



**5** Kuwait hosts International Arabian Horse Festival



**11** World's longest zipline opens in Ras Al-Khaimah



**30** Egypt unveils tomb of ancient priestess



**16** Sanchez breaks duck as Man Utd cut gap on City



# Farwaniya residency dept open all week long during amnesty

## MoH workers arrested for tampering with expat blood tests

### Kuwait spending substantially on cancer treatment

KUWAIT: The cost of medicines for treating cancer in Kuwait's health budget amounted to KD 23 million (\$76 million) in the 2017-2018 fiscal year, an official at the health ministry said yesterday. The value of medicines for breast cancer has reached KD 6.1 million (\$20.1 million), the most costly category, followed by lymphatic and blood cancers with KD 4.9 million (16.1 million), said Abeer Mansour, director of the health ministry's medical stores, in an interview with KUNA. Colon cancer ranks below the above-mentioned segments, with the cost of the drugs estimated at KD 1.2 million (\$4.2 million), followed by prostate cancer with KD 618,362 (\$2.04 million).

Farah Dashti, manager of the medical engineering department, said the cost of diagnostic equipment stands at KD 1.6 million (\$6 million). Dr Hadeel Al-Mutawa, deputy manager of the Kuwait Center for Combating Cancer, said number of cancer patients in the country stands at 2,204 - 1,058 citizens and 1,146 expatriates (according to the center's 2013 figures).

Dr Hanaa Al-Khawari, the head of the national program for early detection of cancer, recently said 142 Kuwaiti women were diagnosed with breast cancer. Up to 11,100 Kuwaiti women have been

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By Hanan Al-Saadoun and Agencies

KUWAIT: The relations and security information department at the interior ministry said residency affairs departments in Kuwait's six governorates are receiving residency law violators who can benefit from the ministerial amnesty decree either by correcting their status or leaving the country.

It said all departments will be open during official working hours, while the Farwaniya residency affairs department will also receive expat violators during afternoons and weekends (Fridays and Saturdays) from 2:00 pm till 7:00 pm. The department urged violators to take advantage of the amnesty and correct their status or leave.

Meanwhile, a group of people working at the health ministry's foreign labor test center were arrested because they tampered with blood test samples, the ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health Dr Majda Al-Qattan said Friday. The health ministry, acting on an urgent request by the interior ministry on Wednesday, carried out tests on four Egyptians for hepatitis, tuberculosis and AIDS, Qattan told KUNA. The results came out on Thursday, showing two of the Egyptians were infected with hepatitis-b and two with hepatitis-C. The tuberculosis tests were negative, she added. Qattan noted the interior ministry has



KUWAIT: Expats are seen at the Farwaniya residency department, which is also open on weekends and afternoons on weekdays during the current amnesty period. — Mol

been monitoring employees at the foreign labor test center for four months who were tampering with tests' results by tampering blood samples while moving them between the room where the samples are taken and the laboratory. A

security guard and a health ministry inspector were implicated, she said.

Qattan said the gang was led by an Egyptian woman who forged stamps used to clear tests. "This woman put the clear-to-go stamp on polluted sam-

ples," she said, adding they identified a number of expatriates who passed the medical test through this gang. Qattan said the health ministry will also coordinate with the foreign ministry to prevent such forgery.

### S&P confirms Kuwait rating, outlook stable

KUWAIT: Standard & Poor's (S&P) has affirmed its credit rating of AA/A-1+ for Kuwait with a stable outlook. The global ratings agency said in a press release that the stable outlook reflects its expectation that Kuwait's public and external balance sheets will remain strong over the forecast horizon, backed by a significant stock of financial assets. The agency expected these strengths to offset risks related to lower oil prices, Kuwait's undiversified economy and rising geopolitical tensions in the region.

Kuwait's economic flexibility will be backed by governmental investment spending and gradually controlled public budget, it said, pointing to a reasonable rise in oil prices this year. Falling oil prices have severely impacted the country's economy since oil prices began their downward slide in 2014, according

to the press release. The ratings agency forecast Kuwait's growth will average around 3 percent over 2019-2021 on the back of rising oil production and investment projects, affirming the country's outlook as "stable".

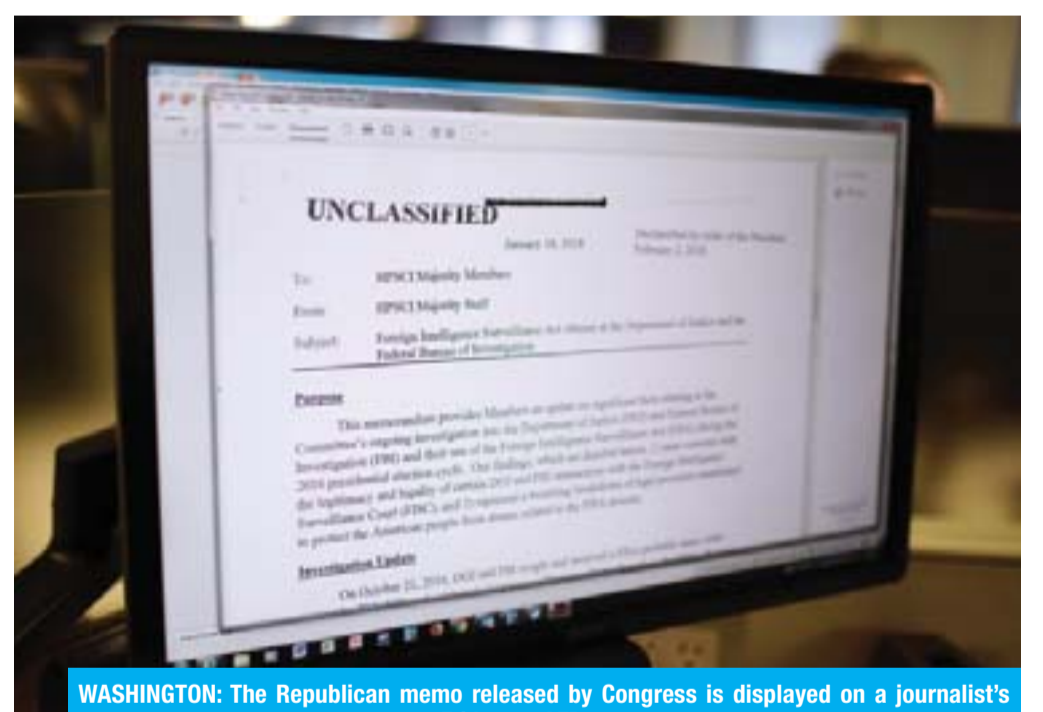
Moderately high oil prices expected this year, along with a broad public investment program, are expected to support growth momentum over the forecast period, the agency added. S&P anticipated Kuwait's oil output to rise to over three million barrels per day (bpd) by 2021 from its current level of 2.7 million bpd.

Gradual fiscal consolidation meanwhile is expected through to 2020 with likely introduction of spending caps and value added tax in 2019, it indicated. The Kuwaiti government is expected to post a deficit of 16 percent for the current fiscal year after the deduction of government revenues to the Future Generations Fund, it said. The financial system in Kuwait is stable and Kuwaiti banks enjoy a strong capital base with cash adequacy according to Basel III, the rating agency pointed out. — KUNA

### Trump claims GOP memo vindicates him

PALM BEACH, Florida: US President Donald Trump said yesterday that a controversial memo attacking federal law enforcement written by congressional Republicans vindicates him in the investigation of Russian meddling in the 2016 US presidential election. Trump's fervent embrace of the memo raised again the prospect that he may use it as justification to fire special counsel Robert Mueller, who is conducting the investigation, or Deputy Attorney Rod Rosenstein, who oversees Mueller.

Tweeting from his resort in Palm Beach, Florida, Trump said the memo "totally vindicates" him but added "the Russian Witch Hunt goes on and on. Their (sic) was no Collusion and there was no Obstruction." He called the investigation "an American disgrace". The White House told Reuters on Friday there would be no changes at the Justice Department as a result of the memo's conclusions. The memo, written by Republicans on the



WASHINGTON: The Republican memo released by Congress is displayed on a journalist's computer screen at a newsroom on Friday. — AFP

US House of Representatives Intelligence Committee chaired by Devin Nunes, argues the federal investigation of potential collusion between Trump's 2016 presidential campaign

and Russia was a product of political bias against Trump at the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Justice Department.

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### Diplomacy and fear fuel Qatar's military spending

DOHA: Since the Qatar diplomatic crisis started, one response by the emirate has become increasingly clear - Doha is using its extraordinary wealth to fund a massive push in defense spending. A flurry of military contracts have followed since Saudi Arabia and its allies dramatically cut all ties with Qatar last June, accusing the 2022 World Cup host of sponsoring terrorism and cozying up to Riyadh's bitter regional rival, Iran.

Isolated by and increasingly vulnerable to its more powerful neighbors, Qatar has in the past eight months subsequently announced military contracts worth some \$25 billion. "While Qatar's defense spending has been increasing for a number of years, the more recent spending surge appears to be directly related to the crisis," says David Roberts,

assistant professor at King's College London.

Doha bought F-15 planes from the United States barely a fortnight after the crisis began and at the same time as US President Donald Trump appeared to take the Saudis' side in the dispute. In December it signed a Rafale fighter jet deal with France during a visit to Qatar by French President Emmanuel Macron. That deal caused consternation among some officials in Britain - desperate for its own bilateral deal as it negotiates its withdrawal from the European Union - until days later London too signed an agreement to supply Typhoon jets to the Qatari air force. Britain will also supply air security during 2022. Last month it was announced that Qatar was in talks to buy Russian air defense missiles.

Sandwiched between the air force deals, Qatar, bordered on three sides by water, also negotiated a multi-dollar billion contract to buy seven Italian navy vessels. There has also been military diplomacy. In the past few days, Qatar's defense minister, Khalid bin Mohammed Al-Attiyah, has said the emirate also wants to host the US Navy. It is already

home to the largest US airbase in the Middle East, Al-Udeid, which houses some 10,000 American troops. And Turkey, which also has a military base in Qatar, could also deploy naval forces there.

Symbolically, during December's National Day celebrations, Qatari troops paraded with recently acquired Chinese short-range ballistic missiles. "It's a massive investment into the military," says Andreas Krieg, a military adviser to the Qatari government until last year. This huge leap in spending - until 2013 Qatar was spending around \$3 billion a year on defense, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute - reflects Doha's fear of invasion especially at the beginning of the crisis.

Qatari officials admit privately they were stunned when the crisis began, taken completely unaware by the Saudi-led states. Despite the sometimes bizarre nature of the crisis - Doha flying in thousands of cows, protest songs and Qatar missing from a map at the Louvre Abu Dhabi - fears of invasion initially ran very deep.

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DOHA: This file photo taken on Dec 17, 2017 shows members of Qatar's armed forces performing during the country's national day celebrations. — AFP

## Local

# US, Iraqi officials discuss reconstruction conference

WASHINGTON: US Deputy Secretary of State John Sullivan said that he spoke with Iraqi officials regarding the investment opportunities that would be presented at Kuwait international conference on reconstruction of Iraq. The upcoming conference "would provide an important opportunity for the government of Iraq to showcase a number of attractive investment opportunities for foreign investors, including many American companies, and to demonstrate that Iraq is open for business," Sullivan, who returned from a visit to Iraq, told reporters. During the meeting, both the sides also agreed to collaborate further in the areas of trade, finance, political, and diplomatic cooperation.

The US senior official also took note of Iraq's recent defeat of the so-called Islamic State (IS) caliphate and highlighted "further coordination on this effort at the ministerial level of the Global Coalition to Defeat IS that will take place in Kuwait on February 13."

With regard to the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), Sullivan indicated that he told Iraqi Prime Minister Haider Abadi to continue to work with Kurdish Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzan to reach "practical accommodation on matters such as" salaries and reopening Kurdish airports.

From Iraq, Sullivan also travelled to Afghanistan to meet with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, Chief Executive Dr Abdullah Abdullah, Foreign Minister Salahuddin

Rabbani, and other government leaders. "During each of these meetings, Afghanistan's leadership made it clear to me that despite the recent tragic events, the Afghan government will continue to work to create the necessary conditions to bring the Taliban to the negotiating table, and establish an environment for a sustained piece," said Sullivan. Yet, he argued "everyone but the Taliban appears ready for peace." The leaders then discussed security cooperation, the importance of timely elections, economic development, peace, and reconciliation. "I applaud the efforts of the Afghan government thus far, and welcome those officials in continuing to make further progress," Sullivan concluded. — KUNA



KUWAIT: The Economic and Commercial Counselor of the Embassy of People's Republic of China Cheng Yongru along with Defense Attache Senior Colonel Zhang Ge visited Kuwait Times recently and discussed matters of mutual concern with Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan. — Photo by Joseph Shagra

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A Wonderful World

## local spotlight

## Hijab Day!



By Muna Al-Fuzai

Muna@kuwaittimes.net

On Feb 1, several hashtags spread around the world on what has been called the International Day of the Headscarf to raise awareness about the hijab and promote tolerance and acceptance by others. Nazma Khan launched the initiative in 2013. The goal of the campaign is to spread awareness about the veil, deepen the understanding of others about it, and promote religious tolerance. All of these are kind gestures, but not enough to resolve urgent issues.

As a woman, I believe women need to exert joint efforts to support their role in the decision-making process in the world. The veil should not be the only demand by women. Let me say what women need in the Islamic world: Women need intensive campaigns to fight discrimination against women, whether legal discrimination, social discrimination or economic discrimination. Because all forms of discrimination certainly frustrate women and hinder the process of development.

The most important challenges that are facing women at the global level, and not just in the Islamic world, are women's views of themselves and the issue of women vs women. It is a regrettable fact that women lack confidence in women leaders, something that exists in the West as well. For example, the number of women voters in Kuwait is higher than male voters, yet we only have one female MP. This is clear evidence that there is a social problem. I wish to see more hashtags to call for women to work to increase their strength as women, and not just hair that must be covered. A woman is an entity, not just a body...

The global social heritage that put men in the leadership position and women in the second row will not be changed by a man, who cements the concept of roles in the community. Due to this social legacy, women are lagging behind. We need a long time to educate women and real media efforts to convey the reality that women deserve to have equal opportunities in leading. This will not happen unless we adopt an educational curriculum that helps women to move from a state of negativity and dependence to a state of participation and equal roles within society.

I hope to see campaigns that call for developing the curriculum and rejecting a system of education that portrays women as only fit to wash and cook. I am witnessing a sectarian rupture, women's vulnerability to extremism, a decline of human rights and women's rights in the Islamic world and their role in political decision-making. These are crucial issues worth mentioning, while initiatives like Hijab Day make it seem as if this is the only thing missing here.

Note that the covering of the head of Muslim women today is in multiple forms and colors. Also, what about the veil (niqab), and should the Western world be forced to accept it too? How about campaigns for equal pay for women and men in the world? This is indeed an appropriate topic. What about captive women under repressive terrorist regimes where they are sold and bought like goods and are fully covered? The hijab is a piece of cloth that you can buy from the market and has nothing to do with the degree of religiosity of the community or its respect of women as humans. What about equal opportunities for women and men in the workplace and in leadership ranks?

In Kuwait, the constitution and the law do not force a woman, whether Muslim or otherwise, to wear a headscarf, which reflects the freedom of women and respect for their human rights. What many of us see is the enhancement of the role of women in society. Thanks to Allah, we have gone a long way to think more about what women need and how to address their issues rather than just believing that the hijab is the only issue, because we need and deserve more.

Local

# Subsidies up by 12.4 percent in 2018-2019 state budget

## Investment authority to develop key recreational facilities

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** The finance ministry stressed that subsidies in the state budget increased by 12.4 percent to reach KD 3.433 billion. Responding to inquiries about the 2018-2019 budget, the ministry's account on Twitter said payrolls will cost KD 11.23 billion, which is 3.4 percent higher than that in the current budget. The ministry added that capital expenses increased by six percent to reach KD 3.62 billion, while other expenses dropped by 33.2 percent to total KD 1.71 billion.

The finance ministry also noted that the state has no intention to borrow KD 25 billion as suggested by several media reports, and explained that this sum is the maximum the government can borrow as stipulated in the public debt bill filed by the government to provide solutions to fund the deficit, while at the same time, maintaining public reserves without affecting citizens' living standards.

Responding to an inquiry about budget deficits despite the income, the finance ministry explained that deficits usually take place when expenditure exceeds public revenues in any given fiscal year and that reserves are not counted in budgets. The ministry also explained that returns made by the future generations fund are not counted in budgets either and that they are

usually invested and kept in the same fund.

### Budget deficit

Meanwhile, head of the parliament's budgets and final statement committee Adnan Abdulsamad said the panel discussed the state's 2018-2019 budget in its recent meeting. Abdulsamad stressed that governmental cooperation with the committee is still limited, since it had urged the

he underlined.

Abdulsamad also noted that exceeding the maximum spending limits set in the budget poses constitutional violations. He added that the government filed two bills requesting KD 103 million in extra funds although the fiscal year 2017-2018 is near conclusion. He added that the committee contacted the finance ministry requesting withdrawing bills requesting KD 665 million in extra funds.

### Recreational facilities

Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) is currently studying developing Kuwait's recreational facilities including Sabahiya Park, said a government document, explaining that a feasibility study is now in progress to develop the park. Once the study is over, it will be offered to engineering offices to get the needed licenses to be issued in collaboration with an international designer. Notably, Sabahiya Park was closed

by a court order on Sept 4, 2016, when a contract signed with the Touristic Enterprises Company (TEC) to run the park, Shaab Park and the Entertainment City expired. South Sabahiya Park is located over a green area of 115,000 sq m in Ahmadi, and includes a variety of touristic and investment sites and games for various age categories. It was officially opened in 2005. Reopening the park is a great oppor-



tunity for investors, as recommended by the Leaders Group Company for Consultancy and Development's monthly report.

### Patient medevacked

A patient who was injured in an accident near Abdaly is currently receiving medical care at Jahra Hospital, and his condition is stable, the Ministry of Health's official spokesperson Dr Ahmed Al-Shatti said. An ambulance arrived at the crash scene within five minutes, where medics decided that the patient needed to be medevacked from Abdaly clinic to Jahra Hospital, he

explained. But the first ambulance broke down, and another was dispatched from Abdaly clinic and arrived within 12 minutes.

Shatti explained that all ambulances are regularly maintained every 5,000 km, and that the first ambulance's battery had been replaced only seven months earlier. He added that Minister Dr Basel Al-Sabah provides special care for emergency and ambulances services, and 79 modern ambulances recently joined service, equipped with the latest first aid equipment. He said medics constantly undergo special training programs.



## Deficit much lesser than estimates: Lawmaker

finance ministry to be notified about new budgets to discuss them prior to having them approved by the Cabinet, which did not happen in this case. Abdulsamad added that the expected deficit in the new budget would be KD 6.5 billion assessed according to considering oil prices at \$50 per barrel, which is way less than the actual current prices of \$60-65. "This means that the deficit will be much lesser than estimates,"

## Man planted marijuana in his Adan house

By Hanan Al-Saadoun and Agencies

**KUWAIT:** Detectives arrested a citizen who planted marijuana in his house in Adan, the Interior Ministry's relations and security media department said yesterday. Upon raiding the suspect's house, detectives found the planted marijuana, 10 gm of hashish and some shabu (meth), the statement added. The suspect was referred to relevant authorities.

### Thieves caught

Hawally detectives arrested a gang of four - three Egyptians and one bedoon (stateless) - for multiple restaurant robberies in Hawally, Capital, Jahra and Farwaniya, said security sources, noting that the suspects used to break into the restaurants and steal cash from inside. The suspects confessed to robbing 30 restaurants. A case was filed and the suspects were referred to relevant authorities.

### Inspections

Kuwait Municipality's Mubarak Al-Kabeer branch, in cooperation with the public cleanliness and road occupancy department, carried out inspections of shops and roaming vendors in west Abu Fatira. Deputy head of the central emergency team Mishal Al-Malek said the inspections resulted in issuing 16 citations for road occupancy, renting basements as stores without license and general cleanliness. Twenty citations were issued to cafes that encroached on state property.

### Home robbery

A citizen who lives in Sulaibiya told police that his house was broken into and jewelry and watches worth KD 16,000 were stolen. Detectives were able to identify the thieves - two bedoons - and arrested one of them, who led police to some of the stolen items. He said that he along with his partner sold some of the items, while some items are still with the other suspect. Detectives went to the house of the second suspect and found he had died of natural causes days after the theft. The case was closed.

### Parlors raided

A tripartite commission raided mas-



**KUWAIT:** Marijuana plants found in a house that police raided in Adan yesterday.

sage parlors in Farwaniya governorate, resulting in the arrest of six Asian men on homosexuality charges. Policemen found women's garments with them. Some parlors received citations for having rooms without lights, which is a violation of the law. A security source said sexual materials were found and confiscated.

### Drug possession

Two men, Syrian and Jordanian, were arrested in Salwa with three pieces of hashish. The two were seen in an SUV, and when their IDs were being checked, a piece of hashish was seen near the driver's seat. The rest of the drugs were found when the two were searched. Meanwhile, three people who were not carrying their IDs were sent to the Drugs Control General Department. They were arrested in Dhaher after being found sleeping in their car. They were under the influence of drugs, when they were awakened, drugs were found on them.

### Fights

A fight between some youth and older people took place in Kabd, and a citizen lost a finger after he was hit by a sharp object. He was taken to Razi Hospital, and two others were treated by paramedics. Meanwhile, a domestic dispute took place in Taima. Although police responded to a call about an attempted murder, only light injuries were suffered that were treated by paramedics.

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## Food safety crackdowns in four areas

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** An inspection campaign was launched by inspectors

from the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition in Farwaniya, Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, Khaitan and Ardhiya industrial area, resulted in closing down eight food outlets and filing several citations. The authority explained in a statement that the citations were issued for violations that included hiring laborers who do not hold health certificates or expired ones, cleaning violations, and violating hygiene conditions.

## Local

# MP Abul vows unfaltering defense of Kuwait at IPU

## Role of Kuwait's National Assembly extolled

GENEVA: Member of the Kuwaiti parliamentary caucus MP Dr Khalil Abul affirmed yesterday that he and his fellow legislators would not be complacent in defending the country at international quarters. Members of the Kuwaiti caucus held a meeting with officials of the human rights committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), in coordination with the Chair Gabriela Barron, to discuss complaints delivered to the IPU against the Kuwaiti parliament, he said on sidelines of a meeting that grouped Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem and Barron, late on Friday.

The discussions tackled protests forwarded by the Israeli Knesset against the Kuwaiti parliamentary caucus and charges that the Kuwaiti parliament had taken anti-Semitic stances. They also dealt with a complaint filed by the former MP Abdulhamid Dashti concerning his lifted parliamentary immunity, as well as protests by lawmaker Shuaib Al-Mwaizri. MP Abul said such complaints are tantamount to protests against the State of Kuwait, rather than "a parliament, institution or individual."



### Lawmaker aspires to change IPU constituent law

#### Assembly's role

IPU President Gabriela Barron had confirmed the existence of several complaints against the Kuwaiti parliament, while at the same time praising it at the regional and international levels. This came in a press statement after meeting Ghanem and his accompanying parliamentary delegation in Geneva on Friday evening.

Barron said in a statement that meetings will be held to discuss the complaints against the Kuwaiti parliament at the IPU, appreciating transparency and commitment of the Kuwaiti parliament and its speaker to search for the facts behind these complaints. "It is good that there is cooperation from parliament to discuss issues related to parliamentary human rights," she said.

Barron praised the active and positive participation of the Kuwaiti National Assembly in the meetings and committees of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, pointing out that the enthusiasm and responsibility shown by the Speaker of the Kuwaiti National Assembly and the accompanying parliamentary delegation are important and strong for the development of cooperative relations between Kuwait and the international community. She stressed the importance of the role of the Kuwaiti National Assembly at the regional and international levels, adding that the IPU needs the assistance of the Kuwaiti National Assembly to achieve the strategies that were set for the next stage.

She expressed concern about the consequences of the transfer of the US embassy to Jerusalem "and we had a position on this matter more than a month ago and reviewed the developments at the Arab, regional and international levels and we are happy to work and cooperate with the Kuwaiti parliament on all Arab and international issues."

