

**5** Cabinet sets May 12 date for municipal elections



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# Australian sheep ship to Kuwait blocked after 'shocking' footage

## WHO says Australia exported listeria-tainted melons to Kuwait



This undated handout photo received yesterday shows a distressed sheep onboard a Panama-flagged livestock carrier Awassi Express from Australia to the Middle East. — AFP

**SYDNEY:** An export ship due to carry more than 50,000 sheep to the Middle East has been blocked from leaving Australia after secret footage emerged of distressed animals dying and struggling to breathe in filthy conditions. Australia's live animal export trade, worth more than Aus\$800 million (US\$615 million) annually, has been under scrutiny in recent years after footage shot at offshore abattoirs showed cattle being mistreated.

The latest images, shot onboard Panama-flagged livestock carrier Awassi Express, showed large numbers of sheep packed together in small, stifling pens, covered in or surrounded by excrement. Many were dead. The footage, captured over five voyages last year to Qatar, Kuwait and Oman from Australian ports, was released by activist group Animals Australia. "They just died in front of us," Faisal Ullah, a graduate from Pakistan's Marine Academy who shot the videos, told broadcaster Channel Nine which first aired the footage Sunday. "Just one by one. One after another... I mean, you are just putting live animals into the oven."

Channel Nine said the sheep were stacked 10 storeys high in the ship and forced to stay standing for three weeks, often in "blast-furnace" northern hemisphere summer conditions. Ullah said lambs born to pregnant sheep, which are not supposed to be exported, died on the vessel and were thrown overboard. The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) said yesterday that thousands of sheep died. The same ship, which was due to depart Fremantle on Australia's west coast this week, reportedly headed for Qatar and Kuwait, was blocked from leaving by AMSA after an inspection "raised some concerns about air flow over some pens".

Agriculture Minister David Littleproud said yesterday he had held "constructive" talks with the industry and welfare groups to strengthen the standards in livestock trade. Littleproud ruled out banning the live export trade but said he was taking other measures, including establishing a whistleblower hotline by the end of the week so people to "call out bad behavior". "It is important we get integrity into the live system and those people doing wrong need to be held to account, whether that is a company or an individual," he told reporters.

Emanuel Exports, which uses Awassi Express, told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation it had made changes to welfare requirements, such as lower loading volumes and a government observer on board its ships. Australia previously suspended live shipments to Egypt for several months in 2013 after abattoir footage showed "horrific" mistreatment of cows. Trade to Indonesia was also temporary halted in 2011 on cruelty concerns.

Continued on Page 11

### April 15 Meraj holiday

**KUWAIT:** Sunday (April 15) is a public holiday marking Israa and Meraj, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh said in a statement yesterday. He said the Cabinet took the decision to declare Sunday a public holiday during its weekly session yesterday. — KUNA

## Finger bone find points to early humans in Arabia

**PARIS:** A lone finger bone unearthed in the desert suggests modern humans had penetrated deep into Arabia already 85,000 years ago, said a study yesterday that claimed to advance our African exodus by millennia. The research, published in the journal Nature Ecology & Evolution, challenged a long-held consensus that humans started to move en masse from our birthplace in Africa only about 60,000 years ago, with a few small, unsuccessful migrations before.

Recent archaeological finds have started to question that idea, with some claiming evidence of homo sapiens spreading beyond Africa and the adjacent Levant region already 120,000 years ago or more. However, many of those discoveries - including from China and Australia - have doubts hovering over their authenticity and dating, said the authors of yesterday's study. Their new fossil finger bone, on the other hand, unquestionably belonged to a human and could be dated directly using radiometric technology, said the team.

Its age served as rare evidence that "our species was spreading beyond Africa much earlier than previously thought," said study co-author Huw Groucutt from the University of Oxford. The bone, just 3.2 cm long, is thought to be the middle bone of a middle finger, likely of an adult. It was discovered in the Nefud Desert of Saudi Arabia in 2016, and analyzed over two years. Groucutt and a team used a form of radiometry called uranium series dating to

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Fossil finger bones of Homo sapiens found at the Al Wusta site in Saudi Arabia. — AFP

## MP claims some expats exempted from medical tests

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** Opposition MP Jamaan Al-Harbash said yesterday that the ministry of health has exempted a number of expatriates from undergoing mandatory medical tests in their home countries, even though some of them had been deported from the country on medical grounds. In a series of questions to Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah, the lawmaker demanded to know the number of

cases exempted from medical tests last year and this year.

Under an agreed Kuwaiti and Gulf procedure, all expatriate workers must undergo medical tests in their home countries before coming for employment in the Gulf. Harbash asked the minister for a list of diseases which mandate deporting expatriates from Kuwait or barring their entry into the country. He demanded to know the number of expatriates deported from Kuwait on medical grounds since the beginning of 2016. He demanded to know the number of expatriates who sued the ministry in court after they were found to have serious diseases and asked to know the outcome of those court cases.

Harbash asked if the ministry allows these people to undergo fresh medical tests in their home countries and then allows them to return to Kuwait, and demanded to know the number of those allowed to return. The lawmak-

er also asked the minister to provide him with a list of the names of expatriate employees in the public health department and their nationalities, and if they are entitled to access the results of medical tests conducted in Kuwait. He also demanded the names of expatriates who were exempted and allowed to obtain residence permits despite being detected with serious diseases that require authorities to deport them.

Meanwhile, MP Waleed Al-Tabtabaei demanded detailed results of the seven parliamentary elections held between 1999 and 2016. The lawmaker gave no reason for his request. Separately, MP Riyadh Al-Adasani said Minister of Electricity and Water Bakheet Al-Rasheedi showed cooperation when told that the ministry should reduce electricity connection charges, which were raised late last year. The lawmaker however did not say if the minister agreed to make the revision.

## Trump vows 'major decisions' as 'Israel' strikes Syrian base

**BEIRUT:** US President Donald Trump yesterday pledged "major decisions" on Syria after a suspected chemical attack on a rebel-held town, as calls grew for an international response to the crisis ahead of a UN Security Council meeting. Trump condemned what he called a "heinous attack on innocent" Syrians in Douma, as he opened a cabinet meeting at the White House, adding that decisions would come in the "next 24-48 hours". "This is about humanity - it can't be allowed to happen," he said.

The Syrian regime and its ally Russia have rejected claims of a chemical attack, with President Vladimir Putin warning against any "provocation and speculation on this matter". Trump - who last year launched a

missile strike on a Syrian regime air base after another alleged chemical attack - warned Sunday that there would be a "big price to pay". US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said Washington does not "rule out anything", while Trump and his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron vowed a "strong, joint response".

The crisis was due to be discussed later yesterday at an urgent UN Security Council meeting, while the US also circulated a draft resolution for a new independent inquiry of chemical weapons attacks in Syria. With tensions high, deadly missile strikes on a regime airbase early yesterday raised the specter of Western military action, but Damascus and Moscow said Israel was responsible.

Russia, which has repeatedly said that rebels in Syria were preparing a "provocation" to prompt foreign military action, warned against acting hastily over the alleged chemical attack. The Kremlin said Putin discussed the "accusations against Damascus by a number of Western countries" with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and "stressed the unacceptability of provocation and speculation on this matter."

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WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump speaks during a cabinet meeting at the White House yesterday. — AFP

## Saudis seek French opera help; to show films at Cannes fest

**PARIS:** Saudi Arabia will employ French expertise to set up a national opera and orchestra, under an agreement signed yesterday during a visit to Paris by the kingdom's modernizing Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. The deal will see the Paris Opera company help the ultra-conservative Islamic nation produce its own classical music and shows, a further sign of Prince Mohammed's desire to change the image of his homeland. He has already announced the lifting of a ban on women driving, the re-opening of cinemas for the first time in over three decades and new mixed-gender concerts, despite opposition from religious hardliners.

Meanwhile, Saudi Aramco will sign eight deals worth \$10 billion with French

firms today, the chief executive of the state-run oil giant said yesterday. The kingdom also revealed yesterday that it would enter short films at the Cannes cinema festival for the first time and send an official delegation to the celebration of often edgy and subversive silver-screen art on the Riviera this May. "I cannot think of a better partner for culture and art than France," Saudi Culture Minister Awwad Alawwad told AFP.

Prince Mohammed, 32, was hosted by President Emmanuel Macron for a three-hour dinner at Paris's historic Louvre museum Sunday night after flying in on his first trip to France as heir to the Saudi throne.

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PARIS: French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe welcomes Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman upon his arrival at the Hotel de Matignon yesterday. — AFP



## Local

# Kuwait seeks 'nuke weapons and WMD free' Middle East

## Kuwait, 8 UNSC members call for urgent session

VIENNA: Kuwait's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the International Organizations in Vienna Sadiq Marafi said yesterday that Kuwait is keen on participating in the review sessions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This came in a statement to KUNA by Ambassador Marafi, who headed the Kuwaiti delegation to the 41st meeting of Senior Arab Officials in charge of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction Committee held last Thursday in Cairo.

He added that Kuwait has always sought to support common Arab position in this issue, stressing that the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in the Middle East is an urgent requirement. The Preparatory

Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the NPT is scheduled to hold its second session from April 23 to May 4, 2018 at the UN Office in Geneva. This will be the second of three planned sessions that will be held prior to the 2020 Review Conference.

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

### Urgent session

In another development, Kuwait, France, the US, Britain, Sweden, Netherlands, Poland, Peru and Cote d'Ivoire requested for an urgent UNSC session, the diplomats said, in the wake of bombardment against Eastern Ghouta in general and the town of Douma in specific. Kuwait joined the other UNSC members in calling for the urgent session out of its moral and humane responsibilities. Kuwait had condemned attacks against populated areas in Eastern Ghouta and Douma using rockets and barrel bombs, which killed and injured scores of civilians. The foreign ministry expressed concern over the large number of victims and reported choking cases among civilians, calling on the international community to investigate the attacks in compliance with UNSC resolution 2118. —Agencies



Kuwait's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the International Organizations in Vienna Sadiq Marafi

## Zain - main sponsor of Accounting Club Week

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced its main sponsorship of the Accounting Club Week held at Kuwait University's College of Business Administration until 12 April. Zain's main sponsorship comes as part of its Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy, which closely focuses on contributing to the development of the education sector and the encouragement of various student activities. The company partners with many organizations to invest in education, an essential element of the further progress of national economy.

The Accounting Club Week features a number of academic and recreational activities and programs targeted at students majored in Accounting in the College of Business Administration. The activities include specialized seminars and workshops, a visit to Ahmad Al Jaber Oil and Gas Exhibition, as well as competitions for students from across the university's clubs with prizes and other recreational activities.

Zain's support springs from the company's core Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy. The company believes that supporting initiatives such as this one provides young people with skills and tools necessary to help them highlight and develop their skills, ultimately contributing to the further progress of national economy. As a leading national company, Zain firmly believes in the importance of contributing to the progress of the education sector, and looks to empower and prepare the nation's youth for the important roles they will play in the further progress of the country.



Zain's representatives are pictured with members of the Accounting Club at the company's booth.

### News in brief

#### Writer promotes tolerance

TUNIS: The Kuwaiti novelist Amal Al-Rendi yesterday called for promoting a culture of tolerance among children through literature and arts. In remarks to KUNA, Al-Rendi, who is participating in the 34th Tunisia International Book Fair, said she narrated her novel "the most beautiful punishment" during a workshop of the event. Al-Rendi's novel, which in essence encourages the culture of tolerance and rewarding the wrongdoers, had won Rashed bin Hamid Award for Culture and Sciences in the UAE in 2016. Noting necessity of implanting such values in the children's conscience, Al-Rendi said she had also lectured about the art of story writing for children. —KUNA

#### Friendship delegation

KUWAIT: The first Kuwaiti parliamentary friendship delegation, currently visiting Bosnia and Herzegovina, met yesterday with Minister of Communications and Transport of Ismir Jusko. Leading the delegation that also includes MP Mohammad Haif, MP Dr Waleed Al-Tabatabaie said the visit aims to promote bilateral relations in all fields, particularly parliamentary ones. Al-Tabatabaie added that Kuwait is ready to contribute to the economically feasible projects in the Balkan country, inviting the minister to visit the Gulf state. For his part, Jusko said that the new transport strategy of his country would open the door for more investments in the coming 15 years, highlighting Kuwait's financing of a major highway there, 5C. Kuwait's ambassador in the country Nasser Al-Mutairi said that they would coordinate with the minister for the infrastructure projects in the country. Meanwhile, the delegation called for forming a joint committee to boost bilateral ties. —KUNA

#### Military expertise swap

KHARTOUM: Kuwaiti Military Attache in Sudan Lieut Col Nama Abdullatif yesterday discussed with Sudanese Minister of Defense Lieut General Awad bin Oaf on cooperation between the two states in training, military habilitation and expertise swap. It was the first official meeting for the military attache since assuming the post as the first military envoy representing Kuwait in the nation. In a statement to KUNA, Abdullatif said opening the military affairs section in Khartoum contributes to cementing relations between the two countries and reflects continuous development of the military ties. The military attache added that his talks with the minister dealt with issues related to training and exchanging military experience. Military relations between the two countries date back to 1968, when Ali Al-Sabah Military Academy was established in Kuwait, with aid of Sudanese officers. —KUNA

## YES program promotes peace, development



KUWAIT: US Ambassador Lawrence R Silverman speaks at the Youth Exchange and Study (YES) program's Sports for Development and Press (YESDP) Alumni Workshop. —Photos by Joseph Shagra

### By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: US Ambassador Lawrence Silverman yesterday inaugurated the annual international Youth Exchange and Study (YES) program's Sports for Development and Press (YESDP) alumni workshop, hosted by Kuwait. The YES program initiative is being held as part of the US State Department's efforts to involve youth for peace and development. The group will be presenting their ideas and sports programs and share their experiences when they were in the United States for the YES program.

Countries with representatives in this program that were at the event at Marina Hotel in Salmiya include Kuwait, Bahrain, Lebanon, Libya, Macedonia, Nigeria, Tanzania, Thailand, Tunisia, the Philippines, Turkey, Kosovo, Jordan and Palestine. In his opening remarks, Silverman thanked all the participants in this year's YES



program. "I am pleased to say the program will celebrate its 15th year in October and I hope it continues for decades to come. During these almost 15 years, more than 11,200 young people like you from 45 countries have benefited from the program. But to be honest, all of us benefit from the program in terms of enhanced mutual understanding between peoples," he said.

The YES enables program participants from predominantly Muslim countries to study for an academic year at an American high school. It also provides a unique opportunity for personal growth through enrichment activities that include community service, youth leadership training and civic education, all of which are vital to promote mutual understanding respect between the United States and partner countries.

"I welcome the 30 YES program participants from Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Macedonia, Morocco, Nigeria,

the Philippines, Tanzania, Thailand, Tunisia, and Turkey. When I speak to some of the many Kuwaitis studying at universities in the United States today, I tell them that they are not just students - they are also ambassadors of their country to the United States," Silverman said.

He said the YES program participants and alumni are in many ways the best ambassadors of their countries. "I hope you will see that by this workshop, we are continuing our outreach to you and your countries and our desire to help you achieve what you and your parents wish for your future. I hope that your experiences in this program have helped build your leadership skills. And I hope that you will stay in contact with those you met in the United States," he added. Samar Khilief, AMIDEAST Country Director thanked the ambassador for gracing the occasion and his continued support to AMIDEAST's effort in enhancing opportunities for the youth across the MENA region.

## Cable thief nabbed

KUWAIT: Police received tips about an elderly Egyptian stealing copper cables, so detectives placed him under surveillance. He was caught trying to steal a cable from a government facility in Farwaniya and sent to concerned authorities. In another development, a citizen told Sulaiyia police that an Indian stole solar power equipment including 9 regulators, boards, 10 batteries and four cartons of solar power batteries. The incident took place in Amghara and the suspect is being sought.

### Woman attempts suicide

A Jordanian woman threatened to attempt suicide near Kuwait airport, prompting police and paramedics to rush to the scene. The woman was standing on the edge of a bridge, crying, "either you let me travel, or I will kill myself". The woman was convinced to change her mind and told police she is the fourth wife of a man who is over 70, who's been torturing her daily by confining her in a metal room on the roof, cutting water and power supplies and depriving her of her financial allowance at the insistence of his three other wives. The woman was handed to the embassy and the children to their father. The case was closed.

### Beggars face deportation

A Turkish and an Indian woman were ordered deported after they were caught begging in an Ahmadi governorate area. The Turkish woman was arrested with KD 90 on her. The Indian was seen begging near a health center.

### Drug suspect detained

Farwaniya police sent a bedoon to the Drugs Control General Department with a variety of drugs. A security source said the bedoon was stopped in Jleeb after patrolmen noticed a bag of heroin and another containing captagon and tramadol, in addition to drugs paraphernalia. —Al-Anbaa



Local

# Ministry draws up plans to overhaul education sector

MoE plans to enhance professional capacities, curricula



Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr Hamed Al-Azmi



President of Kuwait Teachers Society Mutee Al-Ajmi



KUWAIT: Officials and participants are pictured during the 43rd Teaching Conference yesterday.— KUNA photos

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Education (MoE) has drawn up plans for enhancing teachers' professional capacities and educational curricula, effective in the coming years, Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr Hamed Al-Azmi said yesterday. Minister Al-Azmi was speaking to journalists, on sidelines of the 43rd Teaching Conference, organized by Kuwait Teachers Society and patronized by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Crown Prince patronization of the event emanates from his special concern for the sector, said Minister Al-Azmi. "Teacher's professional development and contemporary challenges" is the theme chosen by the society for the conference, he said, indicating that the title depicted great need for overhauling the vital sector. Enhancing teacher's potentials constitute the corner stone for revamping the sector, he said, disclosing that his department had worked out a program for updating teachers' professional performance.

The Ministry of Education has dispatched delegations to advanced nations to study their expertise in professional refurbishing. Locally, it has organized training courses, employing Kuwaiti and foreign specialists and advisors, the minister said, also noting that the ministry is involved in development projects at this level with the World Bank and local authorities. The efforts at the various levels aim at tackling "any loopholes and meeting the challenges with respect of the teachers' graduation: in addition to boosting the professionalism of the teachers," Minister Al-Azmi stressed. Meanwhile, the society president, Mutee Al-Ajmi, said in a statement at the gathering that the conference is held as part of the society's relentless and serious efforts to reach solutions through constructive dialogue with elite educational cadres. He added that the convention will proceed for three days and will include workshops to tackle up to 34 topics namely teacher's professional overhaul in the digital era, teacher's training needs and contemporary challenges and their impact on teacher's vocational development and role of the educational institutions for sharpening teachers' skills.—KUNA

## Kuwait health system outperforms others in the region

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Health system has outmatched others in the region, and is proceeding to the level reached by advanced countries, Sheikh Basil Humoud Hamad Al-Sabah said yesterday. Kuwait has hit 77 marks on the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) citing a report by the World Health organization (WHO) and the World Bank (WB). It has been announced that the minister will lead a Kuwaiti delegation to the 3rd Global Ministerial Summit on Patient Safety Tokyo, Japan April 13-14.

Sheikh Basil Al-Sabah said that taking part in the conference will offer a chance to review what Kuwait has achieved on the health sector, and to exchange researches and expertise with world specialists and experts, and the WHO. No doubt, this will benefit the Kuwaiti health system a lot, he said, noting that the ministry is committed to the application of criteria of health care quality in all services. Patients' safety is a human, ethical and a professional commitment, he stressed. The First and Second Global Ministerial Summits on Patient Safety were held in London, March 2016, and Bonn, March 2017.—KUNA



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## Local

## Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Photo captures an evening view of Kuwait City from Martyr's Garden. —KUNA

# SWS, HLO organize 'Protecting Domestic Workers from Neo-slavery' forum

## Some helpers physically and mentally tortured, sexually abused

By Ben Garcia

**KUWAIT:** Social Work Society (SWS), a non-governmental organization spearheaded by its founder Sheikha Bibi Al-Sabah, organized a forum yesterday to speak about the most vulnerable workers in the country - domestic helpers. The forum entitled 'Protecting Domestic Workers from Neo-slavery' was held at the Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) in collaboration with Human Line Organization (HLO), Human Rights Club and the Ministry of Interior.

"I have noticed for many years that if we talk about the issue of domestic helpers, we get very defensive. We have to look at this issue with an open mind - we should not look at it as an attack on us as Kuwaitis. We should not allow this to happen; because I love my country inasmuch as I wish that every human being living in this land will be treated fairly with respect. I am not attacking everyone because there are many good employers - but many domestic helpers in Kuwait are not paid. They are not paid on time; they are not paid according to their contracts; they are not allowed to go out on regular day offs or even holidays. Some of them are insulted, and worse, physically and mentally tortured, and some are sexually abused," Sheikha Bibi said.

She said since she began working at SWS, more than half of the days in a week are spent at the police station ensuring the rights of mostly domestic helpers are respected. Most of the time, she said police argue that most domestic help issues can be settled between the employer and the employee. "How can you reconcile, especially when you see housemaids with black and blue bruises? Why should you settle with an employer when



KUWAIT: Sheikha Bibi Al-Sabah and Rima Al-Mutairi discuss 'Protecting Domestic Workers from Neo-slavery' at the forum. —Photos by Joseph Shagra

you see they are obviously mistreated and abused? This happens when there is no protection. The law is there, but we have to understand it. We are a country that respects the law; we are known as humanitarian champions, so we have to implement the law," she said.

Sheikha Bibi then spoke about two cases handled by SWS involving Filipina and Madagascan maids who were mistreated. In line with its objectives, the SWS together with the Human Rights Club, HLO and the interior ministry will launch an information booklet as part of a bigger and wider campaign to inform housemaids and employers about their rights. "We are here to make you understand the issue. Let's have an open dialogue. I know you can help



us find solutions for this problem. Join us in this campaign to change our society - many of us do not want to discuss this issue, but we have to be open-minded. If we cannot completely stop the abuses, we want to minimize these cases as much as we can," Sheikha Bibi said.

"When we established SWS in 2005, we did not have a domestic labor law, no anti-human-trafficking law, there was no shelter for migrant workers, and the labor law was not upgraded. At that time, there was not much I could do except rescue vulnerable people through embassies. In 2010, the labor law was improved

a bit, the human trafficking law was enacted in 2013 and in 2015, the domestic workers law was implemented. In 2014, the government established a shelter for run-aways," she explained. Rima Al-Mutairi of Human Line Organization said along with SWS, they were able to come up with a booklet to help domestic helpers understand their rights and demands. "The booklet will be available in Kuwait in 15 languages so that everyone will be able to understand their basic rights. We have included contacts of embassies, co-ops, hospitals, police stations, etc.," she said.



KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) recently presented a financial contribution to support the social, charity, cultural, educational and sports activities sponsored by Sabah Al-Salem coop. In this regard, CBK's Mubarak Al-Kabeer Individual Banking Services Manager Rawyah Al-Mislem presented the contribution cheque to the coop's financial manager Essam Rajab Al-Sahrawi.

## Lebanon hails Kuwait's support, cooperation

**BEIRUT:** Lebanese Army Chief General Joseph Aoun yesterday hailed Kuwait's support for Lebanon on economic and political levels. Aoun's remarks came in an exclusive interview with KUNA on the occasion of his visit to Kuwait on April 10-11, upon an invitation from the Kuwait Army. The visit is a follow up to Lebanese President Michel Aoun's visit to Kuwait last January, he said. It is also part of the Rome-2 Conference to support the Lebanese Army and security services, which Kuwait took part in last March, he added. Lebanon is looking forward to receive the financial support announced during the conference to boost the services and abilities of the army.

Meanwhile, Aoun hailed the military cooperation between the two sides through organizing joint training to share experience. The army chief also noted that he aims to boost the cooperation level further during his visit. Speaking on the security conditions in his country, Aoun affirmed that Lebanon is exerting great efforts to protect its peace and security and prevent terrorism of all sorts. He called on Arab and Gulf tourists to rest assured that they would be safe in Lebanon, noting the various touristic festivals had been held in the country last year.

The Commander General pointed to the military operation executed by the Lebanese army against terrorist groups and regaining control over the eastern borders last year. Terrorism is a great danger faced by the whole world not only Lebanon. The international community must exert further efforts to cooperate in facing such phenomenon, he added. Aoun noted that Syrian refugee camps are posing another threat to Lebanon's security, which could also affect the country's economy, environment and society. "Terrorists are using these camps as a hideout, he said, adding that 60



BEIRUT: Lebanese Army Chief General Joseph Aoun poses for a photo after an exclusive interview with Director of KUNA bureau in Beirut Farah Al-Faraj. —KUNA

percent of crimes come from these places. Another security challenge in the country are Palestinian refugee camps, said Aoun. However, the threat is less in these camps since security forces are spread all around them, he noted. As for the Israeli threats to Lebanon, Aoun affirmed that his country does not seek war and look up to the UN international forces to resolve the situation. Meanwhile, the General said the US provides 60 percent of financial aid to the Lebanese army and about 75 percent of Lebanese soldiers are trained or currently training in the US. The US played a big role in the success of his army's fight against terrorist groups across the country, he underlined. —KUNA



## Local

# Cabinet holds session, sets May 12 for municipal polls

## Bill on credit information swap approved

**KUWAIT:** The Cabinet held its regular session at Seif Palace yesterday, presided by Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. Following the session, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh stated that the session kicked off with a presentation by the acting premier about last week's visit to the country by the president of the Comoros, namely his talks with His Highness the Amir that dealt with means of boosting bilateral relations-capped with an agreement to set up a joint cooperation committee.

As to Al-Israa and Me'raj occasion, falling on April 13, the cabinet decided to declare April 15 as a recreation day where all public institutions will close. The ministers expressed congratulations to His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince, the Kuwaiti people, the Arab and Muslim nations on the anniversary. The cabinet set May 12 as the date for holding municipal elections. The ministers examined a recommendation by the legal affairs commission tasked with handling corruption, adopting a bill on barring conflict of interests.

The draft law was submitted to His Highness the Amir pending implementation. They also approved a bill on credit information swap. The ministers looked into a recommendation by the public services committee regarding mechanism and operating public services in Sabah Al-Ahmad and Khairan residential districts. They decided to assign the Public Authority for Housing Welfare to coordinate with competent authorities to set a timetable for delivering and operating the buildings in the two districts.

Also, Kuwait Cabinet yesterday extended sincere congratulations to Egypt's President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi on his re-election. The Cabinet wished Al-Sisi perpetual good health, success, and good luck in



**KUWAIT:** Kuwait cabinet holds weekly session yesterday at Seif Palace. —KUNA

achieving security and stability in his country and continuing its progress and prosperity march. It also hoped the Egyptian President succeeds in regaining Cairo's constructive and pioneering role in the region and the world.

### Heinous attacks

Meanwhile, the Cabinet strongly condemned the recent heinous attacks with explosive rockets and barrels on besieged areas in Douma, Syria, that killed and wounded several people, including women and children. It also expressed sincere sorrow and con-

cern over the gruesome crimes committed against the Syrian people, and constant violations of the international law, human rights laws, and UNSC resolutions in that country. The Cabinet also urged UNSC to bear its responsibilities in preserving security and peace in Syria, take fast and necessary actions to stop these repeated catastrophic violations, and find an urgent solution for the humanitarian crisis of the Syrian people.

It also called on all parties to implement UNSC resolution 2401 entirely and end the siege of Eastern Ghouta's areas to stop this humanitarian disaster.

Furthermore, the Cabinet condemned the recent attack carried out by Houthi militias against a Saudi Arabia's oil tanker, as well as the rocket they fired on Jazan area in southwestern the Kingdom. It reiterated Kuwait's firm stand in favor of Riyadh and support of all measures it takes to preserve its security and stability, and counter such terrorist actions that aim to destabilize the Kingdom. Moreover, the Cabinet condemned the recent attack carried out against Osmangazi University, in Eskisehir, Turkey, which killed several of the University's staff, expressing sincere condolences and sorrow to the Turkish people. —Agencies

## Officials demolish brick walls, target violators

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Mubarak Al-Kabeer General Cleanliness and Road Occupancy Department removed brick walls and cement columns in a building that was in violation and was encroaching on state property. In Khaitan, the Cleanliness and Road Occupancy Department director Saad Al-Khrajne said the department removed 228 sq m of rubbish using many vehicles and equipment including two bulldozers.

### Israa and Meraj

The Interior Ministry's Relations and Security Information Department said due to the Israa and Meraj holiday on Sunday, citizens who have appointments at electric passports service centers in the morning in Saad Al-Abdullah, Ishbelia, Adan and Fahd Al-Ahmad will have their appointments moved to Saturday from 1 pm to 9 pm. As for those with morning appointments on Sunday in Shamiya and Mishref, they should go on Wednesday and Thursday mornings, and those with evening appointments on Sunday should also go on Wednesday and Thursday in the evening.

### Fire in Farwaniya

A man and a woman received first degree burns during a fire in Farwaniya. The fire started in a flat on the second floor of a nine-storey building. Trapped residents were rescued and the fire was put out. An investigation was launched to determine the cause of the fire.



### Containers loaded with fireworks

The Interior Ministry Relations and Security Information Department said the special security sector in cooperation with the customs department busted 14 containers loaded with fireworks yesterday on arrival at Shuwaik Port. Tips were received about trucks loaded with fireworks heading to Kuwait, so the trucks were placed under surveillance. Each container is estimated to have a load worth KD 500,000.



## Reshuffle at Info Ministry

By A Saleh and Meshal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** Well-informed sources at the Information Ministry said a plan to reshuffle some senior officials has been approved and will take effect within the coming few days. The sources added that the reshuffling will be done according to the ministry's new structure to avoid administrative cases that might be filed against the ministry, like those filed during previous reshuffles.

### Minara Prestige Tower

The Malaysian weekly Edge said that Kuwait Finance House has offered the 36-storey Minara Prestige Tower it owns in the capital for sale for 700-750 million ringgits.

### Real estate assets

Minister of State for Housing Affairs Jenan Boshehri stressed that the housing authority's board of directors decided to proceed with establishing a company to develop real estate assets after it halted foundation procedures on Dec 14, 2017 and refunded KD 25 million it had deposited in the company's account because of the few number of shareholders and MoCI's objections.

### KSE, India boost ties

Kuwait Society of Engineers (KSE) and the Indian Embassy in Kuwait stressed their keenness on boosting friendly relations between Kuwait and India. This came during a visit yesterday to KSE by the Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Jeeva Sagar, who was received by KSE Chairman Faisal Dowah Al-Ottol. Ottol hailed the role played by Indian engineers in Kuwait, noting that around 10,000 of them worked in Kuwait through the Indian Society of Engineers' branch in Kuwait. He added that KSE will provide all possible support to overcome any obstacles faced by engineers working in Kuwait. He also noted that Indian engineers who want 'To Whom it May Concern' certificates will be able to get

them through the companies they work for and that company representatives will collectively apply to KSE to issue the certificates on their behalf.

Sagar stressed India's keenness on developing relations with Kuwait through mutual recognition of engineering establishments accredited by the Indian human resources development ministry. He also noted that India is keen that Indian engineers are highly qualified. In a different concern, KSE board member MUSAED EYADA AL-SHEMMARI called for facilitating traffic flow between Saad Al-Abdullah and Jaber Al-Ahmad by building U-turns on the bridge connecting both areas.

### Shrimping season

Kuwait Fishermen Union Chairman Thamer Al-Sowayyan urged PAAAFR to determine the beginning of the shrimping season in national waters. He also called for putting an end to what he described as "fishermen's constant miseries", noting that Kuwaiti fishermen do not have proper accommodation or areas to store their boats and gear after the conclusion of the season. Sowayyan renewed his demands to move imported fish out of the Sharq fish market immediately, because the latter was originally built as an outlet for local fish only. He also warned that some fishmongers mix imported fish with local ones and sell them all as local fish. PAAAFR Chairman Sheikh Mohammed Youssef Al-Sabah yesterday met the chairman of the dairy producers and cow breeders union and a number of breeders to discuss the problems they are facing and find solutions for them. Both sides also discussed the possibility of allowing the establishment of new dairy factories, in addition to discussing the problem of fodder subsidies.

### Co-ops Soccer Championship

Under the auspices of Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Fawaz Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Ahmadi governorate's 3rd Co-ops Soccer Championship will kick off today and run until Thursday, April 12. Ahmadi governorate's government relations manager Hamed Al-Ibrahim said the championship will be held in collaboration with the Consumer Cooperative Societies Union and Ahmadi educational zone. He also noted that the championship will be sponsored by CBK and will include 14 teams named after various co-ops comprising of secondary school students.

### News in brief

#### Al-Zour refinery project

**KUWAIT:** The key project of building Al-Zour oil refinery is forecast to finish by December 2019, a senior official said yesterday. Up to 57 percent of the vital venture has been accomplished, said Dr Khaled Mahdi, Secretary General of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development, in a statement to journalists while inspecting the project site. This project, valued at KD 4.8 billion (\$16 billion), along with two simultaneous ventures, executed for Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIIC), will secure 1,500 jobs for citizens, he added. Al-Zour refinery venture is designed to produce clean fuel for the power ministry, in addition to kerosene and diesel for the local market-productivity projected at 615,000 barrels per day. For her part, Suad Al-Awadh, in charge of planning at KIPIIC, said the project served the higher objective-diversified economy. —KUNA

#### EU backs Kuwait efforts

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFS) received a message of support from the European Union (EU) amid national efforts to reduce the risks of disaster at both local and regional levels. The EU acknowledgment comes fresh off the heels of a major drill the fire directorate was involved in last month, which led international supervisors highly impressed, KFS said in a statement yesterday. In response to the EU's encouraging words, KFS director general Khaled Al-Mekrad penned a letter of his own, thanking the European bloc for the support, saying the participants in the exercise displayed uncanny professionalism. The drill last March was carried out with the express purpose of laying out a strategy to deal with crises and disasters in a way that minimizes the loss of life and properties, the statement noted. The exercise featured broad participation from across Kuwaiti government bodies, including the ministries of defense, health, and interior, among others. —KUNA

## Kuwait official visits S African embassy, offers condolences



**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah paid a visit to the South African embassy. —KUNA photos

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah paid a visit to the South African embassy yesterday, where he offered his condolences over the death of former First Lady Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. The official expressed his sympathies on behalf of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Kuwaiti people. Madikizela-Mandela, a prominent anti-apartheid activist and the ex-wife of former South African president Nelson Mandela, died in hospital on Monday aged 81 after a prolonged illness. —KUNA

## Kuwait donates \$1 million to treat Syria refugees from cancer

**DEAD SEA:** Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) yesterday signed one million dollars donation to King Hussein Cancer Foundation and Center (KHCC). The Kuwaiti donation aims to contribute in the treatment of Syrian refugees in Jordan from cancer. KFAED's Director-General Abdulwahab Al-Bader stated to KUNA. Al-Bader made his remarks after signing the third deal with KHCC Chairperson Princess Ghida Talal, bringing the total amount to three million dollars over a three-year period. The financial contribution is part of KFAED's humanitarian aid framework to support the humanitarian situation of refugees and alleviate the burden of hosting them on the Kingdom, he said. It is also part of Kuwait's commitment to provide aid and support to Syrian refugees. Al-Bader noted, adding the Fund's overall financial aid the Syrian refugees has reached USD 250 million.

The donation will support diagnosing the disease, performing laboratory tests, x-rays, chemotherapy, physiotherapy, palliative therapy, and bone marrow transplant on patient refugees, he said. It will also help providing emergency procedures and medicine to the patients, in addition to operating tumors removal surgeries, treating complications resulted from other surgeries, and running medical procedures to alleviate pains resulted from the disease, added Al-Bader. For her part, Princess Ghida lauded the Kuwaiti donation and expressed pride and appreciation of KHCC's strategic partnership with KFAED, thanking the Fund for its unlimited support and generosity to the Center. —KUNA





Hungary's anti-immigrant PM basks after election walkover

## UK to launch crime blitz as violence rises



JERUSALEM: African migrants demonstrate in Jerusalem on April 4, 2018 against Israel's Prime Minister's cancellation of an agreement with the United Nations aimed at avoiding forced deportations of thousands of African migrants. —AFP

# African migrants lament Netanyahu reversal

## Bibi has repeatedly referred to them as 'infiltrators'

**TEL AVIV:** In a park near Tel Aviv's central bus station, dozens of African migrants waited for Israelis to offer them work, trying to eke out a living in a country where many want them to leave. Only days before, a solution had been announced that would regularize the situation for many migrants and end the potential forced deportation of thousands of others. But in a stunning turnaround on April 3, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu cancelled the agreement with the UN refugee agency, bowing to pressure from his right-wing base to scrap the deal.

"I have no future," Mohamed Idris, a 32-year-old from Sudan, said as he sat on the grass in the park hoping an Israeli contractor would come by and offer work. "We do not know where the wind will blow us," said Idris, who arrived in Israel six years ago and rents a room in Tel Aviv with four others. Netanyahu's reversal of an agreement that offered a solution for the mainly Sudanese and Eritrean migrants came as a surprise to many, coming only hours after he announced the deal in a televised speech.

But in doing so, many analysts saw Netanyahu already under pressure over a string of graft probes as giving in to demands from his traditional supporters and ministers in his right-wing government, including those who want to see all of the migrants expelled. The presence of African migrants in Israel has become a political

issue, and Netanyahu has repeatedly referred to them as "infiltrators". He was hit with an avalanche of criticism immediately after announcing the agreement with the UN, which would have allowed thousands of migrants to remain in Israel at least temporarily. His reversal hours later was welcomed by some residents of south Tel Aviv, where many of the migrants also live. "All should be deported. This is my opinion," south Tel Aviv resident Meir Bachar said.

**'Color of our skin'**  
"I don't want to sound radical or as someone who discriminates. It's not right to deport some of them and to leave others here." Other Israelis have opposed their deportation, including Holocaust survivors who say the country has a special duty to migrants. A poll released in February showed nearly two-thirds of Jewish Israelis supported a government plan for deportations.

Jewish Israelis opposed to the presence of the migrants say they are only concerned about maintaining the Jewish character of the country. Some also speak of

the migrants bringing a different culture, while others allege they have brought the neighborhood down, though the area near the bus station has long been economically depressed.

Since the arrival of the migrants, African shops and cafes have become common in the area. Some of the migrants say they feel they are being targeted for racist reasons. "They want to kick us out only because of the color of our skin," said Halofom Sultan, chairman of the Eritrean immigrants committee. Netanyahu had worked out the agreement with the UN refugee agency because he said he had little choice.

Under a previous controversial plan announced in January, his government intended to give the migrants a choice between leaving voluntarily or facing indefinite imprisonment with eventual forced expulsion. As the migrants could face danger or imprisonment if returned to their homelands, Israel offered to relocate them to an unnamed African country, later revealed to be Rwanda. Rwanda however said it would not accept the deal. The UN agreement provided a compromise by which a mini-

mum of 16,250 migrants would be resettled in Western nations. In exchange, Israel would grant temporary residency to one migrant for each one resettled elsewhere, bringing some certainty to their legal situation.

### 'Then I ran away'

According to interior ministry figures, there are currently some 42,000 African migrants in Israel, half of them children, women or men with families who are not facing immediate deportation. They began entering Israel in 2007, after perilous journeys that led them to what was then a porous Egyptian border. The border has since been strengthened, all but ending illegal crossings.

With the UN deal now cancelled, Israel is still reportedly hoping to deport migrants to a third country - Uganda. But Uganda has said it cannot accept migrants expelled involuntarily. In her small apartment on a recent day, Yordons Tekla, a 28-year-old Eritrean, was cooking lunch to invite her friends for Easter. Pictures of Jesus hung on the wall. "My husband came to Israel in 2010," she said. "After that the Eritrean authorities jailed me and my mother-in-law for one week... Then I ran away and arrived in Israel in 2011." Fredi Karabuskel, also from Eritrea, said he could not return home and did not want to be sent to an unfamiliar African nation. "I really think people here are OK, but the prime minister hates black people," he said. "What he's doing is racism." —AFP

## As life improves, some Iraqi's still seeking refuge in the past

**BAGHDAD:** From his 13th-floor balcony in central Baghdad, Salam Atta Sabri likes to reminisce about his city's storied past - the years before Saddam Hussein and the US-led invasion which forever changed it. On an overcast afternoon in spring, the 55-year-old artist pointed to stalwarts of Baghdad's historic centre such as the 13th century palace of the Abbasid caliphs, and the city's ambling, literary heart around Mutanabbi Street.

Over coffee, he leafed through recent ink drawings of the city, "I remember walking those very streets when I was a boy, before everything changed." Raised in Baghdad by a renowned artist father, Sabri left Iraq in the 1990s, when crippling economic sanctions made life unbearable, he said. "Even when I lived in Los Angeles or Amman, my dream to return to Baghdad was always with me," he said. "In my dream, there would be a new reality on the ground, a new freedom, that's why I chose to return."