In the meantime, Ghanem said that "during our meeting we discussed several complaints, not one complaint against Kuwait by the Zionists, as well as a former deputy and current one as I previously reported."

"Through our meeting with the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, we have been told that there are those who provide them with false information. I assure the Kuwaiti people that I and your brothers, members of the Kuwaiti parliamentary caucus, will not allow anyone who would dishonor Kuwait and provide international organizations with lies and misleading information," he stated. Al-Ghanem expressed his thanks and appreciation to the

President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union for her praise of the role of the Kuwaiti National Assembly at the regional and international levels and its participation in achieving the strategy adopted by the Union in the coming stage.

He stressed that "this good reputation of the Kuwaiti parliament on the regional and international organizations was built by us and by men of glory before us and no one will succeed in distorting the image of the Kuwaiti parliament or Kuwait abroad," adding that he will inform the Kuwaiti people on the details immediately upon his return to Kuwait.

On the other hand, Ghanem said that the meeting touched on many important topics, chiefly the Palestinian issue, in his capacity as chairman of the Palestinian steadfastness committee formed by the Arab Parliamentary Union and charged with transferring the Arab position to the world's important parliaments on the Palestinian issue. He pointed out that the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union has honorable positions on the Arab issues, foremost of which is the issuance of a statement rejecting the American recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of the Zionist entity. "The President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union was in support of the fair Arab issues in many forums and I share her opinion, which she put during her meeting with us," he added.

#### IPU law

Meanwhile, member of the Kuwaiti parliament Ali Al-Deqbasi said yesterday that he was aspiring for modifying constituent law of the IPU. Deqbasi, member of the Kuwaiti parliamentary delegation currently on a mission at the IPU headquarters, said he was seeking the amendments for ensuring the states that violate human rights and UN principles do not occupy seats in the union. This proposal is ideal for facing



Kuwaiti Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem



IPU President Gabriela Barron



MP Dr Khalil Abul



GENEVA: Speaker of Kuwait's National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanem and his accompanying parliamentary delegation meet with President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Gabriela Barron. —KUNA

arrogance and intransigence of states and entities that breach human rights and principles of the international legitimacy, he said in a statement.

Kuwaiti MPs, at the international level, have been rallying Arab and Islamic forces to face such abuses by several states, namely "the Zionist entity (Israel)" which has continued to breach international legitimacy's resolutions by

committing more crimes, he said. The Kuwaiti parliament, which is respected and admired by the Arab and Islamic groups at the IPU, adheres to UN resolutions and international laws. The credit goes for this admiration to His Highness the Amir who exerted efforts at the international quarters and result of the State of Kuwait balanced policies to bolster global security and peace. —KUNA

## Kuwait returns to UNSC presidency with same priorities: Ambassador

NEW YORK: Kuwait has returned to the Security Council after 40 years and returns today to head the council in February after 39 years, its last presidency of the Security Council in February 1979. Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the United Nations and Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi said. This came at a press conference held at the United Nations recently on the occasion of Kuwait's presidency of the Security Council in February, where Ambassador Otaibi reviewed the agenda of the Council and the top priorities of the foreign policy of Kuwait. He pointed out that the Kuwaiti foreign policy continued during the past four decades with the same priorities, namely the Arab issues on top of which is the Palestinian issue, as well as its policies of preventive diplomacy and mediation.

Otaibi pointed out that during the past decades, the State of Kuwait has made many moves in the Middle East and that during its presidency of the Security Council, it will focus on developing the Council's working mechanism to increase efficiency and transparency, improve the working methods of the Council and humanitarian issues. He said that the most important session of the Security Council will be an open discussion session on the working methods of the Security Council, a ministerial briefing on the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter, in addition to a session on the situation in Palestine and a focus on the humanitarian situation in Gaza after 50 years of occu-

patation. In response to a question on the position of the State of Kuwait on the Palestinian issue, Otaibi said, "We support the Palestinian position and outcome of the meeting of Arab foreign ministers, where the participation of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in the meeting of the Security Council on the Palestinian issue was recently confirmed".

Otaibi stressed the importance of the Palestinian president's planned visit to the United Nations, which comes after a meeting of Arab foreign ministers and the Arab action to push forward the peace process to deal with Israeli violations of Jerusalem.

On the recent Security Council's visit to Washington to become acquainted with remnant of the rockets that were launched by the Houthis on Saudi Arabia which the US claimed they were Iranians, the Ambassador said the Security Council did not receive anything about this matter.

On Myanmar, Otaibi said: "We tried and made an effort to arrange a visit to Myanmar during our presidency of the council, but the government of Myanmar did not reject in principle but the timing was not appropriate".

On the issue of Kuwait's position on the transitional phase in Syria, he said that this stage was adopted in the Geneva Declaration, which included a number of resolutions and the position of Kuwait is to support the implementation of the resolution and the Geneva Declaration.

"If the brothers in Syria agree with each other, the official position of Kuwait is in favor of Security Council resolutions and the Geneva negotiations", he added. On the forthcoming conference on Iraq reconstruction, the Kuwaiti Ambassador said "We expect the participation of more than 70 countries at a high level where preparations are being made in coordination with the governments of Kuwait, Iraq, the United Nations, the European Union and the World Bank to mobilize support for the reconstruction of the liberated areas." —KUNA

## UN chief, Diwan Advisor tackle humanitarian issues

NEW YORK: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and Kuwait's Amiri Diwan Special Advisor and President of the International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) Abdullah Maatouq, discussed yesterday at New York a number of humanitarian issues and challenges, including Iraq Reconstruction Conference, which will be hosted by Kuwait on February 12.

Maatouq, who is also UN Secretary General Special Advisor, said on the sidelines of the meeting that his visit aimed at tackling means of cooperation and coordination on various crises, humanitarian aspects, and repercussions, including the importance of international community in alleviating the humanitarian complications of disasters and conflicts.

He stressed keenness on Kuwait support through its charitable societies to continue cooperation with the United Nations and its specialized agencies and to continue their support to afflicted people suffering from the scourge of homelessness and displacement or even those who found shelter in camps. Maatouq added that he extended his sincere thanks and appreciation to the Secretary-General for responding to the invitation of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to attend the Kuwait International Conference on Iraq

## Kuwait pursues relief effort in disaster areas

KUWAIT: Living up to its UN-bestowed status as an International Humanitarian Center, Kuwait continued responding to natural and man-made emergencies across the Middle East and beyond over last week. On Saturday, Jan 27, Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Chairman Hilal Al-Sayer underlined the significance of development projects for people affected by natural disasters. Upon arrival in the Philippines to launch a Kuwaiti humanitarian project there, Sayer said that the Kuwait-funded humanitarian initiatives mirror Kuwait's bright image worldwide.

He said he was in the Philippines in order to open a Kuwaiti humanitarian village in Samar in Visayas Province, east of the Philippines, which was hit by typhoon in November 2013 and left thousands of people dead and caused stupendous damage nationwide. The Kuwaiti Humanitarian Village is home to 297 housing units, he said, quoting His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-



NEW YORK: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres (right) meets with Kuwait's Amiri Diwan Special Advisor and President of the International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) Abdullah Maatouq. —KUNA

Reconstruction scheduled for February 12-14.

He noted that he discussed with the Secretary General the efforts of the International Islamic Charitable Organization to mobilize local, regional and international organi-

zations in the conference of NGOs to support the humanitarian situation in Iraq, hoping that the conference will succeed in meeting the needs of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi families, including those who live in camps. —KUNA

Sabah as having announced a bountiful donation of \$10 million in emergency relief aid to typhoon-hit people in the Philippines. It took a couple of years to complete the humanitarian project, with relevant international safety criteria having been met, the KRCS chief boasted. The KRCS was in the forefront of the societies that had immediately responded to calls for humanitarian and relief aid to the Philippines, he pointed out.

On Monday, Jan 29, KRCS unlocked a new suburb bearing the name of Kuwait in the eastern Filipino province of Samar. The Southeast Asian archipelago of the Philippines now welcomes its newest suburb christened, "Kuwait Humanitarian Village," with 297 housing units, a KRCS statement cited Sayer as saying.

He hailed Kuwait's prompt and effective aid to the Philippines, saying the village's name was a reference to Kuwait's UN bestowed moniker of "Humanitarian Center." The KRCS Chairman



KRCS Chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer

thanked Filipino officials for their cooperation and support, which proved instrumental in making this fledgling village see the light of day. "KRCS remains steadfast in its commitment to address humanitarian challenges, including poverty and malnutrition, all over the world," Sayer pointed out. Disaster-prone the Philippines is battered by some 20 typhoons a year, leaving millions of Filipinos vulnerable and underprepared for such calamities.

On Friday, Feb 2, KRCS distributed humanitarian assistance to earthquake victims near Halabja province, Kurdistan-Iraq region. The "Kuwait beside you" campaign, funded by KRCS, has delivered 2,000 food supplies to afflicted victims in Kurdistan region, said Kuwait's Consul General in Irbil Omar Al-Kanderi.

The distribution of aid is part of humanitarian campaigns under the guidance of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, he added. Meanwhile, Yonis Abdelsalam, a representative from Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) hailed Kuwait's humanitarian efforts to earthquake victims and to those in special need and expressed gratitude for such support. Since the 7.1 magnitude earthquake, KRCS has supplied 90 tons of food aid as well as 60,000 liters of white oil, he noted. It was the largest earthquake to hit the region since the 7.7 magnitude earthquake in Saravan in 2013 in Iran, killing 35 people. —KUNA

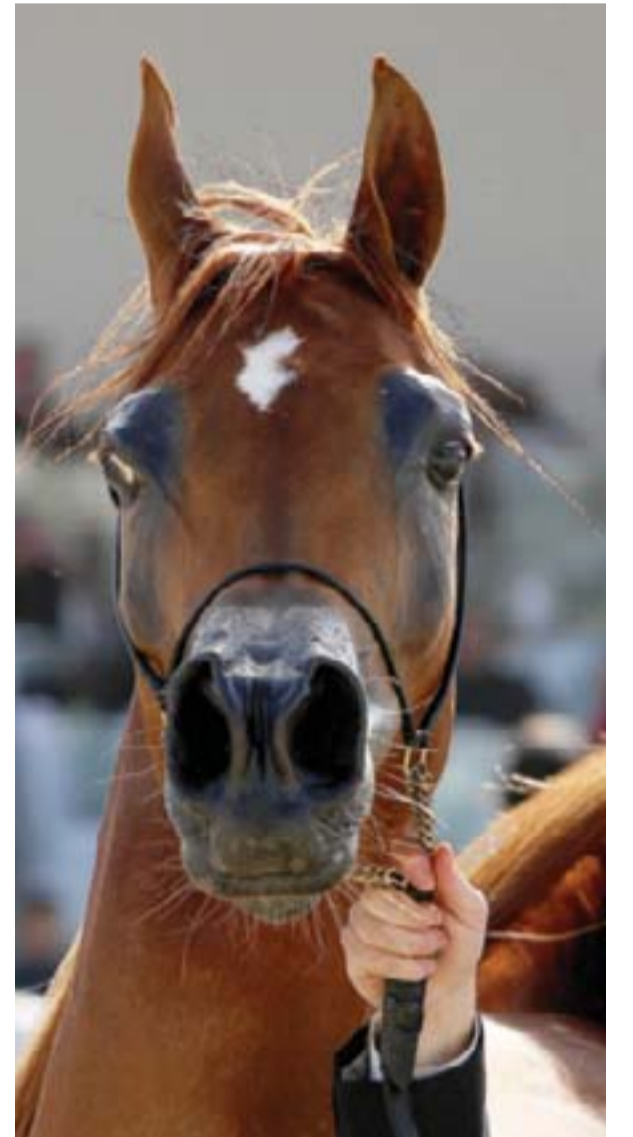


NEW YORK: Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the United Nations and Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi (center) speaks during a press conference held at the United Nations on the occasion of Kuwait's presidency of the Security Council. —KUNA



# Kuwait hosts Int'l Arabian Horse Festival

KUWAIT: Horses are paraded during the 7th International Arabian Horse Festival at the Bait al-Arab Arabian Horse Center in Kuwait yesterday. A total of 289 horses from different Arab countries are participating in the event. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat





Vatican's delicate Chinese mission runs into trouble

## Puigdemont or plan B? Catalan separatists divided

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MEXICO CITY: Personnel of the Fumigation and Avian Control company release a Harris's hawk (Aguililla de Harris in Spanish) (Parabuteo-unicinctus) for it to patrol the runways and air space over Mexico City's Benito Juarez International Airport. —AFP

# Raptors guard Mexico City's airport

## Falcons deployed to prevent 'bird strikes'

MEXICO CITY: Far from the crowds of passengers, lines and passport control, Madison spreads his wings on the side of a runway at Mexico City's international airport, the busiest in Latin America. He is one of several peregrine falcons deployed to prevent "bird strikes" a hazardous collision between birds and planes that can have dangerous and even catastrophic consequences. In 2009, for instance, a US Airways jet had to set down on the Hudson River in New York after a flock of birds took out its engines. In January this year, a Mexico-bound KLM flight made an emergency landing after hitting birds on take-off in the Netherlands. "It's dangerous. Birds don't mix with planes. They can hit a turbine," Oscar Chavez, a 26-year-old who is one of the biologists handling the falcons said. Each day, Madison and another peregrine falcon named Ilse are on duty at the airport, which sees 44 million passengers pass through it each year. "The other birds realize a predator is around and they disappear," said Nayely Flores, who is in charge of animals at the terminal. Getting Madison ready requires a daily procedure that Chavez said was like a ritual: attaching a tracking tag to his leg while dangling quail meat to distract him.

rents while scanning below for targets. These days, however, the days in Mexico's capital are cooler, limiting his forays. Still, the goal is being met and no other birds are spotted in the vicinity.



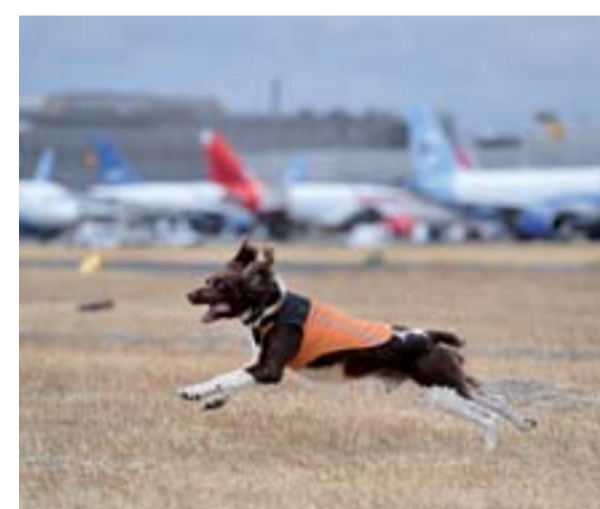
### Collision between birds and planes can be dangerous

Swallows, kestrels and kites are among the species of bird that Madison and Ilse like to hunt. Before 2014, airport authorities used raptors to swoop down and kill their prey as a way of keeping the runways clear. But now, the falcons are trained to fly

and keep the other birds away by their threatening silhouette in the sky. That way, biologists avoid protected species being ripped apart by the falcons' beaks and claws. "If that ever happened, we could get fined" by environmental agencies, Flores said. The new method also has an advantage in that the falcons are not gorging on prey, which would result in them becoming too satiated to want to fly aloft again.

#### Other birds of prey

Peregrine falcons are not the only birds of prey deployed at the airport. A blue-gray aplomado falcon called Panchito and three Harris's hawks also fly as sentinels over the tarmac. One of the hawks is named Loca-crazy in English—because of her aggressive nature. Because they fly low, these carnivorous birds can be used close to boarding halls where there are more plane movements. But there are other, less spectacular animals at work, too. The team of biologists can also call on dogs trained to chase birds away from the ground between runways. And insect populations in the area are kept in check through chemical products, robbing the nuisance birds of a source of food. At the end of the day, the animals—feathered and furred—are ushered into a hangar next to the airport for a night's rest. In the meantime the buzzing facility nearby keeps on with its frenetic activity. —AFP



MEXICO CITY: A dog trained by personnel of the Fumigation and Avian Control company runs to scare birds at Benito Juarez International Airport in Mexico City. —AFP

## Amsterdam community reels as beloved son shot dead

THE HAGUE: An Amsterdam working-class area is in mourning after a teenager known for his volunteer work was shot dead in "cold blood", the latest victim of street violence in the soft-drug tolerant city. More than 1,000 people packed Amsterdam's Nasr Mosque for the funeral of 17-year-old Mohammed Bouchikhi on Wednesday with mourners spilling into the streets, praying in driving rain. It was shortly after 7:00pm last Friday, that two masked gunmen burst through the doors at a community centre in the Wittenburg neighborhood, where Bouchikhi was giving children as young as six a cooking lesson. Armed with at least one automatic rifle, the men fired some 10 shots at a man later identified only as "Gianni L." in an apparent assassination bid.

The gunmen fled, leaving behind a wounded Gianni L. and an injured woman. But caught in the crossfire was Bouchikhi, shot in the lower spine and left arm, said his uncle, Najem Oulad Ali. He died shortly afterwards in front of the shocked children at the centre within walking distance of the red light district, where legal prostitution and cannabis shops daily draw thousands of curious tourists. "They shot him down in cold blood. It's incomprehensible," an emotional Oulad Ali told AFP, at the funeral.

#### Gun violence

Security has been beefed up in the area by Amsterdam police, who have launched a massive probe into the shooting. But they cautioned it was too early to link the latest murder to earlier incidents involving Amsterdam's so-called "Mocro-mafia" gang wars. "At this stage it would be dangerous to speculate and we're not going to," Amsterdam police spokesman Leo Dortland said. Far from tourists' eyes, the Dutch capital has witnessed several assassinations in recent years as rival gangs vie for control of the lucrative drug trade. The most gruesome was in 2016 when the severed head of a known gang member was found outside a shisha lounge.

The gangs consist mainly of Dutch citizens of Moroccan or Surinamese descent. Wittenburg residents do not believe the latest shooting was linked to gang wars. Instead they think it was a street feud which took a violent turn, possibly over drugs or money. But the shooting has raised red-flags over how easily weapons—including AK-47 assault rifles—are available, media reports said. "The fact that Mohammed's murderers could walk into a community centre full of children and open fire with an automatic rifle is of huge concern to us," Bouchikhi's relative Oulad Ali said. —AFP

## 'Tenancingo', the Mexico sex slavery capital

TENANCINGO: "Tenancingo" means "the walled city" in the Nahuatl language, and it lives up to its name: Mexico's sex slavery capital is not a place that welcomes scrutiny from outsiders. Take for example the city's radio frequency jammer, which ensures that prying eyes—police or journalists, for example—cannot fly drones over certain neighborhoods to take aerial images. Trying to get information on the ground is even more hazardous. Plainclothes police who escorted AFP journalists on a recent trip to the central city's red-light district recommended staying in the car and driving without stopping, fearful that local lookouts would ring the church bells—the signal to lynch intruders. Last year, Interpol deployed 50 agents backed by 250 Mexican soldiers to arrest just three pimps in the city.

The cinderblock houses that line the main street stand in contrast with the luxurious and colorful four-storey homes that are the symbols of the city's booming sex trafficking industry. Police say traffickers use the mansions to flaunt their power and lure vulnerable young women into their clutches. The pimps beat and torture the women to force them into prostitution, sometimes in Tenancingo or the surrounding area, sometimes as far away as the United States or even New Zealand. "They take them north and sneak them across the border," said Juana Camila Bautista, a Mexico City prosecutor who specializes in sex trafficking cases.

#### 'Like a princess'

Karla Jacinto, a 25-year-old Mexican woman, was forced into prostitution at the



MEXICO CITY: A sex worker stands on a street at La Merced neighborhood, in downtown Mexico City. The most powerful pimps of Mexico have virtually built walls around Tenancingo, the city where according to authorities, most of them were born. —AFP

age of 12. Her nightmare began when a young man approached her in the subway in Mexico City, which sits about two hours' drive northeast of Tenancingo. She was an emotionally fragile adolescent who liked skating and hip-hop and was anxious to escape an abusive mother who sometimes kicked her out of the house.

The young man claimed to share a similar story, gave her a candy, and paid her compliments she says felt like "the most sincere and honest" she had ever heard. After asking her to marry him, he took her to Tlaxcala, another sex-trafficking hotspot near Tenancingo. For three months he treated her "like a princess," she says: driving her around in a luxury car, inviting her to palatial homes, celebrating the fact that they would be "family" once they married.

Then one day it came crashing down. Her "boyfriend" forced her into prostitution, beating her and threatening to kill her. The

first day, she had sex with more than 30 clients, she says. "I screamed at them to stop. I closed my eyes," she said. That was her life for the next four years. If she failed to meet her daily quota, her boyfriend-turned-pimp beat her or burned her with an iron, nearly killing her three different times, she says. After managing to escape, she now tours the country speaking to groups of schoolgirls on the danger of sex slavery.

#### 'Worthless'

"Young, vulnerable women hungry for affection" make the easiest prey for traffickers, says Mario Hidalgo, 39, who targeted just such victims for a decade as a pimp. Hidalgo started in the trade as a 17-year-old cleaning used condoms from the rooms where his bosses forced their prostitutes to have sex with clients. Two years later he was promoted to luring in victims himself. —AFP

International

# Turkish border guards shoot fleeing Syrians

## HRW urges Turkey to end 'lethal force'

**ISTANBUL:** Turkish guards at the border with Syria are indiscriminately shooting at and summarily returning asylum seekers attempting to cross into Turkey, Human Rights Watch (HRW) said yesterday. The spokesman for Turkey's president said it was highly unlikely that Turkish soldiers would shoot at Syrian war refugees but the government would look into the report. Turkey has taken in 3.5 million Syrian war refugees since 2011.

New York-based Human Rights Watch said Syrians were now fleeing heightened violence in the north-western province of Idlib to seek refuge near Turkey's border, which remains closed to all but critical medical cases. Syrian armed forces have thrust deeper into the mainly rebel-held province in recent months and Turkey

last month launched military action in the nearby Afrin region targeting Kurdish YPG militia fighters. "Syrians fleeing to the Turkish border seeking safety and asylum are being forced back with bullets and abuse," said Lama Fakih, deputy Middle East director at Human Rights Watch.

Asked about the HRW statement, President Tayyip Erdogan's spokesman said Turkish soldiers were there to protect these people and that Ankara has had an "open-door policy" since the start of Syria's civil war in 2011. "We will certainly look into it. It's very unlikely that our soldiers would shoot at people," Ibrahim Kalin told reporters in Istanbul. "We never ask anyone whether they are Kurdish or Arab or Muslim Christian, from this region or that region. I don't know if it's an isolated incident or not."

HRW cited UN figures saying 247,000 Syrians were displaced to the border area between Dec 15 and Jan 15, 2018. "As fighting in Idlib and Afrin displaces thousands more, the number of Syrians trapped along the border willing to risk their lives to reach Turkey is only likely to

increase," Fakih said. Thirteen of 16 Syrian refugees to whom HRW spoke accused Turkish border guards of having shot toward them or other fleeing asylum seekers as they tried to cross while still in Syria, killing 10 people, including one child, and injuring several more.

Turkey has taken in more Syrian refugees than any other country, granting many temporary protection status and providing them with basic services, including medical care and education. "However, Turkey's generous hosting of large numbers of Syrians does not absolve it of its responsibility to help those seeking protection at its borders," the HRW statement added. It said Erdogan's government should issue standard instructions to border guards at all crossing points that lethal force must not be used against asylum seekers and that no asylum seeker is to be mistreated.

### Two soldiers killed

Meanwhile, two more Turkish soldiers were killed yesterday in Turkey's offensive against Kurdish militia inside Syria, the army said, bringing to nine the number killed so far in the incursion. Turkey on January 20 launched the "Olive Branch" operation against Syrian Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) militia which Ankara sees as a terror group and a threat to Turkish territory. The Turkish army and allied Ankara-backed Syrian rebel forces are seeking to oust the YPG from its western border stronghold of Afrin but the operation so far has been marked by fierce clashes. The army said that one of the soldiers was killed in a clash and another on the border area, without giving further details.

In a separate statement, it added a Turkish army tank had been hit in an attack. President Recep Tayyip



**AFRIN, Syria:** A picture taken in the town of Afrin shows the mother (center), brother (2nd left) and sister (left) of the late 23-year-old YPJ fighter Barin Kobani, attending a mourning ceremony in her honor, after the YPJ and the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights accused Turkish-backed Syrian rebels of filming her mutilated dead body. —AFP

Erdogan said on Thursday the Turkish army and Ankara-backed rebels had suffered 25 fatalities between them in the operation so far. Meanwhile, seven civilians have been killed in mortar fire on the Turkish side of the border that Ankara blames on the YPG. Ankara says that hundreds of

YPG fighters have been killed in the operation so far but it is not possible to verify this. Turkey says the YPG is an offshoot of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) which has waged a three-decade insurgency against the Turkish state.—Agencies



## 2 more Turkish soldiers killed in Syria offensive

## Poles still struggle with role - decades after the holocaust

**WARSAW:** Seventy-three years after the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau-the infamous Nazi death camp which has come to symbolize the Holocaust-Poles are still struggling to understand their own role in Germany's wartime genocide of European Jews on Polish soil. A bill passed this week by the right-wing dominated Polish parliament designed to defend the country's image abroad by criminalizing the erroneous phrase "Polish death camps" has backfired, sparking an unprecedented diplomatic row with Israel and sharp criticism from the US and the global Jewish community.

While the critics acknowledge there was no official collaboration between the then-occupied Polish state and Nazi Germany, they regard the bill as an attempt to forget or even deny, the complicity of many Poles in the killing of the Jews during the Holocaust. On Wednesday, the US State Department warned that the bill, which has yet to be signed into law by President Andrzej Duda, could have "repercussions" on "Poland's strategic interests and relationships-including with the United States and Israel."

Before Nazi Germany invaded it in 1939, Poland was a Jewish heartland, with a centuries-old community numbering some 3.2 million, or around 10 percent of the country's population. Under Nazi occupation during World War II, Poland lost some six million of its citizens-including three million Jews in the Holocaust. The vast majority of Jews perished in ghettos and concentration and death camps set up by the Nazis in occupied Poland, including Auschwitz-Birkenau, Belzec, Chelmo, Majdanek, Sobibor and Treblinka. Although the exact number is difficult to determine, tens of thousands of Jews were also either



**WARSAW:** Senators attend an overnight session at the Polish Senate in Warsaw where the upper house of parliament voted 57-23, with two abstentions, to approve a bill which sets fines or a maximum three-year jail term for anyone who refers to Nazi German death camps as Polish or accuses Poland of complicity in the Third Reich's crimes. — AFP

killed or given up to the Nazis by Poles holding anti-Semitic views.

### Executors and executed

On the other hand, the Polish state in exile and the Polish resistance sought, in a clandestine but highly organized way, to save Jews by setting up the "Zegota" network in 1942. The resistance also issued death sentences on Poles who collaborated with the Nazis or denounced Jews to them. The Polish resistance and government in exile in Britain were also the first to inform Allied powers including the United States about Nazi Germany's ongo-

ing genocide of European Jews. Germany set up a monstrous killing machine on Polish soil, with ghettos and death and concentration camps that claimed an estimated 5.7 million lives, half of whom were Polish Jews. But others Polish Jews perished at the hands of their non-Jewish neighbors. Polish-American historian Jan T. Gross triggered shock in Poland in 2001 with his book "Neighbors", in which he revealed that in 1941 during the Nazi German occupation, several hundred Jews were massacred by their Polish neighbors in the town of Jedwabne. Between 340 and 1,500 Jews died during the massacre, according to historians. —AFP

## Wray, 'low key' FBI director in eye of the storm

**WASHINGTON:** Christopher Wray, US President Donald Trump's hand-picked FBI director, told senators during his confirmation hearing not to be put off by his soft-spoken manner. "No one should mistake my low-key demeanor as a lack of resolve," Wray told the Senate Judiciary Committee. "Anybody who thinks that I would be pulling punches as the FBI director sure doesn't know me very well." Just six months into the job, the 50-year-old Wray is having that resolve tested as he squares off with a president who has already fired one head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.



**FBI's Christopher Wray**

Ignoring Wray's objections, the White House approved the release on Friday of a memo which it claimed reveals abuse at the FBI and Justice Department in connection with surveillance of a member of Trump's 2016 presidential campaign who had ties to Russia. According to CNN, the White House was worried Wray may quit to protest the release of the memo drafted under the authority of Devin Nunes, the Republican chairman of the House Intelligence Committee.

On the contrary, the FBI director sent an internal message to the bureau's 30,000 employees on Friday that contained no suggestion he would step down. "Let me be clear: I stand fully committed to our mission," Wray said in the message obtained by AFP. "I stand by our shared determination to do our work independently and by the book. Talk is cheap; the work you do is what will endure," he said. "And know that I consider it an incredible privilege to work beside you-and that I am determined to defend your integrity and professionalism every day." Wray has mostly flown under the radar since replacing James Comey at the head of the FBI, which has been the target of Trump's ire since taking office.

Wray was overwhelmingly confirmed by the Senate in August, three months after Trump sacked Comey amid an FBI probe into whether members of the president's campaign had colluded with Russia help him get elected. That investigation, which Trump has denounced as a "witch hunt," is now in the hands of special counsel Robert Mueller, himself a former FBI director. Democratic lawmakers are claiming the memo is part of a broader campaign aimed at discrediting the Mueller probe and protecting Trump. —AFP

## Exiled Ukrainians coin Trump after 'Putin-in-bullets'

**NEW YORK:** They shot to fame in 2015 with a portrait of Vladimir Putin made of bullet shells from the killing fields of eastern Ukraine. Now, the two Ukrainian artists are back with a portrait of Donald Trump made from coins and poker chips. Threats forced Daria Marchenko, 35, and Daniel Green, 34, to leave their homeland in November 2016. They now lead an itinerant life, traveling and exhibiting their work in the United States and Latin America. The Trump portrait, finished one month ago, is made of nearly 4,000 one cent and five-cent pieces. Poker chips are used for the US president's shoulders. The artists are now searching for a place for a public unveiling.

As with their "Face of War" portrait of the Russian leader, the Trump version, called "Face of Money" plays in the light revealing different expressions. Marchenko's favorite? The one in which "he is very proud of himself," she tells AFP in New York. They came up with the idea of the enormous portrait-nearly eight foot by five foot (2.4 meters by 1.7 meters) — last summer when Putin ordered the United States to reduce its diplomatic footprint in Russia by 755 employees. Trump responded by thanking Putin, saying it would allow the United States to cut down its payroll

and "save a lot of money." "I thought, 'oh my God, you are so cheap, how can you be American president?'" says Green. "At that moment, I thought coins is the best way to show his portrait." The duo deliberately chose one cent and five-cent pieces, the smallest denominations of US currency, to illustrate their point, Green explains. Coins darkened with fire are used for the pupils, eyebrows and to emphasize the chin. The poker chips are a nod to the casinos the billionaire once ran in Atlantic City, New Jersey-but also, in Green's words, to his brand of international diplomacy. "He does international politics like he's playing. Sometimes he wins, sometimes he loses big," says the artist.

### 'Make waves'

Green singles out the US president's announcement in December that he was recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and preparing to relocate the US embassy from Tel Aviv. "When only eight countries follow you, it shows America has lost all power," he says. The artists left Ukraine following the backlash over their Putin portrait, and after a kidnap attempt against Marchenko. "We had threats by email. When you are walking on the street, somebody comes to you and tells you something," says Marchenko, her dreadlocks tucked into a beanie.

"Mostly not direct threats but 'Guys, don't hurry to create... be in a hurry to leave," she carries on. "We became tired of this. Morally it was very difficult. So we left." But the Trump portrait isn't making things easier for them. They offered it for



**NEW YORK:** Ukrainian artists Daria Marchenko and Daniel Green are seen with their portrait of US President Donald Trump, made of US pennies, nickels, and dimes in New York. —AFP

exhibition at New York's Ukrainian Art Institute of America, which is already exhibiting their work on Putin and the war in Ukraine. The institute however was reluctant "to make waves," between Kiev and Washington, Green said. The two artists now hope to show their Putin and Trump portraits together, perhaps in Las Vegas, Los Angeles or San Francisco.

"They will be face-to-face, they will have a dialogue," says Marchenko dryly. She and Green, who both took part in the

pro-European uprising of 2013-14, now consider themselves political refugees without a fixed home, traveling in the United States and Latin America at the invitation of benefactors. Their next project is a portrait of Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, even if that could complicate their return one day to Ukraine, Marchenko says. For Poroshenko's portrait the artists may use chocolate wrappers-a reference to the chocolate company where he made his fortune.—AFP

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## International

# Germany coalition partners seeking to overcome health, labor disputes

## Merkel wants 4th term as conservative chancellor

**BERLIN:** German Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives and the Social Democrats (SPD) battled yesterday to find solutions to disputes on healthcare and labor rules as they discuss forming a government more than four months after an election. The two parties aim to seal a deal on renewing the "grand coalition" that has governed Europe's largest economy since 2013 by the end of today. But some politicians say talks on forging the unnatural partnership could run into tomorrow.

Arriving for negotiations, SPD deputy Manuela Schwesig urged the conservatives to compromise on two areas crucial to her party - abolishing fixed-term contracts for workers and reforming Germany's dual public-private healthcare system. "I don't think Mrs Merkel can explain why there can't be any movement there," she said. The SPD wants to prove to its members that it would be able to push through those core policies in the role of junior partner to Merkel's conservatives to make another "grand coalition" more appealing to skeptical grassroots members.

Many of the SPD's 443,000 members - who will get the chance to vote on any coalition deal - would prefer their party to revamp itself in opposition rather than signing up to another alliance with Merkel after the SPD suffered its worst postwar election result in September. The two camps made some progress on labor policy on Friday by agreeing that employees in companies with more than 45 employees should have the right to move seamlessly back and forth between full- and part-time work.



### SPD wary after previous coalition cost it votes

to exceed 220,000 per year. But the two parties were still arguing over its meaning yesterday, with Joachim Herrmann - a member of Merkel's CSU Bavarian allies who have called for an upper limit to migration - telling Rheinische Post newspaper he believed his party had secured a migrant cap in the negotiations.

Meanwhile SPD deputy Ralf Stegner insists the number is merely a prediction, writing on Twitter: "The fact remains that the SPD has not agreed to any upper limit and will not do so." Migration is a sensitive issue given the influx of more than a million migrants since mid-2015 and the subsequent loss of support the conservatives suffered to the anti-immigrant Alternative for Germany (AfD) in September's national election.—Reuters

#### Stumbling block

Healthcare is a big stumbling block and party sources said Merkel and her Bavarian ally Horst Seehofer discussed the issue together yesterday morning before meeting with the SPD. The conservatives reject replacing the current system with a "citizen's insurance" as called for by the SPD and talks are now expected to focus on improving the position of those with public healthcare such as by changing billing rules for doctors, who earn more by treating private patients and so often favor them.

In a full day of negotiations yesterday, the parties were also hoping to tick off issues including finances, rents and real estate prices, agriculture and municipalities. They reached a deal on migration on Friday, agreeing to stick to wording of January's coalition blueprint that said the parties did not expect annual migration



**BERLIN:** German Chancellor and leader of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) Angela Merkel (center), and the chairman of the Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU) Horst Seehofer take their seats as the parliamentary group leader of the conservative CDU/CSU faction Volker Kauder looks on in the conference room at the headquarters of Social Democrats Party (SPD) in Berlin. — AFP

#### News in brief

##### Police 'kidnap' priest

**KINSHASA:** Police "kidnapped" a Catholic priest yesterday after mass in Kinshasa, witnesses said, amid spiraling tensions between the church and the DR Congo's government over the president's refusal to step down. "Father Sebastien was taken away by police just after morning mass," a nun of the Saint-Robert parish told AFP in N'sele on the eastern outskirts of the capital. A police vehicle drew up outside the church, officers jumped out and "started to beat the priest," said another nun who had also witnessed the incident. "They threw him in the jeep and drove off with him," she said, adding that an unidentified man "filmed the priest" on his mobile phone during mass. Police refused to comment on the incident when contacted by AFP. Priest Sebastien Yebo has worked for the parish since August 2017. —AFP

##### LA school shooting

**LOS ANGELES:** A middle school shooting that left two students injured in Los Angeles was the result of a semi-automatic handgun going off by accident in a 12-year-old girl's bag, police said Friday. A 15-year-old boy sustained a head wound, described as a "graze," while a girl of the same age was hit in the wrist in the incident at Salvador Castro Middle School in central Los Angeles on Thursday. Both are expected to fully recover, and Los Angeles police said they did not believe the shooting was intentional. An 11-year-old boy, a 12-year-old girl and a 30-year-old woman "had minor abrasions to the face area, some from glass," Erik Scott of the Los Angeles Fire Department said, adding that none of the three was struck by gunfire. —AFP

##### Nigeria's judge charged

**ABUJA:** Nigeria's top judge handling corruption cases against public officials has himself been charged with bribery, court papers showed yesterday. Danladi Umar was accused by the country's anti-graft body EFCC of demanding 10 million naira (22,300 euros; \$27,800) from a suspect "for a favor to be afterwards shown to him in relation to the pending charge", according to court papers seen by AFP. The embattled judge was also alleged to have received in 2012, through his personal assistant, the sum of 1.8 million naira from the same accused "in connection with the pending case before him", the papers revealed. Umar, who chairs the Code of Conduct tribunal, last year cleared Senate president Bukola Saraki of corruption charges linked to his time as a state governor. —AFP

##### Cyber-fraud suspect

**WASHINGTON:** A Russian man accused of victimizing thousands of Americans with ransomware and spam has been extradited to the United States from Spain, US officials announced Friday. Peter Levashov, 37, was due to appear before a federal judge in Connecticut where he faces hacking, wire and email fraud, identity theft and conspiracy charges. Prosecutors say Levashov ran the "Kelihos" botnet, a network of thousands of infected computers used to harvest internet login credentials, distribute bulk spam emails sometimes used for fraudulent "pump-and-dump" stock promotions and install malicious software on unsuspecting users' computers. In any given 24-hour period, Levashov's network allegedly generated more than 2,500 spam emails advertising such schemes as services to other potential cyber-criminals. —AFP

## California homeless live in fear

**LOS ANGELES:** Since learning that the California homeless camp where she lives will be dismantled, Ashley Foster has had three serious epileptic seizures. The 23-year-old lives on the banks of the Santa Ana River in Anaheim with 500 other people who recently learned they must pack their bags and move on-though many worry there are no adequate measures in place to ensure the homeless will find shelter. "They're trying to scare us, to have us leave," said Foster's tent neighbor Jodi Samhat, tears streaming down her face behind her sunglasses.

The 34-year-old has nowhere else to go. Four years ago, she lost her corporate sales job after mass layoffs. She subsequently was unable to afford her condo-and is now penniless with alcohol and drug addiction issues. Samhat is one face of the chronic homelessness crisis in California, home to more than a quarter of an American homeless population that has swelled past half a million, despite the coastal state's booming economy and lion's share of billionaires. In cities like Anaheim as well as Los Angeles, San Diego and San Francisco, more and more people are sleeping in cars, tents, under bridges or in parks-often just steps away from luxe restaurants and lofts.

Many are veterans, people suffering from mental illness, or others who found their lives upended after losing a job. Aid authorities say they have been more active than ever, initiating emergency plans worth hundreds of millions of dollars. Urban development network CityNet says it has helped some 200 people get out of the Santa Ana camp since July-but the steady stream of new homeless people is relentless. A lot of people are "living on the edge," said Matt Bates, the organization's vice president. "They're one paycheck away or one tragedy away from falling out of housing." "There's a lot of anxiety and fear of the unknown," he added.

#### 'No magic wand'

Anaheim city spokesman Mike Lyster emphasized that

## Puigdemont or plan B? Catalan separatists divided

**BARCELONA:** Catalonia's separatist parties have to decide in the coming days whether to set their differences aside and back ousted, exiled leader Carles Puigdemont or seek an alternative. Unlike other major independence movements in Scotland and Quebec, concentrated in one party, three different groupings make up Catalonia's separatist camp, united in their will to break with Spain but often at odds with each other.

These quarrels burst into the open on Tuesday, when the Catalan parliament's speaker Roger Torrent, a separatist, postponed a vote meant to reinstate ousted Catalan leader Carles Puigdemont. Alternative candidates are now emerging in the press, even if Puigdemont's Together for Catalonia grouping insists he must make a comeback from self-exile in Belgium after winning big in December elections.

#### Different strategies

Torrent said he had delayed the crunch

parliamentary session to ensure it later went ahead in an "effective" manner after the Constitutional Court imposed restrictions to try and stop the reappointment of Puigdemont, who is wanted for his role in Catalonia's independence drive.

But what really came to light were divergences between the three separatist groupings-Together for Catalonia, Torrent's Republican Left of Catalonia (ERC) and the smaller far-left CUP party. They are torn over how to go forward after the failure of a unilateral declaration of independence in October, which saw Madrid sack the Catalan government, dissolve its parliament and call snap elections. ERC wants to calm things down, get an effective regional government in place and try and increase the separatist camp's support base, which is still under 50 percent of Catalans.

Together for Catalonia, though, insist Puigdemont lead the region again after the election results, which saw his grouping come first out of the three separatist parties. That, however, would lead to yet another showdown with Madrid. The CUP, meanwhile, wants to kick off civil disobedience. "The reality is that Esquerra doesn't want to reappoint president Puigdemont and they're going to drag out the situation and look for excuses," says a high-ranking member of Together for Catalonia, who refuses to be named. "But they don't dare say so in public."

The divisions have been used by the



**CALIFORNIA:** A homeless encampment made of tents and tarps lines the Santa Ana riverbed near Angel Stadium in Anaheim, California. — AFP

the Orange County officials in charge of the area are "not forcing people today or tomorrow-but the time will come when they have to leave." "There is no quick fix; there is no magic wand here," Lyster said. Like many people in her tent city, Samhat has applied for low-income housing. But many of them wait for their chance in vain: it can take years to snag a spot. And some prefer to stay on the streets rather than go to shelters, citing overcrowding, insecurity and rules against living as a couple or bringing pets. "My dogs, they're like my kids, they got me through everything in my life," Tammy Schuler said. Sick of seeing municipal employees toss her personal belongings, she sued Orange County with help from non-profit aid workers.

She won the right to stay on the condition that she keep the vicinity around her tent clean. But the city of Anaheim-one of California's richest, thanks to Disneyland-has justified its planned evacuation with complaints of local residents and the risk of flooding,

though it rarely rains in the area. The growth of encampments has triggered an increase in crime in some areas of California, as well as a Hepatitis A epidemic. A cooking fire in one Los Angeles camp also recently sparked a blaze that swept through one of the city's most affluent areas-underscoring the need for authorities to address the homelessness crisis.

Eve Garrow, a homelessness policy analyst with the American Civil Liberties Union, blames municipal officials for not investing in affordable housing. "It's a matter of a lack of responsiveness from the county and the city," she said, denouncing fines suffered by homeless people who are pushed out of tent cities only to set up camp elsewhere. "Access to affordable housing is basically impossible," she said. "Every level of government has failed these people." Bates of CityNet agreed, saying "the resources exist here to solve this problem-to provide housing to the thousands of people here that are homeless." "It's a question of public will," he said.—AFP



**In this file photo,** Catalan regional president Carles Puigdemont looks at his mobile phone during a session recess at the Catalan parliament in Barcelona. —AFP

for Catalonia is against any alternative candidate, even if that means political blockage and possibly new elections. And divisions may heal-at least superficially. "This won't be the last time we hear that the political movement is dead. But not only is it not dead, it will continue to grow," warned Torrent.—AFP

opposition, which has asked the separatist camp to propose another candidate. "The independence movement is broken in two," Puigdemont's rival Ines Arrimadas, of the anti-independence Ciudadanos party, said Tuesday. The restitution of Puigdemont is important for many independence supporters unhappy over Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy's sacking of him and his cabinet, and the imposition of direct rule on the semi-autonomous region. On Tuesday, several thousand people protested in Barcelona wearing masks of Puigdemont's face, unhappy with the delay of the parliamentary vote to appoint him.

#### 'Symbolic' presidency?

But his reappointment is hugely problematic, as any return to Spain will see him arrested. High-ranking members of ERC have started to hint that Puigdemont should step down, and the separatist leader's resolve, according to private phone messages of his caught on camera, appears to be floundering. His former vice president Oriol Junqueras, who is currently in jail, suggested in an interview he could be a "symbolic" president from his home in Belgium, with a fully-functioning executive in Barcelona.

Alternative names have started to emerge in the press, such as Elsa Artadi, Puigdemont's campaign manager during the elections, or Eduard Pujol, a former journalist who is close to the separatist leader. For the moment, though, Together



International

# Vatican's delicate Chinese mission runs into trouble

## Complex row sparks a new war of words

VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis is facing a complex row over the Vatican's warming ties with Communist China, which have sparked a new war of words with a Hong Kong cardinal and growing bitterness among some Chinese faithful. Beijing and the Vatican severed diplomatic relations in 1951, and although ties have improved in recent years as China's Catholic population has grown, they remain at odds over which side has the authority to ordain bishops.

The Vatican relaunched long-stalled negotiations three years ago and now seems to be nearing concrete steps towards solving the major stumbling bloc of how to designate bishops. But the issue has flared up again after two underground Chinese bishops, recognized by the pope, were asked by a top Vatican diplomat to resign in favor of state-sanctioned prelates, including one who was ex-communicated by the Vatican in 2011.

The news was first reported in January by the Vatican-linked AsiaNews website and since confirmed by Cardinal Joseph Zen, bishop emeritus of semi-autonomous Hong Kong, who is a staunch opponent of any rapprochement between the Vatican and Beijing. "Do I think that the Vatican is selling out the Catholic Church in China? Yes, definitely," Zen said in an open letter on Monday, adding that the Communist government had introduced "harsher regulations limiting religious freedom".

The Vatican's number two, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, did not deny the disagreement in a post on the Vatican Insider website, but said that the Hong Kong rebel was only expressing a "personal point of view" and was in no way a spokesman for Chinese Catholics. Zen said he had appealed to the pope in a private meeting earlier this month in Rome, where he delivered a letter from one of

the bishops who was asked to step aside, Peter Zhuang Jianjian.

### Two churches

The cardinal also indicated in his statement that the pope, who has sought to improve ties with China, was not in agreement with his mediator in Beijing a claim which prompted a terse denial from the Vatican. For Parolin, the Vatican secretary of state, "there does not exist two churches in China, but two communities of the faithful calling for a gradual path towards reconciliation and unity". China's roughly 12 million Catholics are divided between a government-run association, whose clergy are chosen by the Communist Party, and an unofficial church which swears allegiance to the Vatican.

The secretive negotiations between the two sides could come down to the Vatican recognizing some of the bishops chosen by the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association in exchange for a more benevolent attitude from Beijing. The last word on nominations for future bishops could be given to the pope, following the suggestion of the China's underground Catholic authorities. Parolin hopes that it will be possible to "abolish" the distinction between "underground" and "official" churches, which he warned would require certain "sacrifices" by some. "The Church does not forget the sufferings past and present of all Chinese Catholics," he said, calling for everyone to work towards "building a more peaceful future".

### Anger among the faithful

Reactions from the faithful at underground Chinese churches, published last week by AsiaNews, included both sorrow and anger. "I have nothing left to do but become a farmer," said one



VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis (right) speaks with (from left) Bishop of La Rioja and second Vice President Marcelo Daniel Colombo, Bishop of San Isidro (Argentina) and President of the Episcopal Conference of Argentina Oscar Vicente Ojea, Archbishop of Buenos Aires and first Vice President Mario Aurelio Poli and Bishop of Chascomus, Secretary General Carlos Humberto Malfa, during a private audience at the Vatican yesterday. —AFP

priest. At the heart of the drama is Chinese bishop Zhuang, who has been ordained by the Vatican. The 88-year-old has twice been asked to leave his post in China's southeast in favor of bishop Joseph Huang Bingzhang, Beijing's nominee who was excommunicated by the Vatican in 2011. Another Chinese

prelate, aged 70, who was imprisoned in 2017, according to AsiaNews will be relegated to number two in his diocese to allow another Chinese regime pick to take the position. Progress appears elusive, with staunch opponents to normalizing diplomatic ties on both sides. —AFP



## China's roughly 12 million Catholics are divided

## Maldives resists court order to free dissidents, shuts parliament

MALE: Maldivian authorities yesterday announced an indefinite postponement of parliament as President Abdulla Yameen's regime resisted international pressure to comply with a landmark Supreme Court order to free political prisoners. The People's Majlis, or parliament, told local reporters in a brief message that the assembly will not have its scheduled sessions tomorrow "due to security reasons". No fresh date was given for the sessions.