But when Sabri came back in 2005 - two years after the US-led invasion which toppled Saddam and left a fractured country - Baghdad was a city under siege. One of the ripple effects of the 2003 invasion was sectarian warfare, which irreparably changed Baghdad and its historically pluralistic society. Kidnappings, killings and forced displacements of civilians by Sunni insurgents and Shiite militias were commonplace. Religious minorities were threatened enough to leave en masse, either for the north or overseas. "But through it all she has always remained Baghdad mon amour, Baghdad my love," Sabri said.

**Concrete slabs**  
Sabri's reverence for Baghdad and its past as a centre for art and learning, is echoed by many, both young and old - those who remember a pre-2003 Iraq and those who don't. But the city is now a shell of what it once was. Security checkpoints obstruct once open streets and its famed hybrid architecture which married traditional brick homes with the modernist buildings by Le Corbusier and Rifat Chadirji, has been subsumed by concrete blast walls. Power outages are commonplace and heavy-duty generators spew dark fumes, adding to some of the worst pollution in a smog-heavy region. Raw untreated sewage is still dumped into the Tigris and there are few accessible riverbanks and open spaces for children to play.

This decade-long decline in quality of life has given rise to nostalgia for pre-1980 Iraq - the year the country was plunged into its first of several wars. But this is a dangerous airbrushing of Iraq's authoritarian past, said Hadi Al Najjar, the president of the Society of Iraqi Photographers.

"Before 2003, we couldn't have an open conversation in a cafe in Baghdad without worrying about someone informing on us, or us informing on each other. At least now, we no longer need to censor ourselves." And while those like Sabri seek solace in memories, other Baghdad residents are looking forward with growing hope.

They say the situation in the capital has improved recently as the rate of security incidents has slowed and a strict curfew was lifted in 2015, allowing restaurants to flourish in well-to-do districts like Mansour. "Since 2003, we've just been trying to survive," said Mustafa Younes, a 27-year-old pharmacy worker, who said he'd lost two brothers during bombings in Baghdad in the last decade. "But now, for the first time, we are starting to think about the future." — Reuters

## Rouhani: US will regret if it violates deal

**TEHRAN:** Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said yesterday that the United States would regret withdrawing from the nuclear deal, and that Iran would respond in "less than a week" if that happened. "We will not be the first to violate the accord but they should definitely know that they will regret it if they violate it," Rouhani told a conference to mark National Nuclear Technology Day in Tehran. "We are much more prepared than they think, and they will see that if they violate this accord, within a week, less than a week, they will see the result."

US President Donald Trump has threatened to walk away from the nuclear deal and re-impose sanctions by May 12 unless tough new restrictions are imposed on Iran's nuclear and missile programs. Rouhani dismissed the threat, saying: "It's been 15 months since this gentleman who came to power in America has been making claims and there have been many ups and downs in his remarks and his behavior. "(But) the foundations of the JCPOA (nuclear deal) have been so strong that during these 15 months of pressure... the structure has remained solid."

The other partners to the agreement - Britain, France, Germany, China, Russia and the EU - all agree that Iran has stuck by its commitments, as does the International Atomic Energy Association which is tasked with inspecting Iran's compliance. "Even if one day (the US) can harm the JCPOA, we will be the winner in the public opinion of the world as the nation that stuck by its commitments," Rouhani said. "If they withdraw, it would mean that they are not committed to their words."

Rouhani said the country's military and diplomatic powers were not aimed at intimidating its neighbors - an apparent riposte to claims by Saudi Arabia that it is seeking to dominate the Middle East. "Our path is clear. We are not thinking of threatening anyone. Our powers, even our military power is not for aggression against any country. Our relations with our neighbors will be friendly relations," Rouhani said. He also took aim at his headline opponents on the domestic front, who have criticized his efforts to reach out to the West. "We need hard power. We need soft power... Some only look at one side of the coin," he said. —AFP



## International

# After rebels release hostages, Syrians search for loved ones

## Detainees have been bussed out of bombed town of Douma

**DAMASCUS:** Clutching an old photograph of her little sister, Wafa anxiously scanned a crowd of released Syrian hostages hoping to reunite with her sibling for the first time in four years. In a Damascus sports hall, she was among dozens hoping to catch a glimpse of their loved ones, after around 50 people were released Sunday by rebels outside the capital.

The former detainees have been bussed out of the bombed-out town of Douma, after weeks of deadly bombardment, under a deal with the Jaish Al-Islam fighters who once controlled it. Inside the basketball hall decorated with Syrian and Russian flags, 33-year-old Wafa weaved her way through the throng, searching for her younger sister.

Repeatedly checking the old photograph, she examined the faces in the crowd until suddenly she came face to face with the person she was looking for. Ghina was only 12 years old when she was detained with her father, mother and brother in the Adra area outside the capital after it was overrun by rebels. But in front of Wafa now stood a slender 16-year-old with long hair spilling below her shoulders. Wafa wrapped her arms around her little sister Ghina and held her tight. "This is her smell. Her eyes and her gaze are exactly the same," she said, clasping Ghina's hand. "But she's become a young woman."

### 'Dream of this moment'

Ghina said being freed after years in captivity was a dream come true. "When I was young, I used to dream of becoming a doctor. But after I was taken hostage, my only dream was to get out," said Ghina. After travelling for hours from central Syria's Al-Masyaf area, Wafa also found their mother among those who returned late Sunday. But the fate of Wafa's father and brother remain unknown.

Seven years into Syria's devastating civil war, thousands of people are still missing, with families in the dark about whether they are dead or alive. Since February 18, the regime has retaken almost all of the last rebel bastion of Eastern Ghouta east of the capital through deadly bombardment, a ground assault and evacuation deals.

Under these Russia-brokered agreements, people taken hostage by the rebels have slowly been released from the last pockets under opposition control. For several weeks, dozens of their family members have rushed to areas at the

edges of the shrinking enclave in the hope of finding their loved ones. In another part of the hall, Sonia Dayub, 43, threw off a white scarf from her hair and a black robe she was wearing on top of her clothes to embrace her brother. Her brother Osama wiped the tears from her cheeks, and kissed her eyes and the top of her head. "I still can't believe I'm seeing my sister," he said. "I've dreamt of this

moment so many times, and now the dream has become reality."

### 'He could be coming'

Sonia dabbed her eyes with a tissue. "I no longer want to cry. This is a new start to life. I've been reborn," she said. Among those released from Eastern Ghouta were people taken hostage by rebels after they captured the industrial area of Adra in December 2013. In November 2015, a Britain-based war monitor reported rebels in Eastern Ghouta were using dozens of captives taken hostage in Adra as "human shields".

They put regime soldiers and civilians they were holding captive in metal cages, then placed them in public squares to prevent regime bombardment, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. In the basketball hall,



**DAMASCUS:** Relatives reunite after buses carrying the first batch of detainees whom the agency said were released by Jaish Al-Islam after being held hostage in the Eastern Ghouta town of Douma, arrived in Damascus. —AFP

Rasha's mother fell to the floor sobbing when she at last spotted her long-lost daughter. Rasha sprinted towards her mother, throwing herself beside her to comfort her and wipe away her tears. "I'm back, Mummy," she said. "I'm back."

But not all those who flocked to the sports hall were so

lucky. Seated on the terraces around the basketball pitch, Zaina Khaluf, 38, rested her cheek in her hand and stared at the main door. "I hoped my brother would be among those who were released," she said. "But I'm not losing hope. I'm staying here until the morning. He could be coming in the next round" of releases. —AFP

“My only dream was to get out”

## Thousands rally in B'desh after 100 injured in protest

**DHAKA:** Thousands of students across Bangladesh staged protests and sit-ins yesterday after clashes at the country's top university left at least 100 people injured. Police fired rubber bullets and tear gas at Dhaka University students fighting what they complain are discriminatory quotas for government jobs in favor of special groups. It was one of the biggest protests faced by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in her decade in power.

Following the violence that erupted Sunday and continued into the early hours of Monday, classes at Dhaka University ground to a halt as thousands occupied the main square chanting "Reform, reform!" Students at state-run universities in Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi, Barisal, Rangpur, Sylhet and Savar also boycotted classes and staged sit-ins, police and media said. At Jahangirnagar University alone, more than 1,000 students joined the demonstrations, said Ataur Rahman, a protester in Savar where the university is located.

Dhaka University students said they would continue their fight. "We won't leave the streets unless our demands are met. This is all about dignity. We are not afraid of bullets," said Abdullah Bhuiyan, a 22-year-old English student. Another student, Saimon Rahman, said quotas meant young graduates missed out on government jobs: "We want a merit-based society. We want equal opportunities for all," he said.

### Overnight scuffles

Students burned furniture and set lengths of bamboo alight but no fresh clashes were reported after the overnight scuffles turned Dhaka University into a battleground. Hundreds of police patrolled key entry points to the campus. Organizers in Dhaka said they had been holding peaceful protests Sunday when police started firing tear gas and rubber bullets, and used batons and water cannon to clear a central square.



**DHAKA:** Bangladeshi university students clash with police during a protest against the quota system used in government recruitment. —AFP

As violence spread across the campus, thousands of male and female students engaged in pitched battles with officers. "More than 100 people were injured," police inspector Bacchu Mia said, adding they were treated in hospital but their condition was not serious. Protesters threw rocks, vandalized the home of the Dhaka University vice-chancellor, torched two cars and ransacked the fine arts institute, said senior police officer Azimul Haque. Fifteen people were detained, police said. The students are angry at the government's decision to set aside 56 percent of civil service jobs for the families of veterans from the 1971 war of independence and for disadvantaged minorities.

That leaves most university graduates to fight for only 44 percent of the jobs. The cabinet, led by Hasina, discussed the quota issue at its weekly meeting yesterday,

cabinet secretary Shafiqul Alam said. The prime minister has asked senior minister Obaidul Quader to hold a meeting with the protest leaders, he said.

Hasan Al Mamun, a leader of the protests, said tens of thousands of students joined the demonstrations nationwide yesterday. Police declined to estimate the number. Al Mamun said the quota for top-grade jobs should be reduced to only 10 percent. "These quotas are discriminatory. Due to the quota system, 56 percent of the jobs are set aside for five percent of the country's population. And 95 percent of the people can compete for the 44 percent," he said. Students are particularly upset at the 30 percent quota set aside for descendants of veterans of the independence war. Sheikh Hasina, whose father was the architect of the country's independence from Pakistan, has rejected demands to slash the quotas. —AFP

## Suicide, scandal: The sad life of Brazil's presidents

### RIO DE JANEIRO: Suicide, coup d'etat, impeachment, scandal or prison: get elected president in Brazil and you're almost guaranteed an unhappy ending.

When Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva was locked up in federal police headquarters in Curitiba to begin a 12-year sentence for corruption on Saturday, it was a bombshell. A two-term former president who left office in 2011 as one of the most popular men on the planet, Lula is the frontrunner in October presidential elections. But seen another way, Lula's brutal political demise was practically business as usual.

Brazilian presidents get to live in an incredible Oscar Niemeyer-designed palace in Brasilia. They rule over a resource-rich country of 209 million people with the world's biggest rainforest and possibly the best football team. Then somehow things tend to go wrong. At least Lula finished his two terms. His successor Dilma Rousseff, whom he propelled to victory in 2010, was stripped of office in impeachment proceedings for cooking the budget books in 2016, halfway through her second term. Inheriting the green and yellow sash was her vice president, Michel

Temer. He's still there, but his future's murky. Last year he was twice charged with corruption, becoming the first Brazilian president to face criminal prosecution while still in office. For now, at least, he remains shielded by presidential immunity. Go back a little further, to 1992, and you have President Fernando Collor de Mello. He was impeached after corruption allegations and resigned two years into his first term.

Prosecutors are after him again now and in 2015 they impounded his spectacular fleet of luxury cars. Oh and just for good measure, another of the five living ex-presidents- Jose Sarney, who ruled from 1985-1990 — is also facing a corruption probe. It's worth noting that he only rose to the presidency because he was deputy to Tancredo Neves, who'd won the election, but died before taking office.

### Tragedy

"Going into politics is a risky business," columnist Angela Alonso wrote Sunday in Folha de S.Paulo newspaper. "In Brazil there's a risk of losing an election, your freedom (prison is in vogue) and your life." That was especially true for President Joao Goulart, known to everyone as Jango.

He became president in 1961 after the resignation of Janio Quadros, who lasted barely half a year in office. Then in 1964, Goulart was overthrown in the military coup which would install a dictatorship lasting two decades. Escaping, he spent the rest of his life in exile, dying in Argentina in 1976



**CURITIBA:** A supporter of hard-right former army captain Jair Bolsonaro and of the "Car Wash" anti-graft operation demonstrates against former Brazilian president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva outside the Federal Police headquarters. —AFP

—officially of a heart attack, though there were unproven claims that he was poisoned.

Most tragic of all Brazil's leaders was Getulio Vargas. A populist, he ruled in two periods through the 1930s-1950s, doing much to transform the country into an industrial powerhouse. Then 24 August, 1954, he shot himself through the heart with a revolver in his presidential palace, leaving a suicide note to the Brazilian people, reading: "I gave you my life, now I give you my death."

Delving back into early Brazilian history, it doesn't get any better. In fact, the country's first president founded the republic with a coup d'etat in 1889, ending the Empire of Brazil. Mauricio Santoro, at the international relations department of Rio State University, says the dismal experience of life in the presidents' club reflects deep problems with democracy. "Today, democracy is broader based than it used to be, but it remains marked by instability," he said. —AFP

## News in brief

### Mexican leftist leads rival

**MEXICO CITY:** Mexican leftist Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador has a nearly 11 percentage point lead over his closest rival ahead of the July presidential election, a poll published yesterday showed. Lopez Obrador has capitalized on deep unhappiness with widespread violence and corruption to fashion a commanding lead in the race for the next president, and has been striving to strike a balance between appealing to his leftist base and business leaders, who fear he could destabilize the economy. The poll found that 42 percent of respondents say they would vote for Lopez Obrador, a former mayor of Mexico City who has twice failed in presidential bids. He enjoys a lead of 10.9 percentage points over Ricardo Anaya, who leads a right-left coalition. Jose Antonio Meade, who is running as the candidate for the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party, was in third place. The El Universal/Berumen y Asociados poll, based on 1,256 interviews, was conducted April 3-5. —AFP

### Quake hits Japan

**TOKYO:** A 5.6-magnitude quake hit western Japan early yesterday, injuring five people and damaging buildings and roads, as officials warned stronger tremors could come in the days ahead. The shallow tremor was gauged as magnitude 5.6 by the US Geological Survey and 6.1 by Japan's meteorological agency on the Richter scale. It rocked the west of the main island of Honshu, 96 kilometers north of Hiroshima, at 1:32am. The Japanese agency urged residents to stay vigilant. "We want the areas that experienced strong tremors to be on guard in the coming week or so against quakes that could be as powerful as the upper five," agency official Toshiyuki Matsumori said, referring to a Japanese seismic scale with a maximum intensity of seven. Five people were hurt in the quake, including a 17-year-old boy who broke his leg after falling from his bed. Damage to some buildings and roads were also reported. —AFP

### China's emperor topples

**BEIJING:** A strong gale-force wind has toppled a giant statue of China's first emperor Qin Shi Huang and flattened its face at a popular tourist site in eastern Shandong province. The 19-meter bronze replica of the monarch—who was the first to unify warring factions in China and established the Qin dynasty (221-206 BC) was blown out of its pedestal on Friday. Cranes were immediately called in to pick up the statue, which weighs about six tons, according to the state-run People's Daily newspaper. Photographs showed the structure was hollow, with metal bars inside. The monument was built in 2005 to attract visitors to a local tourist resort. —AFP

### New York bus crash

**WASHINGTON:** Dozens of New York teenagers returning from a school trip to Eastern Europe were injured when their bus crashed on the journey home to Long Island, police said. New York State Police Major David Candelaria said of the 44 people on board Sunday evening, two were seriously wounded and five moderately, with the rest of the injuries minor. The passengers included 38 students aged between 16 and 18. Images on local media showed the bus, owned by New Jersey-based Journey Bus Line, with its roof sheared off after reportedly striking an overpass on the Southern State Parkway in Lakeview, around 30 miles southeast of Manhattan. Candelaria said the bus was traveling from New York's John F. Kennedy Airport to the Walt Whitman Mall in Huntington—a journey of around 40 minutes by road. The driver, from Pennsylvania, and the passengers were taken to several local hospitals, he added. —AFP



## International

# Hungary's anti-immigrant PM basks after election walkover

## 'The opportunity to defend themselves and to defend Hungary'

**BUDAPEST:** Hungary's anti-immigrant Prime Minister Viktor Orban basked yesterday in the glory of a bulldozer election triumph that delighted other nationalists but sent a chill through civil society groups and portended fresh battles with Brussels. Near-complete results showed that Orban's right-wing Fidesz party romped home with almost half the vote (48.8 percent), highly likely giving it a two-thirds majority and a legislative carte blanche.

Addressing ecstatic, flag-waving supporters in Budapest late on Sunday before a patriotic singalong, Orban said the "destiny-deciding victory" gave Hungarians "the opportunity to defend themselves and to defend Hungary". His win, which decimated a cautiously optimistic opposition and was even more crushing than expected, followed strong election performances from other parties portraying themselves as anti-system such as in Italy in March and in Austria and Germany last year.

“

### Destiny deciding victory

”

for the dehumanised politics and hate media". French National Front head Marine Le Pen said the "EU's reversal of values and mass immigration were rejected again" while Brexit leader Nigel Farage called Orban the EU's "biggest nightmare". Beatrix von Storch from the Alternative for Germany (AfD) said it was a "bad day for the EU and a good one for Europe". European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker will write to Orban to congratulate him on his "clear victory", a spokesman told reporters in Brussels yesterday. German Chancellor Angela Merkel congratulated Orban and called for cooperation, her spokesman Steffen Seibert told a news conference. Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz, who swept to power last year on an anti-immigration platform and is in coalition with far-right populists, also congratulated Orban on Twitter.

#### From rebel to patriot

Orban, 54, became a household name as a young student in 1989 in the dying days of communism with a stirring speech demanding Soviet troops go home. As one of the brightest stars in newly democratic "new" Europe, Orban co-founded Fidesz and anchored it firmly in the centre-right with a focus on family and Christian values.

The father-of-five learned from a rocky first term as prime minister from 1998-2002. He bounced back in 2010 with a two-thirds majority, a feat he repeated four years later. He shook up Hungary's judiciary, brought state media under closer control many independent titles have been bought up by Orban allies-and tacked hard-right during

Poland's deputy foreign minister said the win confirmed central Europe's "emancipation" while anti-migrant Czech President Milos Zeman's spokesman hailed "another defeat



**BUDAPEST:** Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban (C) celebrates from the podium on the bank of the Danube River after winning the parliamentary election with members of his FIDESZ party. —AFP

Europe's 2015 migrant crisis. Building razor-wire anti-migrant fences on Hungary's borders with Serbia and Croatia, Orban has railed against what he says are the dangers to European culture and security posed by mass Muslim

immigration. During the most recent election campaign he ramped up his attacks on financier and philanthropist George Soros as the malign mastermind of a "global elite" seeking to flood Europe with foreigners. —AFP

### News in brief

#### Pope supports migrants

**VATICAN CITY:** Pope Francis issued a warning to Catholics who criticize his calls to welcome migrants with open arms, in a much-awaited text published yesterday. The Argentine pontiff has put the plight of people fleeing war, persecution and poverty at the heart of his five-year papacy, putting him at odds with a wave of anti-immigrant sentiment in many parts of the world. In the third apostolic exhortation of his pontificate—a guideline on how Catholics can strive for "holiness"—the 81-year-old unexpectedly hit out at his critics. "Some Catholics consider the situation of migrants to be a secondary issue," he wrote. "That a politician looking for votes might say such a thing is understandable, but not a Christian for whom the only proper attitude is to stand in the shoes of those brothers and sisters of ours who risk their lives to offer a future to their children." —AFP

#### Indonesia mastermind jailed

**JAKARTA:** The convicted mastermind of a deadly twin bombing in Jakarta last year claimed by the Islamic State group was sentenced to nine years in prison yesterday. Kiki Muhamad Iqbal, 38, was found guilty of organizing the suicide attacks that killed three policemen and injured a dozen others at a busy bus station in the sprawling capital. Ahmad Sukri and Ikhwan Nur Salam, who died when they blew themselves up in the huge explosions in May 2017, had attended a mosque where Iqbal gave fiery sermons calling on Muslims to "die as martyrs", the North Jakarta court heard. "(The defendant has been) proven, legally and convincingly, of committing the crime of plotting and mobilizing others to commit a criminal act of terrorism," presiding judge Purwanto said. It was less than the 12-year jail term that prosecutors had demanded. Iqbal, who was arrested two weeks after the bombings, pleaded not guilty and said he had no knowledge that the two men would carry out an attack. —AFP

#### S Korean ex-prez indicted

**SEOUL:** Former South Korean president Lee Myung-bak was formally indicted for corruption yesterday, becoming the latest of the country's ex-leaders to face criminal charges. The CEO-turned-president who served from 2008 to 2013 has been charged with bribery, power abuse, embezzlement, and tax evasion, state prosecutors said in a statement. It comes just days after Lee's successor as president, Park Geun-hye, was jailed for 24 years for corruption. "We will thoroughly retrieve the criminal proceeds that were accumulated by Lee through illegal means," prosecutor Han Dong-hoon told reporters. Lee was detained late last month but has since refused to be interrogated by prosecutors. He has denied any wrongdoing and has denounced the investigation as a "political revenge". If convicted of all the allegations, the septuagenarian Lee could be jailed for life, Yonhap news agency reported. —AFP

#### UN troops attacked

**BANGUI:** United Nations troops came under attack overnight in the heart of the capital of the Central African Republic (CAR), a UN spokesman said yesterday. The incident occurred shortly after UN peacekeepers and CAR troops launched an operation targeting armed groups in a flashpoint district of Bangui. At least two people were killed and dozens wounded during the joint operation, according to UN and medical sources. Hours later, UN troops were attacked in the institutional district of Bangui, near the presidential palace, in the first such incident since President Faustin-Archange Touadera was elected in 2016. "There was an attack lasting about half an hour, which singled out MINUSCA," the mission's spokesman, Vladimir Monteiro, said. "We are checking who was behind the attack. We returned fire and sent reinforcements. The attack was not directed against a CAR institution." —AFP

## UK to launch crime blitz as violence rises

**LONDON:** British Home Secretary Amber Rudd vowed yesterday to do "whatever it takes" to curb crime as she unveils a new multi-million pound response to a surge in violence in London and elsewhere. The new initiative, backed by £40 million (46 million euros, \$56 million) in funding, aims to steer young people away from crime and tackle violent drug-dealing gangs, according to Britain's interior ministry. It comes after a deadly start to 2018 in the British capital in which a spate of stabbings and shootings has left more than 50 people dead—pushing its murder rate higher than New York's in recent months.

"As a government we will never stand by while acid is thrown or knives wielded," Rudd will say in a speech in London. "I am clear that we must do whatever it takes to tackle this so that no parent has to bury their child." A crucial part of our approach will be focusing on and investing more in prevention and early intervention." Rudd is set to announce the introduction within weeks of new laws targeting offensive weapons, including action to stop knives being sent to residential addresses after they are bought on the internet.

She will also call on social media companies to do more to rid the web of violent gang content. There are funds for new "community projects" for young people and a coordination centre targeting national drug dealing networks, the interior ministry said. Following a rise in violent crime in towns and cities across Britain, the Conservative government has faced criticism for years of cuts to police funding and a reduction in officers.

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn said Sunday that Rudd

## Northern Ireland: A fragile peace tested by Brexit

**BELFAST:** Two decades after the Good Friday Agreement formally ended the conflict in Northern Ireland, the peace process remains fragile and Brexit is provoking concerns over its durability. The accord, signed on April 10, 1998, by the British and Irish governments and local political parties, ended 30 years of unrest that had left more than 3,500 dead. It came four years after the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which had waged a deadly campaign of bombings and shootings in Northern Ireland and mainland Britain against London's rule on the island, declared a historic ceasefire.

"I have been a member of the Labour Party for 54 years and a parliamentarian for 32 years and nothing in my life has compared with 5.30 pm on Good Friday, April 10, 1998," Paul Murphy, a British Foreign Office minister for Northern Ireland at the time, told reporters as the anniversary approached. Since then violence by the IRA and unionist paramilitary groups fighting for continued British rule of the province, has receded.

But communities continue to be divided along sectarian lines and political tensions remain—most pointedly around devolved governance. Northern Ireland has been without an executive for 15 months after a power-sharing administration between the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and nationalist party Sinn Fein, in place since 2007, collapsed acrimoniously. "A lot of people are wondering really how much has Northern Ireland changed in 20 years if the communities are so divided," Siobhan Fenton, author of the forthcoming book "The Good Friday Agreement", said.

#### 'Chuckle Brothers'

Former Ulster Unionist Party leader Mike Nesbitt believes power-sharing in Belfast has been successful for "only one year"—when Ian Paisley, of the DUP, and one-time IRA commander Martin McGuinness, of Sinn Fein, ruled together through 2007. "(They) got on so well they became known as the Chuckle Brothers," he said. "These two old enemies came together and... put a smile on their



**LONDON:** Britain's opposition Labour party leader Jeremy Corbyn (L) and The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan arrive for the launch of Labour's local election campaign. —AFP

and Prime Minister Theresa May were "ignoring their record" and there were 21,000 fewer officers than in 2010. But the government insists the rise in robbery, knife and gun crime is due to improvements in police recording and a rise in drug dealing. London's Metropolitan Police deployed an additional 300 officers over the weekend to areas most impacted by crime after a particularly violent

week. Mayor Sadiq Khan, who has devolved powers over policing, announced he would host a summit today, as he faced pressure to act over the crime spike. Rudd, Police Commissioner Cressida Dick, London MPs and other local leaders from across the capital were among those invited, according to City Hall. The Home Office declined to confirm whether Rudd would attend the meeting. —AFP



**BELFAST:** In this file photo taken on March 2, 2017 a Sinn Fein party election worker dressed up as a crocodile stands behind a banner referring to Brexit outside a polling station in Belfast, as voters in Northern Ireland go to the polls to elect a new Assembly. —AFP

face and they made the effort to get along." The accord, reflecting "the unique nature of Northern Ireland", was not intended to be "a one-off agreement", according to Fenton. Instead, "it has to be constantly updated to respond to the different events and social changes in society." Others have been more sceptical from the outset of the agreement. "If the agreement was perfect, we wouldn't have the crisis we actually have in Stormont", said Ian Paisley Jr., a DUP lawmaker in Westminster.

The DUP was the only major political group in Northern Ireland to oppose the deal in 1998, citing too many concessions to nationalists. Giada Lagana, a political science academic at the National University of Ireland Galway, told AFP the deal was an "ingenious compromise where everything is subject to interpretation". However, its

interpretive nature has led to recurring disagreements over certain key provisions. Britain's domestic politics has also complicated the picture. Conservative Prime Minister Theresa May's minority Government remains in power only with the support of 10 Westminster lawmakers with the fervently pro-Brexit DUP, sparking fears over their influence.

The impact of Britain's impending departure from the European Union on Northern Ireland has many worried, particularly because of the prospect of the return of a physical border with the Republic of Ireland, an EU member. New Sinn Fein leader Mary Lou McDonald told reporters in London in February that Brexit was "not compatible" with the agreement. Brexit will also result in the loss of a key channel for dialogue among peace process stakeholders, according to Lagana. —AFP



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## Analysis

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## Will closure of Backpage dent Britain's sex slave trade?

Britain's sex slave trade is unlikely to be dented by the closure of the sex marketplace website Backpage as traffickers use dozens of sites to advertise and sell their victims, according to police and anti-trafficking experts. US law enforcement agencies last week shut Backpage.com - a classified advertising site primarily used to sell sex - which some analysts believe accounted for 80 percent of online sex trafficking in the United States including of under-age girls.

In Britain dozens of adverts offering sexual services were listed daily on the affiliated Backpage.co.uk before it was closed, and as many as one in 20 may have involved victims of slavery, according to an exclusive analysis by Thomson Reuters. But analysts said online sex slavery was more complicated in Britain than in the United States with Backpage just the tip of the iceberg as police are monitoring at least 50 other sites for cases and trialling software to spot ads posted by traffickers. "In Britain you have many more of these listings sites where sex ads are posted," said Wade Shen, a program manager at the US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), which is the US Department of Defense's research arm. More than 8,500 ads for sexual services are posted online every month in Britain - where it is legal to buy and sell sex but soliciting and pimping are banned - according to the police. "Criminals can hide among the sheer volume of online ads," Dan Parkinson, a detective sergeant with Britain's national anti-slavery policing unit, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

### 'New, young, fresh'

Yet traffickers often leave traces which can help police to spot cases of slavery among ads posted by willing sex workers. The same contact number, username and blurb across multiple ads are possible indicators, while descriptions such as 'new', 'young' and 'fresh' may mean the woman is underage or a slave, said Thomson Reuters analysts who examined Backpage for months. Other signs include refusing to talk terms over the phone, photos of faces - as most sex workers prefer privacy - and being willing to visit clients in the early hours, said a woman who was forced to sell sex by a pimp in Britain over several years. "Technology has created a new age of pimping," she said by email, asking to remain anonymous. "It's easy for pimps, profits are lucrative, and the likelihood of being caught is minimal."

While it is hard to pinpoint the extent to which women and girls are sold online for sex in Britain, 166 anti-slavery police operations involved sex exploitation as of the start of the year - up from 102 in early 2017 - according to police data. Britain's anti-slavery helpline has received a rising number of calls about adult services and listing websites, said Andrew Wallis, founder of the charity Unseen which runs the service. "Traffickers are increasingly harnessing the power of the web to recruit, control and exploit victims," Wallis said. At least 13,000 people across Britain are estimated by the government to be victims of forced labour, sex exploitation and domestic servitude - but police say the true figure could be in the tens of thousands with anti-slavery investigations rising.

### Going underground

The police are trialling software to automate the process of trawling websites to identify ads posted by traffickers, and working with banks to investigate suspicious online payments. They are also demanding greater cooperation from the adult service sites to share data about users who buy sex, said Phil Brewer, chief of the Metropolitan Police's anti-slavery squad. "We have warned these websites that if they're not ready to work with us, then we are prepared to take action," Brewer said.

However under Britain's sexual offences and modern slavery laws, a website could only be prosecuted if they were shown to have knowingly facilitated human trafficking, said Caroline Haughey, a barrister at London-based law firm Furnival Chambers. And even in such cases, taking action could put victims of sex trafficking in even greater danger, police and lawyers say. "If you prevent something being easily free and available, and make it criminal, you will drive it underground," Haughey said. "Then it becomes harder to trace, and harder to police." While adult service websites are used by traffickers, they also protect countless women who choose to sell sex, according to sex worker collectives which fear the prospect of Britain considering a US-style law targeting online sex marketplaces. The US Senate last month passed a law aimed at penalizing websites that facilitate online sex trafficking, and fail to keep all exploitative material off their platforms. "Such legislation ... will do next to nothing to protect sex trafficking victims," said Katy Simon of Tits and Sass, a blog for sex workers. "It will simply dissolve the communities - most of which are online - that sex workers rely on for survival."

### Cat-and-mouse

Britain has been considered a leader in the world's drive to end trafficking since passing the 2015 Modern Slavery Act to fight a crime affecting an estimated 40 million people globally. Yet three years on, anti-slavery activists say the law has not been utilized fully to jail traffickers, support victims or drive firms to scrutinize their supply chains for forced labour.

Nazir Afzal, a former British chief prosecutor, said efforts to tackle online sex trafficking are hindered by limited police resources and a lack of computing expertise and experience. "We have this online Wild West where people are exploiting others with impunity in plain sight," said Afzal, who prosecuted some of the highest-profile cases of sex slavery in Britain. "It's like a game of cat-and-mouse, but the cat has two legs tied together." —Reuters



## Orban win means more headaches

The crushing re-election victory of Hungary's Viktor Orban may have delighted populists around Europe, but the anti-immigration hardliner's triumph looks set to prolong the fractious relationship between Brussels and Budapest. Congratulations for Orban from the leading political group in the European Parliament and European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker were tempered by warnings that Hungary must live up to the bloc's values.

The EU has clashed repeatedly with Orban's government during its past two terms over a number of issues including Hungary's crackdown on foreign-funded universities and NGOs, its hardline stance on migrants and alleged misuse of funding from the bloc. Juncker's spokesman Margaritis Schinas said the former Luxembourg PM would congratulate Orban in a letter and phonecall, but also struck a warning note.

"The European Union is a union of democracies and values. President Juncker and the commission believe that the defense of these values and principles is a common duty for all member states, without exception," Schinas said. The EU has launched a barrage of legal action against Orban's government, taking it to the bloc's top court over a crackdown on education and foreign-backed civil society groups that critics say targets US billionaire George Soros.

The European Commission has also brought a case against Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic over their refusal to accept quotas for asylum seekers. But Orban has remained defiant in the face of both criticism and legal action from Brussels and the bloc faces a challenge in trying to either cajole or compel him to cooperate.

### 'Talk straight to him'

Orban's Fidesz party is part of the European People's Party (EPP), the dominant force in the European Parliament which also includes German Chancellor

Angela Merkel's CDU party, and some critics say this has given him political cover in Brussels. Yesterday, Manfred Weber, the head of the EPP bloc in the parliament, congratulated Orban on Twitter, saying he was looking forward to "continuing working with you towards common solutions to our European challenges".

Left-leaning groups in parliament condemned the EPP's support for Orban, with German MEP Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann, of the Socialists and Democrats, saying they needed to "talk straight to him, instead of flattering him with visits and invitations". It has been suggested



### EU has clashed repeatedly with Orban's govt

the EU could launch so-called Article 7 sanctions over Hungary's alleged breaches of the bloc's values, which could strip it of its voting rights, but such a move would almost certainly be vetoed by Budapest's ally Poland.

Daniel Mikecz of the Republikon Institute, a Hungarian thinktank, said that on the European stage, if not domestically, Fidesz could be open to persuasion by the EPP. "Fidesz value their membership of the EPP and their good relations with the German conservatives - those two actors could be a moderating influence,"

Mikecz said. Similarly, Agoston Mraz of the Neozopont Group thinktank said much would hinge on a meeting Orban has proposed with Merkel and the leaders of Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic - which make up the Visegrad Four group with Hungary.

In an interview with AFP, Weber insisted that the EPP's backing for Orban was not unconditional, stressing that Fidesz must respect the "fundamental values" of the EU. "On one hand there is the election. We must respect the outcome of the decision made by the voters. On the other one, we have a clear request and clear expectations to what Viktor Orban must deliver to be part of the EPP," Weber told AFP. But Fidesz has already pledged to forge ahead with a new "Stop Soros" package of legislation, setting the stage for fresh clashes with the EU.

### Massive victory

Orban's massive victory - with around 49 percent of the vote and potentially gaining a two-thirds majority in parliament - comes after eurosceptic and anti-EU parties made big inroads in elections in Austria and Italy. Praise for Orban has flooded in from allies such as Poland, far-right leaders like Marine Le Pen of the French National Front and staunch anti-EU campaigners like Nigel Farage of Britain's UKIP. Joachim Fritz-Vannahme, an analyst with the Bertelsmann Stiftung thinktank, said Orban's win could be an unpleasant foretaste for Brussels of next year's elections to the European Parliament.

"We already have almost a third of MEPs who are anti-Europe or eurosceptic, from UKIP to Marine Le Pen," he told AFP. "If we take the results in Italy, Hungary and Austria it's clear there is a very strong anti-European current which is going to dominate the character and temperament of the next European Parliament." —AFP

## SE Asian social ventures lift poor out of poverty

For the 48 families who once lived in shanties and rundown tenements around Manila, going to work meant hour-long commutes in crowded jeepneys and tricycles. Now, they walk a few hundred metres along the tree-lined Enchanted Farm site in Bulacan, about 40 km north of Manila, to one of its half dozen social enterprises - businesses which address social problems while making a profit. From making peanut butter to designing plush toys, the businesses developed in-house have enabled the former slum dwellers to escape poverty and improve their lives.

"The poor do not have many options for work, but social enterprises are a great way to generate jobs and incomes, and benefit many more in the community," said Joni Morales, a manager at Gawad Kalinga, which runs Enchanted Farm. "Everyone who lives here works here, and can themselves become entrepreneurs one day."

Experts said such efforts to narrow growing inequality could get a boost if the Senate approves the Poverty Reduction Through Social Entrepreneurship Bill, designed to include the sector in development plans and increase training and access to funding. One in five Filipinos is poor, living on less than \$1.25 per day, according to the World Bank, even as the economy has among the fastest rates of growth in the world.

In the meantime, local universities offer degrees in social enterprise, and the number of ventures has more than tripled in the last decade to 165,000, according to a study by the British Council and the Philippine Social Enterprise Network (PSEN). "For the marginalized with little education and few resources, social enterprises are often the only option for financial security, sustainabili-

ty and empowerment," said Gomer Padong at PSEN, which is pushing for the passage of the bill. "They are particularly relevant for the Philippines, as the poor are increasingly locked out of private sector-focused development," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

### Peanut butter

At Enchanted Farm, residents build their own two-room homes with materials gifted by donors, each family putting in about 500 so-called "sweat equity" hours to be included in a lottery for the homes that they then own. Gawad Kalinga's founder Antonio Meloto aims to lift 5 million out of poverty by 2024 through social enterprises. Like Bayani Brew, a line of natural beverages made from ingredients such as lemongrass and pandan leaves.

Originally formulated by resident Linda Maningas, a group of women at Enchanted Farm test different concoctions, and the beverages are sold in a number of retail outlets, including at Manila's international airport. "This is something I did, and it's nice to see that there is a whole range," Maningas said, as she handed a bottle priced at 50 pesos (\$1) to a visitor in her small shop selling snacks outside her home. "Having your own home and your own business gives you security," said Maningas, 52, who has lived there since 2008.

Other businesses include First Harvest - partly funded by Australian Aid - which makes peanut butter and other spreads, and Plush and Play, set up by a French well-wisher, that makes stuffed toys resembling vegetables and fruits. A sister organization, Human Nature, makes skincare and bodycare products with ingredients such as coconut, aloe and lemongrass sourced from poor farmers. Its employees include Enchanted Farm residents, as well as slum-dwellers. New ideas are hatched constantly, including by youth who cannot afford to go to college. They are trained to become social entrepreneurs. "Otherwise their only option is to go overseas to work in low-paying jobs. This gets them out of poverty, gives them dignity, and benefits the larger community," Morales said.



Women sew stuffed toys at Plush and Play, one of about half a dozen social enterprises that engage residents at Gawad Kalinga's Enchanted Farm in Bulacan, Philippines on March 14, 2018.

### Embroidery

But awareness among regional lawmakers is still "relatively low" and they have been slow to yield to policy demands, said Tristan Ace, British Council's global social enterprise lead. There is cause for optimism, though. Vietnam revised its law for businesses a few years ago to include a social enterprise article, while Malaysia has a three-year strategy to expand such ventures. "Although the argument for why social enterprise is a route to support inclusive and sustainable development is powerful, the evidence base is not particularly well developed," Ace said.

"For risk averse governments, evidence and practical examples are vital," he said, adding that the British Council is surveying social enterprises across Southeast Asia to quantify their impact to encourage further legislation. In Thailand, home to some 10,000 social enterprises, the government set up a Social Enterprise Office in 2010. Even though a draft social enterprise promotion act has stalled, businesses with a social mission are flourishing.

The Sikhha Asia Foundation trains older

women who cannot do physically demanding work in Klong Toey, Bangkok's largest slum, to fashion embroidered fabric from poor Karan, Akha and Hmong tribes in northern Thailand into bags, runners and book covers. They also make jewellery and articles from repurposed rice bags, designed by a Japanese artist, which gives them an edge in the market for products that do good, said Nalynya Jaronruangrit at the Foundation.

Another venture focuses on female refugees and asylum seekers who have little education and are legally not allowed to work, using their traditional skills in embroidery and intricate henna designs, to make bags, pouches, notebooks and t-shirts. "These are the most vulnerable of people," said Bernardo Miranda, whose venture in Bangkok, which he declined to name, works with about 40 women from Vietnam, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. "Businesses have more resources, but social enterprises are more suited for such a niche group because they are quite hard to reach, and need flexibility, and a focus that is not on profits." —Reuters



News

# CEO Zuckerberg: Facebook could have done more to prevent misuse

WASHINGTON: Facebook Inc Chief Executive Mark Zuckerberg told Congress yesterday that the social media network should have done more to prevent itself and its members' data being misused and offered a broad apology to lawmakers. His conciliatory tone precedes two days of Congressional hearings where Zuckerberg is set to answer questions about Facebook user data being improperly appropriated by a political consultancy and the role the network played in the US 2016 election.

"We didn't take a broad enough view of our responsibility, and that was a big mistake," he said in remarks released by the US House Energy and Commerce Committee yesterday. "It was my mistake, and I'm sorry. I started Facebook, I run it, and I'm responsible for what happens here." Zuckerberg, surrounded by tight security and wearing a dark suit and a purple tie rather than his trademark hoodie, was meeting with lawmakers on Capitol Hill yesterday ahead of his scheduled appearance before two Congressional committees today and tomorrow.