The move followed a shock order Thursday by the country's Supreme Court to release nine political dissidents. It also restored the seats of 12 legislators who had been sacked for defecting from Yameen's party. The reinstatement of the dozen legislators has given the opposition a majority in the 85-member assembly, and it can now potentially impeach Yameen as well as his cabinet.

The beleaguered president announced yesterday that he sacked police chief Ahmed Saudeh, who was appointed just two days ago. His predecessor Ahmed Areef was fired on Thursday, shortly after he said he will honor the court's decision. The main opposition Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) said Yameen was yet to release any political prisoners. "Although Yameen has said he will abide by the ruling, he is yet to comply with the order delivered more than 36 hours ago," Colombo-based MDP spokesman Hamid Abdul Ghafoor said yesterday morning.

The court had said that cases against the nine dissidents, including MDP leader and former president Mohamed Nasheed, were politically motivated and asked the government to release them immediately. In a statement issued overnight, the joint opposition, which includes



COLOMBO: In this file photo, former president of the Maldives Mohamed Nasheed (center) arrives for a press conference. Tensions ran high in the Maldives on Friday after a shock Supreme Court decision to clear the exiled former president and eight other convicted political dissidents triggered overnight clashes between police and opposition activists. —AFP

Nasheed's MDP, said there were concerns the regime would ignore the ruling and that it would trigger further unrest in the nation of 340,000 Sunni Muslims. "We are deeply fearful that the government's refusal to implement the Supreme Court order could escalate to unrest and incite violence across the country," the opposition said.

Nasheed, the country's first democratically-elected president, has urged the government to respect the top

court's decision. The United Nations, Australia, Britain, Canada, India and the United States welcomed the court's decision as a move towards restoring democracy in the politically troubled Indian Ocean nation. Earlier, Nasheed had said the ruling cleared the way for him to return to the Maldives and contest elections due later this year. "I can contest and will contest," he told AFP in the Sri Lankan capital Colombo. —AFP

## Nepal losing out to China; Everest operators cross the mountain

KATHMANDU: Poor regulation and overcrowding are pushing Everest climbers away from Nepal to China, which is investing millions to boost a rival path to the top of the world. Veteran climbing outfits, fed up with what they regard as a lax attitude to safety on Nepal's southern flank of the 8,848 metre (29,029-foot) peak, are starting to shift operations to Everest's north side in Tibet.

"The south side is way too overcrowded with inexperienced people," Phil Crampton, a seasoned Everest hand who announced in January his company Altitude Junkies would shift to China, the third such outfit to abandon Nepal in recent years. The exodus could dent a long-standing source of revenue for the cash-strapped Himalayan nation-Kathmandu raked in more than \$4 million in Everest permits fees alone in 2017. A growing chorus of foreign-led Everest operators in Nepal are demanding greater scrutiny of low-cost outfits that have mushroomed in recent years, offering cheap expeditions up the fabled summit.

These budget players are luring hordes of amateur climbers chasing the thrill of

Everest but also risking death and injury, climbing experts say, warning that some expedition leaders are ill-equipped to tackle the peak. Seven of the 10 climbers who died on Everest's south in the last two years were summiting with budget operators, according to information from the Himalayan Database. "What has happened over the last few years on the south side is absolutely intolerable," said Lukas Furtenbach, whose company Furtenbach Adventures relocated to China last year citing safety concerns.

Those pushing for change want to see permit numbers curbed and greater oversight of guides and operators. Nepal introduced new laws in late December barring solo climbers, blind mountaineers and double amputees from scaling Everest, restrictions it said would make the peak safer. But many mountaineers say the rules miss the mark. "Nepal needs mountaineering rules and regulations. But for the operators, not for the climbers," said Furtenbach. Nepal has been criticized as reluctant to introduce much-needed regulations because it fears harming an industry that spins money for the impoverished nation.

### Climate change threat

Meanwhile, China is sending a message that Everest's north is open for business, investing in climbing infrastructure vital for a safe ascent to the summit. It is building a mountaineering training centre in Lhasa and plans to allow helicopter rescues on Everest's north from 2019, according to Chinese state media.



PANGBOCHE: In this file photo, a Nepalese porter carries merchandise through a valley near Pangboche in the Khumbu region in north-east Nepal. —AFP

Currently helicopter rescues are only possible in Nepal. It also fixes ropes to Everest's summit at the beginning of each climbing season, an industry standard on most major peaks around the world-but missing on the southern face in Nepal.

"China is addressing the issues in a way that Nepal has just struggled to... There is no system in place to actually enforce the rules," said Adrian Ballinger, who was the first operator to move exclusively to Everest's north in 2015. Until a decade ago, a roughly even number of climbers attempted the summit from the northern

and southern sides of Everest. But China's reputation took a hit when authorities closed the Tibetan side of Everest without warning in 2008, fearing protests ahead of the Beijing Olympics. Many companies abandoned the north saying the political situation in Tibet was too unpredictable.

But that is changing due to what many in the industry see as a deteriorating situation in Nepal. Ballinger expects more companies to move north in the coming years, especially as the Khumbu Icefall presents an increasingly avoidable danger on the south. —AFP

### News in brief

#### Elephant kills monk

COLOMBO: A senior Buddhist monk died in hospital yesterday, a day after being attacked by an elephant at his own temple near the capital, police said. Bellanwila Wimalarathana, 77, was violently pushed to the ground by the tusker, but the mahout managed to prevent the monk from being gored, police said. The monk was rushed to hospital but died a day later. He was also a vice chancellor of a state-run university and becomes the first high profile monk to be killed by a tamed elephant in the country. The elephant was gift to the temple by the government of Myanmar in mid 2013 and it had been named "Myan Kumara." Elephants are considered sacred animals protected by law in Sri Lanka. Several Buddhist temples have pet elephants which are paraded at annual pageants. —AFP

#### 'Rolex General' taunt

BANGKOK: Thai students with huge banners and caricature puppets yesterday delivered the latest satirical swipe at the junta's number two-known as the "Rolex General" for his collection of undeclared luxury watches. The watch scandal has seized a kingdom growing weary of military rule and sparked a spate of creative protests that are challenging the junta's stranglehold on dissent. Yesterday, students leading an annual pre-football match ceremony in Bangkok wheeled a series of massive parade floats around the pitch-including several poking fun at junta No 2 Prawit Wongsuwan. The 72-year-old general has been the target of public ire ever since photo circulated of him in December lifting a hand to block his eyes from the sun, revealing a diamond ring and a pricey Richard Mille watch. —AFP

#### Mass graves in Rakhine

YANGON: Myanmar yesterday denied that there were five mass graves of Rohingya Muslims in a village in crisis-hit Rakhine state, saying that 19 "terrorists" had been killed and buried in the area. The denial was response to an Associated Press report that used testimony from dozens of Rohingya refugees and time-stamped cell phone videos to describe a massacre by soldiers and at least five previously unreported mass graves in Rakhine's Gu Dar Pyn village. The Myanmar government's Information Committee said in a statement on its Facebook page that a government inspection team had gone to the village to probe the report and found it to be false. "The inspection team systematically investigated the AP's report on the Gu Dar Pyn village case, including interviewing villagers, and found it not to be true," the statement said.—AFP

#### Israel planes hit Hamas

GAZA: Israeli aircraft hit a Hamas compound in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday, after Palestinians there fired a rocket into the Jewish state, the Israeli army said. "In response to the projectile fired at southern Israel... fighter jets struck a Hamas compound composed of two military structures," the army statement said. A Palestinian security source said the raid hit a facility of Hamas's military wing west of Rafah in southern Gaza, "without causing injuries." Israeli army radio said that there were no casualties from Friday night's rocket, which it said fell on open ground in southern Israel. It was the second exchange in 24 hours, after the air force hit a Hamas position in Gaza early Friday in response to a rocket being fired from the Palestinian enclave the night before. —AFP

## Analysis

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E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net  
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## WASHINGTON WATCH

## Recognizing Black contributions and atoning for our past

By Dr James J Zogby

This is Black History Month, an important time to reflect on the contributions African Americans have made to the history of the United States of America. It is important because, as we have discovered, in too many instances these contributions have been either deliberately ignored or are just not known or recognized. More than that, however, this month should provide also us with an opportunity to learn more about the shameful legacy of white America's treatment black Americans. By this, I mean, not just the major crimes - slavery, mass lynchings, Jim Crow, and segregation - that have defined our history. I also mean the countless lesser known but still devastating "little crimes" that have been inflicted on the black community.

I recently became aware of one of these crimes. It took place a century ago, literally, in my own backyard. For the past four decades, I have lived in Northwest Washington. When we bought our home, we noted that in the deed's historical record there was a "covenant" stipulating that the property could not be sold to "colored people". That covenant had been overturned in the 1960s by national civil rights legislation, but it remained in the deed as an uncomfortable reminder of my city's racist history.

What I didn't know then, and only discovered this month, was that Washington's past was marked by other troubling instances of racism. A neighbor sent me a copy of a fascinating piece of academic research entitled "Free Black People of Washington County". It tells the story of the forced evacuation and destruction of two settlements of hundreds of free black families that had lived just blocks from my home.

These settlements had been founded in the mid-19th century by the descendants of former slaves who had been residents of Washington for generations. They had built businesses, started schools for their children, and, during the civil war, many had served, with distinction, in the Union Army defending the Capital from the Confederacy. Back then, the areas where these settlements had been established were somewhat rural and so, in isolation from white Washington, these black American families prospered. All of that was to change in the early 20th century.

With the advent of the streetcar, and the extension of telephone and electricity services, this once "far reaches" of Washington became more accessible and, therefore, more attractive to whites wanting to move out of the crowded downtown area of the Capital city. During the first two decades of the 20th century, the areas surrounding the black settlements were developed into white-only subdivisions that included the "whites-only" provision I had found in my deed.

### Fateful Decision

As more white families moved into the area they demanded that schools be built for their children. A combination of this need and the discomfort that many whites felt at their proximity to the black settlements, led the District of Columbia to take a fateful decision. In 1928, the government used "eminent domain" and authorized the "purchase" of the black-owned properties in both of the black settlements and the eviction of the African American community from these areas of Northwest Washington. In the place where these black settlements had existed, the city built two all-white schools and parks for the children of new residents of the area.

As profoundly disturbing as this history is, even more troubling is that it is largely unknown. One of my children went to Lafayette School, and one of my grandchildren is currently enrolled at Alice Deal School - both of which were built on the ruins of those once-vibrant black communities. Not only have they been erased, but our memory of them has, as well. As the author of the article I read noted, a 1938 Washington Post article included this sentence: "Lafayette School which stands on the site of once barren ground is the hub of a thriving community life."

So America needs Black History Month, not only to teach us about African American scientists, inventors, political leaders, and scholars who have made significant, though all too often unacknowledged, contributions to our collective history. We also need it to remind us of our forgotten crimes, born of our nation's original sins of slavery and racism and the price African Americans have paid for our behavior. We cannot, as a nation, atone for our past when we remain unaware of the horrible crimes that defined it.

**DISCLAIMER:** The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Arab American Institute. The Arab American Institute is a non-profit, nonpartisan national leadership organization that does not endorse candidates.

**NOTE:** Dr James J Zogby is the President of the Arab American Institute



## Texas shale challenges North Sea crude

Surging shale oil production in Texas and North Dakota is being felt on trading desks in Chicago, Houston and New York, where a brisk business in West Texas Intermediate crude futures is far outpacing contracts for London-based Brent crude. As the United States approaches a record 10.04 million barrels of daily production, trading volumes of so-called "WTI" futures exceeded volumes of Brent crude in 2017 by the largest margin in at least seven years.

A decade ago, falling domestic production and a US ban on exports meant that WTI served mostly as a proxy for US inventory levels. "There was a time when the US was disconnected from the global market," said Greg Sharenov, portfolio manager at PIMCO, who manages more than \$15 billion in commodity assets. Two changes drove the resurgence of the US benchmark. One was the boom in shale production, which spawned a multitude of small producers that sought to hedge profits by trading futures contracts. Then two years ago, the United States ended its 40-year ban on crude exports, making WTI more useful to global traders and shippers. US exports averaged 1.1 million barrels a day through Nov 2017, rising to an average 1.6 million bpd in the final three months. That compares to just 590,000 bpd in 2016. As US production and exports grow, global firms that increasingly buy US oil are offsetting their exposure by trading in US financial markets. That also gives US shale producers more opportunity to lock in profits on their own production.

### Rival Exchanges, Shifting Profits

The US boom has reignited a competition over oil trading that began in the 1980s between two of the world's biggest exchange operators - Intercontinental Exchange, and the New York Mercantile Exchange, or NYMEX, which was acquired by Chicago-based CME Group in 2008. For ICE and CME, energy represents the second-biggest source of revenue, trailing only stocks and interest rate trading, respectively. ICE is based in Atlanta, but is known for its European contracts after it bought London's International Petroleum Exchange and its Brent futures contract in 2001.

About 310 million US crude futures contracts - worth about \$16 trillion in oil - changed hands on CME's New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX) in 2017, far more than the about 242 million contracts in Intercontinental Exchange's Brent crude futures.

## Is Super Bowl really the US' biggest sex trafficking magnet?

With a million party-minded football fans flocking to Minneapolis today's Super Bowl - dubbed the biggest trafficking event in the United States - dozens of agencies are gearing up to bust criminal networks and rescue victims. Minneapolis police says it is working with 23 law enforcement agencies, patrolling the web to target people buying sex online and monitoring hotels for sex trafficking.

While the anti-slavery group Polaris will be staffing up its anti-trafficking hotline, its chief executive Bradley Myles cautioned against painting the country's largest sporting event as a sex trafficking magnet. "All this is, is a one-day snapshot into what otherwise is a 365-day problem," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "The same traffickers that are committing trafficking ... during the Super Bowl, they're going to wake up in the morning on Monday and do the same thing."

Big sporting events, from the World Cup to the Olympics, regularly trigger a panic over an influx of sex-trade workers, with many being victims of human trafficking. Arrests of pimps running underage sex rings are reported at the National Football League's championship game almost every year, with girls being trafficked from as far away as

Energy products including WTI brought in \$790 million in revenue for CME in 2016, the latest annual data available. Brent crude futures and options alone contributed nearly \$300 million to ICE's revenues in 2016.

Since 2011, trading volumes in WTI futures have risen by about 135 million contracts, compared to an increase of about 109 million in Brent, according to exchange data. CME has said there is a "clear trend" that the US benchmark is being used more globally, in part because of growing production there and relatively stagnant output of the North Sea crude grades that underpin Brent trading. That makes investors more likely to trade in WTI than Brent, said Owain Johnson,



### US operating as 'Wal-Mart of oil market'

managing director of energy research and product development at CME. "You know more about what WTI will look like in the next five years," he said. Jeffrey Sprecher, chief executive at ICE, dismissed the notion that WTI's global influence is rising versus Brent, calling it "a red herring."

### Export Surge Lures Buyers

The increasing liquidity in US oil futures stems partly from the surge in hedging by domestic shale producers but also from growing overseas interest, which pushed outstanding contracts to new records in 2017. Average daily volumes in WTI futures from outside the US jumped nearly 40 percent in 2017 over 2016, according to CME Group data. Foreign participation in WTI now represents about 30 percent of CME's average daily volume.

"The US is reclaiming the title of being arguably the world's most relevant crude oil benchmark" because of

rising US exports and production, said Michael Tran, director of energy strategy at RBC Capital Markets in New York. Purchasers worldwide say the US contract may have to change, however, to reflect the price at export hubs such as Houston. Currently, WTI contracts are tied to oil deliverable at the landlocked storage hub in Cushing, Oklahoma. More supply is coming to Gulf Coast ports from Texas, where production is now near 4 million barrels a day. "We need a new benchmark for pricing American crude oil for export to Asia and other areas," said Chen Bo, president of Chinese state oil trader Unipec, at an industry event in Houston in November. Unipec is the trading arm of refiner Sinopec and the largest buyer of US oil in Asia: Chinese firms bought an average of 220,000 barrels a day of US crude last year. Sources with two major trading firms said CME has approached them to gauge demand for a benchmark futures contract that would have Houston as its delivery point.

In December 2017, the NYMEX introduced a new contract aimed at the growing market of Asian buyers importing US crude, such as China, the second biggest importer in 2017. The contract prices the spread between WTI and Middle-East benchmark Dubai. The contract allows Asian refiners to better evaluate the economics of US crude compared to oil elsewhere, Chen said.

The dominance of Europe's Brent and America's WTI crude futures comes despite Asia's growing share of global oil consumption, up from 27 percent in 2000 to almost 40 percent today. Europe's and North America's share of demand has declined. A key reason for the Middle East's and Asia's failure to create an oil futures benchmark is that financial commodity trading is not well established in either region.

Middle Eastern producers are largely state-owned, and while the Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME) was set up in 2007 to establish a new benchmark, it has so far not managed to attract enough liquidity to dominate the region. In China, a long-delayed futures contract is expected to be launched by Shanghai's INE exchange this year, with the stated goal of becoming Asia's benchmark. But wrangling over details has undermined INE's credibility, analysts say. That's left the United States, with its established commodity markets, operating as "the Wal-Mart of the oil market," Tran said. —Reuters

Hawaii to hook up with clients via the Internet, hotels and strip clubs.

Some 1.5 million people in the United States are victims of trafficking, mostly for sexual exploitation. The majority are children, according to a US Senate report published last year. US police arrested about 750 people in nationwide sex-trafficking sting operations ahead of last year's Super Bowl, the largest sweep since operations began 13 years earlier.

### Online Ads

Although the attorney general of Texas dubbed the Super Bowl the "single largest human trafficking incident" in the United States in 2011, this is largely a myth, academics and anti-trafficking campaigners said. The commercial sex market grows modestly during Super Bowls, but also during other large events, from the Las Vegas consumer electronics show to Memorial Day weekend, said Lauren Martin, a trafficking expert at the University of Minnesota.

After reviewing 55 academic papers and more than 100 media stories about prostitution and the Super Bowl, Martin says research points to a likely spike in sex trafficking because 5 to 20 percent of sex workers are trafficking victims. "But after the event is over, the levels of activity in the commercial sex market will go back to what they were," she said, adding more research is needed as it is a relatively new field.

Artur Dubrawski found online escort ads proliferated when US cities hosted large public events in his regularly-cited 2016 study, but recognizes some have criticized his approach. "Certain researchers

question the validity of using web advertisement" to size up a city's commercial sex market, the Carnegie Mellon University computer scientist said.

### Media Hype

The Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW) is among the most vocal critics of those who link the Super Bowl with a spike in trafficking, dismissing it as "manufactured media hype" that seeks to raise funds and attract attention. This is damaging, says the coalition of nonprofits, which campaigns for the rights of sex workers, migrants and domestic workers, as well as trafficking survivors. "What is the cost of such rumors?" asked Annalee Lepp, an expert in human trafficking at Canada's University of Victoria and GAATW board member. "There are really harmful effects ... on the very people that everybody is so concerned about."

GAATW says the "moral panic" over sex trafficking at sporting events wastes resources that are needed elsewhere and increases criminal penalties against sex workers who are displaced in city 'clean up' efforts. Campaigners are hopeful that officials are starting to recognize trafficking as a complex, long-term problem. "We know sex trafficking occurs, it occurs every day," the City Attorney of Minneapolis, Susan Segal, said at a public briefing of lawmakers about the sporting mega event in January. "It's going to occur well after the Super Bowl has come and gone." This impressed Michelle Guelbart of campaign group ECPAT-USA, who helps businesses stop child sex trafficking. "The conversation is moving in the direction that we want it to," she said. —Reuters

## World's longest zipline opens in Ras Al-Khaimah

**RAS AL KHAIMAH:** The world's longest zipline opened in the United Arab Emirates on Friday, propelling thrill-seekers at speeds of up to 150 km an hour down the Middle East country's highest mountain peak. The 2.8-km zipline, spanning the equivalent of 28 football fields, was certified last week by the Guinness World Records, the local tourism authority said.

But this world record is not in the glitzy regional

financial and tourist hub of Dubai, or the oil-rich capital Abu Dhabi. It is in relatively less developed Ras Al-Khaimah, located in the country's north along the Oman border. Most visitors to the UAE spend their time in Dubai, home to one of the world's largest shopping centers, and an indoor ski slope. Ras Al-Khaimah hopes the zipline, starting 1,680 m above sea level on top of the Jebel Jais mountain, will be a drawcard for tourists.

The zipline can handle as many as 100,000 people a year, and though there are no age restrictions, riders must be at least 1.22 meters tall and no heavier than 150 kg. The UAE's latest record will be added to a mantle of achievements that includes the world's tallest building, and artificial palm-shaped islands. — Reuters



**RAS AL-KHAIMAH:** A woman rides yesterday the world's longest zipline, which measures almost 3 km in length. — AFP

## Father of molested girls lunges at US Gymnastics doctor

**CHICAGO:** A father whose three daughters say they were sexually abused by Larry Nassar lunged at the disgraced former USA Gymnastics doctor in a Michigan courtroom Friday, bringing his sentencing hearing to an abrupt halt while order was restored. The disruption came on the last day of victim impact statements before Nassar - already condemned to spend dozens of years behind bars on child sex abuse and pornography charges - hears his final sentence tomorrow.

At least 265 female athletes - including several Olympic gold medalists in gymnastics - have claimed the 54-year-old Nassar abused them over a period of two decades. The disruption came as dozens more women confronted Nassar and told the Charlotte court of the sexual abuse they suffered under the guise of medical treatment. Randall Margraves hurled himself toward Nassar after two of his daughters spoke about their abuse. A third daughter had given a statement in a separate hearing about a week ago.

Margraves asked the judge to "grant me five minutes in a locked room with this demon". The comment at first elicited chuckles in the courtroom, but Margraves then lunged towards the defense table. Three sheriff's deputies tackled him and Nassar was removed from the courtroom. "I want that son of a b\*\*\*\*!" Margraves yelled as he was being handcuffed. The hearing later resumed with an appeal for calm from Judge Janice Cunningham. Margraves was arrested but quickly released. "I'm embarrassed. I'm not here to upstage my daughters," he told the judge. "I lost control. I apologize a hundred times."

Under a plea agreement over the final set of charges, Nassar could receive an additional 25 to 40 years in prison from Cunningham. Cunningham, expressing sympathy, did not impose a fine or jail sentence on Margraves. "My heart goes full out to you and your family, because of what you've gone through," the judge said. Margraves explained that he did not know in advance what his daughters were going to say in court and was overcome with emotion. "I gotta hear that and I



Larry Nassar

look over here and Larry Nassar is shaking his head 'no,' like it didn't happen," he said. Within hours, an online fundraiser had raised more than \$12,000 for Margraves.

Several other parents also addressed the court, speaking of their anguish at failing to protect their children. A father who asked to remain anonymous said his daughter had initially refused to come forward "because she did not want me to feel sorry for what happened". "I'm so sorry, my princess," he said. Lynn Erickson said her daughter Ashley was treated by Nassar for 17 years until Aug 2016, when assault accusations first became public. "When I see her quiet tears, it breaks my heart," Erickson said as her daughter stood crying behind her.

The victim statements ended, as they had during the first sentencing, with the words of Rachael Denhollander - the first to publicly accuse Nassar of abuse. "He devastated children and he devastated families," she said, asking the judge for the maximum sentence possible.

The Nassar case has triggered a wave of upheaval in the gymnastics world. Valeri Liukin - the father of 2008 US gold medalist Nastia Liukin - on Friday became the latest to exit USA Gymnastics, abruptly resigning as coordinator of the US national women's team. The "present climate causes me, and more importantly my family, far too much stress, difficulty and uncertainty," he said. Also Friday, the Michigan attorney general's office said state investigators entered Michigan State University unannounced, looking for "physical items assigned to William Strampel," the former head of the department where Nassar worked. — AFP

## Kuwait spending substantially...

Continued from Page 1

examined as part of the program that was launched in 2014. Among 1,000 women, 11 were diagnosed with breast cancer. Dr Fahd Al-Ibrahim, the head of the department for the early detection of colon cancer at the health ministry, said this program has been in effect for early diagnosis since 2015.

Another specialist, Dr Khaled Al-Saleh, deputy chairman

of the national campaign for promoting awareness of cancer (CAN), said rates of cancer in Kuwait have increased, along with a noticeable hike in treatment costs. The rate of treatment has reached 60 percent, along with some cases where it has hit 90 percent. As for lung cancer, he expressed his belief that the rates can be lowered by quitting smoking. Breast cancer can be treated in the early stages at a proportion of 80 percent, compared to 30 percent in later stages.

Dr Nawal Al-Goud, director of the nutrition department at the ministry, recommends breastfeeding and eating healthy as some of the natural means of minimizing the chances of developing cancer. She also warns against obesity, cardiac illnesses as well as stress as contributors to the disease. — KUNA

## Diplomacy and fear fuel Qatar's ...

Continued from Page 1

"There was concern that the initial diplomatic and economic measures imposed on Qatar on June 5 might be the prelude for military action," says Kristian Ulrichsen, a fellow at the Baker Institute for Public Policy at Rice University in the United States.

Krieg adds that Qatar's fear of invasion stretches back to 2014 when Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain abruptly pulled their ambassadors from Qatar. Their dispute was resolved - or at least papered over until last summer - but its impact is not forgotten. Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani took over from his father Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani just months before that dispute.

A former member of the Qatari air force who attended Britain's Sandhurst military training academy, Sheikh Tamim broke from his father's policies and poured more of

his country's gas riches into defense spending. "The military had been underfunded for many decades," says Krieg. "Regardless of the crisis, there was always a demand to get new equipment for the air force, navy and land forces." Roberts adds: "I think Qatar's leaders are trying to expect the unexpected. So while they may feel that a military action is unlikely, their expectations have been consistently wrong thus far, so Qatar needs to plan for the worst."

Military contracts also have value beyond mere weaponry - and for Qatar it's also a way of diplomacy, cementing its relations with key countries. Lolwa Al-Khater, foreign ministry spokeswoman, told AFP that bilateral defense deals help to "strengthen these partnerships". Roberts adds they "deeply intertwine" Qatar's security with Washington, Paris or London. "Qatar wants these states to have an increasingly direct stake in Qatar's security and stability," he says.

But despite the spending, Qatar's military capabilities pale into comparison to those of Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Ultimately its long-term security may depend on another investment - Al-Udeid. "We shouldn't underestimate that the greatest guarantor is Al-Udeid," says Krieg, referring to the presence of US troops at the base on its territory. — AFP

## Trump says GOP memo vindicates...

Continued from Page 1

Trump approved the release of the formerly classified memo without redactions, despite objections from the FBI in a move that deepens tension between the White House and senior law enforcement that has existed since Trump first took office.

Democrats contend the four-page memo mischaracterizes highly sensitive classified information and was intended to undermine the Mueller criminal probe that was launched in May 2017 as an outgrowth an earlier FBI investigation. Jerrold Nadler, the top Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, said in a statement that Trump's decision to allow the release of the memo was "part of a coordinated propaganda effort to discredit, disable and defeat the Russia investigation."

Some Republicans also were critical of the memo's release. John Kasich, the governor of Ohio and a former rival of Trump's for the presidential nomination, released a statement yesterday calling it "a disservice to our country". Asked by reporters on Friday whether the memo made him more likely to fire Rosenstein or whether he had confidence in him, Trump replied, "You figure it out." Dismissing Rosenstein or Mueller would trigger a political firestorm much like the sacking of FBI Director James Comey by Trump last year. Mueller also is examining whether Trump has obstructed justice in trying to thwart the Russia investigation.

The memo alleges the FBI concealed the Democratic ties of a source the agency used to justify surveillance on Carter Page, a former Trump campaign adviser with links to Russia. The memo revealed the names of senior FBI and Justice Department officials, including Rosenstein, who it said had signed off the surveillance. The document was commissioned by Nunes, the

Republican chairman of the House intelligence panel. He said it laid bare "serious violations of the public trust, and the American people have a right to know when officials in crucial institutions are abusing their authority for political purposes."

Mueller's investigation so far has led to guilty pleas by two of Trump's foreign policy advisers to charges of lying to the FBI, and indictments of former campaign manager Paul Manafort and his business partner Rick Gates. On Friday, the Justice Department backed Mueller by dismissing a civil suit filed by Manafort claiming Rosenstein had exceeded his legal authority in giving Mueller "carte blanche".

The Republican memo focused on court-approved surveillance of Page and said the FBI used a source who was strongly biased against Trump, former British spy Christopher Steele, to justify the action. It alleged that a dossier of alleged Trump-Russia contacts compiled by Steele, and funded in part by Democrats, formed an "essential part" of requests to a special court to be allowed to conduct electronic surveillance on Page that began in October 2016.

Despite the memo's charges, neither the focus on Page nor the FBI's investigation of Trump-Russia ties began with the Steele dossier. Page came to the FBI's attention as early as 2013, when he met in New York with Russians who were officers of the Kremlin's foreign intelligence service, sources have said. The memo acknowledges that the FBI counterintelligence investigation began in July 2016, three months before the request for electronic surveillance on Page, as a result of the activities of another Trump campaign aide, George Papadopoulos.

Steve Vladeck, a professor of constitutional law at the University of Texas-Austin, said it was unprecedented for the president to feud so publicly with leaders of the US intelligence agencies. "You do long-term damage to these institutions if you convince a large swath of the American public that they can't be trusted," he said. — Reuters

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## Sports

# Vonn hits 'big number' 80th World Cup win, Garmisch hat-trick

## Vonn closing in on Stenmark's all-time alpine record of 86 WCup wins

**GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN:** US ski queen Lindsey Vonn chalked up her 80th World Cup win yesterday with downhill victory at Garmisch-Partenkirchen for the third straight year-just days before the Winter Olympics.

Vonn, 33, clocked 1min 12.84sec, just 0.02 secs faster than World Cup downhill leader Sofia Goggia, who finished second. Austria's Cornelia Huebner was third at 0.13 sec back on a shortened course due to warm temperatures in the Bavarian Alps at the start of the week.

Vonn is closing in on Ingemar Stenmark's all-time alpine record of 86 World Cup wins. "It's a big number," said Vonn of her 80th victory. "I remember when I got my 50th win here, I never thought I would get close to Annemarie Moser-Proell's record (of 62 wins).

"Now I am getting closer to Stenmark's. "It's incredible. "I am so thankful that I have gotten myself in a position to get these wins coming into the Olympics. "I feel strong mentally and physically. "I never thought I would get 80 wins-it's a big day."

Vonn has the chance for another victory in a second downhill today, the final tune-up before the Olympics open in Pyeongchang on Thursday. A doubleheader had been planned for Saturday but warm temperatures in the Bavarian Alps meant the second race was moved back a day.

Vonn's victory was overshadowed by

injury to US team-mate Jacqueline Wiles, who was stretchered off the course after a bad crash.

### 'HARD TO BE HAPPY'

"It was really hard to be happy and to celebrate with Jackie in hospital," said Vonn, who grimaced when Wiles crash. While American Breezy Johnson finished fourth, crashes by US skiers Laurene Ross and Wiles worried Vonn.

“I never thought I would get 80 wins-it's a big day”

"It was a rough day for the whole team," said Vonn. "I am happy Laurene wasn't hurt, she'll be sore, but at least her knee is okay. "It was great to see Breezy get fourth, we are capable of all getting on the podium, we just hope Jackie is okay."

This was Vonn's fourth downhill win in Garmisch after wins here in 2012, as well as in 2016, 2017 and now 2018. "It feels like I am racing in the States when I am here," she said after vocal crowd support with a

US Army base in the town.

Vonn plans to go even faster in today's second downhill race, on the full-length course, in the last World Cup event before the Olympics. "I'm looking forward to skiing on the full track and getting a little bit more speed tomorrow," said Vonn.

The women's Olympic alpine programme starts with the giant slalom on February 12 while the downhill-the blue-riband event-is on February 21. Vonn won downhill gold at the 2010 Vancouver Games, but missing Sochi four year later with injury. Eight years after her last Olympics, Vonn is gunning for gold.

### HAPPY RIVALS

She put in an impressive display on the Kandahar course, shaving fractions of a second off Goggia's time at the first two time checks. She was 0.08 behind at the third, but picked up speed on the lower section of the course, where her rivals had slowed, to claim her milestone win in style.

Vonn's career stats are all the more impressive given her injuries - a fractured arm in November 2016 having broken her ankle the previous August. Goggia took delight in her rival's performance and celebrated with Vonn, who is just 43 points behind in the downhill rankings.

"We don't know each other that well, but it's really fun to race with her," said the 25-year-old Goggia. "After all she has been



**GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN:** Lindsey Vonn of the US celebrates on the podium after winning the Ladies' Downhill event at the FIS Alpine Skiing World Cup in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, southern Germany, yesterday. — AFP

through, I am pleased for her." Vonn also enjoys the competition. "Whenever she is racing, she gives 100 percent, and she is always risking everything," Vonn said of

Goggia. "It is all or nothing with her and I like that. "It's a fun little game, to see who has the hundreds, it makes it more exciting for us and the spectators." — AFP

## Singh books rare India Winter Olympics berth

**NEW DELHI:** Cross-country skier Jagdish Singh has qualified for the Winter Olympics, one of only two Indian athletes who will be seen in action at Pyeongchang, South Korea. Singh and veteran luger Shiva Keshavan will comprise the Indian contingent for the Games starting February 9. Indian Olympic Association (IOA) secretary-general Rajeev Mehta told AFP yesterday.

It will be a maiden Olympic appearance for 26-year-old Singh, who

booked his place with just one point over the qualification mark. He will be participating in the 15-km Nordic skiing freestyle event that is scheduled for February 16.

The Winter Games Federation of India (WGFI) is not recognised by the IOA, which has made it tough for Indian athletes to break through to the big stage. Keshavan, 36, has been India's only regular face in the Winter Games since making his debut in 1998.

In the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics, India was represented by three athletes: Keshavan, Himanshu Thakur (alpine skiing) and Nadeem Iqbal (cross-country skiing). Cricket-crazy India has never won a medal at the winter games and has only ever scooped one individual gold at an Olympics, with Abhinav Bindra taking the honours in a rifle shooting event at the 2008 Beijing summer games. —AFP

## More athletes from Russia may make it to Olympics

**PYEONGCHANG:** Thirteen Russian athletes and two coaches banned for life for doping and then controversially cleared of wrongdoing may be headed to the Pyeongchang Olympics after all, the IOC said yesterday.

Already 169 Russians have been cleared to compete as 'clean' athletes despite a blanket ban on Russia from taking part in the Winter Olympics following revelations of state-sponsored doping. Just six days from the opening ceremony of the February 9-25 Games, International Olympic Committee spokesman Mark Adams said the cases of the 15 would be examined by a specialist IOC panel who would rule on whether they would be allowed to take part.

"We will take an individual view of each of these athletes before reaching a decision," he told a press conference following the first day of a two-day IOC executive board meeting in Pyeongchang. IOC chiefs were stunned last Thursday when the Court for Arbitration for Sport overturned life bans imposed on 28 Russian athletes linked to a state-sponsored doping scheme operating at the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics, ruling them potentially eligible for participation in Pyeongchang.

However, of the 28, 13 have either retired from sport or are unavailable for another undisclosed reason, leaving

only 15 still eligible to take part, according to a source close to the case. Adams said that the IOC's invitation review panel will examine each case individually before making a decision but promised that would happen before the Games get underway.

### EXPLOSIVE FINDINGS

The IOC's disciplinary commission banned 43 Russian athletes for life and disqualified all Russians from competing at the Pyeongchang Games over the doping conspiracy. It later said that 169 athletes who had proved they were clean would be allowed to compete.

Following an appeal against the life bans by 42 athletes, CAS cleared 28 citing insufficient evidence against them, and also lifted bans on 11 others, but barred them from taking part in the 2018 Olympics.

Adams said that the IOC reserved the right to appeal against the CAS decision, viewed by Olympic officials as undermining the fight against doping in sport. Last week the IOC responded to the court's ruling by saying that lifting the ban "does not automatically confer the privilege of an invitation" to the Games.

He was speaking after the first day of a two-day IOC board meeting which will be followed by a two-day full IOC session on Monday.

Last week's CAS hearings were a result of allegations of a vast state-sponsored doping programme contained in the report into Sochi authored by sports law professor Richard McLaren for the World Anti-Doping Agency.

His explosive findings laid out the workings of the programme—from the use of secret state agents to passing urine samples out of testing labs through mouse-holes. —AFP

## Nigeria sends off its bobsledders with a party

**LAGOS:** Nigerians got to meet their Winter Olympic bobsleigh team for the first time on Friday night, just over a week before the start of the Games in Pyeongchang, South Korea. Seun Adigun, Ngozi Onwumere and Akuoma Omeoga were given a rousing welcome at a corporate reception held in their honour at a luxury hotel in the commercial hub, Lagos.

The trio—all born to Nigerian parents and brought up in the United States—will be the first African team to compete in the sport at the Games. Their qualification late last year has since attracted massive interest around the world and won the previously crowd-funded athletes a string of big-name sponsors.

Many people in Africa's most populous nation said they were unaware the country even had a bobsled team. Some were keen to play up their supposed ignorance for comic effect. "So, you are the driver?" the comedian compering the event said, pointing at Adigun.

"And you are the brake... appliers," he ventured eagerly to Onwumere and Omeoga, as if searching for the correct terminology. "And what is that thing you are pushing? A wheelbarrow?" "First question," he asked the women's team-mate Simi Adeagbo, who will also make history by becoming the first African to compete in the skeleton. "What is that?"

### DRY ICE AND COTTON WOOL

Despite being new to hurtling down an icy track at 150 kilometres (93 miles) per hour, Nigerians-noted more for their passion for football—are happy to cheer the team on. On the hotel's rooftop bar, with temperatures still



**LAGOS:** (L-R): Seun Adigun, Ngozi Onwumere, Akuoma Omeoga, and Simidele Adeagbo dance on stage at a social event in Lagos, Nigeria on Friday. The ladies will represent Nigeria at the Winter Olympics when they compete at the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea. — AFP

in the mid-30s Celsius (95 Fahrenheit) by late evening, the reception increasingly resembled a Nigerian wedding.

Guests drank champagne and ate "small chop" (finger food). Dance music distorted through a skyscraper of loud-speakers. Most people arrived late. Everyone blamed bad traffic. But Nigeria's pioneering winter sports team were made to feel at home with fairy lights and Christmas snowflake decorations twinkling overhead, above white plastic sheeting stuck to the floor with gaffer tape. To complete the frozen idyll, a bored-looking teenager wearing a single red rubber glove operated a dry ice machine that sent damp-smelling fog curling over snow drifts of cotton wool.

Nearby, air conditioning units were set to the equivalent of 16 degrees—a good 10 degrees below the temperature that normally makes some in tropical Nigeria don a hat and coat. The team took the gentle ribbing with

good humour, batting back comparisons to Jamaica's participation in the 1988 Games in Calgary, Canada, that led to the 1993 Hollywood film "Cool Runnings".

Questions about the basics of the sport—from timings to the number of people participating—were met with polite responses. But in a country where self-sufficiency is a matter of life and death for most people, the women's hard work and commitment to achieving their goals got the loudest cheer.

Adigun said she hoped their experience would "inspire young girls" and show them that anything is possible. For her, she said once she had told herself out loud that she was going to try to make the Winter Olympics there was no going back. "Once you speak (something) into existence, that's an affirmation that you're going to commit," she added. "Can you speak gold into existence?" asked the comper. Adigun smiled. Then the dancing started. — AFP

## KIB: Year-long sponsorship of Al-Fadel

**KUWAIT:** In a continuation of its ongoing efforts to support sports activities and young local talents, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) offered its sponsorship to world-renowned Jet Ski champion and national athlete, Abdullah Al-Fadel. As part of its year-long sponsorship, the Bank will continue to support the athlete throughout his participation in local, regional and international tournaments and championships.

Over the past few years, Al-Fadel has amassed a series of internationally-recognized sports titles and achievements. Most recently, Al-Fadel won second place in the King of Thailand International Jet Ski tournament and second place in the Pro Ski King's Cup for professional riders: one of the largest and most challenging categories. He also nabbed first place in two different categories in a championship held in Chicago in the State of Illinois in the United States.

On this occasion, Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB, Nawaf Najia, said: "This sponsorship comes as part of KIB's strategy aimed at supporting sports activities and initiatives of talented local youth. Accordingly, we hope to support youth across various areas, thereby boosting Kuwait's standing and the nation's future leaders."

Najia added that KIB has always been a dedicated supporter and proud sponsor of national champion, Abdullah Al-Fadel. This stems from the Bank's strong belief in his athletic talent and his ability to garner a series of prestigious achievements and awards across a num-



**Abdullah Al-Fadel**

ber of international tournaments.

It is worth mentioning that sponsoring sports initiatives and activities continues to be a cornerstone of KIB's leading social responsibility program. For that reason, the Bank provides its unwavering support to talented athletes across all sports, aiming at promoting the sports culture throughout the local community.

Sports

# Raptors rebound from loss with three-point explosion

**LOS ANGELES:** DeMar DeRozan delivered 35 points and nailed a career-high matching six three pointers as the Toronto Raptors rebounded from Thursday's loss with an emphatic 130-105 demolition of the Portland Trail Blazers. Jonas Valanciunas added 18 points and eight rebounds for the Raptors, who won for the third time in four outings. Six players scored in double figures for Toronto. Damian Lillard scored 32 points and dished out 10 assists for the Trail Blazers, who lost for only the second time in nine games. CJ McCollum had 21 points and Jusuf Nurkic 20 for Portland.

**BUCKS 92, KNICKS 90**

Jabari Parker scored 12 points in his first game since February of last season and Giannis Antetokounmpo capped off a 29-point night by scoring with a second left as the Milwaukee Bucks held on for a 92-90 victory over the New York Knicks on Friday night at the Bradley Center. Antetokounmpo pulled down an Enes Kanter miss with 24 seconds left and worked the clock down before putting up a left-handed floater, breaking a 90-90 tie in the final second. The Knicks called timeout, and Tim Hardaway Jr. missed a 3 as time expired. Antetokounmpo hit 10 of 21 shots and went 8-for-12 from the free throw line while adding 11 rebounds for the Bucks, who were playing without point guard Malcolm Brogdon after an MRI revealed a partially torn left quadriceps tendon that

will sideline him six to eight weeks. Parker had been sidelined since Feb. 8 of last season when he tore his left ACL for the second time in his brief career. He played his limit of 15 minutes and showed few signs of rust in the opening half, scoring 12 points on 4-of-7 shooting. He got his first true test of the knee in the final minute of the first quarter, driving the length of the court, planting and going up for a dunk.

**76ERS 103, HEAT 97**

Ben Simmons had 20 points, six rebounds and five assists to lead all five starters in double figures as host Philadelphia defeated Miami. Joel Embiid scored 17 points and grabbed 11 rebounds while Dario Saric had 17 points and 10 rebounds as the Sixers snapped a three-game losing streak and moved one game above .500. Robert Covington and JJ Redick scored 13 points each and Justin Anderson had 11. The Heat outscored the Sixers 37-17 and managed to pull within four in the fourth quarter, but Philadelphia was able to hold on.

**CELTICS 119, HAWKS 110**

Terry Rozier scored 10 of his career-high 31 points late in the third quarter, propelling Boston over Atlanta at TD Garden. Jayson Tatum complemented Rozier with 27 points, helping the Celtics beat the Hawks for the third straight time this season in a duel between the teams with the best and



MILWAUKEE: Enes Kanter #00 of the New York Knicks handles the ball against the Milwaukee Bucks on Friday at the BMO Harris Bradley Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. — AFP

worst records in the Eastern Conference. The Celtics were playing for a second consecutive game without All-Star guard Kyrie Irving, out with a bruised quad. Boston was also without Marcus Morris (hip), Marcus Smart (hand) and Shane Larkin (knee).

**HORNETS 133, PACERS 126**

Kemba Walker scored 41 points to help make sure Charlotte didn't waste a franchise record set early in the game against visiting Indiana. The Hornets scored a record 49 first-quarter points. That was the most points for any quarter in franchise history. Nic Batum, buoyed by seven 3s, pumped in a season-high 31 points and Frank Kaminsky supplied 15 points, as the Hornets cranked it up late after a spotty midgame stretch.

**LAKERS 102, NETS 99**

Brook Lopez received a video tribute at the end of the first quarter in his return to Brooklyn and scored 19 points as Los

Angeles took the lead for good midway through the fourth quarter and held on. Lopez, who is the Nets' all-time leading scorer, received a nice hand from fans in pregame introductions and then was given a tribute at the end of the opening quarter. The center scored 14 points in the second half and finished making 8 of 13 shots and 3 of 5 3-pointers. D'Angelo Russell, who was acquired from the Lakers for Lopez, had 15 points on 7-of-18 shooting for the Nets.

**PELICANS 114, THUNDER 100**

Without new frontcourt partner Nikola Mirotic, Anthony Davis scored 43 points and passed Davis West as New Orleans' all-time leading scorer in a win over Oklahoma City at Chesapeake Energy Arena. Davis also had 10 rebounds and is expected to join forces with Mirotic for the first time on Saturday when New Orleans visits Minnesota. E'Twaun Moore added 26 points, Jrue Holiday had 11 points and 11 assists, Darius Miller scored 11 off the bench

and Rajon Rondo had seven points, 13 assists, seven rebounds and four steals for the Pelicans. Russell Westbrook had a triple-double for the Thunder, finishing with 16 points, 14 assists and 10 rebounds. Steven Adams had 23 points and 12 rebounds, Paul George scored 15 points, Alex Abrines had 14, Carmelo Anthony 13 and Jerami Grant had 12 points and 12 rebounds.

**JAZZ 129, SUNS 97**

Rookie guard Donovan Mitchell scored 40 points and made a season-high seven 3-pointers and Joe Ingles added 16 points in Utah's lopsided victory over Phoenix at Talking Stick Resort Arena. Ricky Rubio had 14 points, nine assists and six rebounds, and every starter scored in double figures for the Jazz, who won their second straight blowout after beating Golden State 129-99 on Tuesday. Ingles made four 3-pointers to extend his hot shooting. He made a career-high six 3s against Golden State and has 16 in his last four games. — Agencies

**NBA results/standings**

Oklahoma City 100, New Orleans 114; Philadelphia 103, Miami 97; Sacramento 104, Golden State 119; Boston 119, Atlanta 110; Brooklyn 99, LA Lakers 102; Toronto 130, Portland 105; Phoenix 97, Utah 129; Milwaukee 92, New York 90; Charlotte 133, Indiana 126.

Eastern Conference				Western Conference			
W	L	PCT	GB	Golden State	41	11	78.8
Boston	38	15	71.7	Houston	37	13	74.0
Toronto	35	16	68.6	San Antonio	34	20	63.0
Cleveland	30	20	60.0	Minnesota	33	22	60.0
Washington	29	22	56.9	Oklahoma City	30	23	56.6
Miami	29	23	55.8	Portland	29	23	55.8
Milwaukee	28	23	54.9	New Orleans	28	23	54.9
Indiana	29	24	54.7	Denver	27	25	51.9
Philadelphia	25	24	51.0	LA Clippers	25	25	50.0
Detroit	24	26	48.0	Utah	23	28	45.1
New York	23	30	43.4	LA Lakers	20	31	39.2
Charlotte	22	29	43.1	Memphis	18	33	35.3
Brooklyn	19	34	35.8	Phoenix	18	35	34.0
Chicago	18	33	35.3	Sacramento	16	35	31.4
Orlando	15	35	30.0	Dallas	16	36	30.8
Atlanta	15	37	28.8				25

## Brady and Patriots looking forward, not back

**MINNEAPOLIS:** The New England Patriots say they have left past glories firmly in the rear-view mirror as they look ahead to today's Super Bowl clash with the Philadelphia Eagles. The most dominant franchise of the past two decades will etch themselves into the record books today if they claim a sixth Lombardi Trophy, putting them alongside the Pittsburgh Steelers with the most titles in history.