Zuckerberg did not respond to questions as he entered and left a meeting with Senator Bill Nelson, the top Democrat on the Senate Commerce Committee. He is expected to meet Senator John Thune, the Commerce Committee's Republican chairman, later in the day, among others. Top of the agenda in the forthcoming hearings will be Facebook's admission that the personal information of up to 87 million users, mostly in the United States, may have been improperly shared with political consultancy Cambridge Analytica.

But lawmakers are also expected to press him on a range of issues, including the 2016 election. "It's clear now that we didn't do enough to prevent these tools

from being used for harm..." his testimony continued. "That goes for fake news, foreign interference in elections, and hate speech, as well as developers and data privacy." Facebook, which has 2.1 billion monthly active users worldwide, said on Sunday it plans to begin on Monday telling users whose data may have been shared with Cambridge Analytica. The company's data practices are under investigation by the US Federal Trade Commission.

London-based Cambridge Analytica, which counts US President Donald Trump's 2016 campaign among its past clients, has disputed Facebook's estimate of the number of affected users. Zuckerberg also said that Facebook's major investments in security "will significantly impact our profitability going forward." Facebook shares were up 2 percent in midday trading.

### Online information warfare

Facebook has about 15,000 people working on security and content review, rising to more than 20,000 by the end of 2018, Zuckerberg's testimony said. "Protecting our community is more important than maximizing our profits," he said. As with other Silicon Valley companies, Facebook has been resistant to new laws governing its business, but on Friday it backed proposed legislation requiring social media sites to disclose the identities of buyers of online political campaign ads and introduced a new verification process for people buying "issue" ads, which do not endorse any candidate but have been used to exploit divisive subjects such as gun laws or police shootings.

The steps are designed to deter online information warfare and election meddling that US authorities have accused Russia of pursuing, Zuckerberg said on Friday. Moscow has denied the allegations. Zuckerberg's testimony said the company was "too slow to spot and respond to Russian interference, and we're working hard to get better." He vowed to make improvements, adding it would take time, but said he was "committed to getting it right." A Facebook official confirmed that the company had hired a team from the law firm WilmerHale and outside consultants to help prepare Zuckerberg for his testimony and how lawmakers may question him. — Reuters

# Finger bone find points to early...

Continued from Page 1

determine the bone's age by measuring tiny traces of radioactive elements.

The tests revealed it was at least 85,000 years old - possibly 90,000 - making it the "oldest directly-dated homo sapiens" fossil ever found outside of Africa and the Levant, said the team. It is the first fossil of a hominin - the group of humans and our direct ancestors - discovered in what is Saudi Arabia today. Other archaeological finds, which their discoverers claim are even older, may very well be authentic but were not directly dated, said the research team. Most had their age calculated from the sand or rock layers they were found in, or other items in the vicinity.

Besides redating the human exodus from Africa, the

study may also alter its route. "What we're arguing here is that there were multiple dispersals out of Africa, so the process of the movement and the colonization of Eurasia was far more complicated than our textbooks tell us," said study co-author Michael Petraglia of the Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History in Germany.

According to one mainstream theory, humans left Africa in a single wave, moving along the coast from Africa via southern Arabia and India all the way to Australia. The Levant is roughly the eastern Mediterranean area today covered by Israel, Lebanon, part of Syria, and western Jordan. The finger shows "that modern humans were moving across the interior, the terrestrial heart, of Eurasia - not along the coastlines," said Petraglia.

The bone was discovered in an area known as Al Wusta that 90,000 years ago would have looked very different to the desert it is today - with plentiful rivers and lakes. The team found fossils of various animals, including hippos, as well as advanced stone tools. This all pointed to the owner of the finger having been a member of a semi-nomadic hunter-gatherer group moving after water and animals. — AFP

# Australian sheep ship to Kuwait...

Continued from Page 1

Separately, melons contaminated with deadly listeriosis bacteria were exported to at least nine countries from Australia, where an outbreak has killed seven people and caused one miscarriage, the World Health Organization said yesterday. The rockmelons, or cantaloupes, were sent to Hong Kong, Japan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, and may also have gone to the Seychelles, a WHO statement said.

Between Jan 17 and April 6, Australia reported 19 confirmed and one probable case of listeriosis, all of whom were hospitalized. Seven died. The Listeria monocytogenes bacterium has a potentially long incubation period, usually one or two weeks but possibly up to 90 days, so more cases may be reported, the WHO said. "Cases in the affected countries may still be identified," it said. The Australian melon producer, which the WHO did not name, recalled the fruit on Feb

27. On March 2 Australian authorities discovered the firm's melons had been exported, and they sent detailed notifications through the International Food Safety Authorities Network to the countries concerned.

"It is believed that the cause of the outbreak was a combination of environmental conditions and weather contaminating the surface of the fruit, with low levels of the bacteria persisting after the washing process," the WHO said. "The grower continues to work closely with the relevant authorities and has returned to supply rockmelons (during the week starting 2 April) after testing cleared the produce."

Listeriosis can come in a mild form that causes diarrhoea and fever in healthy people within a few days. But it also has a severe form that can cause septicemia and meningitis among more high-risk people, such as pregnant women, infants, old people, and people having treatment for cancer, AIDS or organ transplants. The severe form has a 20-30 percent mortality rate. As well as unwashed fruit, high risk foods include dairy products made of unpasteurized milk, soft cheeses, deli meat products, ice creams, raw seafood, crustaceans and shellfish. A separate listeriosis outbreak in South Africa killed at least 180 people earlier this year, sparking a class-action lawsuit against South African food producer Tiger Brands. — Agencies

# Saudis seek French opera help; to show...

Continued from Page 1

"The discussions were friendly, which allowed the two men to establish a personal relationship," Macron's office said. They will now work on a "strategic document" involving a series of contracts to be signed by Macron during a visit to Saudi Arabia later this year, his office said, without further details.

Macron, 40, faces a diplomatic tightrope in talks with the prince as he seeks to bolster his ties with the world's top oil exporter, while also managing relations with the kingdom's archrival Iran. He will host the prince for a gala dinner at the Elysee Palace today. Prince Mohammed's visit is part of a global tour that has already seen him travel to the United States, Britain and Egypt as he seeks to project a more moderate vision of his country which is often associated in the West with exporting jihadist ideology.

Saudi and French aides had stressed before the trip that cultural ties, as well as new business opportunities, would be at the heart of two days of talks between government and private-sector figures from both countries. In February, Saudi Arabia's General Entertainment Authority (GEA) announced it would stage more than 5,000 festivals and concerts in 2018, double the number of last year, and pump \$64 billion in the sector in the coming decade. The announcement about the Cannes film festival came after Prince Mohammed dined last week in Hollywood with media mogul Rupert Murdoch, along with film studio bosses and famed American actors including Morgan Freeman.

Amid the flurry of announcements in France, campaigners were also mobilized to keep attention focused on French weapons exports to Saudi Arabia and rights abuses in the country. The kingdom is the lead partner in a coalition of countries bombing and blockading Yemen, where a combination of fighting, disease and food shortages has led it to be dubbed the world's worst humanitarian crisis by the UN.

"France is potentially an accomplice to serious violations of humanitarian laws by selling weapons and military equipment to Saudi Arabia," said Aurelie Perrier from Amnesty International at a protest near the Eiffel Tower. Three out of four French people believe it is "unacceptable" for France to continue selling weapons to Saudi Arabia, according to a poll last month by independent research group YouGov. Amnesty International also took out a full-page advertisement in the Liberation newspaper on Monday, featuring the feet of an executed prisoner, urging Macron to talk about human rights with Prince Mohammed.

Ahead of Prince Mohammed's trip to France, Saudi officials suggested relations were strong between him and Macron, both young leaders with reformist agendas. But the trip follows a period of underlying tensions. Macron waded into a regional crisis last November when Lebanon's Prime Minister Saad Hariri tendered his resignation on live television from Riyadh, apparently under pressure from the crown prince. Macron invited Hariri to Paris for talks and he later rescinded his resignation, a development that analysts say exposed the limits of the prince's authority. Macron has also announced plans to be the first French president to visit Iran since 1976, as he seeks to build relations with the two competing regional powers in the Middle East. "The president speaks to everyone, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Iran, Qatar..." the French presidency said in a statement after the dinner on Sunday night at the Louvre. — Reuters

# Trump vows 'major decisions' as 'Israel'...

Continued from Page 1

Rescuers and medics in Douma say more than 40 people died after an alleged poison gas attack late Saturday in Douma, the last rebel-held pocket of the one-time opposition stronghold of Eastern Ghouta. Access to the area, which has faced weeks of regime bombardment, is limited and there has been no way to independently verify the accounts. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, a UN watchdog, said it was investigating the allegations but that so far only a "preliminary analysis" had been carried out.

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Russian experts from its military deployment on the ground in Syria had visited the site and "did not find any trace of chlorine or any other chemical substance used against civilians". Both Damascus and Moscow had warned against using the allegations to justify military action against Assad.

It briefly appeared in the early hours of yesterday that action had been taken, as Syrian state media reported missile strikes on an airbase, but blame later fell on Israel which has carried out repeated strikes on regime targets. Initially pointing the finger at Washington, state news agency SANA said the missiles had hit the T-4 airbase in central Syria. Washington and Paris denied having carried out the strikes and SANA and the Russian army later said Israeli F-15s had fired several missiles at the base from Lebanese airspace.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which monitors the country's conflict, said 14 fighters were killed, including Syrian army officers and Iranian forces.

Iran's Fars news agency said four Iranian military advisers were killed in the strike and the foreign ministry in Tehran accused Israel of "flagrant aggression". Israel declined to comment on the latest air raid.

Nick Heras, an analyst at the Center for a New American Security, said Israel appeared to have seized on a moment of international outrage over Douma to strike Syria. "On the eve of potential US and French strikes against Assad in response to the Douma gas attack, it is likely the Israelis already had the intention to strike at the T-4 base, and timed their attack to maximize the destruction they could inflict on Iranian forces," he told AFP.

Israel has repeatedly warned it will not accept its arch-foe Iran entrenching itself militarily in Syria. In February, it accused Iranian forces at the T-4 base of sending a drone into Israeli territory. After targeting Iranian units in Syria in retaliation, an Israel F-16 was shot down by Syrian anti-aircraft fire in one of the conflict's most notable escalations. Israel then carried out what it called "large-scale" raids on Syrian air defense systems and Iranian targets, which reportedly included T-4.

Syrian regime forces have waged an assault since Feb 18 on Ghouta, that has killed more than 1,700 civilians and left Islamist rebels cornered in their last hold-out of Douma, Ghouta's largest town. After capturing most of Ghouta, Syria and Russia secured two negotiated withdrawals last month that saw 46,000 rebels and civilians evacuate.

Following fraught negotiations and a concentrated regime bombing blitz, state media on Sunday announced a deal was reached for Jaish al-Islam to leave Douma within 48 hours and release hostages it was holding. Several buses of detainees arrived in Damascus overnight after having been freed by Jaish al-Islam, and rebels were being evacuated in a parallel operation yesterday, SANA said. — AFP



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## Sports

# Reed edges Fowler, Spieth to capture Masters thriller

## Spieth only the seventh player to shoot 64 in the last round

**AUGUSTA:** Fending off epic challenges from three top rivals in a dramatic Masters final round, Patrick Reed captured his first major title Sunday, grinding out a one-shot victory at Augusta National. The 27-year-old US Ryder Cup firebrand showed the same grit he displays in match-play battles, dispatching Jordan Spieth, Rickie Fowler and Rory McIlroy in an emotional battle that had spectators roaring.

"Today was probably the hardest mentally a round of golf can possibly be," Reed said. "I knew it was going to be a dogfight." Reed, whose breakthrough came in his 17th major start, fired a 1-under par 71 to finish 72 holes on 15-under 273, one stroke ahead of Fowler with Spieth third on 275 and Spain's Jon Rahm fourth on 276.

"Having to shoot under par in the final round to win my first major, it was awesome," Reed said. "It was really satisfying." In addition to the iconic winner's green jacket, Reed pocketed \$1.98 million from an \$11 million purse.

Reigning British Open champion Spieth, the 2015 Masters champion and twice a runner-up, matched the low final-round in Augusta National history with a 64, a closing bogey thwarting his bid for the biggest comeback to win in Masters history.

"I started nine back," Spieth said. "I wanted to shoot a low round and see if something crazy happens." Fowler, still seeking his first major win, birdied six of the last 11 holes. He sank a 7-foot birdie putt on 18 to pull within one and keep Reed under pressure to the 72nd hole. "We gave our all out there and made P-Reed earn it," Fowler said. "I was happy to make that last putt." Needing a two-putt par from 25 feet at 18 to win, Reed gently tapped the first putt and saw it race four feet past the cup. He sank the comeback effort and pumped

his fist in celebration.

"To have to two-putt the last hole to win my first major, it definitely felt right," Reed said. "I was glad to end the drought." Reed's last-pair partner McIlroy kept near on the front nine, chasing his dream of a Masters win to complete a career Grand Slam, but managed only one birdie in the last 14 holes.

"I just didn't quite have it," the Northern Ireland star said. "When I did have opportunities I didn't take advantage of them. Tough day. But I'll be back."

### KUDOS FROM TRUMP TO REED

US President Donald Trump congratulated Reed, who won a 2014 WGC event at Trump-owned Doral, although Trump mistakenly cited it as in 2013. "Congratulations to Patrick Reed on his great and courageous MASTERS win!" Trump tweeted. "When Patrick had his amazing win at Doral 5 years ago, people saw his great talent, and a bright future ahead. Now he is the Masters Champion!"

Reed, who had never cracked 70 in 12 Masters rounds before this week, became the fourth straight first-time Masters winner and the ninth first-time winner in the past 10 majors.

Reed's approach at the par-5 13th clung to a bank above Rae's Creek, his title bid nestled with it, but he escaped with par to stay deadlocked with Spieth for the lead at 14-under.

Reed sank an eight-foot birdie putt at the par-4 14th to regain a one-stroke lead and parred to the clubhouse to win. Spieth clipped a tree branch off the 18th tee and needed three to reach the green, where he missed an 8-foot par putt that would have seen him match the 18-hole course record.

happen, it's racing. "But from Friday morning on, Marquez did this to (Maverick) Vinales, to (Andrea) Dovizioso, to me, and on Saturday morning, and today he went straight through four riders," added the 39-year-old nine-times world champion.

Rossi said such behaviour created a dangerous situation, which would only be made worse if others acted in the same way as Marquez, who has won four of the last five world championships. He said he had spoken to race director Mike Webb and hoped his words had an effect.

"They have to do something," added Rossi. "I'm scared on the track when I'm with Marquez. I was scared today when I saw his name on the board."

"I'm not race direction-they will decide-but like this he is destroying our sport, because when you do 300-kilometre an hour on the track, you have to have respect for your rivals." Marquez accepted in a Honda release that he had been to blame for a high speed collision with compatriot Aleix Espargaro but said the Rossi clash was down to the conditions.

"I touched a wet patch, locked the front, and released the brakes. I tried to turn, again making my best effort to avoid contact. When he crashed I immediately apologised," said the Spaniard. "It was a tricky Sunday. Of course today I made some mistakes, which I recognise."

"Other mistakes were made by race direction on the



**AUGUSTA:** Patrick Reed of the United States celebrates with the trophy during the green jacket ceremony after winning the 2018 Masters Tournament at Augusta National Golf Club on Sunday in Augusta, Georgia. —AFP

Spieth was only the seventh player to shoot 64 in the last round, the first since Bo Van Pelt in 2012. American Charley Hoffman ace the par-3 16th with a 6-iron, the 20th time the hole has surrendered a hole-in-one, while compatriot Tony Finau birdied six consecutive holes from the 12th to 17th.

Dustin Johnson fired a 69 to share 10th on 281 and retain his world number one ranking. Spieth, Rahm or Justin Thomas could have overtaken him by winning.

### TIGER ROARS LATE

Tiger Woods, playing his first major event since 2015 in a comeback from nagging back pain and spinal

fusion surgery, fired a 69, his week's low round. "It was possibly the highest score I could have shot today," Woods said.

"All in all it was a bittersweet ending." The 14-time major champion sank a 29-foot eagle putt at the par-5 15th and birdied 17 but a closing bogey denied his goal of level par overall.

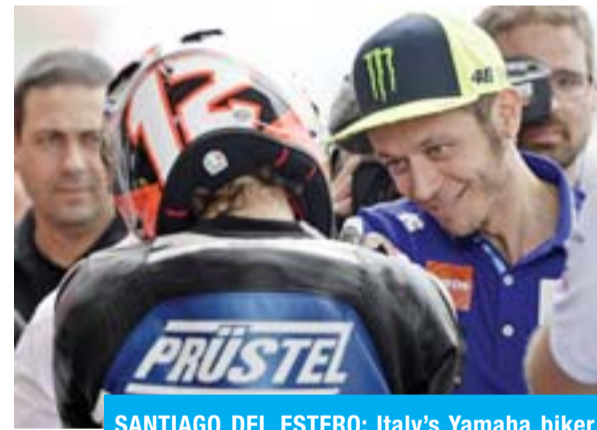
Woods, a four-time Masters champion, failed to deliver on promise showed in two top-5 tuneup finishes but said he was glad to be back. "I really missed it," Woods said. "I made too many mistakes. But overall it was a lot of fun. It felt great to be able to compete again." —AFP

## Rossi accuses Marquez of 'destroying' MotoGP

**SANTIAGO DEL ESTERO:** Italian MotoGP great Valentino Rossi has accused reigning world champion Marc Marquez of 'destroying' the sport by riding dangerously and without respect for his rivals. The pair clashed on a damp track in Argentina on Sunday, with Rossi falling after being pushed onto the grass by the Spaniard who had already incurred a ride-through penalty for a breach of start procedures.

Rossi finished 19th with Marquez, who was handed a 30 second penalty for the collision, also out of the points in 18th position. "I'm OK, but this is a very bad situation," Rossi said of the incident, with Marquez refused access to the Yamaha garage in an attempt to apologise that the Italian dismissed as mere PR for the cameras.

"If you take what happened this weekend as an example, one incident can happen to anybody, you can make a mistake in braking, you can touch the other guy. It can



**SANTIAGO DEL ESTERO:** Italy's Yamaha biker Valentino Rossi (R) congrats Italy's KTM biker Marco Bezzecchi after the latter won the Moto3 race of the Argentina Grand Prix at Termas de Rio Hondo circuit, in Santiago del Estero, Argentina on Sunday. — AFP

grid, and others were due to the difficult conditions, but one thing I know for sure: never in my career have I intentionally hit another rider." — Reuters

## Hamilton concerned about Mercedes form, looks for Shanghai

**SAKHIR:** Lewis Hamilton yesterday admitted to concerns about Mercedes' early-season form after seeing Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel remain unbeaten in Sunday's Bahrain Grand Prix. The 33-year-old defending four-time world champion said he had little idea how or why Ferrari had been able to out-perform his Mercedes team, Vettel claiming a tense win ahead of Valtteri Bottas.

It was the German's second win in as many races this season and installed him as a clear favourite to beat Hamilton to become a five-time champion. "I am thinking and wondering," said Hamilton. "My thoughts are already on the world championship - I've lost two races in a row now and I am 17 points down after just two races."

"Obviously, the grid penalty was difficult to swallow here this weekend, but I think the team did a really good job. Hopefully, when we go to China for the next race, we will have a better understanding of the tyres and put up a better fight against Ferrari. "Shanghai has been kind to me in the past so I am hoping I can bounce back." Vettel won Sunday's race despite admitting he felt Mercedes had him in 'check-mate' when they adopted a one stop strategy. Mercedes boss Toto Wolff said he believed that move had given his team a "90 per cent chance" of winning, with Bottas on durable medium tyres close behind Vettel who was on soft tyres and a two-stop strategy. But Ferrari switched strategy and asked Vettel to go the full distance - meaning he ran 39 laps on used soft tyres to complete the race. "I think we had won the race already after coming out on the medium behind Sebastian, with a gap that we were able to close down, and knowing that they would either need to stop once again or they would run out of tyre," said Wolff. "At that moment, I would say 90 per cent probability was on us winning-and we lost that."

Hamilton said he believed he lost the race in qualifying when he could not match Ferrari's pace - as they locked out the front row of the grid and he had a changed gearbox that cost him five places. "I could not make the moves I wanted to in the opening laps and that cost me," said Hamilton.

Wolff added that he was encouraged by the pace of Mercedes cars in the closing laps as they chased down Vettel without avail. "What was interesting to see was that maybe the pace of the Ferrari was not as good as we expected," he added.

"They were fuel saving straight from the beginning which for sure cost them performance. "Our pace was solid on the super-soft and actually I think we could have probably been able to go a little quicker." — AFP

## KIB sponsors 3rd Al-Mudaheka showjumping championship

**KUWAIT:** In a continuation of its ongoing efforts to support local talents across all areas, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) sponsored Al-Mudaheka Annual Showjumping Championship in its third edition. The championship was held at the Messilah Equestrian Club, under the patronage of KIB's Chairman, Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al-Sabah, and as part of the Bank's leading social responsibility program.

The annual championship included categories for beginner, intermediate and advanced.



**Winners and officials at the Al-Mudaheka Annual Showjumping Championship.**

## Burgan Bank sponsors 'Night Run'

**KUWAIT:** Burgan Bank, one of the leading contributors to sustainability and progress in the Kuwaiti community, is sponsoring the 5 KM "KBA Night Run": a run held under the umbrella of the Kuwait Banking Association. The run is scheduled to take place on April 14, 2018 at 7 pm at Murooj complex. As part of Burgan Bank's ongoing commitment to encourage sports as a gateway to maintaining a healthier lifestyle, the bank encourages the participation of all families, athletes and avid runners to sign up for the much anticipated marathon.

Running under the theme of 'Get set, Glow', the 5 KM run will be a first of its kind event as it takes place at night accommodated by particular gear to glow in the dark, targeting both genders of all age groups at any level of fitness. Organized at Murooj complex, the run will be accompanied by a specialized exhibition of fitness which will bring together health clubs, relevant food companies

and sponsors.

The event is aimed at enabling both adults and youth explore sports and fitness as a means to leading healthier mind-sets and overall lifestyle. In participation with other banks in Kuwait, Burgan Bank's contribution rests as part of its corporate social responsibility towards supporting all genres of people with significant emphasis on youth empowerment and supporting athletes' passion for running while facilitating lasting positive change in the society.

Races encompass several areas of challenges that result in therapeutic benefits ranging from physical, mental and emotional developments. Participants are required to train and equip themselves with a holistic approach that involves nutritious food, mental focus, stamina, strength and endurance in order to enhance performance. Backed by the belief that better choices make for better lives in the long run, such recreational activities engage the mind and body to unite with other likeminded individuals on the same road to achieving a common goal of personal enrichment and happiness.

As a determined advocate of societal advancement and wellbeing through innovative health initiatives, Burgan Bank had previously sponsored and hosted similar nation-

wide sporting events namely the Burgan Bank Tri Festival, a successful celebration of sports, healthy lifestyles, fitness and fun as well as the Spark Marathon, Kuwait's biggest charity race.

To register for "KBA Night Run" visit [www.kba.com.kw](http://www.kba.com.kw)

Burgan Bank's support of this initiative falls under its dynamic full-fledged community program entitled 'ENGAGE' - Together to be the change. This program sheds light on important aspects affecting every segment of the society by promoting social welfare through educational, cultural and health driven initiatives. Burgan Bank's approach to 'ENGAGE' begins with a vital principle that as a leading Kuwaiti financial institution, its conduct and policies should be aligned with the needs and interests of the community.





Sports

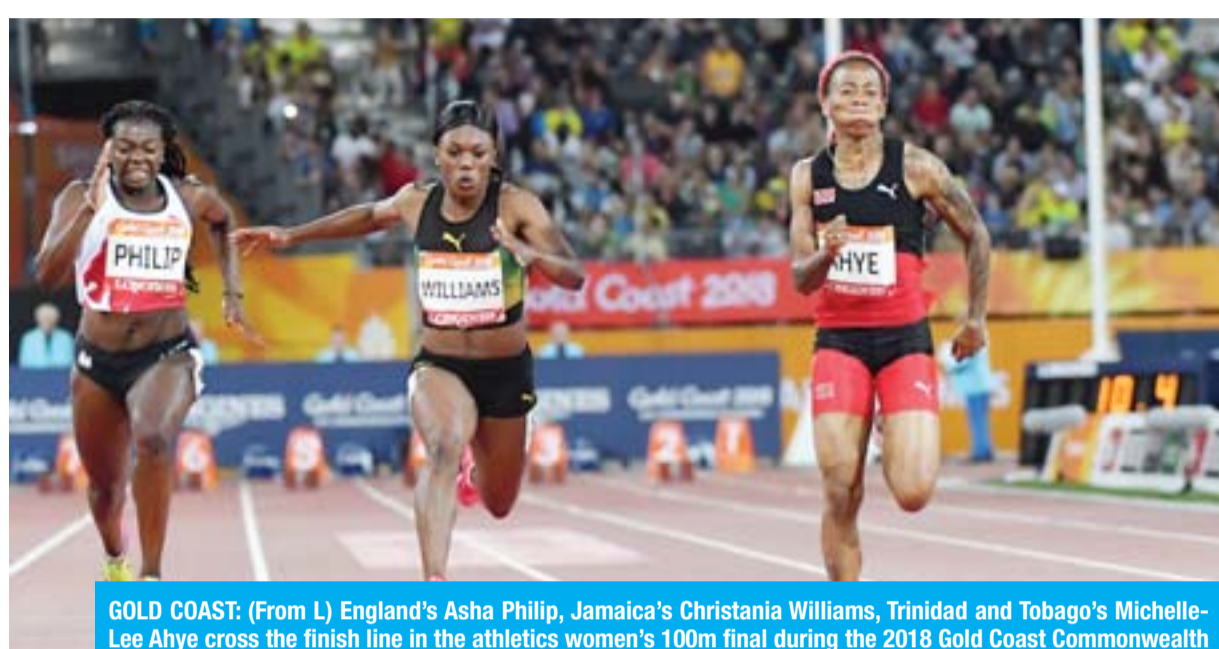


# Simbine upsets stumbling Blake to win 100 metres gold medal

## Ahye wins women's 100m gold



**GOLD COAST:** (From L) South Africa's Henricho Bruinjies, South Africa's Akani Simbine and Jamaica's Yohan Blake, compete in the athletics men's 100m final during the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games at the Carrara Stadium on the Gold Coast yesterday.



**GOLD COAST:** (From L) England's Asha Philip, Jamaica's Christiana Williams, Trinidad and Tobago's Michelle-Lee Ahye cross the finish line in the athletics women's 100m final during the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games yesterday. — AFP photos

**GOLD COAST:** Akani Simbine upstaged favourite Yohan Blake to win the 100 metres gold medal for South Africa at the Commonwealth Games yesterday, ending Jamaica's reign over the sprint.

With a heaving crowd at Carrara Stadium roaring, Rio Olympic finalist Simbine blazed away after Blake botched his start, and crossed the line in 10.03 seconds, leading a South African one-two with team mate Henricho Bruinjies.

A stumbling Blake struggled for balance and by the time he regained it, the race was over, leaving him disappointed with the bronze and a time of 10.19.

The third fastest man of all time, Blake topped qualifying with a time of 10.06 and had been warned jokingly by Bolt not to come home without gold in his luggage. "I was stumbling all the way," the 28-year-old told reporters ruefully. "I just didn't recover from it. It was a pretty easy race for me to win because I've been feeling good."

"It was just never (going) to happen today, I don't know. I'm a bit disappointed because I've been feeling good, I've been running good."

Bolt, who retired last year with eight Olympic golds including two 4x100 relay titles shared with Blake, tweeted his congratulations to his team mate and Simbine. "Well done @YohanBlake. Keep putting in the work. You know your journey," the sprint great said.

The path to gold was made smoother for Simbine when England runner Adam Gemili, a 4x100m relay gold medallist at the London world championships, pulled out before the final with a thigh injury.

Simbine's victory ended Jamaica's domination of the Commonwealth 100m dating back to the 2006 Games in Melbourne. "I wasn't focused on (Blake). I was just focused on myself and making sure I get to the 50

metres as quick as I can because I know if I put that together the rest of my race will come together," said the Pretoria 24-year-old.

"Being able to run in lane eight and lane nine with Henricho and placing first and second with him, it's really amazing. And it's a big thing for South Africa sprinting and South African sports."

Jamaica was also denied in the women's 100, with Trinidad and Tobago's Michelle-Lee Ahye taking the gold in 11.14, holding off Blake's team mate Christiana Williams (11.21) and

third-placed Gayon Evans. It was a better night for world and Olympic 800m champion Caster Semanya, who kicked off her bid for a

Commonwealth double with a comfortable win in the 1,500m heats in four minutes and 05.86 seconds.

The South Africa flag-bearer, who will run in the 800, qualified fastest for Tuesday's final ahead of home runner Georgia Griffith (4:06.41) and Kenya's Mary Kuria. Even with the absence of Wayne van Niekerk and reigning champion Kirani James, the men's 400m boasts quality and looks to be a battle between Botswana's flamboyant Isaac Makwala and Grenada's Rio Olympic finalist Bralon Taplin.

Makwala, who was barred from competing in the world championships' 400 final in London last year over illness fears, qualified fastest for the final with a time of 45.00 seconds.

After crossing the line, the 31-year-old did two push-ups on the track and grinned at the TV camera.

New Zealand's world champion Tomas Walsh threw 21.41 metres to take the shot put gold, going one better than his silver at Glasgow.

Stella Chesang fought off Kenya's Stacy Ndiwa to take the 10,000m gold for Uganda and win her maiden Commonwealth medal. — Reuters



## It was a better night for world champion Semanya

## Sweet 16 as le Clos carves out Games history

**GOLD COAST:** Chad le Clos toasted South African success in and out of the pool at the Commonwealth Games yesterday after rewriting the history books yet again. The 25-year-old completed a butterfly hat-trick by romping to victory in the men's 100 metres final in a Games-record 50.65 seconds to become the most decorated Commonwealth Games swimmer of all time with 16 career medals. Le Clos, who shot to fame at the 2012 London Olympics when he floored Michael Phelps in the 200m butterfly, in one of the sport's great upsets, wanted to share his achievement with his teammates on a big night for South Africa on the Gold Coast.

"That's 16!" le Clos told AFP after surpassing Australian great Susie O'Neill. "I'm very humbled. I knew had to win tonight—a lot of pressure obviously going in as the favourite. James (Guy) I knew was going to come out guns blazing. It was a tight race but I kept my

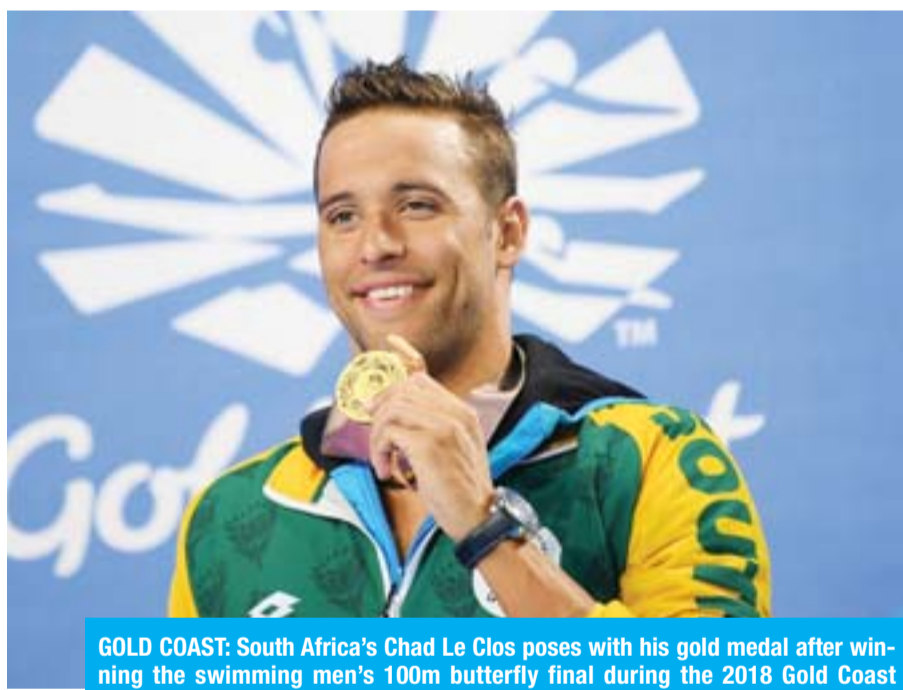
cool in the end." "Awesome night—I don't where to start," added the 25-year-old, pointing to Cameron van der Burgh's upset of world record-holder Adam Peaty in the 50m breaststroke, and Tatjana Schoenmaker's victory in the women's 100m breaststroke.

"Cameron was phenomenal. That was one of the best performances I've ever seen him do. And then Tatjana, superstar, getting the double gold (in the 100 and 200m)." Draped in a South African flag, le Clos also paid tribute to track sprinter Akani Simbine's shock victory over Jamaica's Yohan Blake in the men's 100m metres at the Commonwealth Games athletics, with Henricho Bruinjies taking silver.

"We got gold and silver in the 100m—unbelievable!" whooped le Clos, before returning to van der Burgh's stunning defeat of Peaty. "But Cameron's win was very special. Knowing what he's been through in the last couple of years, especially with Peaty."

"Obviously Peaty is the world record-holder, so for him to win that is unbelievable. You've got to tip your cap to Cameron." Le Clos arrived in Australia hoping to become the most successful athlete in Commonwealth Games history.

He was six medals behind shooters Mick Gault and Philip Adams, who lead



**GOLD COAST:** South Africa's Chad Le Clos poses with his gold medal after winning the swimming men's 100m butterfly final during the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, yesterday. — AFP

the way with 18. Despite adding three gold and one silver to his haul, le Clos will now have to until Birmingham 2022 to overtake them after failing to medal in the 200m freestyle and the 4x100m free.

"If I get a (relay) medal tomorrow, I'll

miss it by one but I've done everything that I could," said le Clos, contesting seven events in Gold Coast. "I'm very proud of myself personally. Nothing could have gone better for me this week. I couldn't ask for a better way to end." —AFP

## No dreadlock holiday for Barbados rasta-blaster

**GOLD COAST:** A 63-year-old Barbados grandfather who used to smash fearsome West Indies bowler Joel Garner around a cricket pitch is shooting for Commonwealth Games gold in the men's pistol—after surviving a near-death experience last year.

Bernard Chase, instantly recognisable with his grey-streaked dreadlocks and wiry beard, suffered a heart attack while cycling and only made it onto the plane to Australia after getting the all-clear from his cardiologist. "My buddy told me I just collapsed on my bike," the pistol-toting fruit and veg farmer told AFP in an interview.

"I woke up two days later in hospital. I used to cycle in a group and before we ride we say a prayer," added Chase, fighting back tears. "I remember praying, but the next thing I knew I was in hospital. They put me on a treadmill and found out I had a blockage in one of the small vessels of the heart—I'm lucky to be here."

The spritely granddad, known as "Ras" to his teammates, underwent heart surgery last August and insists he's in tip-top shape to contest his fourth

Commonwealth Games. Father-of-four Chase, who made his Games debut in Manchester 16 years ago, bears a passing resemblance to wild-haired Hollywood pirate Jack Sparrow when he aims his gun, due to his unusual shooting style.

He shoots with his right hand while focusing with his left eye to compensate for a glaucoma problem. "People think I'm a little bit of a freak because I'm left-eye dominant," the Barbadian record-holder said with a chuckle.

"Most people stand 45 degrees to the target and bring up the pistol to their right eye. If I stand like that I could never shoot straight."

### CRICKET DREAM

Chase, who took up shooting a little over 20 years ago, once dreamt of playing cricket for the West Indies alongside giant fast bowler Garner, his former classmate. "I had dreams," he smiled. "Joel Garner went to school with me and we played cricket together. 'Big Bird' wasn't a bad cricketer—he bowled at me and I got some lashes in him too!"

Chase, who also played football and flirted with athletics in college, shrugged: "I wasn't going to make the Barbados cricket team, let alone the West Indies team—so I took up shooting."

Chase's best Commonwealth Games performances so far came in Manchester—a ninth-place effort in the 50m pairs—but he promised to come out all guns blazing on the Gold Coast to make his family proud back home in Bridgetown.

"My daughter especially thinks her dad is the greatest," he said. "I'm looking to be in the bunch here. I'm a



**BRISBANE:** Bernard Chase of Barbados is pictured as he takes part in the 10m air pistol men's qualification shooting final during the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games at the Belmont Shooting Complex in Brisbane yesterday. — AFP

champion, I'm going to be around for a long time to come." Asked about how it feels to pull on the Barbados team colours and compete for the Caribbean island, Chase puffed out his cheeks.

"It feels great, man," he said. "It makes you feel worthwhile, that life is worth living. It makes you feel even bigger than Joel Garner!" — AFP

## The hit factory: How British boxing took on the world

**GOLD COAST:** When Anthony Joshua beat Joseph Parker in their recent world heavyweight title unification bout, it was more than just a personal victory—it was further evidence of the rude health of British boxing. British fighters are prominent in multiple weight divisions at professional and amateur level, with the latest talent off the conveyor belt in action at the Commonwealth Games on Australia's Gold Coast.

Lee Pullen has been an integral part of the process and did his bit too in the fast rise of the 28-year-old Joshua, a former Olympic champion who is now unbeaten in 21 professional bouts and a hugely popular figure in Britain.

Pullen, a full-time coach at the GB Boxing programme and with the English team at the Commonwealths, described how Joshua spends 90 minutes stretching or warming down after training. It is that "attention to detail" that Pullen said England's eight men and four women boxers at the ongoing Games should emulate if they want to reach the top.

"For the majority of the (coaching) team we've worked with Josh throughout his pro career and we trained him as an amateur so we enjoyed the journey to where he is now," said Pullen, 59, a former amateur boxer. "He's so receptive it's untrue. He wants to get better, continuously. Again, attention to detail." Pullen identified another trait in champions. "They don't whinge, they don't moan," he said. "Real fighters, proper men, never find an excuse why they lost."

### 'MORE THAN BOXING'

There are eight current professional world champions from Britain, several of whom—including Joshua and super-middleweight champion James DeGale—came through GB Boxing. Established in 2008 to prepare amateur fighters for Olympics, the programme is based at a state-of-the-art facility in the northern English city of Sheffield that is the envy of much of the boxing world. Its performance director is the highly respected Rob McCracken, who is also Joshua's trainer.

Pullen, who works under McCracken at GB Boxing, said the man he calls "captain of the ship" is a major reason for their success. One of McCracken's initiatives was to put the boxers in small groups so they get more tailored training. And the boxers are only nominally amateurs: they box 48–50 weeks a year, four times a week. Training is "very tough," said Pullen, who works as part of a formidable team that includes other coaches, nutritionists, a dozen sports science staff, video analysts and psychologists.

All of this takes serious money. GB Boxing received a grant of £13.7 million (\$25 million) from the governmental UK Sport for 2013–17, comprising contributions from a national lottery played by the public and the government's coffers.

"I've seen the rise in the last 20 years since I've been involved and the introduction of lottery funding and full-time coaching has made a massive difference," said Pullen. —AFP



## Sports

# Crosby's Penguins seek to win a third straight Stanley Cup

## Boston Bruins fall short in pursuit of Atlantic Division title

**LOS ANGELES:** The Pittsburgh Penguins are trying to win their third straight Stanley Cup and the expansion Vegas Golden Knights get their first taste of the postseason as the puck is ready to drop on the NHL playoffs.

The battle for first place in the Eastern Conference went down to the wire as the Boston Bruins failed to lock down the top seed on the final night of the regular season, when they lost 4-2 on Sunday to the Florida Panthers. Boston had trailed the Tampa Bay Lightning by one point and needed a win over the Panthers to vault into first place.

The loss to Florida means the Bruins will open the playoffs against another Original Six team, the Toronto Maple Leafs, who are trying to end a 51-year Stanley Cup drought. Tampa Bay shutout Boston 4-0 last Tuesday to record their first win this season over the Bruins.

Tampa opens their playoff series at home against the New Jersey Devils on Thursday, the same night Boston and Toronto kick off. The playoffs begin Wednesday with the Penguins on tap to play the Philadelphia Flyers and the Golden Knights taking on the Los Angeles Kings. The Sidney Crosby-led Penguins are trying to become the first team in 35 years to win three straight Stanley Cups since the New York Islanders won four consecutive in the early 1980s.

Pittsburgh is more than just Crosby. They have some of the best depth in the league at forward, an experienced defence and a proven goaltender in Matt Murray. Crosby said the success of their special teams is going

to be crucial in the playoffs.