But Bill Belichick's team say their sole focus remains the four quarters of combat against the Eagles at the US Bank Stadium. Running back James White, who scored a record 20 points in last year's epic against Atlanta—three touchdowns and a two-point conversion—said he rarely thinks about his MVP-worthy performance in Houston 12 months ago.

"This is a 'What have you done for me lately?' league," White told AFP. "You've always got to prove yourself and that's what I've been trying to do ever since. 'Houston for me is over. It was over two weeks afterwards,'" he added. "You never stop having to prove yourself in this team."

White's mantra would no doubt win firm approval from Tom Brady. The Patriots quarterback has his gaze fixed squarely on the challenge of the Eagles in what will be his eighth Super Bowl appearance. The 40-year-old icon is determined to avoid a repeat of the two Super Bowl defeats he suffered against the New York Giants in the 2007 and 2011 seasons.

## Turkish Airlines brings Super Bowl excitement to the skies with Dr Oz

**KUWAIT:** Turkish Airlines passengers will be able to watch the Super Bowl LII, the final game of the National Football League, live on all flights with Internet connection today.

"We not only carry our guests to the most



MINNEAPOLIS: Iron Chef Cat Cora attends SiriusXM at Super Bowl LII Radio Row at the Mall of America on Friday in Bloomington, Minnesota. — AFP

"The ones that we lost are very painful," Brady told AFP. "You put a lot into it and when it doesn't go well, you wake up the next day and you're thinking it was a nightmare. You're thinking 'Man, did that really happen?'"

"That's what I remember from those two losses," Brady, however, who would become the first player to win six Super Bowls if Philadelphia are vanquished this weekend, has long learned to leave the past behind.

Like White, Brady has consigned last year's record comeback against Atlanta, where he inspired the Patriots as they overturned a 28-3 deficit, to history. "I haven't thought about the game last year much in a long time," Brady said. "It was a great win but we've got another big one coming up and that's where my focus is. What's happened in the past is great, but it's not going to win us anything this weekend."

countries worldwide, but we also aim to bring them the experience of a lifetime by delivering them not only superb quality of service but also excellent in-flight entertainment. We are once again excited to offer the experience of watching the Super Bowl, the most watched show in US TV history, live on Turkish Airlines flights. I am also delighted to announce that our new commercial video starring famous heart surgeon and TV personality Dr. Oz will also be broadcast for the first time during the Super Bowl commercial break, marking the launch of our Five Senses campaign."

Ahmet Olmustr, Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) of Turkish Airlines announced.

Turkish Airlines has been recognized as the winner of Skytrax's 'Best Airline in Europe' award

**'WHATEVER IT TAKES'**

Yet Brady acknowledged that the experience of digging out so many late wins gave his team a formidable reserve of mental muscle memory. Brady has led no fewer than eight fourth-quarter comebacks during postseason games, a record. It is a fact that Brady regularly reminds his teammates of when he is rallying on the sidelines.

"A lot of times I tell our team: 'Whatever it takes. Whatever it takes. Don't ever let up. Don't ever let your mind drift to a place where you lose a certain level of belief,'" he said. "Because I've always believed that until the clock runs out, it's never over. I've had a lot of situations in my career to know that anything can happen. 'We've been down 11 points with two minutes left and won. We were down in this game last year by a big margin. You don't want to be in those positions but if you are, you play to the end.'" — AFP

six consecutive years and awarded for 'Best Business Class Airline Catering', 'World's Best Business Class Lounge', and also 'Best Business Class Dining Lounge' several times by Skytrax, one of the most prestigious passenger survey organizations in global aviation industry.

The global carrier offers a seamless in-flight entertainment service with Planet which features content in 23 different languages including more than 800 TV shows, over 700 music albums, 7 in-flight live TV broadcasts, 11 "barrier-free" films with "descriptive subtitles" and "descriptive audio" techniques; as well as noise-cancelling headphones on all long-haul flights. A preview of the commercial video can be viewed via the following weblink: <https://youtu.be/s2ZpajjaZc>

## Patriots, Eagles ready for Super Bowl showdown

By Antonio Coelho  
Sports Editor

It's going to be one game, one night. The New England Patriots and Philadelphia Eagles have set up a second Super Bowl showdown after both teams won their respective conference championships with contrasting victories last week. Reigning NFL champions Patriots defeated Jacksonville Jaguars 24-20 in the AFC title game, while Eagles crushed the Minnesota Vikings 38-7 in the NFC title game to set up a Feb 4 clash in Minneapolis. The Patriots will be making their 10th appearance in the title game.

New England enjoyed the upper hand when the two last contested an NFL title game in 2005. Overall, the teams have met 13 times through the years, with the Eagles winning seven of the games, the last in 2015. But tonight's game is going to be a close one with plenty of fireworks from both sides.

The prediction is that Eagles will score 35 straight points just like they did two years ago in Foxboro. But the Eagles haven't won a Super Bowl in franchise history. If they win, they will join the Giants as one of only two teams able to take down the mighty empire in the Super Bowl.

The player to watch is New England Patriots' Tom Brady getting his sixth ring, despite an injured hand. He rallied New England from a 10-point deficit in the fourth quarter with two touchdown passes to beat Jacksonville. "It's just been an unbelievable run," said Brady, who will be making his eighth Super Bowl appearance with coach Bill Belichick.

For the Patriots, Brady is on the cusp of doing something no 40-year-old quarterback has done before. He's also the top candidate to earn the NFL's Most Valuable Player award, which would be his fifth.

Justin Timberlake will perform at halftime, while Pink will sing the national anthem before kickoff.

Today, the NFL has the highest average attendance of any professional sports league in the world and is the most popular sports league in the United States. The Super Bowl is among the biggest club sporting events in the world and individual Super Bowl games account for many of the most watched television programs in American history, occupying the all-time most-watched US television broadcasts. Television ratings of the Super Bowl have steadily increased over the years, with advertisers paying more than \$3.5 million for a 30-second spot.

Meanwhile, Las Vegas casinos are joining the Tom Brady fan club, since their share of what is expected to be a record year for Super Bowl wagers will increase if the quarterback's Patriots beat the Eagles. The defending champions are 4-1/2 point favorites heading into the National Football League's championship game in Minneapolis, with the bulk of bets still to come in ahead of kickoff.

## Sports

# Opener Kalra's unbeaten ton seals U-19 World Cup for India

## Tendulkar leads accolades for India U-19 team

**MOUNT MAUNGANUI:** Opener Manjot Kalra smacked an unbeaten 101 in even time as India easily disposed of Australia at Mount Maunganui yesterday to win the Under-19 World Cup for a fourth time.

With Kalra scoring freely, India won by eight wickets as they chased down Australia's 216 all out with more than 11 overs to spare. The opener's century included eight fours and three sixes, and he was well supported by wicketkeeper Harvik Desai, who was 47 not out when he finished the match with a boundary.

The pair put on 89 for the third wicket, while Prithvi Shaw scored 29 at the top of the innings and Shubman Gill added 31. "I really can't express what I'm feeling now," said captain Shaw. "It was the final, a very crucial hundred from Manjot. Gill was batting really well. And the two pacers, Mavi and Kamlesh, (have) been excellent throughout the tournament." Man of the match Kalra, not surprisingly,

“The wicket was ideal for batting, I enjoyed it a lot”

felt the wicket was ideal for batting. "I enjoyed it a lot. The conditions were good. Not a difficult wicket, it was flat and good to bat on," he said. Australia's innings, all over in the 48th over, was held together by Jonathan Merlo's 76 after it fell apart despite a promising start.

Jack Edwards (28) and Max Bryant (14) batted at a run a ball through the first five overs. But once both were dismissed by Ishan Porel, the steam went out of the Australian innings. Merlo and Param Uppal (34) put on 75 for the fourth wicket but it took more than 17 overs, and there was little resistance from the following

batsmen. Porel finished with two for 30 while left-arm spinner Shiva Singh was instrumental in slowing the Australian run rate with two for 36.

Meanwhile, batting great Sachin Tendulkar led the accolades after India's Under-19 cricketers won a record fourth World Cup, sparking off celebrations in the cricket-crazy country. Fans danced in the streets and exchanged sweets just as Harvik Desai hit the winning boundary in the final to seal an eight-wicket win over Australia.

With celebrated former captain Rahul Dravid as the coach, the Indians finished the 16-team competition in New Zealand unbeaten. The Prithvi Shaw-led side's winning streak included a crushing 203-run triumph over arch-rival Pakistan in the semi-final.

Tendulkar, who was a part of India's senior side that won the World Cup in 2011, said the win should spur the players to bigger glory in the coming days. "With great team work, great dreams work. Congratulations to our world champions, you have made us proud," Tendulkar said in a recorded video on Twitter. "For our youngsters the beautiful journey has just begun ... continue to give your best and enjoy the game above all, good luck and have a wonderful career."

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) promptly announced a cash bonanza for the team, with Dravid to receive five million rupees (\$78,000) and \$47,000 for each of the 16 players in the winning



**MOUNT MAUNGANUI:** India's team poses to celebrate their victory in the U-19 cricket World Cup final match between India and Australia at Bay Oval in Mount Maunganui yesterday. — AFP

squad. Prime Minister Narendra Modi too joined in the collective applause, saying the win made every Indian extremely proud. "Absolutely thrilled by the stupendous achievement of our young cricketers," Modi tweeted

from his official account.

Mohammad Kaif (2000), current senior team captain Virat Kohli (2008) and Unmukt Chand (2012) had previously led the Indian Under-19 team to victory. — AFP

### SCOREBOARD

**CHITTAGONG, Bangladesh:** Scoreboard at stumps on the fourth day of the opening Test between Bangladesh and Sri Lanka at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong yesterday:

<b>Bangladesh first innings 513</b> (Mominul Haque 176, Mushfiqur Rahim 92, Mahmudullah 83 not out; S. Lakmal 3-68, R. Herath 3-150)	8-706 (Lakmal), 9-713 (Herath) Did not bat: L. Sandakan Bowling: Mustafizur 32-6-113-1, Sunzamul 45-2-153-1, Mehedi 49-4-174-3, Tajjul 67.3-13-219-4, Mosaddek 3-0-24-0, Mominul Haque 2-0-6-0, Mahmudullah 1-0-7-0.
<b>Sri Lanka first innings (overnight 504-3)</b>	<b>Bangladesh second innings:</b>
D. Karunaratne c Kayes b Mehedi 0	Tamim Iqbal c Dickwella b Sandakan 41
K. Mendis c Mushfiqur b Tajjul 196	Imrul Kayes c Chandimal b Perera 19
D. De Silva c Liton b Mustafizur 173	Mominul Haque not out 18
R. Silva c Liton b Mehedi 109	Mushfiqur Rahim c Mendis b Herath 2
D. Chandimal b Tajjul 87	Extras (nbl) 1
N. Dickwella c Liton b Mehedi 62	Total (three wickets, 26.5 over) 81
D. Perera lbw b Sunzamul 32	Fall of wickets: 1-52 (Kayes), 2-76 (Tamim), 3-81 (Mushfiqur)
R. Herath lbw b Tajjul 24	To bat: Mahmudullah, Liton Das, Mosaddek
S. Lakmal b Tajjul 9	Hossain, Mehedi Hasan, Tajjul Islam, Sunzamul
L. Kumara not out 2	Islam, Mustafizur Rahman
Extras (b11, lb6, w2) 19	Bowling: Herath 6.5-0-22-1, Lakmal 4-0-16-0, de Silva 6-0-20-0, Perera 7-1-20-1, Sandakan 3-1-3-1.
Total (9 wks declared: 199.3 overs) 713	
Fall of wickets: 1-0 (Karunaratne), 2-308 (de Silva), 3-415 (Mendis), 4-550 (Silva), 5-613 (Chandimal), 6-663 (Dickwella), 7-687 (Perera).	

## Bangladesh struggle after Sri Lanka's massive lead

**CHITTAGONG:** Sri Lanka spinners led by Rangana Herath took three crucial wickets late in day four to leave Bangladesh with an uphill task of saving the opening Test in Chittagong yesterday. Bangladesh reached 81-3 at stumps, still needing 119 to make Sri Lanka bat again. The visitors declared their first innings at 713-9 in the final session.

Off-spinner Dilruwan Perera dismissed Imrul Kayes for 19 before left-arm unorthodox bowler Lakshan Sandakan got Tamim Iqbal caught behind for 41. Herath then removed Mushfiqur Rahim for two with his left-arm spin in the last over of the day.

Mominul Haque — 18 not out — was at the crease when the players walked back after another run-filled day. "We have a pretty good chance to win the Test. It is a pretty good wicket. It is all turning from the rough, and outside the stumps," said Sri Lankan wicketkeeper Niroshan Dickwella. "We are hoping to start the (fifth and

final) day well. We are bowling in good areas, line and length." Sri Lanka declared their innings in the third over into the final session with a lead of 200 runs in response to Bangladesh's first innings total of 513.

Left-arm spinner Tajjul Islam, who returned figures of 4-219, took two wickets off his successive overs to wrap up the Sri Lankan innings. Tajjul got the all-important wicket of skipper Dinesh Chandimal for 87 before off-spinner Mehedi Hasan removed Dickwella for 62 to slow down the Sri Lankan progress.

"It is a batting wicket, but we didn't bowl to that level. I think they made 100 runs too many," said Tajjul. Debutant left-arm spinner Sunzamul Islam got his maiden Test wicket, trapping Dilruwan Perera leg-before for 32.

Roshen Silva joined the run fest in the morning session to post his maiden Test century after Sri Lanka resumed on 504-3. He made 109 off 230 balls before becoming the first batsman dismissed on the day.

Silva was Sri Lanka's third century maker of the innings after Kusal Mendis and Dhananjaya de Silva, who made 196 and 173 runs respectively. Mehedi ended Silva's impressive innings when the right-hander edged a low delivery to wicketkeeper Liton Das. Silva shared a 135-run stand with Chandimal for the fourth wicket and hit six fours and a six. —AFP

## Lynn, Maxwell hit out in Australia T20 win over N Zealand

**SYDNEY:** Power hitters Chris Lynn and Glenn Maxwell propelled Australia to a convincing seven-wicket victory over New Zealand in the first tri-series Twenty20 match at the Sydney Cricket Ground yesterday. Lynn (44 runs from 33 balls) and Maxwell (40 not out from 24 balls) shared in a scorching 77-run stand from just 53 balls to steer Australia to the rain-reduced total of 95 from 15 overs with 21 balls to spare. Despite a top-order wobble, in which captain David Warner and the debutant D'Arcy Short fell inside the first three overs, the belligerent power of Lynn and Maxwell swamped the Kiwi bowling attack. Australia's victory was earlier set up by towering paceman Billy Stanlake whose fierce pace justified Warner's decision to bowl first after winning the toss, as he wrecked New Zealand's top order with three wickets in the space of his first eight balls.

Stanlake startled Colin Munro with his high bounce for debutant wicketkeeper Alex Carey to race out to point to complete the catch. Martin Guptill was then flummoxed next ball by a perfect-length seamer that flicked the top of off stump.

Stanlake narrowly missed his hat-trick as Tom Bruce clipped an attempted yorker through the leg side for three. Andrew Tye claimed four wickets as Australia restricted New Zealand to a below-par 117 for nine off their 20 overs.

Tye mopped up the Kiwi tail to finish with four wickets for 23, while towering paceman Stanlake claimed three wickets inside the powerplay to dismantle the Kiwis' top order. Australia had New Zealand at 60 for five before Colin de Grandhomme hit an unbeaten 38 from 24 balls with three sixes and a four. De Grandhomme launched two massive sixes off leg-spinner Adam Zampa with the Black Caps managing just four sixes in the entire innings. Stanlake underlined why he is one of the hottest prospects in the country and has been locked up on a Cricket Australia central



**SYDNEY:** Australia's David Warner (L) plays a shot against New Zealand during their Twenty20 cricket match at the Sydney Cricket Ground in Sydney yesterday. — AFP

### SCOREBOARD

**SYDNEY:** Completed scoreboard in the first Twenty20 tri-series match between Australia and New Zealand at the Sydney Cricket Ground yesterday:

<b>New Zealand</b>	15-3, Agar 4-0-22-1 (1w), Tye 4-0-23-4 (2w), Zampa 3-0-21-1 (1w), Stoinis 1-0-2-0.
M. Guptill b Stanlake 5	<b>Australia</b>
C. Munro c Carey b Stanlake 3	D. Warner c Bruce b Boul 6
K. Williamson c Warner b Tye 8	D. Short c Taylor b Southee 4
T. Bruce c Richardson b Stanlake 3	C. Lynn c Sodhi b Boul 44
R. Taylor c Carey b Agar 24	G. Maxwell not out 40
T. Blundell c Richardson b Zampa 14	A. Carey not out 0
C. de Grandhomme not out 38	Extras (w2) 2
M. Santner c Warner b Tye 1	Total (3 wickets: 11.3 overs) 96
T. Southee c Stoinis b Tye 9	Fall of wickets: 1-10 (Short), 2-10 (Warner), 3-87 (Lynn)
I. Sodhi b Tye 0	Did not bat: M. Stoinis, A. Agar, A. Tye, K. Richardson, A. Zampa, B. Stanlake
Extras: (b2, lb4, w6) 12	Bowling: Boul 3-0-14-2, Southee 2.3-0-27-1 (2w), Santner 2-0-20-0, Sodhi 3-0-24-0, De Grandhomme 1-0-11-0.
Total (9 wickets: 20 overs) 117	Result: Australia won by 7 wickets (D/L method)
Fall of wickets: 1-11 (Munro), 2-11 (Guptill), 3-16 (Bruce), 4-34 (Williamson), 5-60 (Blundell), 6-90 (Taylor), 7-92 (Santner), 8-114 (Southee), 9-117 (Sodhi)	
Did not bat: T. Boul	
Bowling: Richardson 4-0-28-0 (2w), Stanlake 4-0-	

contract. Tye's first wicket owed much to Warner's catch, running backwards to make the grab and remove Kiwi captain Kane

Williamson for eight from 21 balls. Australia play England in the second match of the tri-series in Hobart on Wednesday. — AFP

## KFH clinches KBA Cricket Trophy

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Cricket Team clinched the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) final cricket trophy 2017-2018 after defeating the National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) by 4 wickets in the final match played at Doha Entertainment City ground last Saturday.

It was a well-deserving victory for KFH Team, who played the tournament with the determination to win. The match went into a thrilling stage. KFH man of the match smashed a match-winning 37 runs to secure the victory.

KFH's win in the KBA tournament comes in tandem with the Bowling Tournament 2018, where KFH Bowling team clinched the first runner-up prize.



**KFH Cricket team**

Sports

# Aubameyang bags debut goal, Ramsey treble as Arsenal crush Everton

## Arsenal five points behind fourth placed Chelsea

**LONDON:** Arsenal's record signing Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang scored on his debut and Aaron Ramsey hit a hat-trick in a swaggering 5-1 rout of woeful Everton yesterday. Aubameyang vowed to emulate Arsenal legend Thierry Henry after arriving from Borussia Dortmund for £56 million (\$79 million, 63 million euros) this week.

While it is too soon for such lofty comparisons, the Gabon striker certainly made the perfect first impression at the Emirates Stadium. Aubameyang, recovered from an illness that had placed his debut in doubt, capped an exhilarating first half from Arsenal with a composed finish to put his side four goals ahead.

Ramsey had opened the scoring and Laurent Koscielny increased Arsenal's lead before Ramsey struck again to make it three goals in the first 19 minutes. Aubameyang's lively debut was aided by three assists from Henrikh Mkhitaryan in his first Arsenal start.

Wales midfielder Ramsey completed his treble in the second half and the only angst for Gunners boss Arsene Wenger was the sight of goalkeeper Petr Cech limping off injured. Sixth placed Arsenal are now five points behind fourth placed Chelsea, who face Watford on Monday, in the race to qualify for next season's Champions League via a top four finish. Wenger had bemoaned Arsenal's defending in their wretched 3-1 loss at Swansea on Tuesday, but the two changes he made were both attack minded as Aubameyang and Mkhitaryan came in.

Aubameyang replaced misfiring France striker Alexandre Lacazette, who has only one goal in his last 12 appearances. Lacazette had been Arsenal's record signing until the Aubameyang swoop, but while he has struggled to live up to expectations, Aubameyang quickly set about repaying his hefty transfer fee—with help from an old friend.

Mkhitaryan was making his home debut after arriving from Manchester United as part of the deal that sent Alexis Sanchez to Old Trafford. Mkhitaryan rarely showed his best

form with United, but he and Aubameyang had formed a deadly double act during their time at Dortmund and they were back in the groove as Arsenal took a sixth minute lead.

When Aubameyang slipped a pass into Mkhitaryan, the midfielder whipped over a superb cross that invited Ramsey, timing his run perfectly, to slot past Jordan Pickford from close-range for his first goal since October.

Mkhitaryan went close to doubling Arsenal's lead moments later with a fierce strike that whistled wide from the edge of the area. Lethargic Everton were unable to stem the tide and Wenger's men didn't have to wait long to claim their second goal in the 14th minute.

Shkodran Mustafi met Mesut Ozil's corner with a header towards the far post, where Koscielny stooped to head home from close-range. Everton's dismal display was ruining Sam Allardyce's 500th match as a Premier League manager and there was worse to come in the 19th minute.

Afforded time and space by Everton's statuesque rear-guard, Ramsey unloaded a 25-yard strike that took a deflection off Toffees debutant Eliaquim Mangala on its way past the wrong-footed Pickford.

With Arsenal threatening every time they went forward, Aubameyang, who also scored on his Bundesliga debut, was able to join the party in the 37th minute.

Mkhitaryan's pass split the Everton defence and, although Aubameyang looked offside, the linesman's flag stayed down as the debutant clipped a deft finish over Pickford. It was another remarkable goal blitz from Arsenal, who scored four times in the first 22 minutes of their previous home league game against Crystal Palace. Everton's capitulation made it a depressing return for Theo Walcott, who was subbed midway through the second half of his first return to Arsenal since his January transfer. Dominic Calvert-Lewin got one back for Everton with a 64th header, but there was still time for Ramsey to strike again with a low finish from Mkhitaryan's pass in the 74th minute. —AFP



**LONDON:** Arsenal's Gabonese striker Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang (R), with Everton's Dutch defender Cuco Martina, misses a shot at goal during the English Premier League football match between Arsenal and Everton at the Emirates Stadium in London yesterday. —AFP

## Ribery among scorers as Bayern march on in Bundesliga

**BERLIN:** Franck Ribery netted a rare Bundesliga goal as Bayern Munich eased to an eighth consecutive league victory with a 2-0 win over Mainz yesterday.

After a sluggish first half-hour, the veteran Frenchman put Bayern ahead on 33 minutes. Picking up a poorly cleared corner at the edge of the box, he released a fizzing half-volley to score only his second league goal of the season.

James Rodriguez then doubled the lead just before half-time, elegantly bringing the ball down on his chest before volleying it past Robin Zentner. "We were exhausted at the end," Bayern centre-back Mats Hummels told Sky Sport. "Mainz passed the ball well, but we deserved to win."

The win saw Bayern extend their lead at the top of the table to 18 points after second-placed Bayer Leverkusen were held to a 0-0 draw in Freiburg.

Lucas Alario hit the post for Leverkusen early in the game, but there were more yellow cards than chances, as seven players were booked and Freiburg once again frustrated a top team. "It was a heated game," Leverkusen's Julian Brandt told Sky. "We knew in advance that it wouldn't be easy to come to Freiburg."

Leverkusen, though, remain in second after Schalke once again dropped points. Both teams profited from goalkeeping errors in Gelsenkirchen, as a late goal saw Werder Bremen snatch a surprise 2-1 victory. A catastrophic mistake from Jiri Pavlenka gifted Schalke the lead on 24 minutes. Yevhen Konoplyanka's speculative effort flew straight at the Bremen goalkeeper, who allowed the ball to slip through his fingers.

"These things happen, it just looks stupid because he is the last man," said striker Max Kruse in Pavlenka's defence. "We all made mistakes on the pitch today."