"That's an important part of us winning - special teams," he said. "Definitely the power play. We take a lot of pride in it. It was good that we were able to create good things throughout the year and help us win." Edmonton Oilers captain Connor McDavid claimed his second straight Art Ross Trophy for being the league's top scorer. McDavid, of Canada, finished with 41 goals and a career best 108 points.

Russian forward Alex Ovechkin failed to reach 50 goals but still bagged 49 and as a consolation he picked up his seventh career Rocket Richard Trophy as the leading goal scorer. One of the closest races this season is for the Hart Trophy which is given to the league's most valuable player. Colorado Avalanche star Nathan

MacKinnon, Flyers forward Claude Giroux, Boston's Brad Marchand, and New Jersey Devils winger Taylor Hall are in the running.

### BARZAL'S BREAKOUT

The New York Islanders' Mathew Barzal scored 85 points in 82 games to finish 20 points ahead of his next closest player in rookie scoring. The breakout season should earn Canadian Barzal the Calder Trophy as the rookie of the year.

The biggest shock so far has been the Golden Knights' inaugural season which saw them set several records for a first year team and win the Pacific Division title. Vegas is the NHL's first expansion team to make the playoffs in its first season at any level since



**BOSTON:** Aaron Ekblad #5 of the Florida Panthers and James Reimer #34 save a shot on goal from Noel Acciari #55 of the Boston Bruins during the first period at TD Garden on Sunday in Boston. — AFP

1967-68, when an entire division was comprised of six expansion teams, guaranteeing four of them a berth in the postseason. McDavid's Oilers didn't make the playoffs, with the league missing out on a chance to showcase its best player on the bigger stage. Several teams head into the postseason missing key players including the Anaheim Ducks who will be without defenceman

Cam Fowler and maybe goaltender John Gibson to start. American Ryan Suter of the Minnesota Wild was capable of "wounding" some people in Japan. In 2016, as Japan struggled to qualify for the World Cup, he told AFP he felt his players were too respectful.

## Napoli re-ignite title campaign with help of two fringe players

**MILAN:** Just as they seemed to have lost their spark, Napoli have re-ignited their Serie A challenge with the help of two fringe players. Trailing 1-0 at home to Chievo with one minute to play on Sunday, Napoli turned the game around thanks to last-gasp goals from injury-plagued forward Arkadiusz Milik and second-choice midfielder Amadou Diawara.

It was exactly the sort of boost Napoli needed as they try to keep up with league leaders Juventus, a task which appeared to be taking its toll on coach Maurizio Sarri and his players. Defeat would have left them seven points behind but instead they have kept the gap down to four, leaving Serie A as the only one of Europe's big five leagues to offer a genuine title contest.

Juventus have won 14 and drawn one of their last 15 matches and several of those must have proved demoralising viewing for Napoli as the Turin side snatched wins in games where they had been struggling. Sarri also believes that Juve have gained a psychological advantage by playing first on most weekends, leaving Napoli to play catch-up. Worn down by relentless Juve, Napoli's usually free-flowing football had begun to look jaded as they scored only two goals in their previous three games. It was the same on Sunday as lowly Chievo packed their penalty area and defied Napoli to find a way past. Napoli huffed and puffed, missed a penalty early in the second half and then gifted the visitors the lead when they lost possession trying to play the ball out of defence.

But Sunday's finish, while nerve-racking, could prove far more of a boost than if they had ground out a 1-0 win. "To win this game in this manner is a message to ourselves, rather than a message for Juventus," said Sarri. "We always want to win and, if we hadn't done so today, it would have been an injustice. "We are going through a stage where we are making too many wrong choices in the final 20 metres but that's always going to happen at some point in a long championship." The lack of strength in depth has often been a worry for Napoli, with Sarri fielding almost the same lineup—seven players have played in at least 30 of their 31 Serie A games— and a 4-3-3 formation in every match.

But Sunday's win was down to two players who have barely got a look-in this season. Diawara, still only 20, has found it difficult to break into a midfield where Allan, Jorginho and captain Marek Hamsik are the obvious first choices.

Poland forward Milik, meanwhile, has suffered two knee ligament injuries since joining from Ajax at the start of last season. The 24-year-old, signed to replace Gonzalo Higuain, scored seven goals in his first nine appearances before injury struck and Sarri said he had been badly missed. "I'm very happy with Milik's goal, it shows just how disastrous for us his double injury has been," he said. — Reuters

## Japan switch coach two months before World Cup

**TOKYO:** Japan yesterday named respected veteran Akira Nishino as its new national football manager, taking an "emergency measure" after sensationally dumping Vahid Halilhodzic only two months before the World Cup. The 63-year-old Nishino boasts an impressive array of domestic silverware and masterminded one of Japanese football's proudest moments: beating a Brazil side containing Ronaldo and Roberto Carlos 1-0 at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. Nishino will have only 70 days with the Blue Samurai before they play their first match against Colombia in a tough World Cup pool that also includes Poland and Senegal. "We thought the new director should be appointed from inside, given we have just two months left before the World Cup," Japan Football Association President Kozo Tashima told reporters.

"We have asked Nishino to take this position as an emergency measure." A former international midfielder who won 12 caps for his country, Nishino is best known for his stint at the helm of Gamba Osaka, which he steered to the team's first Asian Club Championship in 2008.

This earned them the biggest match in their history, a World Club Cup semi-final clash with a powerful Manchester United side featuring Cristiano Ronaldo, Ryan Giggs and Wayne Rooney, which they lost in a 5-3 thriller. Despite the famous win over Brazil in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, Nishino came under fire for being overly defensive. But in 2012 he wrote a newspaper column on "the thrills of attacking football", setting out an offensive style of play. Tashima said the "basics will remain the same"

## Ohtani dazzles with his bat and arm for Angels

**ANAHEIM:** Shohei Ohtani flirted with a perfect game in his home pitching debut on Sunday, retiring the first 19 batters to power the Los Angeles Angels to a 6-1 rout of the Oakland Athletics. The two-way Japanese sensation is exceeding expectations with his fairytale season as he struck out 12 batters and allowed just one hit over seven shutout innings at Angels Stadium.

Marcus Semien singled to left field to break up the bid for a perfect game, but the 23-year-old rookie kept his cool and hung in there to eventually get the side out and end the inning in front of a crowd of 44,700. "Especially with how my spring training went, I wasn't really imagining (the start of the season) to be this good, to be honest," Ohtani said through a translator.

"I feel better every day. I feel like I'm getting used to everything more and more each day. But it's just the first week." The highly sought after offseason free agent is living up to the Ruthian hype. Ohtani joined Babe Ruth in the record books, becoming just the third player in league history to hit a home run in three straight games and

post a double-digit strikeout game in the same season. The first to do it was Ruth in 1916 and the other Ken Brett in 1973.

He is also the first major leaguer to record two wins and three home runs in his first 10 games since Jim Shaw in 1919. Ohtani had performed poorly in spring training, but if there was any doubt he could hit and pitch at the major league level it was erased this week. Ohtani blasted three homers between his pitching debut last weekend and his first win at Angel Stadium on Sunday.

He started quickly on Sunday, striking out the side in the first inning on just 15 pitches. He struck out the side again in the fifth inning as only one A's batter managed to avoid being a strikeout victim on the night. "That's as good a game as you are going to ever see pitched," said Angels manager Mike Scioscia.

After yielding the lone hit he eventually struck out Matt Olson to end the seventh inning and celebrated with a scream and a fist pump. "I wanted to keep a clean zero on the board," Ohtani said. "One hit would (mean) two runs, and it's a huge difference. I wanted that strikeout, and I got it."

Ohtani, who played with the Hokkaido Nippon-Ham Fighters last season, said this would have been his first no-hitter. Asked how he compares this outing to previous ones he said, "probably my best outing was when I was in elementary school." In his pitching debut last Sunday, he allowed three runs on a second-inning homer by third baseman Matt Chapman, but that was his only blemish in the 7-4 victory.



**LIEGE:** This March 24, 2018 picture shows Japan's national football team head coach Vahid Halilhodzic (2nd R) speaking to his players during a training session ahead of their friendly match against Ukraine at Liege, Belgium. — AFP

under the new manager, adding that a fast, attacking style was "much needed."

The writing was on the wall for Halilhodzic after a series of disappointing results, including a loss to Ukraine and a snatched draw with Mali from the last kick of the game. The straight-talking Halilhodzic was also reported to have ruffled feathers in the dressing room with his no-nonsense approach. Tashima said the reason for the sacking was that "communication and trust with players have become weakened".

He said he had given the news over the weekend to Halilhodzic, who had reacted with a mixture of confusion and anger. "I told him that we have reached this decision so that Japan would have more chance of winning," said Tashima. Franco-Bosnian Halilhodzic, who recovered from

being wounded in 1992 during the Bosnian war, insisted he was no "dictator"—but acknowledged his frank approach was capable of "wounding" some people in Japan. In 2016, as Japan struggled to qualify for the World Cup, he told AFP he felt his players were too respectful.

"Sometimes I'd really like them to be more aggressive, more street-smart, more vicious," said the former Nantes and Paris Saint-Germain striker. He once reportedly banned his players from smiling, and he found himself in trouble with authorities on two separate occasions after traffic accidents in 2015 and 2017.

"No progress, no hope, lots of worries over the World Cup," blared a headline in the Sports Nippon last month, raising the prospect that Japan might lose all its group games in June.—AFP



**ANAHEIM:** Shohei Ohtani #17 of the Los Angeles Angels pitches in the first inning of the game against the Oakland Athletics at Angel Stadium on Sunday.— AFP

### HOME RUN HERO

Since then, Ohtani moved to designated hitter for games Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and homered in all three in dramatic fashion. His three-run blast in his first at-bat in front of the Angels Stadium home crowd lifted Los Angeles to a 6-2 lead against the Cleveland Indians on Tuesday, and they eventually won 13-2.

The next day, he hit a game-tying two-run homer off two-time AL Cy Young winner Corey Kluber in the fifth inning, and the Angels went on to win 3-2 in 13 innings.

After an off day on Thursday, Ohtani belted a 449-foot solo home run to centre field with two outs in the second inning and Los Angeles rallied from a huge deficit to win 12-9. Angels third baseman Zack Cozart said Ohtani also has a variety of pitching weapons.

"His splitter just kind of drops off the table," Cozart said. "It looks like a strike I feel like almost every time, but it never is. It just drops below the zone. That's how it comes out, the same as his fastball. It makes it tough as a hitter." — AFP



Sports

# Man City need to produce 'the perfect game', says Guardiola

## City must overturn 3-0 deficit against Liverpool

**MANCHESTER:** Manchester City must overturn a 3-0 deficit against Liverpool in the second leg of their Champions League quarter-final tie today and manager Pep Guardiola said that will require "the perfect game" from his players.

City go into the match on the back of a 3-2 defeat in the Premier League to rivals Manchester United on Saturday when a win would have secured the title. Guardiola's side gave up a two goal lead in that game and they know that even a single slip-up against Liverpool will make their task of progressing to the semi-finals almost impossible. "Of course to go through you have to make the perfect game, create chances, be clinical, concede few chances, all the conditions have to be perfect," said the Spaniard. "The result is tough but we have 90 minutes and in football anything can happen. What we are going to do is try. We have to score the first one, then make the second one. We'll see the momentum, try to keep it longer and then we'll see," he added.

City conceded their six goals in the past two games

during a pair of intense short spells and Guardiola said they have to be ready to deal with adversity. "If we concede, don't give up - it's more than 90 minutes. We have very often created a lot of chances in short period of time and we have to be clinical. And if we are not clinical then move on to the next one," he said.

City were eliminated last season in the last 16 by Monaco and it would be a disappointment for them to fail to make the last four after such a dominant season domestically. But the former Barcelona manager believes that his side is growing and will soon be among the real elite of European football.

"We need titles in Europe - it's complicated but you need nights that make you understand it," he said. "Beating Barca (last season) was so special because we know they're the best team in the world but it will happen sooner or later. "With what this club has done in the last 10 years in terms of creating facilities and making it bigger it will happen. (To compete with) the big clubs you need time but hopefully we can do it. Maybe next year but soon it will happen."

“ We need titles in Europe ”



**MANCHESTER:** Liverpool's English defender Nathaniel Clyne (L), Liverpool's Croatian defender Dejan Lovren (C) and Liverpool's Dutch defender Virgil van Dijk (R) attend a training session on the eve of the UEFA Champions League second leg quarter-final football match between Manchester City and Liverpool. — AFP

## Torres to leave Atletico at end of season

**MADRID:** Fernando Torres has confirmed this season will be his last playing for Atletico Madrid, the striker's boy-hood club. Torres enjoys hero status at Atletico, where he came through the ranks as a teenager and made his first-team debut, aged 17 in 2001.

But, after spells away at Liverpool, Chelsea and AC Milan, the 34-year-old's second stint in the Spanish capital has largely been as a back-up. Torres has started only three La Liga games this season under coach Diego Simeone.

"I'd like to take this opportunity to confirm that this is my last season at the club," Torres said yesterday. "I felt I should let the fans know, as they have given me so much love and affection. "Both the club and I knew that this moment was going to come. I think it is the best moment, accepting the reality that I am in, you see the prominence that I have in the team and maybe it is time to make way for others."

Torres scored 76 league goals during his first five seasons at Atletico and after making an emotional return, he had hoped to retire at the club. In between, a superb four years at Liverpool had been followed by difficult periods at both Chelsea and Milan, where Torres never rediscovered his lethal touch.

"For me it is very difficult to say goodbye to this club for the second time, because my head and my idea was to hang up my boots here," Torres said. "But things do not always work out the way you want. I feel very well and I want to continue playing. I do not know if in two, three or five years I'll look for a different situation."

"I do not have any team or competition (decided), since we have made the decision not long ago. So now we listen to the proposals and among these proposals we will have to decide." It has been suggested that Torres does not see



**Fernando Torres**

eye-to-eye with Simeone, who is also something of an icon at Atleti, having played for five years there, before coaching the team to the La Liga title in 2014.

"My relationship with Simeone is normal, it's professional," Torres said. "I've always said that I'm not going to participate in any division with Simeone. There is no problem with the coach, nor with anyone in the club, it's a decision that is exclusively mine."

Torres was struggling at Chelsea when Atleti won the league four years ago, meaning the only trophy he has left

ed with the club is a Segunda Division title in 2002. Atletico, however, are strong favourites in this season's Europa League and the possibility remains that the forward will sign off after a victorious final in Lyon on May 16. Torres has scored 113 goals in 330 appearances for Atletico. He also won the World Cup with Spain in 2010, as well as the European Championships in 2008 and 2012. "This second stage (at Atletico) has been magnificent," Torres said. "I have lived magical moments and I am sure that I have others to live." — AFP

## Di Francesco hoping for Barcelona 'miracle'

**ROME:** Roma coach Eusebio Di Francesco has urged his side to believe in a "miracle" to overturn a 4-1 deficit against Barcelona and advance to the Champions League semi-finals today. "We have to believe in something important and go for it with great love and passion. They will play their best to confirm the result but we can also produce a miracle," Di Francesco told a pre-match press conference. "It's difficult, but we have to believe. We stopped (Lionel) Messi (in the first leg) and we have to try to do it again tomorrow." Edin Dzeko scored a valuable away goal after own goals from Daniele De Rossi and Kostas Manolas in the Camp Nou, but the Italians need a remarkable comeback at the Stadio Olimpico to advance to final four for the first time since 1984.

Here are some talking points ahead of the quarter-final second leg clash: Messi hoping for more Roman heroics Barcelona star Lionel Messi returns to the Stadio Olimpico where his stunning header sealed the Champions League title in 2009 against Manchester United. The Argentine-back from a hamstring problem and subdued in the first leg-warmed up with a hat-trick in a 3-1 win over Leganes Saturday as Barcelona equalled the record longest unbeaten run in La Liga history. "I don't see it as being tied up in any way," said Barcelona coach Ernesto Valverde ahead of the return. Messi and teammate Andres Iniesta are poised for a milestone of 100 Champions League appearances together. Iniesta is a veteran of 129 Champions League games, and Messi, 124.

### ROMA STRUGGLING AT HOME

Roma have slipped to fourth in Serie A after a 2-0 home defeat to Fiorentina, making it three games without a win, and a seventh home defeat. Di Francesco's side will be looking to avoid equalling the club's record of eight home defeats in all competitions going back 70 years. "Maybe



**ROME:** Roma's midfielder from Belgium Radja Nainggolan (2ndR) takes part in a training session a day before the Champions League quarter-final, second-leg football match AS Roma vs Barcelona yesterday. — AFP

Barcelona away are not the same team as at the Camp Nou, we will try to close down Messi wherever he is on the pitch," said the Roma coach. Roma have kept a clean sheet in all of their European games at home this season while the Catalan giants have struggled to get goals away in the Champions League, setting the scene for a low-key scoring affair in the Stadio Olimpico.

### DZEKO PROVING HIS WORTH

From a possible sacrifice for his cash-strapped club in January, Edin Dzeko again proved his worth to Roma with his 19th goal of the season in the first leg. After the 32-year-old's proposed move to Chelsea fell through in the winter transfer window, Dzeko helped the club's balance sheet by securing Roma's place in the last eight of Europe's lucrative elite competition. And the former Manchester City striker showed his class and his talents by getting a goal back against the Spanish league leaders.

### DECISION TIME FOR INIESTA

Andres Iniesta could be playing his final games for Barcelona as he has said he will make a decision on whether to accept an offer to move to China before the end of April. Iniesta, 33, penned a new contract at Camp Nou earlier this season but the terms of the deal allow him to leave at the end of each season. The midfielder, who remains an important part of Valverde's side, has said: "I will decide before April 30. There are still a few weeks left. There are two options: stay at Barcelona or go to China."

### ROMA DUO RETURN FROM INJURY

Barcelona midfielder Sergio Busquets is still not fully fit as he comes back after breaking his toe against Chelsea last month with Philippe Coutinho not eligible to play and Lucas Digne injured. Roma's Radja Nainggolan has recovered from injury while Di Francesco has said Turkish forward Cengiz Under is fit again and will feature in the second leg. "The home crowd can be our weapon," warned Di Francesco. — AFP

## European giants Bayern hungry for more success

**BERLIN:** Less than 24 hours after securing a sixth successive Bundesliga title, Jupp Heynckes cut Bayern Munich's celebrations short as they aim for a seventh Champions League semi-final appearance in nine seasons. "We want to take everything this season that there is to take—and this team has got big ambitions," said Bayern chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge. Only Real Madrid and AC Milan have enjoyed more success on the continent than five-time European champions Bayern, who are bidding for a second treble in five years.

Thiago Alcantara's headed winner earned Bayern a 2-1 victory at Sevilla in last week's quarter-final first leg, leaving the Germans in control going into Wednesday's return at the Allianz Arena. Bayern clinched a record-extending 28th German league title on Saturday with a 4-1 thrashing of Augsburg to continue their domestic dominance that dates back to 2012. But the following day, those not involved from the start in Augsburg—including Robert Lewandowski, Thomas Mueller, Javi Martinez and Mats Hummels—were put through their paces on the training ground. "It's nice to see how everyone worked hard (at Augsburg)," said Mueller. "This will have been with us for the whole season, we hope it will carry us a bit further." With the Bundesliga wrapped up, Bayern turn their focus to Europe. Since the Bavarians lost the 2010 final to Jose Mourinho's Inter Milan, only holders Real Madrid have reached the last four of the Champions League more often than Bayern.

The Spanish giants have managed it seven times in eight seasons, while Bayern have done so on six occasions. Bayern missed out on the semi-finals a year ago, losing to Real in the quarter-finals, and in 2011 when they were knocked out in the last 16 by Inter Milan. The 72-year-old Heynckes led Bayern to the 2013 Champions League title when Arjen Robben scored the winner in a 2-1 victory over Borussia Dortmund. Under Heynckes' successor Pep Guardiola, Bayern were knocked out at the semi-final stage in each of his three seasons—every time at the hands of Spanish opposition.

Heynckes replaced Carlo Ancelotti in October after Bayern were crushed 3-0 away by Paris Saint-Germain in the group stage. At the time, Bayern trailed then-leaders Dortmund by five points in Germany.

"When he took over, Jupp said that it would be difficult to make up the five points—now we have more than 20 on Dortmund," beamed Rummenigge. "The team and Jupp did a great job. "What I like about this team, it goes on, on and on and is not arrogant. "The team is already focused on Wednesday—we really want to reach the semi-finals of the Champions League." Bayern could yet repeat their 2013 treble, as they face Bayer Leverkusen in the semi-finals of the German Cup later this month for a place in the May 19 showpiece. —AFP

**Live**

**Matches on TV**  
(Local Timings)

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**UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE**

Roma v Barcelona	21:45
beIN SPORTS HD 2	
Manchester City v Liverpool	21:45
beIN SPORTS HD 1	



**12** Reed edges Fowler, Spieth to capture Masters thriller

**13** Simbine upsets stumbling Blake to win 100 metres gold medal

**14** Japan switch coach two months before World Cup



PHILADELPHIA: Dwight Powell #7 of the Dallas Mavericks dunks the ball against the Philadelphia 76ers on Sunday at Wells Fargo Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. —AFP

## Sixers win, Jazz book playoff spot

### Indiana Pacers overpower Charlotte Hornets 123-117

**LOS ANGELES:** Ben Simmons scored 16 points as the Philadelphia 76ers routed the Dallas Mavericks to extend their winning streak to 14 games in the Eastern Conference playoff race on Sunday. Australian star Simmons finished with nine assists and seven rebounds as the Sixers cruised to a 109-97 victory to move one win clear of the Cleveland Cavaliers in the standings.

The Sixers and the Cavs are locked in a duel for the third seed spot in the Eastern Conference playoff picture, with Philadelphia now at 50-30 for the season, ahead of Cleveland, who are fourth with 49-31.

Philadelphia are now assured of at least a top-four finish in the East after Sunday's victory at the Wells Fargo Center. The win also guarantees Philadelphia home court advantage for the start of the playoffs.

"To win 50 games with two games remaining, 14 in a row, to secure home court advantage is fantastic," Sixers head coach Brett Brown said. "Our season has been exceptional. The group has continued to improve and those things are that I will remember the most. There is a toughness to our group."

With the injured Joel Embiid close to a return, the Sixers will enter the postseason brimming with confidence after another impressive win. Simmons was one of five Sixers players to make double figures, with JJ Redick leading the scoring for the home team with 18 points.

Simmons was satisfied to reach 50 wins for the season, two years after the Sixers finished with a dismal 10-72 record at the foot of the Eastern Conference. "It's huge for the team," Simmons said. "It

shows how far we've come for the season.

"I think we've pushed through the tough times and I think we're getting a lot better over time ... it's been very enjoyable. It's better when you're winning." Harrison Barnes led the scoring for the Mavs with 21 points, with Dennis Smith Jr adding 20 points and Dwight Powell 13.

In other games on Sunday, Donovan Mitchell scored 28 points to help the Utah Jazz clinch a playoff berth with a 112-97 win over the Los Angeles Lakers. Mitchell also had nine rebounds and eight assists, and Joe Ingles had 22 points in the win. Jae Crowder came off the bench to score 18.

#### 'GREAT FEELING'

"It's a great feeling to have that," Mitchell said. "But

at the same time, we got two more games left and want to stay where we're at." Also, the Indiana Pacers are one game behind Cleveland after overpowering the Charlotte Hornets 123-117 on the road.

Domantas Sabonis led the scoring for the Pacers with 30 points from the bench, while Victor Oladipo had 27 points. The Pacers improved to 48-33 with the victory.

Elsewhere in the East, second-placed Boston suffered an upset 112-106 loss to bottom team Atlanta at the TD Garden. It was a third defeat in four games for the Celtics, who are battling an injury crisis as they head into the playoffs. The Celtics were rocked this week after it was confirmed star Kyrie Irving would miss the remainder of the season after complications from knee surgery. —AFP

## Cycling mourns death of Michael Goolaerts

**PARIS:** The world of cycling yesterday mourned Belgian cyclist Michael Goolaerts after he died of heart failure at the age of 23 during the gruelling Paris-Roubaix one-day classic race in France. Goolaerts was found unconscious and not breathing at the side of the road on Sunday, after racing along one of the course's famous cobbled sections.

Doctors were unable to revive him at the scene and he was flown to hospital in the northern city of Lille where he died of "cardiac arrest" surrounded by his family, his Veranda's Willem's team said.

A video on YouTube which has been authenticated by AFP showed Goolaerts failing to negotiate a curve and shooting into a grassy bank at high speed. It was not immediately clear if he suffered the heart attack before crashing.

No other rider appeared to be involved. The incident happened at around the 100-kilometre mark of the 257-kilometre race.

#### 'LEFT US TOO EARLY'

"It is with unimaginable sadness that we have to communicate the passing of our rider and friend Michael Goolaerts," his team said on Twitter. "He died of cardiac arrest, all medical assistance was to no avail." His loss was felt especially keenly in Belgium, where the Flemish VRT broadcaster said cycling was "in mourning". David Lappartient, president of the sport's governing body the UCI, said on Twitter: "I would like to extend my deepest condolences to the family, team and friends of Michael Goolaerts, who left us too early today. We share their immense sadness."

The organisers of the Tour de France, who are also in charge of the Paris-Roubaix, said official race doctors had managed to reach Goolaerts within "two to three minutes". "They tried to bring him back to life. In this type of race they administer the first treatment and then they call the local emergency services," race organiser Pierre-Yves Thouault told AFP.

Tour de France race director Christian

Prudhomme said Goolaerts' team had been delighted to receive an invitation to Sunday's race. "They so wanted to be on the start line," he said. "We are united in compassion for them."

The winner of the race, Slovakia's three-time world champion Peter Sagan, paid tribute to Goolaerts on Twitter, writing: "All the thoughts and prayers of the @BORAHansgrohe team and myself are with Michael Goolaerts. Such sad news..."

Paris-Roubaix is known as the "Hell of the North" because a large section of the course is made up of uneven cobbles and the riders have to contend with thick mud in some parts. Goolaerts became a professional rider in 2014 aged just 20, and had taken part in 20 days of racing in 2018, including starting the Tour of Flanders earlier this month, although he did not finish that race.

He was yet to win any major honours in the sport. His death echoed that of another young Belgian rider, 22-year-old Daan Myngher, who died in hospital two days after suffering a heart attack on the Criterium International race in Corsica in 2016. In 2011, Belgium's Wouter Weylandt was killed in a crash during the third stage of the Giro d'Italia. —AFP



Michael Goolaerts



# Business

TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 2018

**18** Aluminum giant Rusal shares collapse after US sanctions



**19** Expat remittance tax could expel knowledge workers from Kuwait



**21** Gulf Air's first Dreamliner takes to the skies at Bahrain Grand Prix



## NBK reports net profits of KD 93.6m for 1Q 2018

### Al-Sayer: NBK's solid YoY growth achieved in a globally challenging environment

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) reported net profits of KD 93.6 million (\$312.2 million) for the first quarter of 2018 compared with KD 85.4 million (\$284.8 million) in 2017, growing 9.6 percent year-on-year.

Total assets as of end of March 2018 reached KD 26.8 billion (\$89.4 billion) up 7.8 percent compared end of March 2017, while total shareholders' equity increased by 3.0 percent to KD 2.9 billion (\$9.7 billion). Customer loans and advances reached KD 14.8 billion (\$49.5 billion) as of end of March 2018, 5.6 percent up from last year's levels. Customer deposits grew by 8.6 percent year-on-year to reach KD 14.3 billion (\$47.6 billion) as of end of March 2018.

Asset quality metrics remained strong with NPL/Gross Loans ratio at 1.38 percent as of end of March 2018, and NPL coverage ratio at 274 percent, reflecting NBK's resilient risk management approach.

Nasser Al-Sayer, NBK Group Chairman said "NBK recorded strong performance in 1Q 2018 demonstrating the resilience, quality and diversity of earnings in a globally challenging



Nasser Al-Sayer



Isam Al-Sager

operating environment. The Group maintained its leadership in Kuwait while successfully strengthened synergies between its international operations to deliver an ultimate customer experience".

"The Group's net operating income grew by 9.2 percent year-on-year to KD 213.4 million (\$712.1 million), reflecting healthy growth trends driven by all business lines and segments" Al Sayer added.

Al-Sayer also added that "Economic

indicators remained positive in Kuwait as capital spending continued to be a key driver of economic activity for the domestic market. Kuwait's fiscal position is better than peers given the substantial buffers and strong sovereign ratings; creating room for acceleration in spending despite lower oil prices".

NBK's robust financial position, strong franchise, diversified business model in addition to its regional and global presence, has positioned the Bank as the country's foremost finan-

cial provider and the largest beneficiary of the growing government expenditure". "Additionally, and in line with our commitment to the economic development of Kuwait: NBK remains highly committed to its corporate social responsibly being consistently the largest contributor to the community year after year," Al-Sayer highlighted.

Isam Al-Sager, NBK's Group Chief Executive Officer said: "the solid results of NBK reflect a period of strong growth and robust operating performance. Given the Bank's adequate capitalization, stable funding and ample liquidity conditions; NBK continues to benefit from emerging opportunities locally and regionally, affirming the Bank's income diversification strategy and improved profitability trends".

"Islamic banking remains a key element in the Group's growth and diversification strategy. Our unique Islamic banking presence has further strengthened our position across business segments in Kuwait as Boubyan Bank continues to drive the growth on the Islamic Banking front. The acquisition of a 58.4 percent stake in Boubyan

Bank in 2012 was a long-term strategic move by NBK. Boubyan Bank can serve NBK's Islamic banking ambitions globally as we continue to see very positive momentum at Boubyan Bank.

"On the other hand, NBK prides itself to be a well-diversified financial institution; not only by product offerings but also by geography. NBK's International operations remained highly profitable contributing 27 percent of the Group's total profits in the first quarter of 2018. This affirms the Bank's consistency with its strategic outlook towards income diversification. All of our key markets have been strongly performing with the integration and cross selling opportunities emerging in different areas". "Our key growth markets regionally are KSA, UAE along with Egypt and we continue to identify organic growth opportunities in international markets. In 2018, we plan to expand our branch network in Saudi Arabia to three branches from one branch currently, in addition to offering wealth management services in the Kingdom through a Saudi CMA licensed entity.

The Group maintained best in class

capitalization positions. As of end-March 2018, NBK's capital adequacy ratio (CAR) reached 17.3 percent, comfortably exceeding regulatory requirements.

NBK continues to enjoy collectively one of the highest ratings among all banks in the Middle East from the three international rating agencies Moody's, Fitch Ratings and Standard and Poor's. The Bank's ratings are supported by its high capitalization, prudent lending policies, and its disciplined approach to risk management, in addition to its highly recognized and very stable management team. NBK was also named among Global Finance's list of the 50 safest banks in the world for twelve consecutive times and was awarded as the Best Bank in Kuwait in 2017 by the Banker, Euromoney and Global Finance.

NBK enjoys the widest banking presence with a local and international network reaching 4 continents. NBK's international presence spans many of the world's leading financial centers including New York, Europe, Singapore and China; in addition to its presence in MENA.

# 93.6

## Million KD Net Profit for the 1st Quarter, 2018

31/03/2018

Net Profit

**93.6**  
Million KD

Net Operating Income

**213.4**  
Million KD

Shareholders' Equity

**2.9**  
Billion KD

Total Assets

**26.8**  
Billion KD

Moody's  
Aa3

Fitch Ratings  
AA-

Standard & Poor's  
A+

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Business

# Aluminum giant Rusal shares collapse after US sanctions

## Metals major at risk of defaulting on part of its debt

**MOSCOW:** Shares in Russian aluminum giant Rusal collapsed yesterday after Washington targeted it with sanctions, putting the metals major at risk of defaulting on part of its debt.

On the Hong Kong stock market, one of the exchanges where Rusal's shares are listed, it closed 50 percent down at HK\$2.34. The fall wiped more than 3.5 billion euros (\$4.3 billion) off the market capitalization of the company which is headed by billionaire Oleg Deripaska and accounts for some seven percent of the world's aluminum production.

In Moscow, the other exchange where its shares trade, they were down 23 percent in mid-session business. The meltdown came after US President Donald Trump on Friday announced sanctions against Russian oligarchs close to Vladimir Putin following the diplomatic crisis sparked by the poisoning of former spy Sergei Skripal.

Washington has accused Deripaska of operating for the Russian government. Other magnates hit by sanctions include the director of state-owned energy giant Gazprom, Alexei Miller. The Kremlin yesterday slammed the latest round of sanctions. "This is an outrageous business from the point of view of illegality, from the point of view of flouting all the norms, and of course careful analysis is needed here," Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said Moscow was looking at how to support the companies and sectors that have been hit. In a statement, Rusal said the sanctions "may result in technical defaults in relation to certain credit obligations of the group".

The latest wave of sanctions also saw Russian stock market indices plummet around 10 percent.

The RTS index, which trades in dollars, fell 9.75 percent, and the MOEX index, which trades in rubles, fell 6.9 percent. Russia's currency also took a hit, with the dollar and euro rising to 59.81 and 73.42 against the ruble respectively.



### US accuses Deripaska of operating for Russian govt

#### Aluminum price surges

Meanwhile aluminum prices surged on the London metals stock market (LME). As of 1200 GMT, the price of aluminum had surged 3.97 percent to \$2,123, its biggest jump in three years.

"Base metals are making a subdued start to the new week of trading-with the exception of aluminum," Commerzbank Commodity Research said in a note. "This is due to sanctions imposed by the US on Russian oligarchs and their companies on Friday," it added.

Matt France, global commodities broker at Marex Spectron, agreed: "No doubt about the outperformer in both price and volume as aluminum surges post the Friday Rusal announcement." In all, Trump's administra-



**MOSCOW:** People walk past the aluminum giant United Company RUSAL headquarters in Moscow yesterday. Shares in Russian aluminum giant Rusal collapsed yesterday after Washington targeted it with sanctions, putting the metals major at risk of defaulting on part of its debt. —AFP

tion targeted seven oligarchs, 12 companies they own or control, 17 senior Russian officials and a state-owned arms export company.

The sanctions follow weeks of tit-for-tat diplomatic measures between Russia and Western states following the poisoning of a Russia former double agent in Britain last month. The health of Sergei Skripal, the former

Russian spy who was found slumped on a bench with his daughter in the English city of Salisbury, is now improving. The US said however that Friday's action was taken under a law passed to punish Russia for its alleged bid to interfere in the 2016 US presidential vote, as well as its intervention in conflicts in Syria and Ukraine. —AFP

## Lufthansa cancels 800 flights today in German airport strikes

**FRANKFURT AM MAIN:** German airline giant Lufthansa said it will cancel "more than 800" flights today as public-sector workers walk out on strike for more pay, hobbling major airports like Frankfurt. "Lufthansa must cancel more than 800 of its planned 1,600 flights tomorrow, including 58 long-distance services, because of the strike," the group said in a statement, adding that around 90,000 passengers would be affected.

Service would be back to normal on Wednesday after the strike, which will see groups like support staff and airport firefighters walk off the job between 05:00 am and 6:00 pm local time (0300 to 1600 GMT), Lufthansa added. Frankfurt airport-Germany's largest-warned on its website of "significant delays and cancellations" affecting many airlines, asking travellers to check with their carrier whether their flight would go ahead before departure.

Today "warning strike" will also hit Munich, Cologne and Bremen airports, as well as local transport, kindergartens, rubbish collection and hospitals in several states like capital Berlin, Bavaria or North Rhine-Westphalia. Major union Verdi said its walkouts between April 10 and 13 aim at "increasing pressure" on employers to "allow public sector workers a share in good economic performance" in Europe's largest economy, where tax income has surged as the pace of growth has picked up. Worker representatives at Verdi, teachers' union GEW and civil servants' federation DBB demand a 6.0-percent pay raise or a pay increase of at least 200 euros (\$245.52) per month for the 2.3 million people working for Germany's federal and local governments.

They have been encouraged by the success of powerful metalworkers' union IG Metall, which wrung a 4.3-percent pay increase and a more generous right to temporarily go part-time out of bosses in a February deal. A final round of talks between the public-sector unions and their employers is slated for April 15-16. "Warning strikes" lasting a few hours are a traditional warm-up to sector-wide pay and conditions talks in Germany. —AFP

## Tata Steel open to taking majority stake in steel JV Thyssenkrupp

**LONDON/MUMBAI/FRANKFURT:** India's Tata Steel would consider taking a majority stake in its planned European steel joint venture with Germany's Thyssenkrupp after the business has publicly listed, according to two sources familiar with the matter.

Tata's willingness to increase its holding is a sign of its commitment to expanding its steel empire globally, said the sources. This had been questioned by investors and analysts in recent years after the company, under former group boss Cyrus Mistry, put its British steel assets up for sale following years of losses. Such a development in the planned joint venture - which would create Europe's second-largest steel group after ArcelorMittal - would also fit with Thyssenkrupp's strategy of reducing exposure to steelmaking to concentrate on manufacturing high-margin industrial and technology goods. "They have different visions. Thyssenkrupp is looking to exit the steel sector while Tata is looking to stay and grow," said one of the sources.

Tata Steel and Thyssenkrupp declined to comment. The two companies struck a preliminary deal last year to merge their European steel assets into the 50:50 joint venture. Investors widely expect a flotation of the business, something that both companies have said could happen. Tata Steel would "down the road be open to taking over a larger piece of the pie" in the Thyssenkrupp tie-up once the merged entity is publicly listed, the second source said.

The source added that this would depend on market conditions at the time of a listing and how well the company's operations were in doing in India. Thyssenkrupp and Tata must retain a joint stake of at least 50.1 percent in the venture for at least six years following the deal's closing in the event of an IPO, according to a labor agreement between Thyssenkrupp and its workers seen by Reuters.

The deal does not specify how that stake should be split up, however, meaning Thyssenkrupp could in theory reduce its stake to, for example, 1 percent if Tata

Steel agreed to take on the other 49.1 percent. "We haven't addressed at all the question of an end, of a minimum (stake)," Thyssenkrupp Chief Financial Officer Guido Kerckhoff told journalists in February when asked about whether both groups would equally divide the 50.1 percent stake. Global steel equity values have more than doubled since hitting 12-year lows in early 2016 at the depth of the steel sector crisis. Tata's push to expand reflects a broader global trend towards consolidation of a fragmented steelmaking industry. The biggest players, including industry leader ArcelorMittal, China's Hebei Iron and Steel Group (Hesteel) and India's JSW Steel are looking to snap up assets across the world as the market rebounds.

#### Patriarch

Thyssenkrupp, an industrial firm as opposed to a pure steel player like the others, has long been open about its desire to sell out of steel. Both the Tata tie-up and last year's sale of its Brazilian steel mill CSA were done with a view to drastically lower Thyssenkrupp's exposure to steel and transform the group into a technology and industrials powerhouse. Many investors have welcomed this strategy to slim down the sprawling industrial group to remove some of the conglomerate discount that they say weighs on the stock. For Tata Steel, by contrast, the joint venture is a move to save its ailing European steel business, which has been burning through about \$1 billion of cash a year, by getting better economies of scale. Another major contrast between the two companies centers on ownership structure and corporate philosophy. Tata Steel's holding company is Tata Sons, a \$100 billion salt-to-software conglomerate which is 65 percent owned by Tata Trusts - public charities that have a major say in group decisions and have historically favored the good of all stakeholders over shareholder returns.

In 2016, former Tata Sons chairman Cyrus Mistry was ousted by family patriarch and Tata Trusts chairman Ratan Tata, in a dispute that involved competing corporate ethics and vision.

The octogenarian Tata was acquisitive, legacy driven and an exponent of the traditional Tata Trusts view that companies exist to provide value and service to a community, making profits as a by-product of that process. Mistry, by contrast, was more focused on increasing shareholder returns, being nimble and cutting debt. He put Tata Steel's British assets up for sale in 2016 and even considered closing down the business. —Reuters

## Al-Tijari announces winner of Al-Najma new prize program

**KUWAIT:** Commercial Bank of Kuwait announced the winner of the first weekly draw of Al-Najma prize given account for KD 5,000, where Rouchelle Desouza was announced as the lucky winner. The draw was conducted in the presence of Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative. Al-Najma Account was recently revamped by adding several benefits to the prize program through which now the account provides its customers the chance to win the biggest annual cash prize offered by a bank in Kuwait and over the globe as much as KD 1 million and half (KD 1,500,000) so that customers' dreams can easily turn to reality.

The bank stated that the account prizes this year is featured by the highest cash prize and diversity of prizes throughout the year clarifying that Al-Najma Account will offer weekly prize of KD 5,000 and monthly prize of KD 20,000 and a semi-annual prize of KD 500,000 for which the draw will be held on 1st July 2018 in addition to the grand prize (the biggest prize in the world) of KD 1,500,000 for which the draw will be held in January 2019. Al-Najma Account can be opened by depositing KD 100, and customer should maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 to be eligible to enter all draws on Al-Najma Account prizes. As for the chances of winning, the more balance a customer maintains in Al-Najma Account, the more chances the account holder will get to win, where each KD 25 will give the customer one chance to win, the account also offers additional benefits like the ATM card, a credit card against customer's account and all CBK banking services that customer can enjoy.