**MAINZ:** Mainz' Ivorian midfielder Jean Philippe Gbamin (L) and Bayern Munich's French midfielder Franck Ribery vie for the ball during the German first division Bundesliga football match Mainz 05 versus Bayern Munich yesterday in Mainz. —AFP

With 11 minutes to go there was more farcical goal-keeping as Ralf Faehrmann allowed Kruse to equalise for Bremen. After Matija Nastasic was sent off for a second bookable offence, Faehrmann fumbled the resulting free-kick, allowing the ball to bounce out of his hands and into the path of Kruse. It would get worse for Schalke in stoppage time, as Zlatko Junuzovic stabbed a loose ball past Faehrmann to claim a dramatic and invaluable victory for relegation-threatened Bremen. Elsewhere in the lower half of the table, Mario Gomez scored against his former club to rescue a point for VfB Stuttgart, as they welcomed new coach Tayfun Korkut with a 1-1 draw in Wolfsburg.

Liverpool loanee Divock Origi put Wolfsburg in

front on 24 minutes, curling a long-range shot into the bottom corner. Gomez, who left Wolfsburg for Stuttgart in January, levelled the scores on the hour mark, prodding the ball home from close range.

In yesterday's other game, Hoffenheim extended their winless run to five matches after throwing away a 1-0 lead to draw at Hertha Berlin. Andrej Kramaric gave Hoffenheim the lead from the penalty spot on 39 minutes, but Salomon Kalou's header drew the home side level just before the hour mark.

On Friday, Michy Batshuayi scored twice on his debut for Borussia Dortmund after joining on loan from Chelsea as his new club won 3-2 at bottom side Cologne. —AFP

## Gross seals Brighton's first league win of the year

**LONDON:** Brighton & Hove Albion secured their first Premier League win this year as they beat West Ham United 3-1 thanks to superb strikes from Jose Izquierdo and Pascal Gross in a thrilling game at the Amex Stadium yesterday.

Brighton's Glenn Murray opened the scoring with his ninth league goal of the season but Javier Hernandez, who said he had wanted to leave the club ahead of the January transfer deadline, equalised before the break after jinking past three defenders. Brighton's second-half goals were stunning. First Izquierdo rocketed a shot past West Ham keeper Adrian from the edge of the area after 59 minutes and then Gross capped a fine display by scoring from 25 metres in the 75th.

West Ham's midweek signing from Preston North End, striker Jordan Hugill, came off the bench but Brighton held on to complete their first league double over West Ham and move level with the 12th-

placed visitors on 27 points.

Brighton manager Chris Hughton said Izquierdo's goal was the turning point of the game. "That goal lifted the stadium," he said. "Whatever goal gets us the lead is important but when it's as good as that it lifts everyone on the pitch and in the stadium. "If we can put in more performances like this before the end of the season, then we'll be okay."

Earlier, substitute Lys Mousset came off the bench to score his first Premier League goal for Bournemouth as they came back from a goal down to beat Stoke City 2-1 in a pulsating Premier League clash at the Vitality Stadium yesterday.

Swiss international Xherdan Shaqiri, who had seen a shot cleared off the line by Steve Cook moments earlier, put visitors Stoke in front in the fifth minute, the diminutive winger heading home unmarked from Badou Ndiaye's cross.

Bournemouth, who hammered Chelsea 3-0 on Wednesday, upped the tempo in the second half and had plenty of chances to score, but it took until the 70th minute for Joshua King to put them back on level terms with a thumping right-foot strike.

Sensing that Stoke's resistance was waning after King's goal, Bournemouth continued to attack and nine minutes later Mousset nodded home Jordan Ibe's free kick for the simplest of finishes to take all three points. — Reuters

## West Brom at rock bottom after defeat by Southampton

**WEST BROMWICH:** West Bromwich Albion were left stuck at the bottom of the Premier League after losing 3-2 to Southampton yesterday, despite having made a fine start to the match. It was an emotional day at the Hawthorns where there was a minute's applause before the game for their former striker Cyrille Regis, who died last month. Egyptian defender Ahmed Hegazi headed Albion into an early lead from a corner by set-piece specialist Chris Brunt but Southampton hit back with two goals in three minutes before halftime. Gabon's Mario Lemina drove in from 20 metres and defender Jack Stephens scored his third goal in three games.

A direct free kick by James Ward-Prowse made it 3-1 and Saints held on

for a first League victory in 13 games despite Salomon Rondon's 72nd-minute headed goal for the home side. Victory carried them six points above West Brom, who gave a first game to striker Daniel Sturridge, on loan from Liverpool.

"They are now four points behind the pack at the bottom of the table and face an away game with champions Chelsea next. "It's a painful one for us because Southampton looked like they had a little more energy," manager Alan Pardew said.

"We had players who had been playing two games in three days and looked a little leggy and it was unlike us to concede through two set-plays. "It was a shame because it was a special day in a lot of ways but not a special result and no matter how much we huffed and puffed we just couldn't get back into it."

"We needed this victory, for many reasons, but the most important one is to believe what we can do on the pitch," Southampton manager Mauricio Pellegrino said. "Now we celebrate this and it will be massive to increase our confidence. "The position in the table is nothing because we want to go higher and move and get more points and finish as high as possible." — Reuters

## Official urges efforts to lift Int'l ban on Kuwait sports

**KUWAIT:** Public Authority for Sport (PAS) Director General Hmoud Al-Flaiteh yesterday called for serious and sincere efforts for lifting international suspension of the Kuwaiti sports.

Al-Flaiteh, in a statement, urged all stakeholders to cooperate for serving higher interests of the national sports. On a related topic, he said a recently-formed settlement commission of the Kuwaiti Football Association is capable of implementing "the road map," worked out by FIFA to endorse "amendments required from Kuwait."

His remarks came against backdrop of a recent decision by Sheikh Ahmad Al-Yusuf Al-Sabah to resign as chairman of the football association. Sheikh Ahmad had also declared resignation of board members, following a visit by a joint commission of the international and Asian football federations to Kuwait for setting up the settlement committee, in response to FIFA's desire. The settlement committee was formed with aim of "bolstering legality" of the Kuwaiti association. —KUNA

Live		Matches on TV (Local Timings)	
<b>ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE</b>			
Crystal Palace v Newcastle United	beIN SPORTS HD 2	17:15	
Liverpool v Tottenham Hotspur	beIN SPORTS HD 2	19:30	
<b>SPANISH LEAGUE PRIMERA</b>			
Getafe v Leganes	beIN SPORTS HD 3	14:00	
Espanyol v Barcelona	beIN SPORTS HD 3	18:15	
Girona v Athletic de Bilbao	beIN SPORTS HD 3	20:30	
Atletico de Madrid v Valencia C.F	beIN SPORTS HD 3	22:45	
<b>ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE</b>			
Hellas Verona v AS Roma	beIN SPORTS HD 4	14:30	
Atalanta v Chievo Verona	beIN SPORTS HD 8	17:00	
Bologna v Fiorentina	beIN SPORTS HD 1	17:00	
Juventus v Sassuolo Calcio	beIN SPORTS HD 4	17:00	
Udinese Calcio v Milan	beIN SPORTS HD 7	17:00	
Cagliari Calcio v Spal	beIN SPORTS	17:00	
Benevento v SSC Napoli	beIN SPORTS HD 4	22:45	
<b>GERMAN BUNDESLIGA</b>			
Augsburg v Eintracht Frankfurt	beIN SPORTS HD 5	17:30	
Hamburg v Hannover	beIN SPORTS HD 5	20:00	
<b>FRENCH LEAGUE</b>			
Stade Rennais v Guingamp	beIN SPORTS HD 6	17:00	
Caen v Nantes	beIN SPORTS HD 6	19:00	
Monaco v Olympique Lyonnais	beIN SPORTS HD 6	23:00	

**12** Vonn hits 'big number' 80th World Cup win, Garmisch hat-trick



**14** Opener Kalra's unbeaten ton seals U-19 WCup for India



**15** Franck Ribery among scorers as Bayern march on in Bundesliga



**MANCHESTER:** Huddersfield Town's Swiss-born Dutch defender Terence Kongolo (C) collides with Manchester United's English midfielder Scott McTominay (R) in the penalty area injuring McTominay during the English Premier League football match between Manchester United and Huddersfield Town at Old Trafford in Manchester yesterday. — AFP

## Sanchez on target as Man United win

United were missing Fellaini, Phil Jones, Bailly and Zlatan

**MANCHESTER:** Romelu Lukaku and Alexis Sanchez were on the scoresheet as Manchester United scrapped their way to a 2-0 victory against Huddersfield Town at Old Trafford yesterday. After a tough-tackling first half, Lukaku sent United on their way in the 55th minute before Sanchez scored his maiden United goal on his home debut to finish off the determined visitors.

It was a forgettable contest, dominated more by concerns about the performance of referee Stuart Attwell than any moments of true class but Lukaku's opener gave them some breathing space before Sanchez put the icing on the cake with 22 minutes left.

United were missing Marouane Fellaini, Phil Jones, Eric Bailly and Zlatan Ibrahimovic but were buoyed by Manchester City's 1-1 draw with Burnley in the early yesterday kick-off. As United looked to close the 16-point gap on City, out-of-form Huddersfield were the perfect side to face.

David Wagner's side went into the contest on the back of four straight Premier League losses, with their impressive start to the season, including a 2-1 win over

United on home soil, long forgotten. Ahead of kick-off, an impeccably observed minute's silence was held to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Munich Air Disaster. United made the most of the early running and although Huddersfield began the contest with the second-worst defence in the top-flight, they held firm as Juan Mata and Jesse Lingard probed down the right wing. Lingard had the game's first real chance after eight minutes after Sanchez did well to put him through on goal but his tame left-foot shot was comfortably saved by Jonas Lossl.

The game picked up an extra edge after 19 minutes

when United youngster Scott McTominay was clattered in an aerial challenge by Terence Kongolo inside the

Huddersfield box. McTominay carried on but Huddersfield were lucky that Attwell deemed the challenge to be fair when many other officials would have given a penalty. That soured the atmosphere and the game became increasingly bad-tempered as both sides looked for a decisive opening.

penalty that was rightly waved away. Shortly afterwards Kongolo kicked the ball into touch, thinking Sanchez was injured after another foray forward but United played on from the throw-in rather than giving the ball back to the Terriers.

After the interval, United seemed certain to take the lead when Sanchez found himself unmarked six yards out but a stunning covering last-ditch block by Huddersfield captain Tommy Smith kept the score at 0-0. However, Huddersfield's resistance finally crumbled when Mata delivered an inch-perfect cross for Lukaku, who volleyed home from five yards out on his favoured left foot.

The game became more pedestrian and a Huddersfield comeback appeared remote, something confirmed when Michael Hefele fouled Sanchez in the box midway through the second period.

Sanchez dusted himself down and although his spot-kick was saved, he bundled home the rebound to grab United's second and ensure Huddersfield would fall into the relegation zone for the first time this season. — AFP



**It was a forgettable contest**

### SANCHEZ SKILLS

Sanchez showed fine skills to dribble clear of trouble and fire a shot at Lossl after 26 minutes and then went down weakly in the box 60 seconds later in search of a

## City made to pay for Sterling sitter by Burnley

**BURNLEY:** An extraordinary miss by Raheem Sterling proved the turning point as Burnley recovered to snatch a draw against runaway Premier League leaders Manchester City 1-1 at Turf Moor yesterday.

Pep Guardiola's team, leading from Danilo's first half goal, looked well in control but Sterling's huge error 20 minutes from time offered a lifeline and renewed belief to the home side. After 82 minutes, Matt Lowton's deep cross from the right allowed Johann Berg Gudmundsson to ghost past the City backline and score with a left-foot volley from six yards.

It is just the fourth time City have dropped points in the Premier League this season, but they still enjoy a commanding 16-point lead over Manchester United, who hosted Huddersfield. Burnley showed great character and organisational

tion in their defending from the start but, when they made an error, City punished it clinically.

A quickly-taken 22nd minute Kevin De Bruyne corner found Bernardo Silva who, in turn, moved the ball on to Danilo, who had been left in far too much space outside the Burnley area. The full-back carried the ball to the edge of the area before curling an unstoppable 20-yard, right-foot shot into the far corner.

The lead was just about merited for a City side that came to Turf Moor without seven injured first team players and with Guardiola naming just six substitutes. The City manager claimed he had not wanted to deny youngsters playing in a Friday night elite development squad fixture in order just to sit on the first-team bench. But Guardiola's decision was also interpreted as a gesture in response to his recent complaints that his players are not receiving enough protection from referees, leading to a long injury list at the Etihad, as well as City's failure to land Riyad Mahrez from Leicester before Wednesday's transfer deadline.

City still had enough talent on display and, after taking the lead, Sterling cut into the box and shot firmly into Pope's body before the England forward worked a clever one-two with Ilkay

Gundogan that almost opened up another chance. Burnley, seeking to end a worrying run of eight league games without victory, responded well to going behind, however, and created their best opening after 31 minutes. Jack Cork lobbed an inviting cross into the City area for captain Ben Mee to connect with a 12-yard volley which Ederson saved well and the Burnley defender also threatened when he rose to meet a corner from Gudmundsson and headed just wide.

But before the interval, De Bruyne's terrific 25-yard shot was parried by Pope, with Sergio Aguero missing the follow-up, and Aguero wasted another opening, shooting straight at the keeper's torso.

City were even more dominant after the restart with Gundogan and Sterling combining well to set up Aguero for a shot which the striker really should have converted, rather than see his strike hit the back of defender Lowton. Gundogan saw a couple more chances blocked and, after 54 minutes, a selfless pass from Aguero set up the unmarked Sterling for a chance which he blasted over from six yards. The chances kept coming with Danilo close to another goal from the edge of the area, denied only by Pope's fingertip save.—AFP



**BURNLEY:** Manchester City's English midfielder Raheem Sterling sends a shot wide to miss a chance during the English Premier League football match between Burnley and Manchester City at Turf Moor in Burnley, north west England yesterday. — AFP



## Business

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2018

**18** NBK most valuable banking brand in Kuwait with a value of US \$1.748bn**19** Infiniti AI Babtain introduces the INFINITI QX80 in Kuwait**22** Holograms and mermaids: Top trends at Nuremberg toy fair

BAGHDAD: Iraqis attend the opening of a business centre. — AFP

# Highs, heists: Where is crypto heading?

## Crypto regulation on the minds of the global elite

TOKYO: A hacking theft that netted \$530 million, a ban on Facebook advertising, regulation even in Russia and more wild price swings: despite another stomach-churning week for cryptocurrencies, analysts say they are here to stay. While headline-grabbing hacks like that suffered by Japan's Coincheck are likely to attract the attention of regulators, experts say the "Teflon" crypto boom is now part of the economic landscape.

Cryptocurrencies have "been down numerous times, but always able to get off the canvas," Stephen Innes, head of Asia-Pacific trading at OANDA, told AFP. Virtual currencies have certainly taken some hefty blows recently. In the dead of night, hackers stole \$530 million in Japanese virtual currency from Coincheck, sending prices plunging and underlining the vulnerability, and volatility, of cryptocurrencies.

The January 26 hack appears to be the largest cryptocurrency theft ever, exceeding even the \$480 million stolen in 2014 from another Japanese virtual currency exchange, MtGox. In the wake of the MtGox theft, Japan's government introduced regulations requiring exchanges to obtain a government-issued license. And the news from Coincheck again piqued regulators' interest, with Finance Minister Taro Aso admitting this week that the government "needs to strengthen our supervision."

Coincheck "did not store the important things separately. I think they lacked fundamental knowledge or common sense," he said. Regulators have already clamped down in South Korea and China and even in Russia, where a draft

law was drawn up last week aimed at controlling the production and creation of virtual money.

On Thursday India's Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said the government did not consider cryptocurrencies legal tender and would "take all measures to eliminate" their use as part of a payment system and in funding illegitimate activities. Innes said such regulatory oversight was long overdue, as the current framework was "far too lax given investors' vulnerabilities from both market volatility and cybercriminals." "In general, the regulatory framework in Asia was terrible, which offered criminals mouth-watering targets," he added.

### 'Systemically important'

Crypto regulation was also on the minds of the global elite at this year's World Economic Forum, with British finance minister Philip Hammond urging governments to be "cautious." "Possibly we do need to look at the way we regulate this environment before the amount of outstanding bitcoin becomes large enough to be systemically important in the global economy," he told Bloomberg TV.

Tech giant Facebook then got in on the act, banning all

ads related to cryptocurrencies in an effort to fight scams. All this has taken its toll on the value of bitcoin—the best-known virtual currency—which soared to nearly \$20,000 before dropping back to less than half that value with wild

daily swings. But despite the negative publicity and the growing attention of regulators, enthusiasm for cryptocurrencies does not appear to be waning. BitFlyer, Japan's main bitcoin exchange, told AFP it had actually seen increased interest after the Coincheck hack was revealed.

"Many people got interested in cryptocurrencies. On our platform, the number of new account applications increased," bitFlyer CFO Midori Kanemitsu said. And Innes said virtual currency had "a sort of Teflon persona." He said he expected to see dips down to around \$6,000 "before the market irons out." "Given recent trading patterns, I suspect \$10,000-\$15,000 will be the sweet spot, and as more traditional market makers enter the fray... volatility will decrease."

### 'More selective'

Industry professionals say there is no stopping the technology behind virtual currencies and while some cryptocur-

rencies may disappear, others will likely pop up in their place. "All kinds of new ideas are emerging," said lawyer Ken Kawai, an expert in financial regulation and the blockchain technology behind cryptocurrencies. "Hacks occur. People who choose to use this technology must be aware of the danger associated with it," he told AFP. "I expect to see users becoming more selective when choosing exchanges." To ensure client safety and improved use of the technology, virtual currency exchanges should face strict regulations like banks and brokerages, he suggested. Banks and e-commerce firms could use the most stable cryptocurrencies among themselves, while others could be traded as alternative assets, Kawai said. With investor interest apparently insatiable, regulators are likely to introduce a range of tighter checks, including requiring exchanges to verify the identity of their clients. They could also impose outside cyber audits to protect against the kind of security loopholes that appear to have led to the Coincheck theft.

Cryptocurrency trading is also likely to come under the scrutiny of tax authorities, potentially cooling investor appetite if particularly steep new tariffs are rolled out, analysts say. Kanemitsu said bitFlyer would welcome "good and reasonable regulation" as "an opportunity." Hikaru Kusaka, co-founder of blockhive, an innovation incubator, said consumers will eventually weed out the weak virtual currencies and only the best will survive. "To put it dramatically, maybe not all the cryptocurrencies will disappear, but new ones will emerge, and there will be a process of picking and choosing," said Kusaka. — AFP

“Always able to get off the canvas”

## Infrastructure: A Trump goal in search of funding

WASHINGTON: In his first State of the Union address, President Donald Trump called for a \$1.5 trillion infrastructure initiative to upgrade America's aging transportation networks. But the bridge from wishes to reality begins with finding the necessary funds, a topic he did not address in the Tuesday night speech.

### What are the facts?

Built for the most part between the 1950s and 1970s, US highways, bridges, railroads, airports and other infrastructure are showing their age. Even Trump said they were "crumbling." A third of US bridges, or 226,837, and a third of highway overpasses, 17,726, are in need of repair,

according to the American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA). And the association says that is just "the tip of the iceberg."

The American Society of Civil Engineers first sounded the alarm about decaying infrastructure decades ago. In 1998, it gave US infrastructure a "D" grade and put the total cost of investing in modernization at \$2 trillion over 10 years. In 2007, a bridge over the Mississippi River in Minneapolis, Minnesota collapsed killing 13 people, and federal investigators found the structure was not designed to handle the increased use it was seeing as a major commuter route into the city. Former President Barack Obama pushed for years for Congress to fund a rebuilding program to address the problems and create jobs but Republicans blocked the effort almost entirely.

### Trump's plan?

In his address, Trump called on Congress to act but gave few details. He claimed that winning regulatory approvals to build a road could take as much as a decade, whereas New York's 102-story Empire State Building was completed in about a year. "This is not a plan, this is a number," said

Jacob Kirkegaard, senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics. He noted that the Trump administration has promised for months to release a detailed proposal. So far, the White House says it favors a public-private partnership. Trump's budget proposal last year included \$200 billion for infrastructure, in the hopes of generating a total of a \$1 trillion from private investors as well as state and local governments. "I think this is a completely unrealistic aspiration," Kirkegaard told AFP. "An aspiration is not a plan." Lawmakers seem unlikely to approve funding, especially given that massive tax cuts approved in December already have ballooned budget deficit forecasts.

Other, less politically palatable options could involve charging tolls on roads and bridges—something many US states already do—or raising the federal gasoline tax, which has long been used for road projects but has not changed since 1993. The choice of what to build and where also will have to break with the tradition of "pork barrel" spending which funds infrastructure projects to help political allies, eager to unveil a new road or bridge in their districts. Different types of infrastructure projects have distinct funding models. —AFP



MARYLAND: US President Donald Trump walks to Air Force One prior to departure from Joint Base Andrews. —AFP

Business

# NBK most valuable banking brand in Kuwait with a value of US \$1.748bn

**KUWAIT:** National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) was recognized as the most valuable banking brand in Kuwait in 2018 according to Brand Finance, the renowned brand valuation agency. NBK ranks among the Top Tier of the Most 500 Valuable Banking Brands in the world. According to Brand Finance, NBK's Brand value reached USD 1.748 billion, up 9.8% year-on-year. Also, NBK's brand rating is ranked AA+, among the top in the region. This recognition reflects customers and shareholders' trust in NBK as well as the bank's strong reputation locally and regionally.

Brand Finance's valuation assesses the dollar value of the reputation, image and intellectual property of the brand. It considers a number of relevant attributes such as financial performance, revenue forecasts, growth rates, brand strength index, sustainability and analysts' insights, amongst others. NBK continues to collectively enjoy the highest ratings 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. In 2017, NBK was also named among Global Finance's list of the 50 safest banks in the world for twelve consecutive times.

NBK has the widest banking presence with more than 170 branches worldwide. NBK's international presence spans many of the world's leading financial centers including London, Paris, Geneva, New York and Singapore, as well as China (Shanghai). Meanwhile, regional coverage extends to Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Turkey.



## Mastercard recognizes KFH for MDES-powered wallet launch



Waleed Mandani, Fadl Chalouhi and Nimer Yasin with Mastercard officials



Waleed Mandani receiving the award from Pankaj Kathuria

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has received a recognition award from Mastercard, a leading technology company in the global payments industry, for being the first bank in the Middle East and Africa to launch a service powered by the Mastercard Digital Enablement Service (MDES) platform with its innovative 'KFH Wallet'.

KFH's Group Chief Retail and Private Banking Officer, Waleed Mandani received the award on behalf of the Bank from Pankaj Kathuria, Country Manager, Qatar & Kuwait, Mastercard at KFH Headquarters, in the presence of KFH Group General Manager Retail Banking, Fadi Chalouhi and Group Deputy General Manager Cards, Nimer Yasin, in addition to Mastercard officials.

Mandani said on receiving the award that it reiterates the Bank's leadership in rolling out innovative e-Payment solutions, indicating this is the core of KFH's strategy in embracing technological innovation and utilizing it for

the best interest of customers as per highest standards of quality, swiftness and security. Adopting and harnessing the power of new technology is paramount to superior customer service and growth. Mandani emphasized KFH's endeavors in constantly improving its electronic services, noting that improvement phases for the XTM are in the pipeline in addition to a wide range of innovative services.

He continued: "KFH organized a vast array of exciting rewards program in an attempt to encourage customers to benefit from the unprecedented offers of e-payment solutions. The Bank has recently launched, in collaboration with Caribou, a new campaign for KFH Wallet users, wherein each time the customers buy anything from Caribou's food & beverage menu and pay with KFH Wallet, they are entitled to a complimentary coffee beverage of their choice. In collaboration with Kuwait Airways, KFH also launched "the journey of 6 million miles begins with a card" campaign for

KFH Oasis cardholders, in addition to several marketing campaigns and special discounts and offers that boost customer satisfaction and their confidence while enhancing the Bank's presence, especially as it dominates the market share in the banking cards on the domestic level."

In addition to being EMV-compliant, the transactions completed using KFH Wallet have an additional layer of security that requires users to enter a PIN or a fingerprint ID before completing the transaction. Pankaj Kathuria, Country Manager, Qatar & Kuwait, Mastercard, said: "Mobile payments are the future of commerce, and payment solutions like the KFH Wallet are driving the shift towards cashless across the region. Powered by our Mastercard Digital Enablement Service (MDES), the KFH Wallet brings innovative and industry-leading payments technology to the consumer's fingertips, along with a greater sense of security that is enabled by Mastercard's multi-tiered approach to safety and fraud protection."