Now CBK existing customers can open Al-Najma Account through Al-Tijari Online and enter all draws without visiting the Bank branch. However, CBK non-customers can submit account opening application via the Bank's website where the Bank's Sales Unit will call them to arrange visit to the customers to complete the account opening formalities.

### EXCHANGE RATES

#### Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.857
Indian Rupees	4.631
Pakistani Rupees	2.640
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.922
Nepali Rupees	2.897
Singapore Dollar	229.850
Hongkong Dollar	38.265
Bangladesh Taka	3.591
Philippine Peso	5.749
Thai Baht	9.654

GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	80.133
Qatari Riyal	82.534
Omani Riyal	780.405
Bahraini Dinar	797.930
UAE Dirham	81.837

ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	19.300
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	17.026
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.206
Tunisian Dinar	126.980
Jordanian Dinar	423.600
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.002
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	33.330

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	300.300

Euro	373.570
Sterling Pound	427.630
Canadian dollar	234.790
Turkish lira	76.120
Swiss Franc	318.960
Australian Dollar	233.780
US Dollar Buying	299.100

Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd	
20 Gram	249.070
10 Gram	127.450
5 Gram	64.570

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	299.850
Canadian Dollar	233.465
Sterling Pound	426.935
Euro	373.535
Swiss Frank	286.765
Bahrain Dinar	797.410
UAE Dirhams	82.040
Qatari Riyals	83.270
Saudi Riyals	80.855
Jordanian Dinar	424.195
Egyptian Pound	17.000
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.923
Indian Rupees	4.622
Pakistani Rupees	2.598
Bangladesh Taka	3.598
Philippines Peso	5.740
Cyprus pound	17.850

Japanese Yen	3.840
Syrian Pound	1.585
Nepalese Rupees	2.892
Malaysian Ringgit	78.580
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	48.185
Thai Bhat	10.595
Turkish Lira	75.740

#### BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
<b>Europe</b>		
British Pound	0.419041	0.426541
Czech Korune	0.006549	0.015849
Danish Krone	0.045535	0.050535
Euro	0.364423	0.371923
Georgian Lari	0.136409	0.136409
Hungarian 0.00133	0.001323	
Norwegian Krone	0.034465	0.039665
Romanian Leu	0.064258	0.081108
Russian ruble	0.005265	0.005265
Slovakia	0.008932	0.018932
Swedish Krona	0.031826	0.036826
Swiss Franc	0.307584	0.318584
<b>Australasia</b>		
Australian Dollar	0.223077	0.235077
New Zealand Dollar	0.212773	0.222273
<b>America</b>		
Canadian Dollar	0.230188	0.239188
US Dollars	0.296700	0.301100
US Dollars Mint	0.297200	0.301100

Asia	
Bangladesh Taka	0.003191 0.003775
Chinese Yuan	0.046211 0.049711
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036573 0.039323
Indian Rupee	0.004101 0.004742
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017 0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.002731 0.002911
Korean Won	0.000274 0.000289
Malaysian Ringgit	0.073646 0.079645
Nepalese Rupee	0.003001 0.003171
Pakistan Rupee	0.002501 0.002791
Philippine Peso	0.005674 0.005974
Singapore Dollar	0.223282 0.233282
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001606 0.002186
Taiwan	0.010320 0.010500
Thai Baht	0.009278 0.009828
<b>Arab</b>	
Bahraini Dinar	0.791247 0.799747
Egyptian Pound	0.014238 0.019956
Iranian Riyal	0.000083 0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000202 0.000262
Jordanian Dinar	0.419642 0.428642
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000 1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000154 0.000254
Moroccan Dirhams	0.023306 0.047306
Omani Riyal	0.774981 0.780661
Qatar Riyal	0.078332 0.083272
Saudi Riyal	0.079127 0.080427
Syrian Pound	0.001274 0.001494
Tunisian Dinar	0.121624 0.129624
Turkish Lira	0.069792 0.080092
UAE Dirhams	0.080471 0.082171
Yemeni Riyal	0.000977 0.001057



## Business

## ANALYSIS

# Expat remittance tax could expel knowledge workers from Kuwait

## Critics warn decision may lead to parallel markets

**KUWAIT:** Marmore MENA Intelligence, a subsidiary of Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz", recently released a research note titled "Remittance Tax in Kuwait: Is it coming finally?". The note discusses the remittance tax bill that is being currently debated and weighs the implications of introducing remittance tax from a wider economic perspective.

Marmore report stated that the Parliamentary Financial and Economic Affairs Committee of Kuwait has approved bills for imposing tax on remittances of expatriates, based on their income level. The tax rate suggested starts at a modest 1 percent for remittance under KD 99 and goes all the way to 5 percent for remittance beyond KD 500. Remittance outflow from Kuwait in 2016 stood at KD 4.6 billion (\$15.3 billion) with nearly 27 percent of that sent to India, followed by Egypt at 18 percent, Bangladesh at 7 percent and Philippines and Pakistan at three percent each. The bill approved by the financial committee has been opposed by the legislative committee citing constitutionality. If the draft bill is approved, it will then be referred to the government and in case if it is accepted by the cabinet, it would become a law. Kuwait would then be the first country in

the GCC region to impose remittance tax.

### Lack of clarity

While the bill discussed about imposing taxes on remittances, it failed to clearly define the category of people who will be paying the taxes. The bill in its current form also failed to describe what would constitute as remittance, would it include income or even loans availed from banks that is being sent abroad. Lack of clarity and proper definition could hinder the upcoming debate in the parliament.

Critics of the bill have warned that introduction of taxes on remittances would lead to mushrooming of alternative channels or parallel black market to route money back home. The Central Bank of Kuwait had also voiced similar concerns in the past.

Higher taxes for high-income, knowledge workers could be dissuaded from pursuing long-term stint in Kuwait and this could constrain their supply. This may be counterproductive at a time when Kuwait strives to transform itself as knowledge-based economy and has a large scale need for highly skilled pro-

fessionals. Unskilled laborers and semi-skilled workers whose wages are low and fall under the lower tax bracket would also stand to lose on the amount of money that they could save. A problem exacerbated by the rising cost of living, especially at a time when fuel and utility



### If implemented Kuwait to become first GCC state to impose remittance tax

costs are on the rise. This could result in demand for higher wages across workers like electricians, plumbers, mechanics, and construction laborers.

### Impact on businesses

Overall, the impact of remittance taxes on

expatriates would be felt on businesses operating in Kuwait in the form of higher salaries and wages and on Kuwaiti nationals in the form of higher expenses to avail expat services. Kuwait is currently ranked seventh among the countries from which foreign money transfers are done. Out of the total foreign remittance, 26.6 percent of the remittance was sent to India amounting to KD 1.1 billion, followed by Egypt with KD 750 million (18.1 percent), Bangladesh with KD 290 million (seven percent), Philippines with KD 250 million (6.1 percent) and Pakistan with KD 220 million (5.3 percent).

Elsewhere, UAE imposes a Value Added Tax (VAT) on all expatriate remittances. The VAT on remittances is not a tax on the remittances themselves but is specifically placed on remittance services implying that the VAT will apply only to the fee charged rather than the amount of funds being remitted.

Saudi Arabia in contrast imposes an 'expat levy' which requires foreigners working in the private sector to pay a family tax of 100 riyals (\$26.60) per month for every minor or unemployed relative living in the country. An



estimated 11 million foreigners work in the Saudi private sector, with 2.3 million of their dependents based in the kingdom, according to the Public Authority for Statistics. The tax is expected to increase every year until 2020, reaching 4,800 riyals (\$1,280) per dependent annually.

Similar to Kuwait, Bahrain is also proposing to impose BD 1 fees on remittances below BD 300 and BD 10 for all money transfers exceeding the amount of BD 300. If implemented it would add at least BD 90 million to the state exchequer. Currently, around BD 2.5 billion annually is being transferred abroad by expatriate workers in Bahrain.

## China blames US for trade frictions, says negotiations currently impossible

**BOAO/BEIJING:** China stepped up its attacks on the Trump administration yesterday over billions of dollars worth of threatened tariffs, saying Washington is to blame for trade frictions and repeating it was impossible to negotiate under "current circumstances".

The comments come after US President Donald Trump on Sunday predicted China would take down its trade barriers, and expressed optimism that both sides could resolve the issue through talks.

Chinese state researchers and media talked down the likely impact of US trade measures on the world's second largest economy and described the Trump administration's posturing on trade as the product of an "anxiety disorder". "Under the current circumstances, both sides even more cannot have talks on these issues," Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told reporters at a regular news briefing.

"The United States with one hand wields the threat of sanctions, and at the same time says they are willing to talk. I'm not sure who the United States is putting on this act for," Geng said.

The trade frictions were "entirely at the provocation of the United States", he added. Beijing did not want to fight a trade war, but was not afraid of one, Vice Commerce Minister Qian Keming said at the Boao Forum for Asia in the southern province of Hainan. The focus this week will be on the forum, with President Xi Jinping and International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde delivering speeches today.

### "Great Wall of denial"

The US move last week to threaten China with tariffs on \$50 billion in Chinese goods was aimed at forcing Beijing to address what Washington says is deeply entrenched theft of US intellectual property and forced technology transfers from US companies. Beijing claims that Washington is the aggressor and is spurring global protectionism, though China's trading partners have complained for years that it abuses World Trade Organization rules and practices unfair industrial policies that lock foreign companies out of crucial sectors with the intent of creating domestic champions.

After repeated pledges by Beijing to open up sectors such as financial services, have yielded little substantial progress, Trump has said that the United States will no longer let China take advantage of it on trade. On Monday morning in Washington

Trump tweeted that China puts 25 percent tariffs on cars imported from the United States, while cars it imports from China face 2.5 percent duties. "Does that sound like free or fair trade. No, it sounds like STUPID TRADE," Trump said in his post.

"China's reaction to Mr. Trump's legitimate defense of the American homeland has been a Great Wall of denial - despite incontrovertible evidence of Beijing's illicit and protectionist behaviors," White House trade advisor Peter Navarro said in a commentary in the Financial Times yesterday.

"Nothing less than the US's economic future is at risk from China's assault on American technology and IP, and its mercantilist bid to capture emerging high-tech industries," he said. Chinese officials deny such charges, and responded within hours of Trump's announcement of tariffs with their own proposed commensurate duties. The move prompted Trump to threaten tariffs on an additional \$100 billion in Chinese goods.

None of the latest measures have yet gone into effect, offering some hope for compromise and a watering down of the proposals even as both sides' rhetoric grows more strident.

China's ambassador to the United States Cui Tiankai said in an interview in China's Securities Daily newspaper that the United States should "adopt a more responsible attitude" on trade or it would harm itself with its own policies. "Some people in the United States are still accustomed to being the world leader, and haven't adapted to the change in the global situation," Cui said.

The Chinese Communist Party's official newspaper, the People's Daily, described U.S. trade policies as a populist tilt by Trump ahead of the US mid-term elections, but that the steps would ultimately end up hurting US consumers through higher prices. "In the world's perception, the US is overshadowed by an anxiety disorder and is very keen to show its anxiety," the paper said.

### "Impact will be limited"

A researcher with China's state planning agency said China's economy will see little impact from the dispute, as its vast domestic market can compensate for any external impact. Even with the US tariffs, China can still reach its 2018 GDP growth target of around 6.5 percent and the impact on employment will be limited, Wang Changlin, a researcher at the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), wrote in a post on the commission's official microblog account. — Reuters

lated to include more than 200,000 workers.

A strike would immediately have idled aluminum smelters, fertilizer plants, ship yards and chemical factories, and could eventually have been extended to hit output of oil and gas, unions said ahead of the talks. The deal remains subject to a vote by labor union members, mediator Nils Dalseide told reporters.

The agreement gives workers an estimated average pay rise of 2.8 percent in 2018, slightly more than the maximum 2.7 percent employers had said they were willing to pay.

Some adjustments were also made to pensions for low-paid workers, although a union demand for more wide-ranging pension reform was rejected and will be subject to a future government study. A separate claim of compensation for travel-related expenses was resolved, unions said. — Reuters

## French rail strikes have cost 100m euros

**PARIS:** France's rail operator said yesterday that the rolling strikes against plans to overhaul the debt-laden company had already cost it around 100 million euros (\$123 million) as the standoff between unions and the government drags on. Train drivers and other staff at the state-owned SNCF have vowed to continue walking off the job two days out of every five until at least June 28 unless the government backs down on its reforms.

The stoppages so far are costing around 20 million euros per strike day and the disruption often spills into non-strike days, SNCF chief Guillaume Pepy told BFM television yesterday, the fourth day of the strike. "From what I can see, France has not been paralyzed," Pepy said, "but clients are being heavily penalized."

Both sides are claiming broad public support. An Ilop poll published Sunday showed 62 percent in favor of the government's reforms, compared with a slim majority of 51 percent in the same survey a week earlier. Yet unions point to the nearly 530,000 euros in donations raised as of Monday morning via a web-based fund for compensating strikers' lost wages. "Nobody wants a long, difficult conflict but for now, we're up against a wall," Philippe Martinez of the CGT union, the largest at the SNCF, told Europe 1 radio. "The government has forced us to take this type of action."

### Weeks of headaches

President Emmanuel Macron, who has barely spoken publicly on the standoff, is set to give an hour-long televised interview Thursday, nearly a year after sweeping away France's traditional parties with his election victory. The 40-year-old centrist, who is



PARIS: SNCF railway workers hold CGT union flags and chant slogans as they demonstrate as part of their strike over plans to overhaul the national state-owned railway company SNCF, yesterday near the National Assembly in Paris. — AFP

pushing reforms to swathes of the French economy, will also appear for a two-hour primetime interview on Sunday night, facing journalists from BFM and the hard-hitting investigative news site Mediapart. Parliament was scheduled to begin debating the SNCF overhaul yesterday, though Macron has said he will implement the changes by decree—another bone of contention for unions.

The government says it needs to move quickly ahead of the opening of French passenger rail traffic to competition starting in 2020, part of an EU-wide opening of state rail markets. Unions are protesting a plan that would do away with the jobs-for-life and early retirement guarantees enjoyed by current rail employees. The SNCF would also be transformed into a private company whose shares are owned by the state—which unions see as a first step toward privatisation, despite government denials. The standoff promises weeks of headaches for the network's 4.5 million daily passengers—which has coincided with a series of strikes at Air France by workers seeking a six percent raise. The airline said Monday that

one-quarter of flights would be cancelled on average today, with another day of strike set for tomorrow.

### Lasting consequences

Just one in five high-speed TGV trains were running Monday, compared with one in seven or eight during last week's strikes, and about 20 percent of the Eurostar trains in and out of London have been cancelled. Pepy noted "quite heavy participation" for the strike on Monday, "though there are more trains than last time". He also warned of lasting consequences for the SNCF if the strike extends into the summer. "When our freight train clients see that the service isn't reliable... they start using the roads, and it's very difficult to get them to come back," Pepy said. Prime Minister Edouard Philippe warned Sunday that the government would not be deterred from the main elements of its reforms. "I get messages from people who support the government, saying we need to carry this through all the way. And that's what we are going to do," Philippe told the Parisien newspaper. — AFP

## Advanced economies need immigration to boost labor

**WASHINGTON:** Aging populations in advanced economies drain the labor force and could slow economic growth, but allowing an influx of immigrant workers could counteract that decline, the International Monetary Fund said yesterday. IMF economists acknowledged that governments face political backlash over immigration. But their options are limited: Even with policies to help sustain a steady supply of workers they will not be able to stave off the inevitable as older workers retire and leave the labor force.

The report encourages immigration for economic reasons and comes at a time when many developed countries face a surge in anti-immigrant sentiment. US President Donald Trump has announced plans to send the National Guard to patrol the border with Mexico and many European countries are struggling with a wave of discontent against migration from war-torn Syria, while the UK is exiting the European Union in part due to voters' concerns about open borders.

The United Nations projects that by the middle of this century, populations will be in decline in almost half of advanced economies, which means younger workers "will support close to double the number of elderly people they do now," the IMF warned in one chapter



WASHINGTON: In this file photo the International Monetary Fund Headquarters is pictured in Washington, D.C. — AFP

of its World Economic Outlook analyzing labor force trends.

### "Migration can relieve the strain"

"Unless more people participate in labor markets, aging could slow advanced economies' growth and, in many cases, undermine the sustainability of their social security systems," the report said.

"Although receiving migrants can pose challenges, potentially prompting a political backlash, it can also be a boon for host countries," the IMF said. "Migration can relieve the strain of population aging and contribute to other long-term gains, such as higher growth and productivity."

Major economies also have been facing a decline in the share of prime-age men in the workforce, defined as those 25-54 years old,

especially those with lower levels of education, partly due to the aftermath of the global financial crisis. The IMF authors said there was "considerable scope for policies" to counteract the economic forces tied to aging by enabling those who are willing to work to do so.

That includes investing in education and training, as well as reducing incentives to retire early, and measures to help workers "combine family and work life," something the report said could "encourage people to join and remain in the workforce."

But ultimately "the dramatic shifts in demographic structure" as workers age out of the labor force will overwhelm developed nations' means of coping, the report said.

That "underscores the need to rethink migration policies to boost labor supply in advanced economies," the IMF said. — AFP

## Norway unions, employers agree wage deal, averting strike

**OSLO:** Norway's private-sector trade unions reached a deal on Sunday with employers over wages, pensions and other compensation, averting the outbreak of major strikes, a state-appointed mediator said after five days of negotiations. Almost 35,000 employees had been scheduled to go on strike if no agreement was found, and a conflict could eventually have esca-



Business

# US, European stocks rise on trade optimism

**NEW YORK:** Wall Street stocks bounced yesterday ahead of key US inflation data and the kickoff of major quarterly corporate earnings later in the week. The gains were a reversal after US stocks on Friday lost more than two percent on trade war fears. About 15 minutes into trading, the Dow Jones Industrial Average was at 24,078.05, up 0.6 percent. The broad-based S&P 500 advanced 0.5 percent to 2,617.11, while the tech-rich Nasdaq Composite Index jumped 0.8 percent to 6,967.49.

US stocks have been on a rollercoaster since late January, pressured by worries over higher interest rates and worsening trade conflict between the US and its major trading partners.

Briefing.com analyst Patrick O'Hare attributed the early rise yesterday to a "technical bounce" after US stocks held above a key level shortly before Friday's close. Key releases this week include the consumer price index for March, as well as minutes from the Federal Reserve's March meeting. JPMorgan Chase, among other large banks, will report first-quarter results on Friday.

Among individual stocks, General Motors jumped 1.6 percent after Morgan Stanley upgraded the automaker on a bullish forecast for US pickup truck sales. Merck surged 3.2 percent after reporting successful results of a clinical trial for its Keytruda treatment for lung cancer.

Gene Therapy company AveXis shot up nearly 80 percent as it agreed to be acquired by Swiss pharmaceutical company Novartis for \$8.7 billion. US shares of Deutsche Bank gained 1.7 percent on the announcement that it had replaced chief executive John Cryan with Christian Sewing.

### Europe bounces

European shares rose in early deals yesterday as hopes that a full blown trade war between the United States and China could be averted spread across markets. The pan European STOXX 600 had risen 0.5 percent by 0805 GMT, after closing in the red Friday when investors feared the trade dispute between the world's two biggest economy could turn for the worse.

"The chatter over the weekend appeared to suggest some optimism that some form of deal would likely be the probable

outcome, though how long that could take to pan out remains a significant unknown, and as such further volatility seems likely", said CMC Markets' Michael Hewson.

The situation in Syria, after President Donald Trump warned of a "big price to pay" for dozens of people killed by poison gas in a rebel-held town, was not impacting confidence. The fact that US futures were pointing to Wall Street opening in positive territory was supporting European bourses, analysts said.

Financial stocks contributed the most to the rise with Deutsche Bank up 3.2 percent after it named a new CEO who said tough decisions would have to be made and the structure of its investment bank reviewed. Another top mover was Portuguese energy and utility group EDP, up 5.3 percent after a report French utility Engie was examining a possible bid.

Britain's Rolls-Royce rose 1.9 percent after it agreed to sell its Germany-based diesel parts maker L'Orange to US-based engineering company Woodward Inc for 700 million euros (\$859 million), as part of a plan to simplify its business. Still on the front of mergers and acquisitions, Novartis rose 0.5 percent after announcing a \$8.7 billion deal for AveXis, a move into gene therapy that gives the Swiss drugmaker a rare-disease treatment seen reaping billions in sales and bolsters its technology base.

Telecom Italia retreated 0.5 percent after proxy adviser Glass Lewis recommended investors back a proposal by activist fund Elliott to replace six board members and shake up the way top shareholder Vivendi runs the phone group. Fresh US sanctions on Russia had a strong impact on a number of corporations linked to allies of President Vladimir Putin.

En+ Group, which manages the assets of tycoon Oleg Deripaska, was down over 20 percent and said the sanctions were "highly likely" to materially affect its business and prospects in an adverse way.

Shares in Swiss pump maker's shares Sulzer and Swiss technology group Oerlikon were sharply down, falling 8.5 percent and 5.4 percent respectively after their majority holder Viktor Vekselsberg appeared on a list of US-sanctioned individuals. —Agencies



NEW YORK, NY: Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) yesterday in New York City. —AFP

## BoJ chief pleads for time as he starts new term

**TOKYO:** Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda said yesterday it would take time to extricate the world's third largest economy from its ultra-loose monetary policy as he embarked on a new five-year term. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe handed Kuroda a second term at the helm of the central bank with a mandate to battle deflation and stoke a nascent recovery.

But the cautious 73-year-old told reporters there was a "deep-rooted" deflationary mindset among companies and households in Japan. Japan "is steadily heading towards" the two-percent inflation target and the economy has "largely improved", Kuroda said.

However, "we're not at the phase of considering the timing for the exit" and how it will be carried out, stressed the central bank chief. Kuroda took the helm in March 2013 with a license to deploy what was called a monetary "bazooka" to revive the moribund economy. He has overseen a policy of ultra-aggressive monetary easing, adopting in January 2016 the BoJ's first-ever negative interest rates-effectively charging lenders to park their cash at the central bank.

The BoJ has also pledged to keep the yield on 10-year government bonds around zero by buying as many as necessary.



TOKYO: Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda (center) speaks to the media with Japan's Deputy Prime Minister, Finance Minister Taro Aso (second right) and Economy Minister Toshimitsu Motegi (right) after meeting with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at Abe's official residence in Tokyo yesterday. —AFP

However, Kuroda has failed in his mission to hit the inflation target of two percent-the latest figures showed prices rising by 1.0 percent in February.

He warned that disclosing details of how Japan would exit its ultra-loose monetary policy could cause "chaos" in terms of communication with the market. —AFP

## Bond redemptions, economic worries hold eurozone yields down

**LONDON:** Eurozone government bond yields held near recent lows yesterday on concerns over European and global economic growth and at the start of a hefty week of European sovereign debt redemptions. In a market preoccupied with the implications of a potential trade war between the United States and China on global growth, safe haven European government bonds such as German Bunds are proving a popular investment.

Although US President Trump expressed some optimism this weekend, the world's two largest economies have threatened each other with tens of billions worth of tariffs in recent days and Chinese officials have said this is not the time for negotiations. As a result, Germany's 10-year government bond yield is continuing to hover around the 0.50 percent level, far below the year's highs of 0.81 percent.

"It looks like we've reached a steady state for the

European market, more particularly for the Bunds," said Commerzbank strategist Rainer Guntermann. German exports plunged unexpectedly in February, posting their biggest monthly drop in more than two years and narrowing the country's trade surplus, data showed yesterday, another sign that growth in Europe's biggest economy may have peaked.

"Investors are just not willing to reduce duration given the concerns about the slowdown in the global economy," said Commerzbank's Guntermann. Sentix's index for the euro zone showed yesterday that investor morale deteriorated for the third month in April on concerns over a growth slowdown and trade war.

Most eurozone bond yields-which move inversely to price are now close to multi-month lows and yesterday they were holding steady at the start of one of the biggest weeks for redemptions in Europe.

Commerzbank estimates that around 60 billion euros of European government bonds are due to mature this week, and given that there is only around 13 billion euros of supply to counter this, yields are unlikely to rise much, analysts said.

That said, investors will keep a close eye on what European policymakers will have to say about global growth amid the trade tensions: ECB vice-president Vitor Constancio and chief economist Peter Praet are due to speak later. —Reuters

## Sterling rises as strong housing data cements May rate hike bets

**LONDON:** The British pound rose against a mostly firmer dollar yesterday and was on track for a third consecutive day of gains as investors were encouraged by data showing British house prices rising more than expected in March. Since Britain signed a transition agreement last month to cover the 21-month period after it leaves the European Union, concerns about Brexit have abated as investors focus on the state of the UK economy before an expected interest rate rise in May.

Sterling rose 0.1 percent against the dollar to \$1.4104 yesterday after mortgage lender Halifax said that house prices rose by a stronger-than-expected 2.7 percent in the first three months of 2018.

The data is likely to bolster expectations that the Bank of England will raise rates next month by a quarter percentage point and reduce fears among investors that Britain's economy

is too weak to stomach a second hike later in 2018. However, house prices are still rising much more slowly than before the 2016 referendum decision to take Britain out of the European Union which hit confidence among many households as the pound's fall pushed up inflation.

"House prices recovering somewhat is a welcome piece of news given that one of the biggest concerns after Brexit is how UK households will deal with falling house prices," said Valentin Marinov, head of GIO FX strategy at Credit Agricole.

Marinov said he had a moderately constructive view on the pound for 2018 and that with Brexit concerns on the back burner sterling could start to outperform a range of currencies, as opposed to just the dollar which has been weakened by US-China trade war fears. "The pound seems to be emerging from under the Brexit cloud. The next time we'll start focusing on Brexit may be well into the third quarter so ahead of that we're really left with economic data to focus on," he said.

But some analysts say uncertainties over Brexit remain and that broad dollar weakness is keeping sterling above \$1.40. Against the euro, the pound strengthened 0.2 percent yesterday to 87.04 pence.

Traders last week largely shrugged off tepid survey data and searched instead for more meaningful signs of economic weakness that could deter the BoE from its path of monetary tightening. —Reuters

National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report									
At 02:00 PM Previous Day									
Global Stock Indices									
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %				
Dow Jones	24,505.22	23,932.76	-572.46	▼	-2.34	-3.18			
NASDAQ	7,076.55	6,915.11	-161.44	▼	-2.28	0.17			
S&P 500	2,662.84	2,604.47	-58.37	▼	-2.19	-2.59			
Financial Times	7,183.64	7,178.35	-5.29	▼	-0.07	-6.63			
DAX	12,241.27	12,316.23	74.96	▲	0.61	-4.66			
CAC 40	5,258.24	5,271.38	13.14	▲	0.25	-0.78			
Swiss	8,671.04	8,702.35	31.31	▲	0.36	-7.24			
Nikkei 225	21,567.52	21,678.26	110.74	▲	0.51	-4.77			
Topix	1,719.30	1,725.88	6.58	▲	0.38	-5.04			
Hang Seng	29,844.94	30,229.58	384.64	▲	1.29	1.04			
Straits Times	3,442.50	3,449.96	7.46	▲	0.22	1.38			
MENA Stock Indices									
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %				
Kuwait	6,603.51	6,633.44	29.93	▲	0.45	2.96			
Saudi Arabia	7,968.44	8,013.29	44.85	▲	0.56	10.27			
Dubai	3,071.09	3,082.13	11.04	▲	0.36	-8.87			
Abu Dhabi	4,602.88	4,665.24	62.36	▲	1.35	4.65			
Bahrain	1,284.49	1,287.41	2.92	▲	0.23	-3.55			
Qatar	8,781.83	8,936.77	154.94	▲	1.76	3.03			
Oman	4,821.19	4,827.89	6.70	▲	0.14	-5.45			
Lebanon	1,182.79	1,182.79	0.00	-	0.00	2.98			
Jordan	2,215.11	2,230.81	15.70	▲	0.71	4.15			
Egypt	17,509.65	17,410.59	-99.06	▼	-0.57	16.58			
Morocco	12,895.23	12,869.58	-25.65	▼	-0.20	3.88			
Tunisia	7,183.58	7,140.61	-42.97	▼	-0.60	14.35			
Global Currencies Exchange Rate									
Currency	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	US Dollar	Euro	Sterling Pound	Swiss Franc	Japanese Yen	Australian Dollar	
Kuwaiti Dinar		12.3857	3.3167	2.7025	2.3518	3.1851	355.16	4.3300	
Saudi Riyal	0.08074		0.2678	0.2182	0.1899	0.2572	28.67	0.3496	
US Dollar	0.30150	3.7343		0.8148	0.7091	0.9603	107.08	1.3055	
Euro	0.37003	4.5831	1.2273		0.8705	1.1788	131.43	1.6025	
Sterling Pound	0.42521	5.2665	1.4103	1.1488		1.3544	151.03	1.8415	
Swiss Franc	0.31396	3.8887	1.0413	0.8483	0.7383		111.53	1.3595	
Japanese Yen	0.00282	0.0349	0.0093	0.0076	0.0066	0.0090		0.0122	
Australian Dollar	0.23095	2.8605	0.7660	0.6240	0.5430	0.7356	82.02		
MENA Currencies Exchange Rate									
Currency	US Dollar	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	Bahraini Dinar	Qatari Riyal	Omani Riyal	Emirates Dirham	Egyptian Pound	
US Dollar		0.30150	3.7343	0.3741	3.6270	0.3831	3.6576	17.6200	
Kuwaiti Dinar	3.3167		12.3857	1.2408	12.0299	1.2707	12.1313	58.4411	
Saudi Riyal	0.2678	0.08074		0.1002	0.9713	0.1026	0.9795	4.7184	
Bahraini Dinar	2.6731	0.80593	9.9821		9.6953	1.0241	9.7771	47.0997	
Qatari Riyal	0.2757	0.08313	1.0296	0.1031		0.1056	1.0084	4.8580	
Omani Riyal	2.6101	0.78696	9.7471	0.9765	9.4670		9.5469	45.9908	
Emirates Dirham	0.2734	0.08243	1.0210	0.1023	0.9916	0.1047		4.8174	
Egyptian Pound	0.0568	0.01711	0.2119	0.0212	0.2058	0.0217	0.2076		
Global Interest Rates									
Currency	1-Week	1-Month	3-Month	6-Month	1-Year				
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.25	1.75	2.00	2.19	2.50				
US Dollar	1.74	1.89	2.33	2.47	2.70				
Euro	-0.42	-0.40	-0.36	-0.32	-0.24				
Sterling Pound	0.48	0.51	0.75	0.87	1.03				
Swiss Franc	-0.80	-0.78	-0.73	-0.64	-0.52				
Australian Dollar	1.64	1.83	1.80	1.78	1.83				
Japanese Yen	-0.03	-0.05	-0.04	0.02	0.11				
Global Bond Yields									
Country	2-Year	5-Year	10-Year	30-Year					
United States	2.27	2.60	2.79	3.03					
Europe	-0.59	-0.10	0.49	1.16					
United Kingdom	0.86	1.16	1.40	1.78					
Commodities									
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %				
Kuwait Oil	64.01	64.02	0.01	▲	0.02	0.84			
Brent	65.72	65.79	0.07	▲	0.11	-2.07			
West Texas	62.04	62.02	-0.02	▼	-0.03	2.55			
Gold	1332.89	1328.64	-4.25	▼	-0.32	2.28			
Silver	16.35	16.34	0.00	▼	-0.02	-3.68			

Source: National Bank of Kuwait



Business

# Gulf Air's first Dreamliner takes to the skies at Bahrain Grand Prix

## Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner fly pass showcases Gulf Air's state-of-the-art aircraft

**MANAMA:** On race day, at the 2018 Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix, Gulf Air, the Kingdom of Bahrain's national carrier, and title sponsor of the Bahrain Grand Prix had a standout, globally broadcast, moment as the airline's first Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner conducted a fly pass before the race showcasing not only the airline's newest, state-of-the-art aircraft but also the new Gulf Air livery.

The new and highly anticipated fleet entry will be delivered on 27th April and will ultimately serve Gulf Air's double daily London Heathrow service, offering increased capacity and enhanced, superior on-board products and services, from 15th June 2018. A total of 5 Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner aircraft will have entered Gulf Air's fleet by end-2018 with an additional 2 aircraft arriving by end-2019 and 3 arriving by end-2020. Gulf Air's Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner orders will ensure it maintains one of the youngest fleets in the region while building upon its award-winning reliability, on time performance and product and service standards.

Gulf Air Chief Executive Officer Kresimir Kukco commented, "As the proud title sponsor of the Bahrain Grand Prix since it first made history in 2004, it is fitting that we use this platform today to reveal our new Gulf Air livery and our new brand. Public reaction to witnessing the return of the Gulf Air fly pass at the Bahrain Grand Prix and to getting an early glimpse of one of our newest incoming aircraft has been overwhelmingly positive.

We are only weeks away from officially taking delivery of Gulf Air's first Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner - a historic moment for Gulf Air and Bahrain and yet another important step in our strategic direction towards furthering Gulf Air's fleet modernization process and supporting our network and overall passen-



ger experience enhancement strategies. Only a few weeks ago, we unveiled a new Gulf Air corporate strategy, 2018 network expansion plans to 8 new routes, details surrounding our incoming fleet, new, best in class products and services, our new overall direction and where we hope the future will take us all. It is time for change and we are embracing change today."

This summer, Gulf Air will begin launching flights to its newest destinations which include flights to Bangalore from 1st May to Alexandria, Egypt from 10th June, Casablanca in Morocco from 11th June, Baku in Azerbaijan from 12th June, Abha and Tabuk in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from 15th June, Calicut, India from 15th June and Sharm El Shaikh, Egypt from 16th June.

Gulf Air's Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners will offer 282 seats in a two-class configuration, with 26 Falcon Gold Class seats and 256 Economy Class seats. The industry-leading

technology of the Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner boasts superior fuel efficiency, environmentally friendly operations and range flexibility that will facilitate Gulf Air's planned network

expansion and fleet optimization at a lower operating cost. Passengers will enjoy many improvements with the 787 family such as the largest win-

dows of any jet, air that is cleaner, more humid and at a higher pressure for greater comfort, large overhead bins with room for everyone's bag, soothing LED lighting and technology that senses and counters turbulence for a smoother ride. "We are very proud to see Gulf Air's first Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner do a fly pass as the opener to the F1 event in Bahrain," said Marty Bentrott, Vice President, Boeing Commercial Airplanes Sales for Middle East, Turkey, Russia, Central Asia and Africa. "The number of airlines operating this super-efficient airplane is increasing across the world and we look forward to the Dreamliner joining Gulf Air's fleet."

The Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner is an all-new, super-efficient family of commercial airplanes that brings big-jet ranges and speed to the middle of the market with 20 to 25 percent less fuel and 20 to 25 per-

cent fewer emissions than the airplanes they replace.

In 2018 Gulf Air's network will serve 49 cities in 26 countries. Gulf Air's incoming fleet of 39 new Boeing and Airbus aircraft will see by end-2018 the arrival of 5 Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners and 2 Airbus A320neo aircraft. Gulf Air is committed to being an industry leader, continually enhancing its services and tailoring a product offering that best fits its passengers' needs.

The airline is famous for its traditional Arabian hospitality, evidenced by its signature family and business friendly products. Today, Gulf Air operates double daily flights or more to select destinations across the GCC, MENA region, Indian Subcontinent and Europe while its network spans the GCC, MENA region, Indian Subcontinent, Europe and the Far East. The airline provides seamless connectivity for passengers travelling across its network via its efficient Bahrain International Airport hub.



### New Gulf Air livery, brand revealed

expansion and fleet optimization at a lower operating cost. Passengers will enjoy many improvements with the 787 family such as the largest win-

## CBK holds draw for 'Your Salary and More' campaign

**KUWAIT:** The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) conducted the first quarterly draw of the salary transfer campaign "Your Salary and More," to select the winners of the promotion. The draw was held on air over

Kuwait 88.8 radio station during the "Diwanayat Al-Yaqout and Al-Ansari program," under the supervision of Commerce and Industry Ministry.

The winners were Mohammad Ali

Mohammad Dyab and Ali Hassan Ali Al-Sibaghah. Talking about the latest campaign, Assistant General Manager for Banking Services of Individuals Sector Hameed Ibrahim Salman said all Kuwaiti customers who transfer their salaries to CBK during the campaign between March 2018 and Dec 31, 2018 will have the chance to receive instant gift of KD 150 in addition to a guaranteed win of up to KD 10,000 or to receive a "0" interest loan of up to KD 10,000.

## flydubai lands in Polish city of Kraków

**KUWAIT:** flydubai has launched its daily service to Kraków, becoming the first UAE carrier to offer direct flights from Dubai. The inaugural flight from Terminal 2, Dubai International landed at John Paul II Kraków Airport on 08 April and was greeted by a water cannon salute. The inaugural flight was piloted by a Polish Captain and First Officer and onboard there were Polish cabin crew members.

The delegation was led by Jeyhun Efendi, Senior Vice President, Commercial Operations (UAE, Middle East, Europe & CIS) at flydubai. HE Robert Rostek, the Polish Ambassador to the UAE, Thierry Aucoc, Senior Vice President, Commercial (Europe & Russian Federation) at Emirates joined the delegation together with representatives from the UAE media. On arrival in Kraków, the delegation was greeted by the UAE Ambassador to Poland, Dr Yousif Eissa Al-Sabri, Radoslaw Wloszek, President of the Kraków Airport Board and Pawel Galiak, Aviation and Commercial Services Director at Kraków Airport.

Speaking at a press conference to mark the occasion, Jeyhun Efendi, Senior Vice President, Commercial Operations at flydubai, said: "As the first carrier to operate daily, direct flights from Dubai to Kraków we are excited about the opportunities that this new route will provide for trade and tourism between the UAE and Poland. This route will be served by the newest aircraft in our fleet, the Boeing 737 MAX 8, which offers our passengers an exceptional travel experience. Not only does this offer our passengers from Kraków connections to more than 200 destinations from Dubai we also know that passengers travelling to Kraków will be keen to explore this popular tourist destination."

flydubai's newest aircraft, the Boeing 737 MAX 8, will operate the direct, daily service to Kraków. The efficient and environmentally



friendly aircraft also features a new cabin offering a flat-bed in Business Class for passengers to sleep comfortably during their flight. Economy Class offers new RECARO seats, which are designed to optimize space and comfort. flydubai also offers exceptional inflight entertainment with a full HD, 11.6-inch screen, featuring more than 1,000 hours of movies, TV shows, music and games in Arabic, English and Russian.

Emirates will codeshare on this route and as part of the Emirates flydubai partnership, each airlines' passengers will have the opportunity to connect in Dubai to hundreds of destinations across the world.

"With our partnership, passengers can connect easily and conveniently to over 90 of flydubai's destinations which complement the Emirates route network, spanning six continents in over 80 countries," said Thierry Aucoc, Senior Vice President, Commercial at Emirates. "Both airlines have grown independently and successfully over the years and this new partnership unlocks the immense value that the complementary models of both companies can bring to consumers, each airline, and to Dubai. We are really proud to be a part of this event and look forward to witnessing flydubai's success on the Polish

market," he added. For bookings under the code-share, Emirates passengers receive complimentary meals and the Emirates checked baggage allowance on flights operated by flydubai in Business and Economy classes.

"A connection offered by the new carrier, flydubai, from Kraków to Dubai International (DXB), opens up wide travel options for passengers from southern Poland. Passengers will certainly appreciate the benefits of the agreement between flydubai and Emirates airlines," said Radoslaw Wloszek, President of the Kraków Airport Board.

"Kraków and Malopolska combine the tradition of many centuries with modernity. They are highly rated by foreign investors and recognized in international rankings. With the extensive tourist and cultural offer, visitors can plan an extraordinary holiday at any time of the year. The new connection is an opportunity for further development to our region and for creating new jobs as well," he added.

With the upcoming launches of flights to Dubrovnik in Croatia today, flights to Catania in Italy and to Thessaloniki in Greece in June, flydubai's route network in Europe will reach 26 points with 135 weekly flights.



## GIC reports net profit of \$121 million for 2017

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Investment Corporation (GIC) announced its results for the financial year ending 31 December 2017. Operating profits, before provisions, reported \$181 million, while the net provisions of \$60 million were provided for the decline in the fair value of investments in the Global Markets and the Principal Investments portfolios. As a result, the Corporation recorded a net profit of \$121 million. The announcement follows the approval of corporation's financial statements by the ordinary general assembly, which was held yesterday at the GIC's headquarters in the State of Kuwait.



Ibrahim Ali Al-Qadhi

ness model followed by the corporation, as well as its sufficient liquidity levels and its remarkable performance.

Al-Qadhi added that principle investments activity across the GCC, whether by entering into new projects or exiting others, is an ongoing process. During 2017, GIC invested in various logistics, health and education sectors with a total value of \$179 million.

Meanwhile, Al-Qadhi stated that during the year, and in order to assess and verify the fairness and integrity of the current valuation, GIC has hired an international valuation firm to conduct a comprehensive and an independent valuation of the Corporation's direct investment portfolio which has a total value of approximately \$2 billion. The results of the valuation were positive in general and emphasize the soundness of the management approach in building up provisions. In November, GIC has paid the full amount of its \$500 million bonds in a timely manner, which has contributed to lowering the debt-to-equity ratio to 52 percent by the end of 2017, a move that reflects Corporation's strategy of reducing its financial liabilities.

## Transfer your salary to NBK and win instant rewards

**KUWAIT:** National Bank of Kuwait creates exclusive and valuable offers for its customers as part of its customer-centric approach. Now new or existing customers who sign up to transfer their salary to NBK during the campaign promotion period can choose to win an instant free gift - ranging from KD 100 to KD 10,000 - or an interest-free loan up to KD 10,000.

interest-free loan up to KD 10,000 and another opportunity for a year's salary." "NBK develops customer-centric campaigns, promotions and offers because we value and appreciate our customers," Al-Qanaie added. "We work to build lasting and loyal relationships with our customers." Customers who transfer their salaries to NBK can avail of a full range of products and services including personal loans, MasterCard and Visa credit cards custom tailored to meet customers' specific lifestyle needs and benefits including free travel insurance and airport lounge access.



Ahmad Al-Qanaie

NBK is among the leading innovators in the region in terms of Fintech. The bank was the first to introduce the use of WhatsApp as a customer service channel. NBK was also the first bank to apply technological solutions to meet customer needs and lifestyle demands. NBK was the first to introduce the ASK ME function via iPads; the bank also adopted many technologies such as ITM and the popular Tap & Pay technology.

NBK's advanced technology solutions include holding the largest fleet of IT-advanced ATMs strategically located throughout Kuwait. NBK was also the first to adopt special-needs tailored ATMs using advanced technology. Moreover, NBK has the safest online banking portal, utilizing world-class security standards and protocols.



After the campaign ends, new and existing customers who transfer their salary to NBK will enter into a draw to win a salary for one year, up to KD 12,000! Three lucky winners will be chosen to receive a salary of 12 months - as a thank you for their continued loyalty and support. Winners will be announced in February 2019.

"NBK goes the extra mile to give our customers unique and extraordinary offers," said Ahmad Al-Qanaie, Consumer Banking Group, National Bank of Kuwait. "With this promotion we offer clients a chance to enjoy instant gifts or



## Technology

# Faced with global warming, aviation aims to turn green

## Norway aims all new vehicle registrations to be zero emission

**OSLO:** Will we someday be able to fly without the guilt of causing environmental damage? A handful of firms and regulators hope that the electric revolution in cars will also take to the skies, helping the industry cope with an expected boom in travel and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. "Many people say that we must get rid of air transport because we will never be able to deal with emissions and noise, but this is an outdated approach," said Norwegian Transport Minister Ketil Solvik-Olsen, who recently hosted an aviation conference in Oslo.

Norway, the largest oil and gas producer in western Europe, is paradoxically a pioneer in the field of electric transport. The Nordic nation aims for all new vehicle registrations to be zero emission by 2025 and launched a first electric ferry in early 2015. After land and water, the northern kingdom is now turning to the sky with the goal of electrifying all short haul flights in just over 20 years. "In my mind, there is no doubt: by 2040 Norway will be operating totally electric," said Dag Falk-Petersen, head of the country's public airport operator, Avinor.

### Tesla of the skies?

Air transportation's impact on global warming is estimated at around five percent through CO2 emissions and other substances, including nitrogen oxide and water vapor. As the number of air

passengers is expected to almost double by 2036 to 7.8 billion per year, according to the International Air Transport Association's (IATA) projections, aviation's impact is on a course to increase substantially if nothing is done.

Meanwhile, the airline industry aims to cut its CO2 emissions in half by 2050 from 2005 levels. While the international umbrella group Climate Action Network (CAN) says these goals are unrealistic, some airlines are beginning to look at electric-powered aircraft as an answer. The small regional carrier Wideroe Airlines, operating in Norway's far north, plans to renew its fleet of twin-engine Bombardier Dash 8 planes with electric-powered aircraft by 2030.

"Aircraft producers see that they have to do it because otherwise there will be a new Tesla taking their positions," said Falk-Petersen, referring to how the upstart US electric car manufacturer has shaken up the traditional automobile industry. Both of the major manufacturers of large passenger aircraft, Airbus and Boeing, are exploring the viability of electric planes.

Airbus aims to develop a hybrid model called E-Fan X, and has teamed up with British engine maker Rolls Royce and German industrial group Siemens. The first flight is planned for 2020. "One of the biggest challenges is electricity storage," Glenn Llewellyn, general manager for electrification at Airbus, said.

As with cars, the performance of batteries is a critical element, with the added problem that they are heavier than fuel and carrying them into the air is the most-energy intensive part of the flight. "But at the same time battery technology is probably the technology in the world which has the most investment. So it will evolve," added Llewellyn.

### 'Any place in the world'

Zunum Aero, a start-up partly financed by US aeronautics group Boeing, meanwhile plans to bring a 12-seat hybrid plane to the market by 2022. "The price that we're targeting is very much in line with the current aircraft but the operation cost is just a fraction, it's literally 60 to 70 percent lower than an equivalent aircraft in operation right now," said the startup's founder Matt Knapp. The expected lower operating costs of electric planes, both due to cheap electricity and simpler motors, means that the highly competitive airline industry could end up adopting them quickly.

Airbus offered several years ago updated aircraft with 15 percent fuel savings, and as jet fuel is a major cost for airlines, they quickly placed orders for thousands as they tried to get ahead of rivals. The transition to electric could also provide another advantage: they are much quieter, meaning they may win exceptions to restrictions imposed due to noise near residential areas.



IN THE AIR: A handout computer generated image released by electric aircraft start-up Zunum Aero shows a Zunum Aero's hybrid-electric regional aircraft flying. — AFP

Combined with the fact that electric planes don't need such long runways, they could be used at some smaller airports close to city centers.

Avinor said switching to electric would also help airlines avoid any climate change related penalties that regulators could impose, such as higher taxes and flying restrictions. Norway sees

itself as a good test bed for electric planes. "There are a lot of issues to deal with, with icy conditions, with heavy winds," says Widero CEO Stein Nilsen.

"But if we can do that here in Norway, I'm certain that this air plane will cope with any conditions in any place in the world." — AFP

## 'Ideas' conference to grapple with dark side of tech

**SAN FRANCISCO:** At a conference where thinkers and luminaries gather to discuss world-changing ideas and innovations, the talk is shifting to the dark side. This year's theme of the annual Technology, Entertainment and Design (TED) conference starting today in Vancouver is "Age of Amazement," but with a keen eye on unintended consequences. The gathering comes amid growing fears about a loss of privacy in the digital world, and a race to artificial intelligence and robotics which could spin out of control.

"The future is amazing, but there is good amazing and there is amazing terrifying," TED curator Chris Anderson said. "There is going to be an intense debate on what we think of the future. We are embracing those fears that the world may have gone mad in one way, but we are also embracing innovations, science and technology." The TED community includes scientists, artists, activists, politicians and superstar entrepreneurs such as founders of Amazon, Google, Microsoft and Netflix. This year's speakers include Netflix co-founder Reed Hastings and star Silicon Valley venture capitalist John Doerr, whose winning investments include early bets on Amazon and Google.

Former US vice president Al Gore, a longtime member of the TED community, will host a discussion on climate change at the conference Anderson expected heated debate on the potential dangers as well as the benefits of new technologies. "Is the world making progress or, despite our best efforts, are we making things worse?" he asked rhetorically. "I think people are astonished and disturbed by a lot of the technology we have built."

### Podcasts popping

While internet-age news cycles have attention shifting from one headline to another, TED is intended as an oasis where ideas and developments are thoughtfully explored. "So many people don't want to hear about progress at the moment; they are not seeing it," Anderson said. "They are feeling stress and anger. You could argue a collective talking ourselves into gloom and doom." Since starting as an intimate gathering on the California coast 34 years ago, TED has grown into a global media platform with a stated devotion to "ideas worth

spreading." TED has a massive following for its trademark presentations in which speakers strive to give "the talk of their lives" in 18 minutes. The standard cost of attending the main TED conference, now in Vancouver, has climbed to \$10,000.

Money brought in by the nonprofit Sapling Foundation behind TED is used to make talks available free in apps, podcasts and videos at online venues including YouTube and ted.com. TED has had a hit with a new live-audience television series in India hosted by Bollywood star Shah Rukh Khan. Podcasts and a TED Radio hour have proven natural fits for the conference's spoken-word style presentations.

TED is poised to launch a native Spanish language podcast in a partnership with Univision as it expands its lineup with offerings such as podcast devoted to the genius of everyday objects and do-it-yourself neuroscience. "The platform has seen spectacular growth despite all the competition from politics," Anderson said. It has also started creating short-form video presentations, as smartphone lifestyles have people accustomed to snippets much shorter than 18 minutes. "In the early days of TED, when you told lecturers, professors and academics they had to deliver a talk in under 20 minutes they looked at you like you were crazy," said TED head of media Colin Helms. "In internet time, when people are used to content as short as 15 seconds, it seems a much meatier format."

### Turning talk to action

Anderson has gracefully but firmly encouraged TED's influential community to act on big ideas that win their hearts or minds. An annual TED prize launched in 2005 that came with cash and support from the conference community to fulfill potentially world-changing wishes will be transformed this year into an "Audacious Project" funding ideas with "the potential to create massive, global change." More than \$250 million has already been committed to the "collaborative philanthropy" model, according to TED. Each year, the project will identify up to five ideas that stand out as thrillingly bold and have a credible path to execution. "The notion of turning ideas into action will be a real sub-theme," he said of this year's gathering. — AFP



FRANCE: Visitors use a Virtual Reality (VR) headset during the 'Laval Virtual' virtual reality, augmented reality and 3D technology show, in Laval, north-western France. — AFP photos

## Zuckerberg to face angry lawmakers as Facebook firestorm rages

**WASHINGTON:** Mark Zuckerberg will appear before US lawmakers this week as a firestorm rocks Facebook over its data privacy scandal, with pressure mounting for new regulations on social media platforms. The 33-year-old chief executive is expected to face a grilling before a Senate panel today, and follow up with an appearance in the House of Representatives the following day. It comes amid a raft of inquiries on both sides of the Atlantic following disclosures that data on 87 million users was hijacked and improperly shared with Cambridge Analytica, a British political consultancy working for Donald Trump's presidential campaign.

On Sunday, Facebook said it had suspended another data analysis firm, US-based Cubeyou, after CNBC reported it used Facebook user information-harvested from psychological testing apps, as in the case of Cambridge Analytica-for commercial purposes. "These are serious claims and we have suspended CubeYou from Facebook while we investigate them," a

Facebook spokesperson told AFP in an email. "If they refuse or fail our audit, their apps will be banned from Facebook."

Lawmakers, meanwhile, have signaled they intend to get tough on Facebook and other online services over privacy. "A day of reckoning is coming for websites like @facebook," Democratic Senator Ed Markey wrote on Twitter Friday. "We need a privacy bill of rights that all Americans can rely upon." Representative Ro Khanna, a California Democrat, agreed that legislation is needed "to protect Americans' dignity and privacy from bad faith actors like Cambridge Analytica, who use social media data to manipulate people."

Khanna tweeted that "self-regulation will not work. Congress must act in the public interest to protect consumers and citizens." Several lawmakers and activists believe the United States should follow the lead of Europe's data protection law set to be implemented in May, which has strict terms for notification and sharing of per-

sonal data online. Zuckerberg told reporters Facebook would follow the European rules worldwide, although cautioned that its implementation may not be "exactly the same format" for various countries and regions.

### Shift on political ads

Facebook meanwhile announced Friday it will require political ads on its platform to state who is paying for the message and would verify the identity of the payer, in a bid to curb outside election interference. The change is meant to avoid a repeat of the manipulation efforts by Russian-sponsored entities which sought to foment discord in 2016, and also responds to criticism about anonymous messages based on Facebook profile data.

Zuckerberg said the change will mean "we will hire thousands of more people" to get the new system in place ahead of US midterm elections in November. "We're starting this in the US and expanding to the rest of the world in the coming months," Zuckerberg said on his Facebook page. "These steps by themselves won't stop all people trying to game the system. But they will make it a lot harder for anyone to do what the Russians did during the 2016 election and use fake accounts and pages to run

ads." Zuckerberg said Facebook is now endorsing the "Honest Ads Act," a bill that would require disclosure of the sources of online political ads. "Election interference is a problem that's bigger than any one platform, and that's why we support the Honest Ads Act," he said. "This will help raise the bar for all political advertising online." Some activists say Facebook needs to do more to guard against manipulation and deception on the platform.

Facebook "should really be turning their attention not only to election ads but to all ads," said Harlan Yu of the technology and social justice nonprofit group Upturn. "They should disclose to the public a detailed accounting of all the bad ads they're taking down." Yu told a forum Thursday at the New America Foundation. Facebook is also likely to face questions on whether it violated a 2011 agreement with the US Federal Trade Commission. Activists have alleged the social network failed to live up to promises to protect privacy.

### Serial offender

David Vladeck, a Georgetown University law professor who headed the FTC's enforcement division when the Facebook deal was negotiated, called the latest incident a "major breach" of the



CALIFORNIA: In this file photo Facebook CEO and founder Mark Zuckerberg speaks during a discussion at the Global Entrepreneurship Summit at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California. — AFP

court-supervised settlement. "Facebook is now a serial offender," Vladeck said in a Harvard Law Review blog post. But Vladeck noted that a major problem with Facebook's privacy woes comes from its failure to get written contracts and guarantees with third parties such as app developers. — AFP



Health

# In sniffing Islamabad, pollen allergies soar

## 130,000 patients register at various health facilities

**ISLAMABAD:** With the approach of springtime, most residents in this capital city look forward to trading in snow and icy weather for milder temperatures and blossoming flowers and trees. But as the days grow longer, the budding trees and blooming flowers are also bearers of an unwelcome reality: the start of the allergy season. As climate change shortens springtime in Islamabad and makes it much less rainy, pollen allergy problems are skyrocketing.

District Health Officer Muhammad Najeem Durrani estimates that more than 130,000 patients with pollen allergy symptoms registered this spring at Islamabad's various health facilities. In previous years, the total was between 40,000 and 50,000, he said. The problem is particularly severe among elderly people and children, said officials at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Science (PIMS), the city's main public hospital.

Aqeel Mustafa, who enters patient information at the hospital, said he had registered more than 600 pollen allergy patients a day since early March, and by the end of the first week of April the total had hit more than 25,000. That is 65 percent higher than last year's registry, Mustafa said, as patients queued up under a scorching sun at the hospital's pollen allergy emergency centre.

### Hospitals step up

Inside the ward, Aamir Aslam was struggling to breathe as a nurse placed a mask over his face to administer medication with a nebulizer. "I have suffered such an acute allergic condition for the first time in my life. I thought I would not live anymore," said the 35-year-old Pakistan Railways employee after he was brought to the hospital with dizziness, a sore throat and eyes, chest pain and difficulty breathing.

To deal with the crisis in allergy admissions, the city's major government hospitals have allocated special beds, stocked medicines, and announced free diagnosis and treatment for allergy patients. In March, health experts warned that Islamabad's allergy sufferers might have to cope with their symptoms for longer than usual as a result of

climate change, which is reducing spring showers that normally wash pollen from the air.

Last month, the pollen count in Islamabad, a city of about 2 million people, hit more than 82,000 pollen grains per cubic metre of air (PPCM), up from a peak of more than 74,000 last year, according to the Pakistan Meteorological Department. "This is a more than 55 times increase from the normal allowable limits under WHO (World Health Organization) standards," said Dr. Waseem Khawaja, an allergy specialist at PIMS hospital.

Rains in the third week of March reduced levels to about 28,000 PPCM, but thousands are still suffering watery red eyes, runny noses, sneezing, coughing and breathlessness, doctors said. The Pakistan Meteorological Department, which has been recording pollen counts since 2003, has seen the city's spring levels rise steadily each year since 2010, as Islamabad's springs become drier and shorter.

### Hotter, dryer

Ghulan Rasul, director general of the Pakistan Meteorological Department, said the city's cool springs have given way to warm ones, most of them without good rain. Both winter and spring are growing shorter as a result of climate change, he said, with summer expanding from 150 to 180 days. Temperatures from mid-February to mid-April used to remain between 10 and 20 degrees Celsius but now range from 20 to 30 degrees Celsius, he said.

"The spring season was spread over 45 days but now it is no more than 10 days with a sharp decline in spring rains," he said. That lack of rainfall, in particular, is "the main cause of the \_ pollen allergy situation in the capital city and adjoining areas." He said the changes were a sign of things to come as climate change gathers speed. "The warming spring ahead, with temperatures reaching up to 30 degree Celsius and less rainy days in coming years, will provide an ideal environment" for more allergy problems, he said, something certain to increase "the country's pollen allergy burden on the health budget".—Reuters

“ I thought I would not live anymore ”



ISLAMABAD: Patients stand in line at the registry kiosk of the Pakistan Institute of Medical Science's pollen allergy emergency centre in Islamabad, Pakistan.—Reuters

# CLINIC PAGE



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

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What's On

# Symphony Style Hotel celebrates Earth Hour

From time to time, we should look around ourselves and take a step towards the environment that can change the world to become a better and more beautiful place. Symphony Style Hotel Kuwait, the jewel of Kuwait City, joined millions of people from more than 118 countries in sending an ecological message to the world. On

March 24, at 8.30 pm, staff and guests at Symphony Style Hotel Kuwait joined together in turning off lights around the hotel, in restaurants, public areas and rooms.

The hotel's responsible business team led the lighting of candles in the hotel grounds as part of the global initiative to reduce energy consumption in the

fight against climate change. The lights were turned off for one hour, enhancing the warm and friendly ambiance of the hotel and reflecting Symphony's Style commitment to a sustainable future. Symphony Style Hotel's annual participation in Earth Hour is in line with the company's responsible business pillars: Think People, Think Community and Think Planet.



## W premieres its signature bold design in Jordan

W Hotels Worldwide, part of Marriott International (NASDAQ: MAR), unveiled W Amman, the brand's first property in Jordan. Developed by Eagle Hills Jordan, the 280-room hotel is located in the heart of Amman's up and coming new downtown neighborhood, Abdali, and features design inspired by the energy of the Middle East and charm of Jordanian history, culture and tradition with a playfully modern twist.

Commenting on the opening, Alex Kyriakidis President and Managing Director, Middle East and Africa, Marriott International said: "W Hotels continue to redefine the hospitality scene globally and we are thrilled to introduce the brand in Jordan and mark our first luxury property in the country. Amman is an ideal destination for the W brand with its engaging social scene and growing passion for design, music and fashion."

W Amman marks the first hotel collaboration between Marriott International and Eagle Hills Jordan which will be followed by three more hotel openings across Jordan - The St. Regis Amman, The Westin Saraya Aqaba and Al Manara, a Luxury Collection Hotel, Saraya Aqaba.

Abdallah Al Fraihat, Executive Director of Operations at Eagle Hills Jordan said: "We are delighted to be working with Marriott International, to introduce four renowned hotel brands to Jordan. As the leading developer in the Kingdom, we are thrilled to launch Amman's newest landmark that combines iconic design and contemporary luxury, transforming the city's skyline and introducing new opportunities to be explored."

W Amman stands tall as a contemporary and unmistakable architectural statement, offering stunning views of the bustling city's seven hills running across the Jordanian capital. Upon arrival, guests are greeted with the iconic W sign, inspired by Amman's unique cityscape and cubic architecture, in the colors of Jordan's distinctive sunset.

Stepping into the Welcome area, the hotel's facade

invokes the unique and colossal beauty of Petra's rock formations, reminiscent of the Nabatean city's striking appearance, one of the new Seven Wonders of the World. Throughout the Canyon Walk, guests are enveloped in a modern design marvel, reinterpreting the natural beauty of Petra's canyon with shard structures and natural tones that can also be seen throughout the hotel.

Each of the 236 rooms and 44 suites at W Amman feature floor-to-ceiling windows and vivid designs, along with W signature beds and modern bathrooms with rain showers. Pillows and throws feature an illustrative interpretation of the Amman skyline and an adapted rendition of beautifully adorned camels of the desert, both in colorful detail.

The hotel features a range of suites including four WOW Suites and a 1,710-square-foot Extreme WOW

features that mirror Amman's extraordinary cityscape.

Elements of Bedouin weaving, flower pots, and locally designed pillows from the Jordan River Foundation (a non-profit focusing on child safety and community empowerment) provide modernized versions of common patterns, colors and shapes from the city. The space is complemented by modern art from Bahraini artist, Jamal A. Rahim that gives an edge of Middle Eastern influence and bright splashes of color alongside the work of Jordanian artist Bader Mahasneh, who utilizes rough surfaces and illuminated figures in a series of striking paintings of faces.

Just steps away from the Living Room, Mesh provides international cuisine with a Levantine touch while bringing the right ingredients together through food, design and guests looking to mingle next to images of fresh produce

cuisines across South East Asia in a sleek setting. The WET Deck (pool deck) brings a new vibe to the city's party scene and will be the place to see and be seen. The beautiful rooftop space is the perfect destination to bask under the sun and enjoy stunning views of west Amman while indulging in cocktails or listening to performances from Amman's up-and-coming musical talent.

The design of the WET Deck includes a modern depiction of The Roman Theater's Atrium. For guests to refuel and rejuvenate, AWAY Spa at W Amman offers massages, body treatments, facials and quick fixes promising look good/feel good experiences in a fun, yet relaxed setup. Guests can then step into the modern FIT gym that features 24/7 access to the newest Technogym equipment. The hotel also plays host to social and business gatherings



Suite (the brand's take on the Presidential suite) - the ultimate party place with sweeping panoramic views of Amman's landscape, an in-room DJ deck, amplified entertainment system, and private jacuzzi.

W Amman is set to add its own rhythm to the beat of Amman's social scene with its vibrant public spaces and culinary experiences. The hotel's Living Room (the brand's take on the traditional lobby) is a clubhouse for the modern traveler, showcasing a fusion of intimate and open areas, low seating and mood-setting lighting among architectural

from Dar Al Anda, one of Jordan's most prominent contemporary art galleries. For those seeking a place to unwind or escape, Aura offers signature beverages and delicious bar bites from around the world in a space that once again reinterprets the stunning angles and elevations of Petra with rose stone tones and colorful, silk-like flooring.

Aura, and other areas in the hotel also feature exquisite pieces of art work from Jordanian artist, Hazem Al Zoubi. Enso, the hotel's signature Pan-Asian restaurant, ignites taste buds by bringing together flavors from five regional

across 780 square meters of versatile meeting and event space, including the stunning 629-square-meter Great Room and four fully equipped, stylish Strategy and Studio rooms.

W Amman offers the W brand's signature Whatever/Whenever(r) service to provide guests whatever they want, whenever they want it. The hotel's W Insider, an in-the-know local expert, connects guests with the hottest events, attractions and adventures to suit any and every travel style.

## Dar Suad Al-Sabah announces closing of 2nd Festival of Arab Literature Buds

Dar Suad Al-Sabah for publishing and distribution announced yesterday that the closing ceremony of the 2nd Festival of Arab Literature Buds will be held on Thursday at the National Library of Kuwait. "The ceremony will be held under the patronage of Sheikhha Dr Souad Mohammed Al-Sabah and the presence of a number of personalities and those interested

in the cultural, educational and literary affairs and the participation of a number of young poets who had competed in this field and achieved progress and excellence," Director of Dar Ali Masoudi said.

He added that the festival, which was launched several months ago, held several meetings in the National Library and conducted competitions that included a number of poems representing the pre-Islamic era and Islamic in various stages, as well as poems of modern poetry of poets from different Arab countries.



Sheikhha Dr Souad Mohammed Al-Sabah

## GUST launches 'The Seen' conference

The Mass Communication and Media (MCM) Department at the Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) launched a three-day cultural industry conference under the name "The Seen" running from April 9 to 11 at their Mishref campus. Organized jointly by students, faculty and student clubs, the conference's aim is to celebrate the various different art forms which fall under the umbrella of "visual communication". More specifically, the conference focuses on photography, fine art, advertising, and digital illustration, with each area represented across each of three differently themed days.

A major component of the "The Seen" is the series of lectures, activities and workshops by Kuwaiti and Arab industry leaders which take place over a period of three days. Each day, leading artists, advertising agencies, illustrators and photographers will share their views about the past, present and future of Kuwait's visual communication scene. The first day, dubbed, "engaging" will focus on individuals and organizations who use visual communication to engage with new communities and the wider society.

The second day, under the theme "Embracing", highlights the work of leading creative companies and individuals including renowned artists like Sharouq Amin, Thuraya Al Baqasami, Amira Behbehani, and Yousef Al Bagshi, photographers like Mohammed Sultan and Abdulaziz Al Sorayya and many others. The third and final day entitled, "Emerging", is dedicated to recognizing new talents, techniques and technologies in the local visual communication field.

Each day, leading artists are conducting workshops including Dr. Fahad Dhawi, Zena Dabbous, Meshari Al Muhaini, Lubna Saif Abaas, Ahmad Muqem and Zainab Abdal. The subjects include environmental graphic design, character illustration, sketching, and iPhone photography, started yesterday, with workshops on pattern design, freedom of artistic expression, and brush letter calligraphy starting today. In addition to the seminars and workshops, the students and public are invited to experience first-hand the various dimensions of visual communications through hands-on activities around the GUST campus, ranging from green screen videography tricks to virtual reality demonstrations.

MCM Department Chair, Dr Fahed Al-Sumait, said, "The event was a tremendous success. We had three days full of activities, speakers, panel discussions, workshops, student tours and fun. We hope this proved to be valuable for the students, entertaining for the guests and informative for everyone." The Seen conference is the fourth organized by the MCM Department.

Each conference is dedicated to an area of emphasis within the department's Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in Mass Communication: Visual Communication, Digital Media Production, and Public Relations and Advertising. Previous events include the first "Seen" in 2014 as well as "The Script" and "The Cause", which dealt respectfully with the fields of media production and public relations in Kuwait. The newly-launched 2018 SEEN conference is open to the public. The Gulf University for Science and Technology, which hosts the event, was founded in 2002 as the first private university in Kuwait. GUST is based on an American-style model of higher education and currently hosts approximately 3,900 full-time students.



Dr. Ali Ansari



## Members of CIHEA to visit Kuwait

Kuwait and Canada enjoy strong and growing bilateral relations, that are well-founded in shared principles and values. Canadians contribute to Kuwait's economy and society with a wide range of services, including healthcare and related education, two sectors represented by the visiting delegation. As part of its mandate to expand partnerships in Kuwait, the Canadian Embassy is pleased to host the largest ever delegation of Canadian health and education organizations to visit the country.

A high-level group of 23 Canadian institutions offering specialized services and expertise in health-related education and training, Canadian International Health Education Association (CIHEA) will visit Kuwait today. This visit is indicative of the genuine interest that exists in strengthening Kuwaiti-Canadian ties and collaboration in this essential field. In addition to the delegation's private program with various local entities, an open house will be held at the Sheraton Hotel-Kuwait from 3 to 4 pm, at which professionals providing health services education in Kuwait are invited to meet with the organizations listed below. The following organizations will be participating in the event:

**YOU ARE INVITED TO AN OPEN HOUSE WITH CANADIAN HEALTH EDUCATION PROVIDERS**

**Canadian International Health Education Association**  
Trade Mission - Kuwait City

**CIHEA**

**Tuesday, April 10, 2018**  
3:00 - 4:00 pm  
Sheraton, Kuwait  
**Canada**

Your opportunity to meet with Canadian leaders in Health Care and Education

**JOIN US AND MEET WITH:**

**Businesses:**

- CAE Healthcare
- Gowling WLG
- International Hospitals Recruitment
- MD Briefcase
- MMI Montreal Medical International
- Saint Elizabeth
- Shift Health
- Yardstick Assessment Strategies

**Associations:**

- Accreditation Canada | Health Standards Organization
- Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing
- Canadian Nurses Association
- College of Family Physicians of Canada
- Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada
- Health Sciences Centres:**
- Sunnybrook
- London Health Sciences Centre

**Universities:**

- Dalhousie University
- McGill University
- Rotman School of Management
- University of Toronto
- Western University
- Colleges:**
- Algonquin College
- Niagara College Canada
- Northern Alberta Institute of Technology



TV



01:00 The Core  
03:20 Seven Years In Tibet  
05:40 Rumble  
07:20 A Good Day To Die Hard  
09:05 The Core  
11:25 The Last Witch Hunter  
13:20 Hunting The Phantom  
15:00 A Good Day To Die Hard  
16:45 The Bodyguard  
18:25 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Out Of The Shadows  
20:25 Allegiant  
22:30 Phone Booth



00:45 River Monsters  
01:40 Cats 101  
02:35 Swamp Brothers  
03:00 Swamp Brothers  
03:25 Monster Mako  
04:15 Alien Sharks: Close Encounters  
05:02 Wildest Latin America  
05:49 Untamed & Uncut  
06:36 Swamp Brothers  
07:00 Swamp Brothers  
07:25 Swamp Brothers  
07:50 Swamp Brothers  
08:15 River Monsters  
09:10 Cats 101  
10:05 Wildest Latin America  
11:00 Swamp Brothers  
11:28 Swamp Brothers  
11:55 Monster Mako  
12:50 Alien Sharks: Close Encounters  
13:45 Cats 101  
14:40 Wildest Latin America  
15:35 Untamed & Uncut  
16:30 River Monsters  
17:25 Pit Bulls & Parolees  
18:20 Cat vs Dog  
19:15 Cats 101  
20:10 Swamp Brothers  
20:38 Swamp Brothers  
21:05 Pit Bulls & Parolees  
22:00 Cat vs Dog  
22:55 Mutant Planet  
23:50 Untamed & Uncut



00:35 Cold Feet  
01:25 Silent Witness  
02:20 Top Of The Lake  
03:20 Trust Me  
04:20 Father Brown  
05:05 Call The Midwife  
06:00 Casualty  
06:50 Father Brown  
07:35 Hold The Sunset  
08:05 Hold The Sunset  
08:35 Casualty  
09:25 Casualty  
10:15 Stella  
11:00 Death In Paradise  
12:00 The Coroner  
12:50 Stella  
13:40 Casualty  
14:35 Casualty  
15:25 Death In Paradise  
16:20 The Coroner  
17:10 Stella  
18:00 Holly City  
18:20 Death In Paradise  
19:00 Death In Paradise  
20:00 Silent Witness  
20:55 The Durrells  
21:45 Death In Paradise  
22:40 Holly City  
23:40 Silent Witness



00:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
01:00 It Takes A Killer  
01:25 It Takes A Killer  
01:55 Britain's Darkest Taboos  
02:50 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence  
03:45 Crimes That Shook Britain  
04:30 It Takes A Killer  
04:50 It Takes A Killer  
05:15 The First 48  
06:00 Live PD: Police Patrol  
06:30 Live PD: Police Patrol  
07:00 It Takes A Killer  
07:20 The First 48  
08:05 Cold Case Files  
08:50 Homicide Hunter  
09:35 The First 48  
10:30 Crimes That Shook Australia  
11:25 Crimes That Shook Britain  
12:20 Cold Case Files  
13:15 Leah Remini: Scientology And The Aftermath  
14:10 The First 48  
15:05 Crimes That Shook Australia  
16:00 Homicide Hunter  
17:00 The Murder Of Laci Peterson  
18:30 The Murder Of Laci Peterson  
20:00 Live PD: Police Patrol  
20:30 Live PD: Police Patrol  
21:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
22:00 Killers: Behind The Myth  
23:00 It Takes A Killer  
23:30 It Takes A Killer



00:05 Teachers  
00:30 Another Period  
01:55 Nathan For You  
02:20 Inside Amy Schumer  
01:45 South Park  
02:10 Nightcap  
02:35 Another Period  
03:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
03:25 Tosh.0  
03:50 South Park  
04:15 Nathan For You  
04:40 Key And Peele  
05:05 Catch A Contractor  
05:30 Disaster Date  
05:55 Ridiculousness Arabia  
06:20 Comedy Central Presents  
Comedy Salvaged  
06:50 Life Or Debt  
07:40 Lip Sync Battle  
08:05 Key And Peele  
08:30 Disaster Date  
08:55 Workaholics  
09:20 Nathan For You  
09:45 Lip Sync Battle  
10:10 Catch A Contractor  
10:35 Friends  
11:00 Key And Peele  
11:25 Disaster Date  
11:50 Ridiculousness Arabia  
12:15 Friendszone  
12:40 Key And Peele  
13:05 Friends  
13:30 Friends  
13:55 Nathan For You  
14:20 Workaholics  
14:45 Disaster Date  
15:10 Friends  
15:35 Key And Peele  
16:00 Nathan For You  
16:30 Friendszone  
16:55 Friends  
17:20 Friends  
17:45 Disaster Date  
18:10 Life Or Debt  
19:00 Friends

19:25 Friendszone  
19:50 Real Husbands Of Hollywood  
20:12 Friends  
20:35 Friends  
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
21:30 The Opposition With Jordan Klepper  
22:00 This Is Not Happening  
22:25 Demetri Martin: Person  
23:15 Real Husbands Of Hollywood  
23:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah



00:30 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
00:55 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
01:20 Finding Bigfoot  
02:10 Somebody's Got To Do It  
03:00 How The Earth Works  
03:50 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor  
04:40 Tanked  
05:30 How It's Made  
05:55 How It's Made  
06:20 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
06:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
07:00 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor  
07:50 How It's Made  
08:15 How It's Made  
08:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
09:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
09:30 Tanked  
10:20 How The Earth Works  
11:10 The Next Great Magician  
12:00 Risking It All  
12:50 How It's Made  
13:15 How It's Made  
13:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
14:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
14:30 Tanked  
14:50 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor  
16:10 How The Earth Works  
17:00 The Next Great Magician  
17:50 Risking It All  
18:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
19:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
19:30 How It's Made  
19:55 How It's Made  
20:20 Tanked  
21:10 The Next Great Magician  
22:00 Risking It All  
22:50 How The Earth Works  
23:40 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor



00:45 A Crime To Remember  
01:40 Murder In The Heartland  
02:35 True Conviction  
03:30 Death On A Submarine  
04:25 Death On A Submarine  
05:20 I Almost Got Away With It  
06:10 Nightmare Next Door  
07:00 Who On Earth Did I Marry?  
07:25 Betrayed  
08:15 Blood Relatives  
09:10 Nightmare Next Door  
10:05 American Monster  
11:00 A Crime To Remember  
11:55 Betrayed  
12:50 I Almost Got Away With It  
13:45 Nightmare Next Door  
14:40 American Monster  
15:35 Gone  
16:30 Betrayed  
17:25 Blood Relatives  
18:20 I Almost Got Away With It  
19:15 Nightmare Next Door  
20:10 American Monster  
21:05 Chandra Levy: A Mistress Murdered  
22:00 Jodi Arias: From Lust To Murder  
22:55 Murder In The Heartland  
23:50 Evil Lives Here



00:00 Hank Zipzer  
00:25 Alex & Co.  
00:45 Disney Mickey Mouse  
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 Zipzer  
03:15 Disney Mickey Mouse  
03:20 Hank Zipzer  
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 Disney Mickey Mouse  
05:50 Rolling With The Ronks S1  
06:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug...  
06:25 Hotel Transylvania: The Series  
06:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts  
06:55 Tangled: The Series  
07:20 Stuck In The Middle  
07:45 K.C. Undercover  
08:10 Bunk'd  
08:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug...  
09:25 Loloirock  
10:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
11:05 Hank Zipzer  
11:30 Alex & Co.  
12:20 Loloirock  
13:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug...  
14:00 The Zhuzhus S1  
14:15 Bunk'd  
14:40 K.C. Undercover  
15:05 Disney Mickey Mouse  
15:10 Bizaardvark  
15:35 Elena Of Avalor  
16:00 Tangled: The Series  
16:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug...  
16:50 Raven's Home  
17:15 K.C. Undercover  
17:40 Raven's Home  
18:05 K.C. Undercover  
18:30 Bunk'd  
18:55 Descendants Wicked World  
19:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug...  
19:25 Liv And Maddie  
19:50 Jessie  
20:15 Disney Mickey Mouse  
20:20 Tangled: The Series  
20:45 Bizaardvark  
21:40 Hotel Transylvania: The Series  
21:55 Stuck In The Middle  
22:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug...  
22:50 Loloirock  
23:10 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
23:35 Binny And The Ghost



01:35 Calimero  
01:50 Henry Hugglemonster  
02:05 Art Attack  
02:30 The Hive  
02:40 Loopdidoo  
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster  
03:10 Art Attack  
03:35 Loopdidoo  
03:50 Calimero  
04:05 Art Attack  
04:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:00 Art Attack  
05:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:45 Loopdidoo  
06:00 Henry Hugglemonster  
06:15 Calimero  
06:30 PJ Masks  
07:00 Trulli Tales  
07:30 Jungle Junction  
07:50 Handy Manny  
08:10 PJ Masks  
08:30 Vampirina  
09:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
09:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers  
10:00 Puppy Dog Pals  
11:00 The Lion Guard  
11:30 The Lion Guard  
12:00 Sofia The First  
12:30 Sofia The First  
13:00 PJ Masks  
13:30 PJ Masks  
14:00 P-King Duckling  
14:30 Vampirina  
15:00 Puppy Dog Pals  
15:30 Sofia The First  
16:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
16:30 Doc McStuffins  
17:00 PJ Masks  
17:45 PJ Masks  
17:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers  
18:00 The Lion Guard  
18:30 Puppy Dog Pals  
19:00 Trulli Tales  
19:30 The Lion Guard  
20:00 Vampirina  
20:30 PJ Masks  
21:00 Trulli Tales  
21:30 Sofia The First  
22:00 P-King Duckling  
22:30 Puppy Dog Pals  
23:00 Miles From Tomorrow  
23:30 PJ Masks



00:15 Ice Cold Gold  
01:05 Impossible Engineering  
01:50 Fire In The Hole  
02:35 What On Earth?  
03:20 Impossible Engineering  
04:05 Buying Alaska  
04:50 Dirty Jobs  
05:35 Storage Hunters  
06:00 Factory Line  
06:23 Dallas Car Sharks  
06:45 Storage Hunters  
07:10 Storage Wars Canada  
07:35 Buying Alaska  
08:20 Factory Line  
08:45 Dallas Car Sharks  
09:10 Dirty Jobs  
09:55 Impossible Engineering  
10:45 Fire In The Hole  
11:30 What On Earth?  
12:20 Factory Line  
12:43 Dallas Car Sharks  
13:05 Storage Hunters  
13:30 Storage Wars Canada  
13:55 Dirty Jobs  
14:40 Ice Cold Gold  
15:30 Impossible Engineering  
16:15 Fire In The Hole  
17:05 What On Earth?  
17:50 Buying Alaska  
18:40 Dirty Jobs  
19:25 Ice Cold Gold  
20:15 Impossible Engineering  
21:00 Killing Fields: Murder Isle  
21:40 Manhunt With Joel Lambert  
22:40 Kidnap And Rescue  
23:30 Street Outlaws vs Fast N' Loud



06:00 Supa Strikas  
06:25 Lab Rats  
06:50 Gravity Falls  
07:15 Marvel's Spider-Man  
07:40 Disney Mickey Mouse  
07:45 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
08:35 Supa Strikas  
09:00 Supa Strikas  
09:25 Mighty Med  
10:20 Phineas & Ferb  
11:10 Lab Rats  
12:00 Right Now Kapow  
12:25 Two More Eggs  
12:30 Right Now Kapow  
12:55 Kirby Buckets  
13:20 Kirby Buckets  
13:45 Gravity Falls  
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse  
14:15 Gravity Falls  
14:40 Pair Of Kings  
15:05 Pair Of Kings  
15:30 Milo Murphy's Law  
15:55 Two More Eggs  
16:00 The Suite Life Of Zack & Cody  
16:25 Lab Rats  
16:50 Walk The Prank  
17:15 Mech-X4  
17:40 Marvel's Spider-Man  
18:05 Kickin' It  
18:30 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
18:45 Kickin' It  
19:10 Mini Ninjas  
19:25 Walk The Prank  
19:50 Marvel's Rocket And Groot  
19:55 Mech-X4  
20:20 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero  
20:45 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
21:10 Kid vs. Kat  
21:35 Marvel's Rocket And Groot  
21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse  
21:45 Lab Rats Elite Force  
22:10 Lab Rats Elite Force  
22:35 Phineas & Ferb  
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA



00:05 WAGs LA  
01:00 WAGs LA  
01:55 WAGs LA  
02:50 Botched  
03:40 Botched  
04:35 Botched  
05:30 Celebrity Style Story  
06:00 Second Wives Club  
06:55 El News Middle East  
07:10 Second Wives Club  
08:10 El News: Daily Pop  
09:10 Botched  
10:10 Botched  
11:05 Botched  
12:00 El News Middle East  
12:15 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
13:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
14:05 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
15:00 El News Middle East  
15:15 El News: Daily Pop

16:15 Botched  
17:10 Botched  
18:05 Botched  
19:00 El News  
20:00 WAGs Atlanta  
21:00 WAGs Atlanta  
22:00 WAGs Atlanta  
23:00 El News Middle East  
23:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians



00:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?  
01:00 Emmerdale  
01:30 Coronation Street  
02:00 Coronation Street  
02:30 The Chase  
03:25 The Voice UK 2018  
04:50 Gino's Hidden Italy  
05:15 Royal Recipes  
06:15 Who's Doing The Dishes?  
07:10 The Chase  
08:05 The Voice UK 2018  
09:30 Gino's Hidden Italy  
09:55 Royal Recipes  
10:00 Who's Doing The Dishes?  
11:50 The Chase  
12:45 Emmerdale  
13:15 Coronation Street  
13:45 Coronation Street  
14:15 Who's Doing The Dishes?  
15:10 The Chase  
16:00 Murdoch Mysteries  
16:55 Murdoch Mysteries  
17:50 Royal Recipes  
18:50 Emmerdale  
19:15 Coronation Street  
19:45 Coronation Street  
20:10 The Chase  
21:00 Murdoch Mysteries  
21:55 Murdoch Mysteries  
22:50 Emmerdale  
23:15 Coronation Street  
23:40 Coronation Street



00:20 Forged: Iron & Fire  
00:45 Pawn Stars  
01:15 Swamp Pickers  
02:00 American Pickers  
02:50 WW2 Treasure Hunters  
03:40 Sean Bean On Waterloo  
04:30 Forged: Iron & Fire  
04:55 Pawn Stars  
05:20 American Pickers  
06:00 Ice Road Truckers  
06:50 Forged: Iron & Fire  
07:15 Pawn Stars  
07:40 WW2 Treasure Hunters  
08:30 Sean Bean On Waterloo  
09:20 Ice Road Truckers  
10:10 Alone  
10:40 Forged: Iron & Fire  
11:25 Pawn Stars  
11:50 WW2 Treasure Hunters  
12:40 Sean Bean On Waterloo  
13:30 Ice Road Truckers  
14:20 American Pickers  
15:10 Alone  
16:00 American Pickers  
16:50 WW2 Treasure Hunters  
17:40 Sean Bean On Waterloo  
18:30 Ice Road Truckers  
19:20 Forged: Iron & Fire  
19:45 Pawn Stars  
20:10 American Pickers  
21:00 Who Killed Tupac?  
21:50 Battle 360  
22:40 Forged: Iron & Fire  
23:05 Pawn Stars  
23:30 Ice Road Truckers



00:15 Poh & Co.  
00:45 Miguel's Feasts  
01:10 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia  
01:40 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet  
02:05 Poh & Co.  
02:35 Restoration Man  
03:30 David Rocco's Dolce India  
03:55 David Rocco's Dolce India  
04:25 Poh & Co.  
04:50 Sinful Sweets  
05:20 Access 360 World Heritage  
06:15 Bangkok Airport  
07:10 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet  
07:35 Poh & Co.  
08:05 Restoration Man  
09:00 David Rocco's Dolce India  
09:25 David Rocco's Dolce India  
09:55 Poh & Co.  
10:20 Sinful Sweets  
10:50 Access 360 World Heritage  
11:45 Bangkok Airport  
12:40 Stepping Out  
13:05 Poh & Co.  
13:35 Restoration Man  
14:30 David Rocco's Dolce India  
14:55 David Rocco's Dolce India  
15:25 Poh & Co.  
15:50 Sinful Sweets  
16:20 Access 360 World Heritage  
17:15 Bangkok Airport  
18:10 Carnivale Eats  
19:05 Restoration Man  
20:00 David Rocco's Dolce India  
20:30 David Rocco's Dolce India  
21:00 Poh & Co.  
21:30 Sinful Sweets  
22:00 Access 360 World Heritage  
22:55 Bangkok Airport  
23:50 Carnivale Eats



00:10 Access 360 World Heritage  
01:00 Taiwan's Toughest  
02:00 Mega Factories  
03:00 Car SOS  
04:00 Access 360 World Heritage  
05:00 Man Hunt  
06:00 Innovation Nation  
06:30 Innovation Nation

07:00 Fish Tank Kings  
08:00 Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey  
09:00 Python Hunters  
10:00 Yukon Gold  
11:00 Wicked Tuna  
12:00 Air Crash Investigation  
13:00 Innovation Nation  
13:30 Innovation Nation  
14:00 Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey  
15:00 I Am Rebel  
16:00 Yukon Gold  
17:00 Wicked Tuna  
18:00 Air Crash Investigation  
19:00 I Am Rebel  
20:00 Yukon Gold  
20:50 Wicked Tuna  
21:40 Air Crash Investigation  
22:30 I Am Rebel  
23:20 Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey



00:20 Attack Of The Big Cats  
01:10 Caught In The Act GPU Reversions  
02:00 Blood Rivals: Lion vs. Buffalo  
02:50 Monster Fish  
03:45 Animals Gone Wild  
04:40 Wild 24  
05:35 Blood Rivals: Lion vs. Buffalo  
06:30 Monster Fish  
07:25 Animals Gone Wild  
08:20 Wild 24  
09:15 World's Deadliest Compilations  
10:10 Savage Kingdom  
11:05 America The Beautiful  
12:00 Sharks Of Lost Island  
12:55 Desert Lions  
13:50 Monster Fish  
14:45 Wild Case Files  
15:40 Wild 24  
16:35 World's Deadliest Compilations  
17:30 Savage Kingdom  
18:25 America The Beautiful  
19:20 Wild Case Files  
20:10 Wild 24  
21:00 World's Deadliest Compilations  
21:50 Savage Kingdom  
22:40 America The Beautiful  
23:30 Sharks Of Lost Island



00:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
00:36 Rabbids Invasion  
01:00 Rabbids Invasion  
01:24 Sanjay And Craig  
01:48 Sanjay And Craig  
02:12 Winx Club  
02:36 Winx Club  
03:00 Harvey Beaks  
03:24 Harvey Beaks  
03:48 Rabbids Invasion  
04:12 Rabbids Invasion  
04:36 Breadwinners  
05:00 Breadwinners  
05:24 The Loud House  
05:48 SpongeBob SquarePants  
06:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
06:36 Harvey Beaks  
07:00 Breadwinners  
07:24 Get Blake  
07:48 Sanjay And Craig  
08:12 Rabbids Invasion  
08:36 The Loud House  
09:00 Regal Academy  
09:24 Winx Club  
09:48 100 Things To Do Before High School  
10:12 Game Shakers  
10:36 School Of Rock  
11:00 Henry Danger  
11:24 The Thundermans  
11:48 I Am Frankie  
12:12 The Frank  
12:36 Massive Monster Mayhem  
13:00 Hunter Street  
13:24 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
13:48 Toon Marty  
14:00 Toon Marty  
14:12 Harvey Beaks  
14:36 Breadwinners  
15:00 Sanjay And Craig  
15:24 Rabbids Invasion  
15:48 SpongeBob SquarePants  
16:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
16:36 The Loud House  
17:00 Toon Marty  
17:12 Toon Marty  
17:24 Massive Monster Mayhem  
17:48 Hunter Street  
18:12 Henry Danger  
18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky And Dawn  
19:00 School Of Rock  
19:24 Game Shakers  
19:48 The Thundermans  
20:12 SpongeBob SquarePants  
20:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
21:00 Harvey Beaks  
21:24 Breadwinners  
21:48 Get Blake  
22:12 Sanjay And Craig  
22:36 Rabbids Invasion  
23:00 The Loud House  
23:24 Regal Academy  
23:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles



00:05 Max & Ruby  
00:28 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
00:39 Kiva Can Do!  
00:50 The Day Henry Met  
00:56 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
01:18 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
01:40 Paw Patrol  
01:52 Kid-E-Cats  
01:57 Kid-E-Cats  
02:02 Shimmer And Shine  
02:24 Nella The Princess Knight  
02:36 Paw Patrol  
03:00 Max & Ruby  
03:23 Dora The Explorer  
03:46 Sunny Day  
04:08 Nella The Princess Knight  
04:31 Shimmer And Shine  
04:53 Wallykazam!  
05:17 Zack & Quack  
05:28 The Day Henry Met  
05:33 The Day Henry Met  
05:39 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
06:00 Rusty Rivets  
06:13 Paw Patrol  
06:37 Dora The Explorer  
07:00 Nella The Princess Knight  
07:22 Kiva Can Do!  
07:33 Kiva Can Do!  
07:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
08:06 Paw Patrol  
08:30 Shimmer And Shine  
08:53 Nella The Princess Knight  
09:15 The Day Henry Met  
09:21 Paw Patrol  
09:45 Rusty Rivets  
10:09 Wallykazam!  
10:32 Bubble Guppies  
10:56 Team Umizoomi  
11:18 Kid-E-Cats  
11:24 Shimmer And Shine  
11:46 Sunny Day  
12:08 Max & Ruby

12:32 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
12:43 Kiva Can Do!  
12:53 The Day Henry Met  
12:59 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
13:22 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
13:44 Paw Patrol  
13:56 Kid-E-Cats  
14:02 Shimmer And Shine  
14:24 Nella The Princess Knight  
14:36 Paw Patrol  
15:00 Max & Ruby  
15:23 Dora The Explorer  
15:46 Sunny Day  
16:08 Nella The Princess Knight  
16:32 Shimmer And Shine  
16:54 Wallykazam!  
17:17 Zack & Quack  
17:28 The Day Henry Met  
17:32 The Day Henry Met  
17:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
18:00 Rusty Rivets  
18:13 Paw Patrol  
18:37 Dora The Explorer  
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19:22 Kiva Can Do!  
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21:15 The Day Henry Met  
21:21 Paw Patrol  
21:44 Rusty Rivets  
22:08 Wallykazam!  
22:31 Bubble Guppies  
22:55 Team Umizoomi  
23:17 Kid-E-Cats  
23:23 Shimmer And Shine  
23:44 Sunny Day



00:05 How I Met Your Mother  
00:40 How I Met Your Mother  
01:05 Seinfeld  
01:30 Seinfeld  
01:55 According To Jim  
02:20 According To Jim  
02:45 According To Jim  
03:10 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
04:00 Alone Together  
04:25 LA To Vegas  
04:50 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
05:40 Marry Me  
06:05 The Bernie Mac Show  
06:30 Fresh Off The Boat  
06:55 Mom  
07:20 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
08:10 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
09:00 Alone Together  
09:25 LA To Vegas  
09:50 Brooklyn Nine-Nine  
10:15 Quacks  
10:45 Marry Me  
11:10 The Bernie Mac Show  
11:35 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
12:20 Fresh Off The Boat  
12:45 Mom  
13:10 How I Met Your Mother  
13:35 How I Met Your Mother  
14:00 Seinfeld  
14:25 Seinfeld  
14:50 Marry Me  
15:15 Brooklyn Nine-Nine  
15:40 Quacks  
16:10 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
17:00 Fresh Off The Boat  
17:30 Mom  
18:00 How I Met Your Mother  
18:30 How I Met Your Mother  
19:00 Seinfeld  
19:30 Seinfeld  
20:00 Speechless  
20:30 Great News  
21:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
22:00 Superstore  
22:30 Superstore  
23:00 Difficult People  
23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers



00:15 Cars  
03:15 Confessions Of A Teenage Drama Queen  
05:00 Inspector Gadget  
06:30 The Parent Trap  
08:45 Cars  
10:45 Confessions Of A Teenage Drama Queen  
12:30 Finding Dory  
14:30 Toy Story 3  
16:30 Cars 2  
18:30 The Lone Ranger  
21:15 Finding Dory  
23:15 Toy Story 3



01:15 Cars  
03:15 Confessions Of A Teenage Drama Queen  
05:00 Inspector Gadget  
06:30 The Parent Trap  
08:45 Cars  
10:45 Confessions Of A Teenage Drama Queen  
12:30 Finding Dory  
14:30 Toy Story 3  
16:30 Cars 2  
18:30 The Lone Ranger  
21:15 Finding Dory  
23:15 Toy Story 3



00:00 9-1-1  
01:00 Grimm  
01:50 Stitches  
02:40 The Resident  
03:30 Absentia  
04:20 9-1-1  
05:20 Chicago Med  
06:10 The Night Shift  
07:00 Good Morning America  
09:00 The View  
10:00 Chicago Med  
12:00 The Night Shift  
13:00 Chicago P.D.  
14:00 The Resident  
15:00 The View  
16:00 Live Good Morning America  
18:00 The Night Shift  
19:00 Chicago Med  
20:00 Chicago P.D.  
21:00 The Voice  
23:00 Star



01:20 Jeff, Who Lives At Home  
03:00 Boris And Natasha: The Movie  
04:35 Big Momma's House 2  
06:20 Daddy's Home  
08:05 Christmas Eve  
09:45 Big Momma's House 2  
11:30 Daddy's Home  
13:15 Christmas Eve  
15:00 My Bakery In Brooklyn  
16:45 Big Mommas: Like Father, Like Son  
18:40 Meet Dave  
20:20 Growing Up And Other Lies  
22:00 My Man Is A Loser  
23:45 Deuce Bigalow: European Gigolo



00:00 The Preppie Connection  
01:50 The Remains Of The Day  
04:15 An Inconvenient Truth  
06:05 African Safari  
07:45 Days Of Heaven  
09:30 The Remains Of The Day  
11:55 An Inconvenient Truth  
13:40 Akeelah And The Bee  
15:45 The Last 100 Days Of Diana  
17:25 The Beat Beneath My Feet

19:10 It Boy  
21:00 Wild Bill  
22:55 On My Way



00:40 Felix All Around The World  
02:10 Shopkins - Chef Club  
03:10 The Fairy Tales Tree  
04:35 Deep  
06:15 Teo: The Intergalactic Hunter  
07:40 The Happy Cricket  
09:10 Amila's Secret  
10:25 Ploddy Police Car  
11:50 Shopkins - Chef Club  
12:50 The Fairy Tales Tree  
14:15 Twigson Ties The Knot  
15:45 Amila's Secret  
17:00 Krazy Planet  
18:25 Dinofroz Return To The Past World  
20:05 Twigson Ties The Knot  
21:35 The Happy Cricket  
23:05 Ploddy Police Car



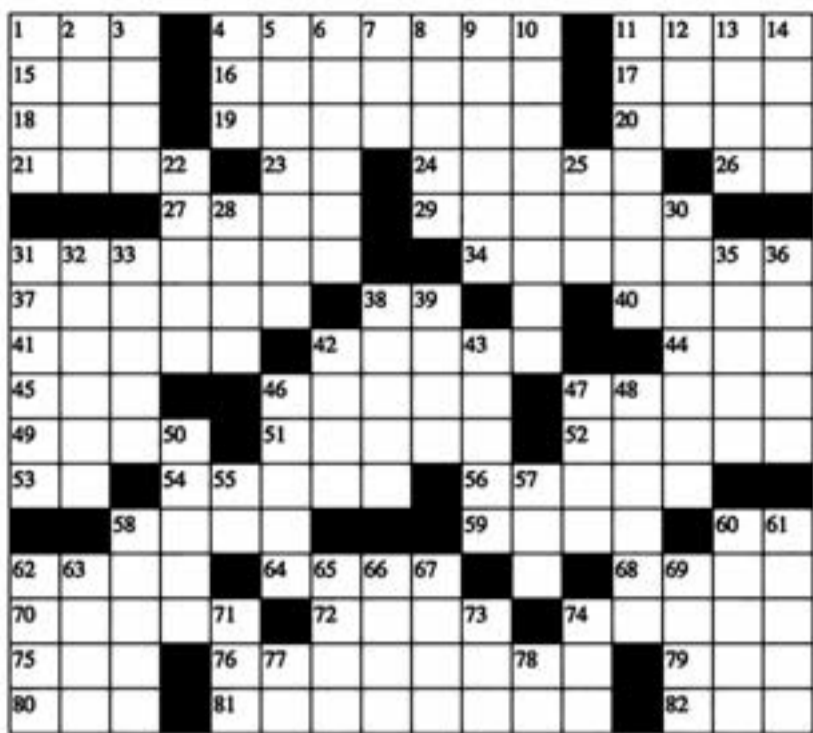
00:25 The Humbling  
02:15 Tekken: Kazuya's Revenge  
03:55 A Monster Calls  
05:45 The Angry Birds Movie  
07:30 Batman: The Killing Joke  
08:50 Tekken: Kazuya's Revenge  
10:25 A Monster Calls  
12:15 Finding Altamira  
13:55 Miss Peregrine's Home For Peculiar Children  
16:10 Dreamgirls  
18:25 The To Do List  
20:15 Dirty Dancing  
22:00 The Revenant



00:30 How Do They Do It?  
00:55 Food Factory USA  
01:20 Invent It Rich  
02:10 Curiosity: How Will The World End?  
03:00 Prototype This  
03:48 Mythbusters: The Search  
04:36 How Do They Do It?  
05:00 Food Factory USA  
05:24 Invent It Rich  
06:12 Curiosity: How Will The World End?  
07:00 How



CROSSWORD 1880



ACROSS

1. The compass point that is one point east of due south.
4. A flat tortilla with various fillings piled on it.
11. Toward the mouth or oral region.
15. Someone who is morally reprehensible.
16. An amino acid that does not occur in proteins but is found in the muscle tissue of vertebrates both in the free form and as phosphocreatine.
17. An amino acid that is found in the central nervous system.
18. A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
19. Morally rigorous and strict.
20. Advanced in years.
21. Lacking or deprive of the sense of hearing wholly or in part.
23. A state in the eastern United States.
24. Conforming to an ultimate standard of perfection or excellence.
26. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
27. A light springing movement upwards or forwards.
29. Belonging to or prescribed for celiac disease.
31. Someone acting as an informer or decoy for the police.
34. English Pre-Raphaelite painter (1829-1896).
37. Related to or written for or performed by a chorus or choir.
40. A former copper coin of Pakistan.
41. Relating to or characteristic of people of Rome.
44. Of a light yellowish-brown color n 1.
45. (folklore) Fairies that are somewhat mischievous.
49. A member of the Siouan people formerly living in the Missouri river valley in NE Nebraska.
51. The seventh month of the Moslem calendar.
52. Indigo bush.
53. A note appended to a letter after the signature.
54. A republic in West Africa on the Gulf of Guinea.
56. Botswana statesman who was the first president of Botswana (1921-1980).
59. A sensation (as of a cold breeze or bright light) that precedes the onset of certain disorders such as a migraine attack or epileptic seizure.
62. A collection of objects laid on top of each other.
64. An ancient Hebrew unit of dry measure equal to about a bushel.
68. A brace that extends from the rear of the keel to support the rudderpost.
70. American dramatist (1928-).
72. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
75. The compass point that is one point east (clockwise) of due north.
76. Someone who imparts energy and vitality and spirit to other people.
79. A member of a Mayan people of southwestern Guatemala.
80. A colloid in a more solid form than a sol.
81. Medium tall celery pine of New Zealand.
82. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

1. Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
2. A Chadic language spoken in northern Nigeria.
3. Tropical starchy tuberous root.
4. A protocol developed for the internet to get data from one network device to another.
5. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (trade names Orudis or Orudis KT or Oruvail).
6. A long brightly colored shawl.
7. Of or relating to or characteristic of Thailand of its people.
8. Of or relating to Attica or its inhabitants or to the dialect spoken in Athens in classical times.
9. An ornamental jewelled headdress signifying sovereignty.
10. Segmented worms.
11. A member of the Siouan people formerly inhabiting the Black Hills of western South Dakota.
12. A small piece of cloth.
13. In bed.
14. An informal term for a father.
22. All the plant life in a particular region.
25. Aromatic bulb used as seasoning.
28. A feeling of strong eagerness (usually in favor of a person or cause).
30. Hard fiber used in making coarse twine.
32. United States clockmaker who introduced mass production (1785-1859).
33. Attractiveness to the opposite sex.
35. Complacently or inanely foolish.
36. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
38. A strong-smelling plant from whose dried leaves a number of euphoriant and hallucinogenic drugs are prepared.
39. Type genus of the Amidae.
42. English actor noted for his portrayals of Shakespeare's great tragic characters (1789-1833).
43. A coffee cake flavored with orange rind and raisins and almonds.
46. A just detectable amount.
47. The sixth month of the civil year.
48. Having a woven pattern.
50. With the mouth wide open as in wonder or awe.
55. An expression of greeting.
57. The central part of a car wheel (or fan or propeller etc) through which the shaft or axle passes.
58. A confusion of voices and other sounds.
60. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
61. Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.
63. A river in central Europe that arises in northwestern Czechoslovakia and flows northward through Germany to empty into the North Sea.
65. A symptom of some physical hurt or disorder.
66. Stable gear consisting of either of two curved supports that are attached to the collar of a draft horse and that hold the traces.
67. Any of various strong liquors distilled from the fermented sap of toddy palms or from fermented molasses.
69. God of love and erotic desire.
71. Take in solid food.
73. The 7th letter of the Greek alphabet.
74. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
77. A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.
78. A midwestern state in north central United States in the Great Lakes region.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

This year will bring your love and family life to the fore; you may be pleasantly surprised by some gossip you hear. This period of time is marked by thoughtless behavior, getting involved in things without thinking. You will have the innate need to streamline and simplify your lifestyle; you will have an opportunity to mix business and pleasure. You will be noticed for your accomplishments and there could be an award associated with this. Relationships are pleasant and easy right today and tonight. Enjoy dinner in an unusual setting; musical entertainment will be especially appealing. You should sit back and enjoy the new relationship you are building with yourself through physical and spiritual evolution.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You desire to streamline and remove clutter from your emotional, spiritual and physical life. This could involve taking items to the trash, a charity outlet or maybe even cutting someone loose that may create negative energy. Your surroundings could seem unfamiliar and uncomfortable just now. Now is the time to spend time with like-minded people that relate to your way of thinking. You wonder if there is something you're missing when it comes to finding true love; friends are wonderful but sometimes not enough. Your sense of making things happen through organization and encouragement will serve you and others well. Allow art to transform your thoughts and take you to exciting new places this evening.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Your old ways have served their purpose; you will replace them with new healthier routines and choices. Your emotions may seem overpowering and much deeper than usual. Starting over will be easy regarding a new romance and other aspects of your life. Your spirit is strong and getting stronger. You could have a strong desire to change behaviors and routines; focus on making them positive and they will be long lasting. You could feel anxious if your affectionate feelings are not returned. Your comfort level will be reached by surrounding yourself with like-minded people with similar goals. You will be more inclined to look inside and keep what you find to yourself later this evening.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You will long to streamline and eliminate clutter from your physical, mental and spiritual life. You always seem to be in search of something new. You could find yourself searching for universal love and support that most people don't even realize exists. Your intelligence and cutting-edge foresight will be appreciated and complimented today. This could be the day for uncovering unexpected knowledge. You may be treated badly by a rude person who constantly interrupts your verbal and mental flow. Separate yourself from those you dislike; there is a good reason you are not fond of them. Your quiet contemplation will come to the rescue of a sensitive situation. You know what you are capable of; have a grateful heart tonight.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You could have a difficult time deciding what to do about an opportunity at work which conflicts with an issue at home. If you have been assigned to a project you have no confidence in perhaps you should voice your concerns to the boss. Sometimes we make our very best decisions when we are put under extreme pressure. Try not to lose something that would immensely improve the quality of life just to keep peace; you know how to debate but even better you know how to persuade. Keep your impetuous nature under control. You will want to form new routines and discover new favorites. Events may occur that upset you and threaten to throw you off course. Take a deep breath, put your feet up and enjoy an old movie with a loved one.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You will struggle with having respect for rules and regulations that seem to serve only a few. You may find yourself publicly defending like-minded people who have gotten into hot water for their views. Watch your words and actions closely as there are many who consider you an example to be followed. You will feel the pull of doing something spur of the moment and without the least bit of planning; watch you don't push yourself into a bad situation. New hobbies and habits will surface during the new cycle you have entered; make them positive if you can because they will be with you for some time to come. You could share a meal with someone to night who has some gossip you will want to hear and keep to yourself.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

The new day brings energy and a positive attitude! You want to start with a clean slate and you will find new and exciting prospects before you; leave your mind open to new challenges. You could discover a new healthy drink to replace an old, unhealthy one; this may seem small to some, but very important to you. You could feel as though you're being attacked when someone criticizes some of your new habits and practices. You have a reputation for getting things done; your assistance will be requested by a well known person. You may see something in a magazine that inspires you to replicate it at home. You will radiate confidence as you move forward with a new diet and exercise plan; you long to feel good again! You are well on your way.



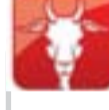
Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

This new cycle brings with the vibration of opportunity for making things happen; your attitude and choices are all that matter now, make sure they are positive. You will feel an acute sense of what is going on in business and finances. Your efforts will pay off handsomely as the stars are aligned to support what you do. Your easygoing manner will be more encouraging than a pushy one. Some of your suggestions could be ill-received by several of those around you; you may not favor much today. You could feel drawn to trying things a new way regarding your routine! Someone you spend time with today will be a comfortable companion who likes your quirky way of looking at things. Your spirits are high when dining on something exotic.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You have entered a cycle of wearing your heart on your sleeve; in other words, you will make no attempt to hide your feelings or opinions. People pay attention when you make strong statements. Try to reign in your fiery passions as you go through this time. You may have a tendency to create new behaviors that you will exhibit for a long time; you may change this energy wisely. The door has opened for working with clean slates; fresh starts at work and home are prominent here and could include all facets of each. A choice later today could confuse or anger you due to the sensitive nature of it. There could be an invitation to a gathering or party that could create a major problem for you; seriously consider what this could cost.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You consider friends, honor and duty to be your source of security now. You strongly desire a different path, new attitudes and intuition tells you the time is now. You put others needs ahead of your own in some instances. You will be at odds with someone close and feel closed away from your current situation in life. Never fear, you will regain your direction and be better for the detour. Pressure from someone concerning personal issues sparks sensitivities and could cause serious damage to the relationship. It will take time and effort to return to normal. Let your mind wander and release built up tensions that lower your energy. Tonight, will bring a new experience for you and a nice companion.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You have entered a period of being outspoken regarding your feelings and plans. You may have a tendency to be hasty and irresponsible, perhaps you may be running from something that is not even there! There will be an opportunity to start over with a project that has seemed hopeless. Someone offends you by making comments on your private life that are hurtful; this person is bitter about something you said. Try to hold your temper later today when a meeting takes an unexpected turn. Your ideas will be revisited at a later day when appropriate. Music will soothe you this afternoon and into the evening. You will receive news about a family member that could include you; plans made long ago could become important again.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Others may see you as being stressed out and nervous. You could feel rattled and disoriented when making decisions or just as you go through your day; stop and take a deep breath as you stretch arms and legs. A need for attention from your lover could be prominent now or this could be a desire to call all the shots and have everything your way because things would run smoother. You could attend a luncheon or early dinner with enjoyable guests and wonderful food; whatever this is will be pleasant. The day will flow together in perfect synchronicity and at the end of the day your spirits could rise. You may finally reach a decision about a side business you have considered awhile; enjoy what you do and do well.

Wordsearch Puzzle

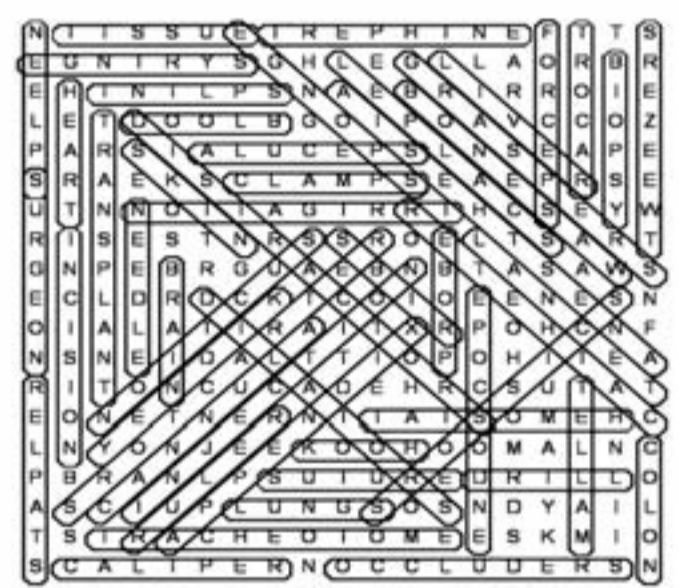
Thankful For...

Find and circle all of the people and things to be thankful for. The remaining letters spell a secret message.



- |                  |             |                |              |
|------------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|
| ACTS OF KINDNESS | ELECTRICITY | GRANDPA        | PETS         |
| A PLACE TO LIVE  | EYEGLASSES  | HAPPY MEMORIES | RAINBOWS     |
| BEACHES          | FAITH       | HOLIDAYS       | SCHOOL       |
| BEAUTIFUL NATURE | FAMILY      | HUMOR          | SINGING      |
| BLESSINGS        | FLOWERS     | INTERNET       | SISTERS      |
| BOOKS            | FOOD        | LAUGHTER       | SMART PHONES |
| BROTHERS         | FREEDOM     | LOVE           | SMILES       |
| CARE GIVERS      | FRESH AIR   | MUSIC          | SUNSHINE     |
| CHILDREN         | FUN         | NURSES         | TEACHERS     |
| CHRISTMAS        | GOOD HEALTH | PARENTS        | TELEVISION   |
| CLEAN WATER      | GRANDMA     | PEACE          | VOLUNTEERS   |
| CLOTHING         |             |                | WARM SHOWERS |
| COMPUTERS        |             |                |              |

Surgery



- |            |            |            |             |
|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| ANESTHESIA | DRILL      | LUNGS      | SPLINT      |
| APPENDIX   | ENDOSCOPE  | MALLET     | SPONGE      |
| BIOPSY     | FORCEPS    | NEEDLE     | STAPLER     |
| BLOOD      | GRASPERS   | OCCLUDERS  | SUCTION     |
| BONE SAW   | HEART      | PROBE      | SURGEON     |
| BRAIN      | HEMOSTAT   | RETRACTORS | SUTURE      |
| CALIPER    | HOOK       | RIBS       | SYRINGE     |
| CANNULA    | INCISION   | RULER      | TISSUE      |
| CATHETER   | INJECTION  | SCALPEL    | TRACHEOTOME |
| CLAMPS     | IRRIGATION | SCISSORS   | TRANSPLANT  |
| COLOR      | KIDNEY     | SKIN       | TREPHIRE    |
| DILATORS   | LANCET     | SPIGULA    | TRUCKAR     |
| DIATRATORS | LIVER      | SPLEEN     | TWEEZERS    |

The hidden message is: THE LARGEST ORGAN OF THE HUMAN BODY IS SKIN

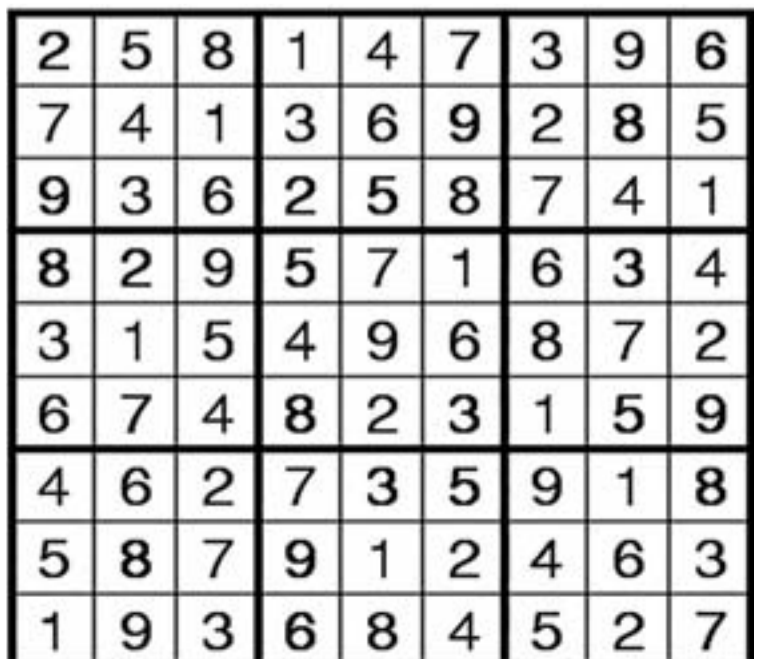
Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution





# Classifieds

Tuesday, April 10, 2018

**Kuwait Times**  
 Now you can browse  
[www.kuwaittimes.net](http://www.kuwaittimes.net)  
 e-mail: info@kuwaittimes.net

**STATE OF KUWAIT**  
 DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION  
 METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 6819 - 6817  
 Fax: (+965) 24348714  
[www.met.gov.kw](http://www.met.gov.kw)



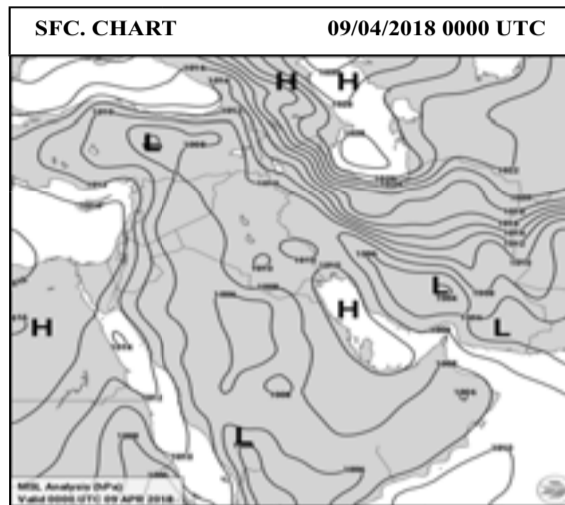
## Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

**BY DAY:** Partly cloudy with light to moderate variable wind to south easterly wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h with a chance for scattered rain later on.

**BY NIGHT:** Partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times south easterly wind changing to variable wind, with speed of 08 - 40 km/h with a chance for rain that might be thundery.

WEATHER WARNING	No Current Warnings
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STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	33 °C	23 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	33 °C	20 °C
ABDALY	33 °C	18 °C
BUBYAN	-- °C	-- °C
JAHRA	34 °C	21 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	31 °C	21 °C
SALMIYAH	30 °C	23 °C
AHMADI	-- °C	-- °C
NUWASIB	29 °C	21 °C
WAFRA	32 °C	20 °C
SALMY	31 °C	19 °C



4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Tuesday	04/10	Clouds will decrease gradually with a chance for light rain	32 °C	20 °C	SE	10 - 42 km/h
Wednesday	04/11	Cloudy to partly cloudy with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times	35 °C	22 °C	SE	15 - 45 km/h
Thursday	04/12	Cloudy to partly cloudy with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times	32 °C	23 °C	SE-VRB	10 - 40 km/h
Friday	04/13	Mostly Sunny	32 °C	19 °C	VRB-N	06 - 24 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:09
Sunrise	05:30
Zuhr	11:50
Asr	15:23
Sunset	18:10
Isha	19:29

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	31 °C
MIN. Temp.	22 °C
MAX. RH	77 %
MIN. RH	32 %
MAX. Wind	N 32 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

## Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

## Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401

## Airlines

American Airlines	22087425
	22087426
Kuwait Airways	171
Jazeera Airways	177
Jet Airways	22924455
FlyDubai	22414400
Qatar Airways	22423888
KLM	22425747
Royal Jordanian	
22418064/5/6	
British Airways	22425635
Air France	22430224
Emirates	22921555
Air India	22438184
Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Egypt Air	22421578
Swiss Air	22421516
Saudia	22426306
Middle East Airlines	22423073
Lufthansa	22422493
PIA	22421044
Bangladesh Airlines	22452977/8
Indian Airlines	22456700
Oman Air	22958787
Turkish Airlines	22453820/1
Aeroflot	22404838/9

**EMERGENCY**  
  
**112**

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is  
**1889988**



Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page ([www.kuwait-airport.com.kw](http://www.kuwait-airport.com.kw))

**DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION**

Arrival Flights on Tuesday 10/4/2018						Departure Flights on Tuesday 10/4/2018					
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	KAC	672	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	JZR	176
THY	772	Istanbul	00:15	KAC	618	Doha	285	Dhaka	00:01	MSR	611
KAC	102	London	00:50	GFA	1078	Doha	14:10			AXB	394
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	KAC	221	Bahrain	14:15	AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05
JZR	539	Cairo	01:00	FDB	059	Tehran	14:20	JZR	528	Asyut	00:15
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	KAC	286	Dubai	14:20	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:30
RJA	642	Amman	01:35	SVA	500	Dhaka	14:25	MSC	406	Sohag	00:30
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	KAC	788	Jeddah	14:45	FDB	072	Dubai	00:35
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:00	ETD	303	Jeddah	14:50	MSC	412	Asyut	01:00
AXB	395	Kozhikode	02:00	KAC	304	Abu Dhabi	15:05	JAI	571	Mumbai	01:05
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:15	KNE	529	Mumbai	15:05	JZR	142	Doha	01:45
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	KAC	562	Jeddah	15:10	KAC	677	Dubai	01:50
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	OMA	645	Amman	15:20	KAC	417	Manila	02:00
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30	ABY	127	Muscat	15:20	THY	773	Istanbul	02:30
JZR	553	Alexandria	02:55	KAC	502	Beirut	15:35	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:30
JZR	607	Kochi	02:55	UAE	857	Dubai	15:45	DLH	625	Frankfurt	02:45
KAC	418	Manila	03:05	ETD	995	Abu Dhabi/Bahrain	16:00	AXB	396	Kozhikode	02:55
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	JZR	1535	Cairo	16:10	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	QTR	1072	Doha	16:15	QTR	1087	Doha	03:40
MSR	606	Luxor	03:05	KAC	118	New York	16:20	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:55
KAC	382	Delhi	03:10	FDB	051	Dubai	16:20	KKK	1269	Istanbul	03:55
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	NIA	361	Alexandria	16:50	OMA	644	Muscat	03:55
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	JZR	125	Bahrain	16:55	THY	765	Istanbul	04:00
LMU	5510	Cairo	04:00	KAC	542	Cairo	17:00	MSR	607	Luxor	04:05
JAI	572	Mumbai	04:00	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:05
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	04:15	GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
KAC	1544	Cairo	04:25	JZR	777	Jeddah	17:35	LMU	5511	Cairo	05:00
JZR	609	Hyderabad	04:30	JZR	145	Doha	17:40	QTR	1077	Doha	05:30
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	JZR	177	Dubai	17:40	KAC	303	Mumbai	05:30
KAC	284	Dhaka	04:50	QTR	1080	Doha	18:10	FDB	070	Dubai	05:45
PAL	668	Manila	05:00	JZR	483	Istanbul	18:20	UAE	874	Dubai	06:15
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	MSR	620	Cairo	18:30	JZR	786	Riyadh	06:25
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	RJA	640	Amman	19:00	JZR	560	Sohag	06:25
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05	THY	771	Istanbul	06:50
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	UAE	875	Dubai	19:05	JZR	671	Dubai	06:55
JZR	561	Sohag	05:55	FDB	063	Dubai	19:10	RJA	645	Amman	07:05
KAC	362	Colombo	06:00	KAC	744	Dammam	19:10	ETD	9882	Dubai	07:05
BAW	157	London	06:10	ABY	123	Sharjah	19:20	GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
KAC	204	Lahore	06:30	NIA	0161	Cairo	19:30	KAC	167	Paris	07:35
THY	6376	Istanbul	06:30	WAN	874	Istanbul	19:30	KAC	171	Frankfurt	08:00
KAC	678	Dubai	06:45	WAN	966	Tbilisi	19:30	KAC	501	Beirut	08:00
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00	KAC	776	Riyadh	19:35	THY	6376	Dubai/Istanbul	08:10
JZR	605	Ahmedabad	07:05	KAC	156	Istanbul	19:35	KAC	165	Rome	08:15
JZR	143	Doha	07:20	RBG	555	Alexandria	19:40	FDB	054	Dubai	08:35
JZR	529	Asyut	07:30	KAC	674	Dubai	19:40	KAC	787	Jeddah	08:40
KAC	358	Kochi	07:40	FDB	057	Dubai	19:50	BAW	156	London	08:55
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:45	KAC	616	Bahrain	20:05	KAC	613	Bahrain	08:55
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	OMA	647	Frankfurt	20:05	KAC	117	New York	09:00
KAC	384	Delhi	08:05	DLH	624	Doha	20:10	KAC	561	Amman	09:40
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	QTR	8511	Doha	20:15	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45
WAN	352	Luxor	08:30	KAC	620	Beirut	20:15	KAC	671	Dubai	09:45
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	MEA	402	Rome	20:25	KAC	101	London	09:45
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	KAC	166	Doha	20:40	UAE	856	Dubai	10:00
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	QTR	1088	Doha	20:40	KAC	541	Cairo	10:00
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	172	Frankfurt	20:45	KAC	515	Tehran	10:00
IRA	675	Lar	09:40	JZR	553	Alexandria	20:50	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:10
SYR	341	Damascus	10:00	KLM	445	Amsterdam	21:00	KAC	773	Riyadh	10:10
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	UAE	859	Dubai	21:15	KAC	617	Doha	10:15
WAN	312	Asyut	10:20	ALK	229	Colombo	21:15	QTR	1071	Doha	10:20
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:15	KAC	155	Istanbul	10:25
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	KAC	168	Paris	21:20	FDB	056	Dubai	10:35
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	GFA	219	Bahrain	21:50	JZR	778	Jeddah	10:40
JZR	165	Dubai	11:45	KAC	564	Amman	21:50	SVA	513	Riyadh	11:00
WAN	114	Bahrain	12:10	QTR	1082	Doha	22:05	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:25
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:20	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:10	IRA	674	Lar	11:40
JZR	325	Al Najaf	12:20	KAC	786	Jeddah	22:15	JZR	776	Jeddah	12:00
MSC	411	Asyut	12:30	AIC	987	Chennai/Hyderabad	22:25	MSC	404	Asyut	12:15
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	BBC	043	Dhaka	22:30	QTR	1075	Doha	12:30
THY	766	Istanbul	12:45	PIA	239	Sialkot	22:35	JZR	606	Kochi	12:45
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	JZR	185	Dubai	22:50	MEA	405	Beirut	12:55





## Lady Gaga thanks fans for support on Just Dance's 10th anniversary

Lady Gaga has marked the 10th anniversary of her debut single 'Just Dance' with a touching note to her fans. The 32-year-old pop star took to Instagram on Sunday to thank her fanbase - who are known as Little Monsters - for their support and to say she was feeling "very emotional" to reach the milestone. She captioned a clip of the music video: "I can't believe it's been ten years since the release of Just Dance. It's very emotional and I am so grateful to little monsters for sticking by me all these years. Cheers to many more, filled with love & bravery to be yourself. I love you so so much (sic)" It comes after Michael Bolton revealed he took Gaga's mother out for dinner to reassure her about any concerns she had about fame. The 65-year-old music legend got the chance to work with the 'Born This Way' hitmaker on the song 'Murder My Heart', a track on Bolton's 2009 album 'One World One Love'. A year before, Gaga was set to explode onto the pop scene with her debut album 'The Fame', and after working in a studio in London together, Michael took the singer and her mom, Cynthia Germanotta, to an Italian restaurant where she spoke of her fears for her daughter and if she would make it as

a pop star. Speaking exclusively to BANG Showbiz, Michael revealed: "The album was just about to come out. We finished the lyrics in London. 'Nobody knew who she was yet, but there was a huge buzz at the label. 'They sent me 'Just Dance and 'Poker Face' and I said, 'this record is going to blow up'. 'They said you are going to love her, so I said OK. 'I was taking a break, but I came back to Los Angeles. 'I drove back and we worked until about 6am in the morning and hit it off immediately.' Michael - who is set to bring his 'Time, Love and Tenderness Tour' to the UK this autumn - said it was a real "cute moment" and that he hopes he reassured Cynthia. He recalled: "We met at the studio Metropolis. I think, in London and wrote the lyrics and finished the song. 'I took her and her mother out for dinner at an Italian restaurant. 'I will never forget her mother started talking about what I thought about her chances of having a career. 'I realized she was frightened that she would be setup for disappointment. 'I was like, OK, first of all, this record is going to be huge everywhere, and I think I made her mother feel better. 'It was a really cute moment, she didn't understand what was about to happen."

## Kaluuya is insecure about his acting talents

Daniel Kaluuya feels insecure about his acting abilities. The 29-year-old actor is widely recognized as one of the rising stars of the business, but Daniel has admitted that because he never attended drama school, he harbors insecurities. He confessed: "I couldn't afford to go to drama school and because I'm not trained, I have a deep insecurity about my ability. So I just feel like I should always learn." Daniel was inspired to pursue his ambitions by fellow Londoner Ashley Walters, who starred in 'Bullet Boy' and 'Get Rich or Die Tryin'. Asked who first inspired him to become an actor, he told OK! magazine: "Ashley Walters. He was in a film called 'Bullet Boy'. 'For working-class people in London, there weren't any role models really when I was growing up. So seeing him it was like: 'Whoah, it's possible for me.'" Daniel previously admitted he didn't have especially grand expectations of himself as a child. The acclaimed actor explained how the environment he grew up in influenced his thinking. The 'Black



Panther' star shared: "The whole of flipping society tells you what you can't do, and people don't even realize that - because they're not of that demographic, so they're not attuned to stuff. 'But if you're attuned to them, you hear these things.'" Despite this, Daniel stressed that culture shouldn't be constricted by rules. He said: "When people impose rules on the arts, I think you're a flipping weirdo. There are no rules."

# The Vaccines: Rolling Stones like teenagers at Hyde Park

The Vaccines' Freddie Cowan says The Rolling Stones acted like teenagers when they supported them at Hyde Park in 2013. The 'If You Wanna' guitarist-and-vocalist was amazed by how unorganised things were backstage, with each band member - Sir Mick Jagger, Ronnie Wood and Keith Richards - arriving late apart from drummer Charlie Watts. Speaking to Gordon Smart on episode five of music show 'Red Stripe presents: This Feeling TV', Freddie said: "What I loved about it was that they seemed like a bunch of teenagers. 'Charlie Watts would arrive first. 'He was annoyed that he was on time and everyone else was late. [Sir] Mick [Jagger] then swans in last. It's like they're still 20. 'It's like you never really get over being in a band.'" Meanwhile, frontman Justin Hayward-Young revealed that the process of making their latest record, 'Combat Sports', was chaotic and there were some disagreements. He said:

"There was plenty of handbags. Being in a band by its very nature is a very intense and volatile thing. 'You're working, living and creating with these other three, four or five people in a room with no natural sunlight, for up to 15 hours a day. 'If you're working on something you really care about then I think you're always gonna have differences of opinion.'" However, Justin is very happy with the final result as they only chose songs that would suit the record to make it a "focused" album. He continued: "We wrote about 80 songs [when working on the record] until we whittled it down to the final cut. 'I think the mistake we've made in the past was making records that feel a bit too chocolate-boxy. 'I think this time we were pretty strict with ourselves to choose songs that feel cohesive and focused, even if that meant leaving off great songs for the benefit of the record as a whole. I think that's what happened here."



## Quincy Jones to host star-studded 85th birthday concert in London

Quincy Jones will host his own 85th birthday celebration concert at London's The O2 arena on June 27. The legendary producer-and-composer - who turns 85 on March 14 - will be joined by an array of artists from Mark Ronson, Jess Glynne, Jack Savoretti and Beverly Knight to Simply Red's Mick Hucknall and Caro Emerald, as he looks back on his career in music spanning six decades. Quincy's revered back catalogue, including Michael Jackson's 'Thriller' and 'Billie Jean' and his arrangement of Frank Sinatra's 'Fly Me To The Moon', will be performed live by the various musicians backed by a symphony orchestra, using the original arrangements from his very own vault in Los Angeles. Quincy will also take part in a Q&A about his life and career, and will no doubt leave no stone left unturned. Speaking about his return to the UK for the one-off show, titled 'Quincy Jones - A Life In Song', he said: "For many years, I couldn't play in the UK because the unions wouldn't allow Americans to do concerts there. 'Finally, it worked out for us to go in '96 for a tribute to Nelson Mandela, and I conducted a show at the Royal Albert Hall with Phil Collins, Tony

Bennett, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, Hugh Masekela, Letta Mbulu, and many other talented performers. 'I'll never forget standing on the stage thinking that, after waiting 30 years, I was finally able to perform in such a historic venue. 'Anyways, it was a long time coming, so every time I get to return to the UK, it's truly meaningful; after not being allowed in at one point, you never take it for granted.' The evening will be an "emotional" one for Quincy, as he'll be paying tribute to late Heatwave star Rod Temperton, who sadly passed away in 2016. The 'Boogie Nights' hitmaker was approached by Quincy to help pen songs for Michael Jackson, and they went on to share a long partnership working on 'Thriller', 'Off the Wall' and 'Rock with You' together for the late King of Pop. Quincy continued: "But more importantly, I know this show is going to be an emotional one for me because we'll be doing a tribute to my brother Rod Temperton, on his home turf. 'I love and miss him with all of my heart and soul, but I'm definitely looking forward to sharing such a special moment with his home country.' Tickets for 'Quincy Jones - A Life In Song' go on sale from 9am on Friday.



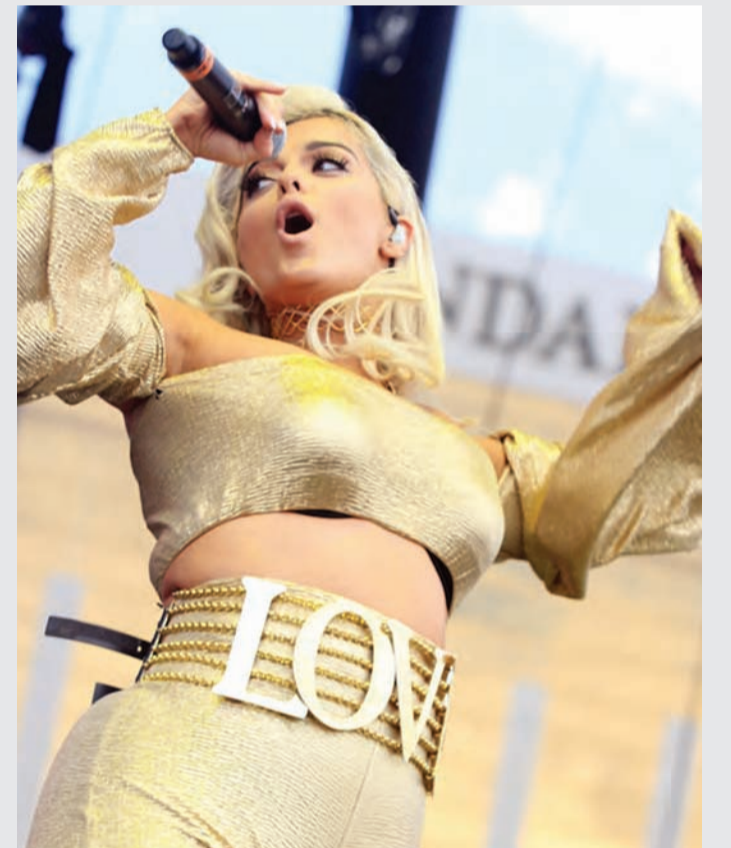
## 50 Cent announces 'Get Rich or Die Tryin' anniversary gigs

50 Cent has announced a UK arena tour to mark the 15th anniversary of his debut album. Billboard chart-topping LP 'Get Rich or Die Tryin', which was produced by Dr Dre and Eminem, was released in 2003 and to mark the milestone, the 'Candy Shop' hitmaker - real name Curtis James Jackson III - will perform three dates this September at Arena Birmingham, The O2 in London and Manchester Arena. The 'Southpaw' actor's first record sold 800,000 copies in the first week, and thanks to singles including 'In Da Club' and '21 Questions', it was named the 10th highest-selling rap album of all time in the US. The 42-year-old rap legend recently teased fans that he is still working on his sixth studio album 'Street King Immortal' and that it's "just as thrilling" as his debut. He said: "Right now I'm in the middle of recording my sixth

album. But it's as thrilling as my first." The record - which will be his first since 2014's 'Animal Ambition' - has been delayed for various reasons, and Curtis even contemplated retiring from music in 2016, after putting the album out. He said at the time: "I want to finish with that project. 'I don't want to write another record after that. 'You know how some artists got to have confirmation that they're right. I have that confirmation in 35, 40 million [albums] that I already sold." The hip-hop star - who will release the record on his own G-Unit label - has been tucked away in the studio working on the record tirelessly. He explained: "I go into the studio to record my music and meet my producers there. 'There are no windows so it's very easy to lose track of time. 'I could be there six hours and not even feel it...The only break we get from recording is when we order in dinner."



## Bebe Rexha announces debut LP



Bebe Rexha has announced her long-awaited debut album will be released this June. The 'I Got You' hitmaker took to Twitter yesterday to reveal 'Expectations' will be available to pre-order this week ahead of its release on June 22 via Warner Bros. Records. In a series of tweets she teased: "#ExpectationsIsComing... My Debut album 'Expectations' our for pre-order this Friday April 13th. (sic)" The pop star - who was previously the singer in Fall Out Boy's Pete Wentz side project Black Cards - has released a string of hit singles since emerging in 2014 with the song 'I'm Gonna Show You Crazy' and penning 'The Monster' for Eminem and Rihanna. Bebe teamed up with Louis Tomlinson and Digital Farm Animals on last year's 'Back to You' and most recently 'Push Back' with Ne-Yo and Nicki Minaj. The 'Hey Mama' singer recently admitted she hates working inside creative "boundaries". The 28-year-old singer doesn't enjoy being pigeonholed as a musician, and also admitted she didn't relish writing for other artists who were asking her to produce a very specific, radio-friendly sound. She shared: "Back in the day everything was so specific to the 'type' of artist you were. 'This is what you look like, this is what you sound like, it was like boom-boom-boom. Being a writer at the time, it was actually hurtful because people would be like, 'Wow you're stuff is too everywhere, who are you?'" She also confessed to experiencing some frustrations when she's been asked to pen songs for other stars. Bebe explained: "When I was just doing songwriting they would send me sheets, and they would say things like, 'This artist is looking for this, there's a new girl group and they're looking for something that sounds like Rihanna meets Christina Aguilera and Coldplay, or whatever, and we want this type of vibe.' But I don't like boundaries." Meanwhile, Bebe previously claimed her single-minded attitude and ability to write her own hits has earned her the admiration of her female fans. She reflected: "Girls like that: someone who says, 'This is who I am, I'm a strong woman, I did it the right way.' 'I write my own songs, no one's sitting there creating a pop chick. They need to know they can do it too and that anything is possible."

## Matthew Murphy: Spice Girls need a new banger

The Wombats' Matthew Murphy has confessed he's a Spice Girls fan and wants them to release new music. The 'Lemon to a Knife Fight' hitmaker - who is joined by Dan Haggis and Tord overland Knudsen in the trio - knows all about having renewed interest in his music after the hype surrounding the indie group's latest LP, 'Beautiful People Will Ruin Your Life', which charted at number three in the Official UK Chart. And now he's suggested the 90s girl group - which is comprised of Mel B, Geri Horner, Emma Bunton, Victoria Beckham and Mel C - should give their fans a "new banger" if they want their comeback to be a success. Speaking to the Daily Star newspaper, Matthew said: "I love the Spice Girls. 'I think they'll be awesome, but there's a bit of a risk that it might be a bit grim watching them up there. 'They should definitely come back with a banger and then it will feel

fresh and more cool and relevant. 'kind of like Take That as now everyone from my grandma to the guys in my band love them.'" The 33-year-old Liverpoolian says Victoria shouldn't have any doubts about having to sing, as he thinks she could get away with miming and pouting. He said: "All she needs to do is pout and that's perfect." The 'Spice Up Your Life' hitmakers - who haven't released new music since 2007 - sparked excitement amongst fans when all five members got together at Geri's house at the start of February, to discuss working together again. Matthew was previously asked if the fresh excitement surrounding his band - who first shot to fame in 2003 and have had hit songs in 'Moving to New York' and 'Let's Dance to Joy Division' - is surreal. He exclusively told BANG Showbiz: "It feels very exciting to be in The Wombats again. 'Things are better than ever really."





Lifestyle | Gossip

# Antonio Banderas says he's too old to play the 'sexy boy'

Antonio Banderas has grown tired of playing the "sexy boy" in his movies. The 57-year-old actor stars as Pablo Picasso in the new TV series 'Genius: Picasso', and Banderas has revealed he didn't hesitate to accept the role because he'd grown weary of playing so many similar parts during his time in Hollywood. Reflecting on the experience of playing the Spanish painter, he confessed: "I found incredible liberation in that because you escape from certain labels that people put you in - you know, the Latin lover or other thing, you know, is fine for a while and it's fun for a while. "But I'm 57. I don't want to be the sexy boy my whole life, because that would be pathetic." Despite what he's already achieved during his career, Banderas



still has a number of ambitions he'd like to accomplish before he quits acting. The Spanish star - whose 19-year marriage to actress Melanie Griffith ended in 2015 - revealed he would like to direct again, while he's also started studying fashion design in recent years. Speaking to CBS, he shared: "I do a lot of things. There's only one life, you have to do it. And there is time. Absolutely, there is time for everything." Banderas has also claimed that in spite of his success, he's always keen to learn new things and he doesn't yet consider himself to be a "master" of anything. He explained to the Guardian newspaper: "I have been a student my whole life, I don't stop studying and I'm going to continue. I don't consider myself a master of anything."

# Normani Kordei's hiatus heartbreak



Normani Kordei was "heartbroken" to announce Fifth Harmony were going on hiatus. The 'Work From Home' hitmaker admits it was "very scary" for her and her bandmates when they announced they would be taking a break from the band and says it only really became real once it was out there in the open. She said: "[It was] very scary. And heartbreaking for me personally. The first day that we even put out the announcement for the hiatus, it was the toughest day ... "So many people saying, 'Oh my god, what happened? What's wrong?' Just having that attention on something that you already know is real and the fact that now everybody else knows it's real, it's like, 'Wow, this is really happening.'" And the 21-year-old singer knows it will be an "adjustment" going solo but she is very "excited" to let people know who the real Normani is. She added to Entertainment Tonight: "It's definitely going to be an adjustment. It's all I've known for the last six years, but I'm excited ... It's a discovery for myself, you know? There are so many people that are excited for me, trying to see, 'Oh, what is she gonna do next?' 'What does Normani sound like?' I'm still trying to figure that out ... I'm in the studio and it's really cool because I talk about things that I actually wanna talk about and things that I feel genuinely, and I can finally fully be myself. I feel like, within the group, I'm so, so grateful for the process but I can speak for all of us, you've only been able to see a fraction of who we are individually."

# Mark Strong prefers being a bad guy



Mark Strong prefers to play villains to heroes and he thinks his love of dark characters comes from him being English. The 54-year-old actor has portrayed bad guys in 'Syriana', 'Zero Dark Thirty' and 'Green Lantern' and has been cast as main antagonist Doctor Sivana in upcoming DC Extended Universe film 'Shazam!', which is being directed by David F. Sandberg. Strong has never shied away from villainous roles because they are always fun and he admits it's a bonus that many Hollywood directors like to cast English actors in those parts. When asked if actors have more fun playing baddies, he said: "I think so. In Britain we don't shy away from villains, whereas American culture is much more geared towards the hero. We can go all the way back to Richard III and Macbeth. They (Americans) have John Wayne." Strong - who can currently be seen playing spy Max Easton in new FOX espionage TV drama 'Deep State' - says the thing he enjoys most about his career is the challenge of playing people completely different to himself. In an interview with the Metro newspaper, he said: "I always thought what made acting interesting was playing what you're not, whether it's wigs, costumes or accent. Although I'd say Max Easton is as close to me as it might get. I couldn't base him on anyone so I had to rely on my understanding of how someone would react in the circumstances he faces ... The most important thing is that Max is a guy trying to protect his family. Anyone can relate to that. He joined MI6 to make the world a better place, gets involved in something he can't stomach, courts their wrath and puts his family in danger."



# Andie MacDowell chose 'normal life' over film career

Andie MacDowell could have had a huge film career but chose a "normal life" instead. The 'Love After Love' star believes she could have had a similar career to the likes of Nicole Kidman but ultimately decided to focus on her family and children. She said: "I look at other people, like Nicole Kidman and all these people, and look back and think, 'At one point, I was a contender along with these people.' I feel like I lost my juice somewhere along the line ... I think it was important to me to have a normal life. I don't know that you can have a normal life. "It was a sweet idea, and I tried super hard. I lived in North Carolina and Montana, and I did not focus very hard on my career. I focused really hard on my children, and I had this concept that I wanted to give them something normal. I don't know that people ever really allowed us to be normal. I think it's super hard for people to allow someone in my position to be normal, because they like to see you as that. It's more fun." However, the 59-year-old actress still considers herself to be "super ambitious". She told the Huffington Post newspaper: "The good thing is, at the same time, I think I'm super ambitious. In getting out of that whole world, I did focus on my children, so there was a positive. They didn't really know that much about what I did. It was not a part of our dialogue, and it did help me to just be a mom. But at the same time, it made me lose the inspiration, in a sense, to be more creative in my work. And it's just a matter of finding that kind of levity and energy and making it happen when you haven't been in the loop."

# James Blunt reveals the key to his Twitter popularity



Beautiful hitmaker - who has 1.75 million followers on Twitter - explained: "I don't really care about it so much. I just think that humans should be kind to each other and treat each other nicer. "But on social media, some people don't. So, I laugh to myself when I'm reading them, and don't take them too seriously." Despite the criticism he's received on Twitter, James has already enjoyed a hugely successful career, selling more than 20 million records worldwide since releasing his debut album in 2004. However, the British star admitted that one particular career memory sticks out in his mind. He told Star2.com: "My favorite moment was playing to 80,000 people at the Glastonbury Festival with the sun setting in the beautiful English countryside. It was an amazing experience. "But just to be on a tour around the world and come to places like Kuala Lumpur is also a great big honor for me. In fact, the greatest honor I have is to play music that brings people together." James also revealed that one of the tracks on his new album has a distinctly political tone. He shared: "In a world where politicians try to divide us, music brings us together. "I have a song on the new album called 'Someone Sing Along' that was specifically inspired by Donald Trump, and the divisive politics that he talks about. "I don't see a difference between skin color or sexuality - we are all humans with the same hopes and fears and the same dreams for ourselves and for our children."

James Blunt says his casual attitude is the key to his social media popularity. The 44-year-old singer has developed a reputation for his amusing and sarcastic messages on Twitter, and James claims that his ability to not take the platform "too seriously" has helped him to maintain a healthy relationship with social media. The 'You're

# Samuel L Jackson doubts Black Panther's impact



Samuel L. Jackson doubts the success of 'Black Panther' will lead to long-term changes in Hollywood. The acclaimed Marvel movie has led to calls for more films to be led by black actors and actresses, but Jackson doesn't think it will ultimately have the impact some fans have suggested. Speaking to Matt Pomroy, Jackson explained: "I'm not positive that 'Black Panther' is going to change the dynamic of black stories being told in Hollywood and being accepted all over the world. "It's an action-adventure story and a lot of people like those, and they'll work all over the world forever because everybody loves a hero. "But not everybody loves a drama about somebody's life experience - that's why awards have a separate category for foreign films: they are perceived as being different. "Once we stop perceiving them as different and just see them as good films and they get recognized in the same category, we'll be laying markers." Meanwhile, 'Black Panther' star Daniel Kaluuya recently admitted he feels insecure about his acting abilities. The 29-year-old actor - who is widely recognized as one of the rising stars of the business - admitted that because he never attended drama school, he still harbors insecurities. He explained: "I couldn't afford to go to drama school and because I'm not trained, I have a deep insecurity about my ability. So I just feel like I should always learn." The London-born actor also revealed he was inspired by the success of Ashley Walters, who starred in 'Bullet Boy' and 'Get Rich or Die Tryin'. Asked who first inspired him to become an actor, he shared: "Ashley Walters. He was in a film called 'Bullet Boy'. "For working-class people in London, there weren't any role models really when I was growing up. So seeing him it was like: "Whoah, it's possible for me." — Bang Showbiz

# Solo: A Star Wars Story offers plot hints

The new trailer for 'Solo: A Star Wars Story' has provided the best insight yet into the movie. The much-anticipated 'Star Wars' spin-off film - which sees Alden Ehrenreich star as the young Han Solo - offers a greater insight into Solo's character than the first teaser, showcasing his self-confidence and hinting at some of the key moments in the upcoming movie. The trailer follows Solo as he first crosses paths with Lando Calrissian, played by Donald Glover, and as he takes possession of the Millennium Falcon. Glover's Lando also plays a central role in the trailer for the Ron Howard-directed movie, while Paul Bettany's character, Dryden Vos, appears to be the primary antagonist. Chewbacca, Emilia Clarke and Woody



Harrelson make appearances in the action-packed trailer, too. The movie also stars Phoebe Waller-Bridge in the role of L3-37, Lando's droid companion. But the British actress - who is, perhaps, best known as the star of the acclaimed comedy series 'Fleabag' - recently admitted she didn't know much about the 'Star Wars' franchise when she took on her part. She said: "I wasn't entirely sure what a droid was, and I was just performing it like a human. And they were like, 'Wow, you're really loose with the whole droid idea. Maybe you could just try it again a bit more ... like a droid?'" 'Solo: A Star Wars Story' is set to premiere on May 15 at the Cannes Film Festival, and will be released in cinemas later in the same month.





Cathy Owen plays the heroine in the play Cathy by Cardboard Citizens, a theatre company raising awareness of homelessness and using homeless actors.—Reuters

## Homeless actors put Britain's housing crisis in the spotlight

In an anonymous east London backstreet, Cathy sat facing a housing officer, anxious to discover whether she will be given somewhere to live with her daughter, who is about to sit exams. It is good news: the authorities can offer the homeless family a fairly new place with affordable rent. There is only one problem - it is 300 miles (483 km) away from Cathy's dementia-ridden father and her daughter's school. "I don't want this," Cathy said desperately, as she broke down in tears, oscillating through hope, rage and pleading. "I want to go home."

ing in London's Soho Theatre and will set off around Britain again in mid-April.

Theatre director Adrian Jackson started the charity to challenge perceptions, raise awareness and foster debate around homelessness, inspired by Brazilian Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed, which uses theatre to promote social change. "Audiences are tremendously moved by this show," he said. "While they're in that state, that's a good place to start

talking about how things could be different." Britain is

Amy Loughton, who played the housing officer, became homeless when she was nine years old. After a divorce, her working mother could not afford to keep paying for their home and they spent nine months in a hostel. Loughton said she found the experience shocking. "For any child, at any age, it has an effect on your mental health," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "You lose your feeling of comfort and security, which I believe is something that every child deserves."

The audience for the rehearsal in the charity's Whitechapel offices was made up of dozens of homeless people, who come by regularly to take part in productions, work on computers, use the kitchen or access health and employment services. Cardboard Citizens says it reaches about 1,500 homeless and at-risk people each year through performances, training and workshops, ranging from acting to interview skills and yoga. The play is one of more than 80 performed by the company since 1991, most of which explore homelessness using Forum Theatre, a method pioneered by Nobel Peace Prize nominee Boal.

It is a form of interactive theatre where audiences suggest how characters like Cathy can make different choices and the cast improvise to see how the changes affect the outcome. Audiences for "Cathy" are asked how they would tackle homelessness. From more than 500 suggestions made, five were presented to Britain's upper house of parliament, the House of Lords, in 2017 when the play was performed there.

### Choice

Jackson and Loughton believe that homelessness can be solved by building more social housing, where people pay rents below market rates. About one in six properties in England, or 4 million homes, are social housing, a figure that has stagnated for a decade, according to gov-



Amy Loughton playing a housing officer in the play Cathy by Cardboard Citizens.

ernment data. More than 1 million families are waiting for local authority social housing in England, with only about 120,000 new lettings made per year, it said. "I don't know how we can possibly solve this or stop it from getting worse if we do not have more houses on offer," said Loughton.

Ownership of social housing has shifted from local councils whose stock more than halved to 1.6 million in 2016 from 3.7 million in 1994 - to private providers, like housing associations, data shows. Millions of tenants bought their council homes at a discount under a "right to buy" scheme. But authorities can only keep a third of this money to build new stock, said the Local Government Association, which represents councils.

This has resulted in them only replacing about a fifth of homes sold since 2011/12, it said, calling for councils to be allowed to keep 100 percent of sale receipts to replace homes. Jackson sees potential for change in the thought-provoking discussions among audiences that follow performances. "They talk about the housing crisis as if it's immutable but of course it's not," he said. "We've all got our part to play in changing things. It's a choice we're making as a country." — Reuters

“We've all got our part to play in changing things. It's a choice we're making as a country”

"Cathy" is a fictional story, produced to mark the 25th anniversary of the theatre company Cardboard Citizens, which started life in Cardboard City, a site where about 200 homeless people used to live near London's busy Waterloo station.

The play, which has been touring the UK since 2016, revisits 50 years on - veteran British director Ken Loach's television play "Cathy Come Home", famous for shocking viewers with its grim depiction of the slide into homelessness. After more than 100 performances in venues ranging from the parliament and the Edinburgh Festival to hostels and prisons, "Cathy" is currently play-

experiencing a housing crisis as homebuilding has declined since the 1970s, driving up property prices faster than wages. The government has set an ambitious target of building 300,000 new homes a year by the mid-2020s. Homelessness has risen in England for more than six years, with 80,000 families in temporary accommodation in England, including more than 120,000 children, government data shows.

### Mental health

While Cathy's story is fictional, many of the actors draw on their own real-life experiences of homelessness.

Americans world's biggest TV addicts watching four hours a day

The average person around the world spent nearly three hours a day in front of their television last year, according to a report released yesterday. Eurodata TV Worldwide said that television viewing was holding up despite more and more people watching online platforms like Netflix and Amazon. Americans and Canadians are the biggest TV addicts, said the report, watching four hours and three minutes on average daily. European viewers came next watching three hours 49 minutes a day in 2017, just ahead of Russia and Brazil, the data gathered from 95 countries showed.

"The length of time people watch television is holding up despite the growing availability of online content," said its vice president Frederic Vaulpre as the report was presented at MIPTV, the world's biggest TV market in Cannes, France. "There was a slight fall in TV viewing in North America and Asia, but it is still growing in South America and in Europe it is maintaining historically high levels," he added. Asians watch less TV than any of the other major markets, spending two hours 25 five minutes in front of the box. In China that drops to two hours 12 minutes.

### Switching to mobile phones

But viewing habits were also changing, the report found. Replay services on average "added an extra eight percent to audiences" in the 35 countries where they were measured. And millennials and young adults were spending more time on their mobile phones, often catching up with programs that way. In Sweden, one of the most digitally advanced countries in the world, young adults watched slightly less than two hours of TV a day. Eurodata TV found that most young people who watched programs on the Internet and on replay services were logging on for show aimed specifically at them. These included reality shows and youth dramas whose audiences were sometimes more than twice as big on the internet than they were for broadcasts. —AFP



Amy Loughton playing a housing officer in the play Cathy by Cardboard Citizens.

## Comic children's actor, voice for Cocoa Puff's cuckoo, dies

The goofy voice behind the "I'm cuckoo for Cocoa Puffs" call for breakfast cereal fell silent Sunday, as comedian and voice actor Chuck McCann died, his publicist said. "His work was legendary," said his publicist Edward Lozzi. "What baby boomer doesn't know cuckoo for Cocoa Puffs?" The Brooklyn, New York, native died of congestive heart failure at a Los Angeles hospital at age 83, Lozzi said.

Showbusiness was in his blood, Lozzi said. He practically grew up in an orchestra pit where his father was a big band leader at New York's Roxy Theatre. His grandfather also performed in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. Through his family, McCann was exposed to some of the best comedians of the 1930s and 1940s and he would have his classmates in stitches imitating them at school.

Lozzi said. He got his professional start in local radio and television doing voices, puppetry work and standup comedy. McCann later starred in scores of children's television programs such as "Lunch with Soupy Sales" and "The Captain Kangaroo Show" and "Rootie Kazootie." Lozzi said.

McCann later moved to Los Angeles and worked as a character actor on shows including "Little House on the Prairie," "Bonanza," and "Columbo." But he is best known for voicing the hungry bird Sonny for General Mills cereal. "We all grew up with him," Lozzi said. "He was a pioneer." He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth Fanning, and two daughters. — Reuters

## Prince Harry's fiancée craves 'Diana 2.0' role: Biography

Meghan Markle has her heart set on becoming "Diana 2.0", according to a new biography of Prince Harry's fiancée that details her lifelong embrace of good causes but also points to a calculating streak. The US actress, who is set to marry her royal beau on May 19, is fiercely protective of "Brand Meghan" and sidelines people as she moves ahead in life, according to people who know her cited in the book. "Meghan: A Hollywood Princess", which is due out in Britain on Thursday, details how the 36-year-old "Suits" star ditched her first husband in a way that also cost her a lifelong friend. The biography was authored by Andrew Morton, the British royal writer who penned the blockbuster "Diana: Her True Story", with the late princess's covert assistance.

### Diana comparisons

Morton also details her fascination with Harry's mother Diana around the time of her death in 1997, watching her funeral in tears and old tapes of her marriage to Prince Charles. Family friends said she was intrigued by Diana "not just for her style but for her independent humanitarian mission, seeing her as a role model". Her childhood friend Ninaki Priddy is cited as saying: "She was always fascinated by the royal family."

She wants to be princess Diana 2.0," Morton says comparisons with Diana are inevitable, given her humanitarian work and glamorous appeal. However, he notes the crucial distinction between the timid Diana, who married Charles aged 20, and the 36-year-old Hollywood professional. "In some ways, the groomed and camera-ready Ms Markle was the woman Diana always strove to become," he wrote.



Britain's Prince Harry (left) and his fiancée US actress Meghan Markle (right) arrive to meet participants at the UK team trials for the Invictus Games Sydney 2018 at the University of Bath Sports Training Village in Bath, southwest England.

### Rising networker

The book also claims that as she finally found success as an actress, Markle shed her old acquaintances-including her film producer husband Trevor Engelson, who helped her get on the acting ladder with early parts. "Her friends in Los Angeles noticed the change in her now that she was on the way up," Morton wrote. "She no longer had the time for friends she had known for years. "A networker to her fingertips, she seemed to be carefully recalibrating her life, forging new friendships with those who could burnish and develop her career."

Markle had been with Engelson since 2004 and they married in Jamaica in 2011. Shortly after their engagement, she landed her signature role as Rachel Zane in the



In this arranged photograph, the cover of the book entitled "Meghan, A Hollywood Princess", by author Andrew Morton, is pictured in London. — AFP photos

US legal drama television series "Suits". Filmed in Toronto, their relationship became long-distance as she became a star. The marriage collapsed in 2013. "Trevor went from cherishing Meghan to, as one friend observed, 'feeling like he was a piece of something stuck to the bottom of her shoe,'" it reads. Another friend said the decision to end the marriage was made by Markle and another that she sent her rings back in the post. —AFP





Emirati boys attend a class at a traditional school during the Sharjah Heritage Days Festival.



An Emirati woman weaves fabric during the Sharjah Heritage Days Festival.



Emiratis attend the Sharjah Heritage Days Festival.



An Emirati man makes traditional coffee during the Sharjah Heritage Days Festival.



Emirati women weave palm fronds.



An Emirati woman weaves palm fronds during the Sharjah Heritage Days Festival.



An Emirati woman prepares traditional henna during the Sharjah Heritage Days Festival.



An Emirati woman weaves palm fronds during the Sharjah Heritage Days Festival.



An Emirati fisherman prepares a cage during the Sharjah Heritage Days Festival.



Emirati girls attend a class at a traditional school during the Sharjah Heritage Days Festival.

# SHARJAH HERITAGE DAYS FESTIVAL

## 'Land of Fire': Azerbaijan's history and culture

Azerbaijan holds a snap presidential election on Wednesday boycotted by the opposition and expected to extend the autocratic rule of President Ilham Aliyev. Here are five points on the culture and history of the Caspian Sea nation.

### The Land of Fire

Due to the abundance of natural flames coming from the energy-rich nation's huge underground gas deposits, Azerbaijanis often call their country "The Land of Fire." The expression is rooted in Zoroastrianism, a fire-worshipping religion that dominated the territory of modern-day Azerbaijan before it adopted Shia Islam. The pentagonal castle-like Baku Temple of Fire had an altar with eternal fire that was fed by underground gas coming to surface and lit up due to the contact with oxygen. A red flame features at the centrepiece of Azerbaijan's state emblem.

### Azokh Cave

One of the country's most important landmarks, the imposing Azix Magarasi six-cave complex, is located on the territory of Nagorny Karabakh which has been under Armenian control since it was seized during a bloody conflict in the early 1990s after the breakup of the Soviet Union. The labyrinthine limestone caves adorned with stalactites and stalagmites are considered by archaeologists to be one of the oldest living sites of prehistoric humans in Eurasia, dating back 1.5 million years.

### Intangible heritage

A complex art form blending traditional Azerbaijani musical improvisation and classical poetry, Mugham reflects different periods of Azerbaijan's history and its contacts with other Turkic peoples, as well as Persians, Armenians, and Georgians. Cultivated by members of the Sufi orders and by performers of religious dramas, the genre features a male or female singer accompanied by

musicians playing traditional instruments, such as a long-neck lute, a four-string spiked fiddle, and a large tambourine. A short selection of Azerbaijani Mugham was in 1977 included on the Voyager Golden Record attached to the Voyager spacecraft to represent world music.

### National animal

Azerbaijan's national animal, the Karabakh horse, is a mountain-steppe racing and riding breed noted for its speed, intelligence and red-golden color. Thanks to their suppleness, the Karabakhs are ideal mount for Azerbaijan's national sport, chovgan, a polo-like horseriding game played on a flat, grassy field by two competing teams. One of the world's oldest, the breed currently numbers below 1,000 and is threatened with extinction.

### Dynastic rule

According to the Azerbaijan constitution, the country is a democratic republic, but in fact it is for over three

decades ruled with an iron fist by uncrowned monarchs—a family which, critics say, has crushed the opposition and used their power to amass a fortune that funds its lavish lifestyle. Current president Ilham Aliyev, succeeded in 2003 his father Heydar, the former Communist leader of the ex-Soviet republic. Cementing his family's grip on power, Ilham Aliyev last year appointed his wife Mehriban Aliyeva as first vice president—after having awarded her with the country's highest honor, the Order of... Heydar Aliyev. — AFP



# Lifestyle

TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 2018



Emirati girls attend a class at a traditional school during the Sharjah Heritage Days festival on April 8, 2018, at the Heritage Area in the United Arab Emirate (For more pictures see page 31). — AFP



Photo shows Al-Turkistani riding her bicycle.



Al-Turkistani sits with her father at her parents' home.



Al-Turkistani attends a friend's birthday with her husband.



Al-Turkistani checks her Instagram feed for her fashion line Lin Collection. — Reuters photos

## CYCLING IN JEDDAH: SAUDI WOMEN EMBRACE CHANGE

When Amirah Al-Turkistani left Boston in 2015 after earning a graduate degree, friends mocked her decision to ship her beloved pistachio-coloured bicycle back home to Saudi Arabia. "They told me, 'What will you do with it in Jeddah, hang it on the wall?'" she laughed, referring to her hometown on the Red Sea coast. Riding in public was unthinkable at the time in the deeply conservative Muslim kingdom, where religious police patrolled public spaces to enforce modest dress, bans on music and alcohol, prayer-time store closures and the mixing of unrelated men and women. Fast forward three years and Amirah is riding regularly on the seaside corniche, alone or with her husband and children.

On the bike, the 30-year-old wears an abaya, the loose-fitting, full-length robe symbolic of religious faith and still required public dress for Saudi women. But instead of traditional black, she chooses from a range of pastels she designed herself, trimmed with lace and sporting patches of bright colors. "Jeddah today isn't the same as Jeddah five, six years ago," she said. "The scrutiny on clothes (has eased), there's more places to go, working opportunities for women are the same as for men."

Saudi Arabia, which for decades seemed irreparably stuck in the past, is now changing by the day. Under a reform program aimed at modernizing the kingdom and transforming its economy away from oil, 32-year-old Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has eased social restrictions, clipping the wings of the religious police,



Al-Turkistani plays with her husband and children at Middle Corniche Park.

sponsoring public concerts and ending a nearly 40-year ban on commercial cinemas. The government has also announced plans to allow women to drive cars starting this summer, and Amirah is raring to hit the road.

"It's not like I want to drive just because I want to drive," she said. "It's a need." The mother of two has a

full-time job teaching graphic design at Jeddah International College and freelances on the side. Selling her homemade abayas brings her fulfillment and a little extra income. Fluent in English, Arabic and Turkish and trained in ballet, Amirah is part of a young generation of Saudi women seizing new opportunities in spite of a guardianship system that still requires women to have a male relative's approval for certain key decisions like travelling abroad. In her spare time, she does yoga and trains at a Crossfit studio.

Yet she realizes that not all women in this country of 32 million have the same opportunities. Tribal customs, domineering male relatives and lingering religious conservatism keep many Saudi women from accessing basic rights. "She can be (modern) but her family isn't. She can be like this but her husband doesn't allow it," said Amirah, who believes some people still oppose the new reforms. "There's a change, that's true, but I'm talking about something very miniscule," she said. "I don't know about other places, other cities. I'm just talking about Jeddah." — Reuters



Al-Turkistani critiques one of her students' work.



Al-Turkistani takes a selfie.