## US car sales mixed but trucks remain strong

**NEW YORK:** Automakers reported mixed US car sales in January, with strong demand for SUVs and pickup trucks continuing to provide a cushion in a declining overall auto market. Ford, Fiat Chrysler and Honda all reported declines in year-over-year sales, while General Motors scored a modest increase and Toyota saw a more substantial jump. Overall new car sales came in at 1.15 million, up one percent compared with January 2017, according to Autodata. Some analysts had predicted a modest decline. The January figures mean the market is on track for annual sales of 17.12 million, according to Autodata.

"January numbers suggest 2018 will be another healthy year for new vehicles sales," said Karl Brauer, executive publisher of Autotrader. "It also suggests the growing schism between car and truck sales will continue, with almost every crossover, SUV and truck up last month and almost every car down in volume." US car sales fell last year for the first time since the financial crisis and are projected to decline again in 2018. Still, analysts and industry executives expect US sales this year to remain solid amid low unemployment and strong consumer confidence.

"US economic factors are very healthy and we're seeing the effect in the auto industry—not just in strong demand for SUVs and pickups, but in demand for high trim versions of vehicles," said Mark LaNeve, Ford's vice president for US marketing. Ford's January sales dropped 6.6 percent from the same month of 2017 to 161,143. Within the total, car sales slumped 23.3 percent, including big drops for the Fusion and Focus, but that was partially countered by increased sales of the market-leading F-Series pickups.

Fiat Chrysler (FCA) saw sales fall 13 percent to 132,803, with gains for the Jeep brand offset by hefty declines in other models. And in contrast with the trend for strong sales of pickup trucks, the Ram truck brand fell 16 percent. However, FCA introduced a revamped fleet of the popular pickup at the Detroit Auto Show last month. Honda reported a 1.7 percent decline, with cars down slightly and the company pointing to "inventory constraints" as a limitation on truck sales. Meanwhile, GM posted a 1.3 percent increase in overall sales compared to January 2017 to 198,548. The biggest US automaker pointed to strong sales of larger vehicles, including the Silverado pickup truck and Chevrolet Equinox SUV. Toyota lead the pack with a 16.8 percent jump last month to 167,056, on gains in light trucks and in its sedan business. The Toyota Camry, which was revamped with the 2018 model, saw a 21.3 percent increase in January. The company also will introduce an upgraded Avalon sedan to dealerships this spring. —AFP



Indian Film Actress Tamannaah Bhatia, Inaugurates Malabar Gold & Diamonds 210th showroom globally at Hilmayat Nagar, Hyderabad, Telangana, India on 28th January, 2018. The event was held in the presence of Chintala Ramachandra Reddy, MLA, MP Ahammed, Chairman - Malabar Group, Asher O, Managing Director - India Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Shamial Ahamed, Managing Director - International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, KP Abdul Salam, Nishad AK, Abdul Majeed - Group Executive Directors, Malabar Group, Siraj PK, Regional Head, other management team members, media & guests.

### EXCHANGE RATES

Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.	
<b>ASIAN COUNTRIES</b>	
Japanese Yen	2.764
Indian Rupees	4.730
Pakistani Rupees	2.718
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.952
Nepali Rupees	2.957
Singapore Dollar	231.120
Hongkong Dollar	38.426
Bangladesh Taka	3.597
Philippine Peso	5.915
Thai Baht	9.624
<b>GCC COUNTRIES</b>	
Saudi Riyal	80.173
Qatari Riyal	82.575
Omani Riyal	780.795
Bahraini Dinar	798.330
UAE Dirham	81.878
<b>ARAB COUNTRIES</b>	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	19.500
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	16.930
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.207
Tunisian Dinar	126.240
Jordanian Dinar	423.770
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.003
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	33.346
<b>EUROPEAN &amp; AMERICAN COUNTRIES</b>	
US Dollar Transfer	300.450

Euro	375.860
Sterling Pound	429.340
Canadian dollar	245.870
Turkish lira	80.660
Swiss Franc	324.810
Australian Dollar	245.770
US Dollar Buying	299.250
<b>GOLD</b>	
20 Gram	249.070
10 Gram	127.450
5 Gram	64.570
<b>Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd</b>	
<b>Rate for Transfer</b>	
US Dollar	300.100
Canadian Dollar	244.515
Sterling Pound	427.310
Euro	374.270
Swiss Frank	281.140
Bahrain Dinar	798.075
UAE Dirhams	82.110
Qatari Riyals	83.335
Saudi Riyals	80.920
Jordanian Dinar	424.545
Egyptian Pound	17.024
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.948
Indian Rupees	4.721
Pakistani Rupees	2.715
Bangladesh Taka	3.640
Philippines Peso	5.824
Cyprus pound	17.865
<b>Selling Rate</b>	

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL		
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
<b>Europe</b>		
British Pound	0.419851	0.427351
Czech Korune	0.006708	0.016008
Danish Krone	0.046028	0.051028
Euro	0.367349	0.374849
Georgian Lari	0.19185	0.19185
Hungarian 0.001107	0.001297	
Norwegian Krone	0.034887	0.040087
Romanian Leu	0.063202	0.080052
Russian ruble	0.005313	0.005313
Slovakia	0.008916	0.018916
Swedish Krona	0.034060	0.039060
Swiss Franc	0.314931	0.325931
<b>Australasia</b>		
Australian Dollar	0.233988	0.245988
New Zealand Dollar	0.215156	0.224656
<b>America</b>		
Canadian Dollar	0.283363	0.247363
US Dollars	0.296350	0.300770
US Dollars Mint	0.298850	0.300770

<b>Asia</b>		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003247	0.003831
Chinese Yuan	0.045929	0.049429
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036326	0.039076
Indian Rupee	0.004245	0.004886
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002674	0.002854
Korean Won	0.000270	0.000285
Malaysian Ringgit	0.073657	0.079857
Nepalese Rupee	0.002997	0.003167
Pakistan Rupee	0.002528	0.002818
Philippine Peso	0.005862	0.006162
Singapore Dollar	0.223685	0.233686
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001688	0.002268
Taiwan	0.010175	0.010355
Thai Baht	0.009214	0.009764
<b>Arab</b>		
Bahraini Dinar	0.790382	0.798882
Egyptian Pound	0.014067	0.019785
Iranian Riyal	0.000083	0.000084
Iraqi Dinar	0.000197	0.000257
Jordanian Dinar	0.49146	0.428146
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000148	0.000248
Moroccan Dirhams	0.021870	0.045870
Omani Riyal	0.774071	0.779751
Qatar Riyal	0.078236	0.083176
Saudi Riyal	0.079033	0.080333
Syrian Pound	0.001273	0.001493
Tunisian Dinar	0.121477	0.129477
Turkish Lira	0.074454	0.084754
UAE Dirhams	0.074454	0.084754
Yemeni Riyal	0.000976	0.001056

Business

# Infiniti Al Babtain introduces the INFINITI QX80 in Kuwait

New QX80 exemplifies INFINITI's presence in the luxury SUV segment



From right : Laurent Pernet, Makram Khater and Ahmed Tawil



**KUWAIT:** Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al Babtain Co (AABC), the sole authorized dealer of Infiniti vehicles in the State of Kuwait, announces the arrival of Infiniti QX80 to Kuwait, following the World Premiere at the 2017 Dubai International Motor Show. The INFINITI QX80 has arrived to advance INFINITI's market-leading presence in the full-size luxury SUV segment, the QX80 takes INFINITI's 'Powerful Elegance' design language in a bold new direction, creating a powerful, contemporary and commanding aesthetic.

The new model has been created to meet the needs of today's luxury car buyers, and introduces a more modern interpretation of upscale luxury to the full-size SUV segment. It will appeal to a buyer that wants for nothing: affluent, high-achieving entrepreneurs and business leaders, often with families, who demand space and utility, hand-crafted quality and modern design, and effortless on-road performance.

Laurent Pernet, General Manager Automotive at Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Company said: "Infiniti fans in Kuwait can look forward to a new class of luxury on wheels - the new INFINITI QX80 has been engineered with exceptional capabilities and an inspired design that challenges the limits. Premiering in Kuwait for the first time after the UAE in the Middle East, reiterates the popularity of our flagship SUV locally and we are confident it will transform the driving experience of our customers as they venture out into the city."

The QX80 has a refined and spacious cabin that features high-quality materials, a hand-crafted finish and advanced drive-assist technologies. With a taut yet comfort-oriented suspension, and ample performance from its 5.6-liter V8 engine, the new QX80 gives drivers



an assured feeling of control and confidence at the wheel. The QX80's new entertainment system has also been upgraded. Higher-resolution screens provide the interface for connectivity and entertainment devices. The system also now supports 31 languages, up from three in the outgoing QX80.

The QX80 is newly-available with a range of technologies to inform the driver of their surroundings, help them avoid potential hazards and ease the monotony of driving in certain conditions. These technologies include: Lane Departure Warning and Prevention, Intelligent Cruise Control, Distance Control Assist, Predictive

Forward Collision Warning, Forward Emergency Braking, Blind Spot Warning and Intervention and Backup Collision Intervention. Infiniti Al Babtain encourages its customers to explore the unique features of the QX80 by visiting the Infiniti showroom located in Al Rai. The showroom is open daily except Fridays.



## GBK wins 'Best Retail Bank' and 'Best Mobile Banking App' awards

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank is pleased to announce it was honored with two awards at the 5th Annual International Finance Awards ceremony held earlier this month in Dubai, UAE. Accepting the award for 'Best Retail Bank in Kuwait - 2017' was Mr. Basel Al-Assad, Assistant General Manager for Branch Banking, while 'Best Mobile Banking App in Kuwait - 2017' was received by Ahmed Abul, Executive Manager for Digital Banking.

Upon accepting the award for Kuwait's best retail bank, Basel Al-Assad noted: "Customers have many choices, so we are always developing methods for delivering an efficient and relevant customer experience. And while, we realize that importance of having the right products, we also place great importance on having the right staff in place to further deliver value to our customers. This award recognition for 'Best Retail Bank' in Kuwait indicates we are on the right path."

Commenting on Gulf Bank's mobile banking award, Ahmed Abul, said: "This recognition affirms the importance Gulf Bank places on delivering products and services that exceed the expectations of our customers. With regard to our mobile banking app, when we designed our app, we paid great attention to simplicity and efficiency of movement, and coupled that world-class biometric security features. This combination of functionality, simplicity, and security make our mobile banking app unique in the Middle East region."

Using a combination of reader nominations and expert analysis the IFM awards work to ensure there is a fair process that is not influenced by reputation or newsworthiness. After meticulous research and analysis by the internal team, the process is transitioned to an external research agency who provide their inputs.

## AUB signs a cooperation agreement with eNet

**KUWAIT:** In line with Ahli United Bank's (AUB) strategy of developing its digital capabilities, the Bank announced that it has signed a cooperation agreement with Automated Services Network Company (eNet) which will allow the Bank to expand its scope of electronic banking services with quick payment solutions to all telecommunications companies in Kuwait, as well as a selective number of carriers abroad.

The agreement will also allow customers to pay their financ-



Mr Basel Al-Assad receiving the 'Best Retail Bank in Kuwait - 2017' award.



Basel Al-Assad and Ahmed Abul, accepting the awards from IFM's representatives.

Then, the finalists are chosen by a panel of industry experts drawn from international ratings agencies and some of the world's leading financial centers. They undergo extensive scrutiny on the basis of innovation, growth, sustainability, and their contribution to society among the key factors before the final Award winners are announced. The IFM Awards exist to recognize and honor individuals and organizations that make a significant difference and add value, and while delivering the highest standards of innovation and performance.

ing installments with companies, school tuition fees as well as purchase online shopping cards while receiving a host of entertainment services through subscribing to various television channels, entertainment packages, and electronic payment channels along with purchasing an extensive range of online games. The agreement enables customers to access electronic payment Solutions available on the Bank's website or through the Bank's mobile banking application

Commenting on the new agreement, Tareq Muhmood, AUB's Senior Deputy Chief Executive Officer said, "This is all about providing our customers with more choice on how they handle their financial affairs. We are committed to deliver better and enhanced services to our customers, as we always strive to facilitate their banking transactions with comfort and ease. Therefore, we have signed this agreement with eNet, which is the first company of its kind in Kuwait to provide

## MIDEA introduces convertible freezer-refrigerator in Kuwait

**KUWAIT:** Midea, One of the leading home appliance brands in the world, has introduced a convertible Refrigerator-Freezer yesterday through their Business partner and leading retailer Easa Husain Al-Yousifi & Sons Company in Kuwait. Midea introduced this revolutionary concept of converting refrigerator to freezer or freezer to refrigerator with a simple digital touch is aimed at catering to the diverse need of the Kuwaiti customers. This highly flexible feature as a whole unit is unique and first of its kind.

The convertible refrigerator series is available in steel and white colors, with left and right handle option in order to give the customer the flexibility to place the refrigerators as per the home space availability. The Model HS-772 is available in white and steel with left right handle options. The 27 CFT Convertible model has a large-spacious interior with wire shelf and Bright Led display, electronically controlled LED display, conversion between °C and °F, adjustable leg, high temperature alarm and easy rolling heel.

With this launch, Midea has added another variety product to its wide range of Refrigerator series. Midea has been offering the entire range of home appliances of refrigerators, washing machines, cooking ranges and small appliance in Kuwait through their business associate Easa Husain Al-Yousifi Company. Best Al Yousifi Electronics is one of the leading consumer electronics and appliances retail out-lets and distributor in Kuwait, having their own professionally managed service center to cater to the after-sales requirements of the consumer.

automated payment services that include the payment of invoices to all major telecommunications companies operating in Kuwait.

Moreover, Huda Al-Madani, AUB's Alternative Distribution Channels said, "We believe customers will be delighted with the ease of use and the convenience of this new service. The new service with eNet offers a wide range of special services that represent added value and a qualitative leap in the level of our services which aim to provide the best means of secure and easy payment methods anywhere and anytime. This is in line with AUB's strategy to stay abreast with the continuous technological development across the financial sector, and provide the latest innovations that meet our customers' needs." "We are keen to leverage fruitful opportunities that allows us to expand our online banking services to provide more convenience to our customers," added Al-Madani.



## For Rent

In a Luxurious and Privileged Compound at Abou Halifa Region Facing the National Park and the Sea

Great opportunity to living good villa in our area. 1 out of 22 units

<b>Duplex &amp; Triplex Villas</b>	3/4 Bedrooms + 3/4 Bathrooms +Big Salon + Separate pool All Master Bathrooms is Marble
Volleyball Court / Basketball Court / Hotel Lobby Pools + Jacuzzi / Billiard / 213 Car Parking Areas	

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Business

Stocks plunge as bond yield soars

NEW YORK: Stock markets plunged and bond yields soared on Friday after US data showing the strongest annual growth since 2009 rattled investors who fear accelerating inflation will usher in more interest rate hikes than expected this year.

later fell further, pushing the yield up as high as 2.854 percent from 2.773 percent late on Thursday. The rapid rise in the 10-year note - the world benchmark for corporate lending - sent shockwaves through a market grown accustomed to low inflation and a steady tick higher in stocks.

spike in bond rates made everybody nervous, said Gary Bradshaw, portfolio manager at Hedges Capital Management in Dallas. But the stock sell-off was long overdue, he said.

saying, "Wait a minute. We sold financials because interest rates are going higher?" It was the biggest single-day percentage decline for the benchmark S&P 500 index since September 2016 and for the Dow since June 2016.

director of institutional sales trading at Robert W Baird in Milwaukee. The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 665.75 points, or 2.54 percent, to 25,520.96. The S&P 500 lost 59.85 points, or 2.12 percent, to 2,762.13 and the Nasdaq Composite dropped 144.92 points, or 1.96 percent, to 7,240.95.

Strong labor market

Art Hogan, chief market strategist at Wunderlich Securities in New York, said next week investors will kick themselves for selling assets for all the wrong reasons in a sell-off akin to throwing the baby out with the bath water.

A stock slide of at least 1 percent in Europe later accelerated on Wall Street as the strong labor market data boosted chances the Federal Reserve will raise rates four times this year instead of the three hikes analysts had expected.

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report. Thursday, February 01, 2018. Includes tables for Index, Trades, and various stock categories like Oil & Gas, Basic Materials, Consumer Goods, etc.

National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report. At 02:00 PM Previous Day. Includes Global Stock Indices, MENA Stock Indices, Global Currencies Exchange Rate, MENA Currencies Exchange Rate, Global Interest Rates, and Global Bond Yields.

Business



# Mohamed Naser ALSAYER & Sons and Toyota Unveil The All New Stunningly Stylish Camry 2018

CAMRY 2018 BUILT ON GENERATIONS OF RELIABILITY

Since its inception the Camry has always been known for being ahead of its time. Now the all-new 2018 Camry continues that tradition with a stunningly stylish exterior design, the all-powerful SV6 engine complemented by 8 speed Automatic Transmission, beautifully redesigned spacious interiors and the very latest infotainment and safety features. Test drive the all-new Camry 2018 today and feel yourself being transported back to the future.

**KUWAIT:** Mohamed Naser ALSAYER & Sons (MNSS), a subsidiary of ALSAYER Holding has unveiled the all-new Camry 2018 - Ahead of Ambitions, redefining the standard for mid-size sedans. The press conference held at ALSAYER Ballroom at Ardiya was attended by Faisal Bader Al Sayer Chairman, Mubarak Naser Al Sayer CEO, Bengt Schultz Chief Operating Officer, Johan Heislitz Senior Business Director MNSS, Scott McNicol General Manager Sales, Hamad Al-Fouzan Product Planning Manager, Naomi Ishii GM, Masato Katsumata Chief Engineer of Camry, Koji Nagata Project General Manager, Yugo Miyamoto Chief Representative Middle East and accompanying delegation from Toyota Motor Corporation along with distinguished members of the press and media.

Setting new standards for the mid-size sedan segment in design, performance, and comfort, Toyota announced today the launch of the all-new 2018 Camry in the Middle East. The design of the eighth-generation Camry aims to test the limits of performance and intelligence, infusing the high-end sedan with a refined feel.

According to Mubarak Naser Al Sayer "As we are aware the automotive industry is rapidly transforming and Toyota continues to set the trend with the introduction of a range of new and exciting models. Camry is a testimony of this. After its introduction in the Gulf 25 years ago, Camry has to its credit spectacular record of achievement and exceptional sales. Camry is close to every family and every business."

The design team began with a blank slate, using Toyota New Global Architecture (TNGA) as the basis for the all-new platform, units, electronics, and other core components. The result is a striking emotional character, stunningly beautiful design, responsive driving, and premium ride performance.

Speaking during the occasion Bengt Schultz said "From a sales point of view our retail as well as fleet customers are happy with the Camry performance. Thanks for their loyalty and support over the years. Some of you would have seen our Camry that has clocked 1 Million KM in display at Scientific Center - This is what makes Camry special, its durability is unbeatable."

"To create something that stirs people's soul, we have



Corporation, said: "We are excited to launch the all-new Camry and build on the success the car already enjoys in the region. With its exhilarating design, refined interior, stirring driving performance, cutting-edge technology, and class-leading fuel efficiency, the 2018 Camry creates a whole new value proposition while ensuring seamless fun and excitement for driver and passengers alike and reestablish itself as the new standard in the mid-size sedan category. We extend our deepest gratitude to our customers in the region for their continued support and feedback, which inspire us to excel and develop cars that exceed their expectations."

Since its debut in 1982 and subsequent evolution over eight generations, the Camry has come to be embraced by people around the world for its excellent performance,

the usage of a new engine, transmission, and the GA-K platform.

"ALSAYER strives to reflect the same Toyota spirit and our strategic focus is on customer service excellence to create the best possible customer service we are ensuring that: We remain close to our customers by opening new showrooms and service centers. Our staff is motivated and well trained. We work with the most modern technology. These are some of the ways we deliver best in the business solutions for our customers" added Mubarak Sayer.

Set to become a new sensation among the region's aspiring car enthusiasts, the all-new Camry comes with three powertrain options: a 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine that produces 178 hp and 23.6 kg-m of torque and mated with a six-speed automatic transmission, and a newly-

ry, the bold new car's cabin is accentuated with a range of advanced features, including enhanced in-vehicle 8-inch information displays, wireless charging system for smartphones, dual-zone automatic air conditioning system, six-speaker sound system, multi-adjustable power front seats, and 60/40 split and reclining rear seats.

### The all-new Camry redefines the standard for mid-size sedans

- Aggressive exterior character lines and low center of gravity
- Redesigned interior concept enhancing comfort for all passengers
- New emotionally-charged performance experience
- Introduction of a 3.5-liter V6 engine with eight-speed automatic transmission
- Advanced safety technologies ensure passenger safety

As with any other Toyota model, safety remains a top priority for the all-new Camry, which includes a comprehensive array of safety features to protect its occupants, such as six SRS airbags, Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), Anti-lock Braking System (ABS), Electronic Brake Force Distribution (EBD), Brake Assist (BA), Hill-start Assist Control (HAC), and an enhanced body structure and platform structure with a 30-percent increase in torsional rigidity among many others.

Available in nine distinctive exterior colors of which two have been newly-developed, including Graphite ME, and Platinum White Pearl MC, which expresses strength and supple flexibility with its warm tint and metallic feel, the 2018 Camry lets customers express their individuality. Also, and for the first time in Camry (for the SE grade with V6 engine), there will be two-tone color schemes that accentuate the Camry's sporty and sculpted shape, and set it apart from the competition. On the other hand, the interior comes in a total of three color schemes. Furthermore, the all-new Camry has been rearmored with a 17-inch alloy wheel and an 18-inch alloy wheel featuring two intricate designs - with one exclusively available for the SE grade.



laid out the concept of a new sedan that provides fun and excitement behind the wheel," said the chief engineer of the all-new Camry, Masato Katsumata. "In developing the next-generation Toyota Camry, we were able to start with a blank slate, which allowed us to create a true driver's car that behaves exactly as the driver intends. The all-new 2018 Camry is an extremely balanced machine with much more excitement and emotion than any previous model. It keeps the driver and passengers comfortable and fresh on long drives while instilling them with confidence on twisty roads."

Yugo Miyamoto, Chief Representative, Middle East and North Africa Representative Office, Toyota Motor

ride quality, and its high level of Quality, Durability, and Reliability (QDR). The car has established an unshakable presence in the standard mid-size sedan market - both in the Middle East and globally - with total sales surpassing 19 million units.

The all-new Camry provides a comfortable and stable ride with superior handling characteristics, thanks to Toyota New Global Architecture (TNGA), which represents an entirely new strategy to the way the company designs, engineers, and packages its vehicles. TNGA retains all of Toyota's traditional values of superlative build quality and safety while injecting a fun driving experience that plays on all the senses. The physical manifestation is

developed 3.5-liter V6 with D-4S fuel injection system that produces 298 hp and 36.3 kg-m of torque and mated with an eight-speed automatic transmission. In addition, a new electrified hybrid system will be introduced later this year, combining two power sources consisting of a petrol engine and two electric motors, producing 176 hp and 118 hp, respectively, and delivering 22.5 kg-m and 20.6 kg-m of torque, respectively. It is also mated with an Electronically Controlled Continuously Variable Transmission (ECVT) that simulates a six-speed sequential shift transmission, delivering a new level of driving pleasure.

With an exciting interior featuring a distinctive design, and offering convenience and comfort with a layer of luxu-



## Technology

# Holograms and mermaids: Top trends at Nuremberg toy fair

## Coaxing kids away from their screens



NUREMBERG: Aramis Gehberger, soap bubble artist demonstrates his skills at a booth during the press preview of the international toys fair. —AFP photos

NUREMBERG: The Nuremberg toy fair, the world's largest, opened its doors this week to an industry in the throes of reinvention as toymakers vie for the attention of children increasingly glued to smartphones and tablets. With traditional toy companies torn between joining kids in the digital world or coaxing them away from their screens, here's a look at some of the most eye-catching trends from the fair's 69th edition.

### Abuzz about nature

Parents whose pleas to "play outside" routinely go unheeded may be happy to hear that nature is, apparently, in. Be it the humble spade, magnifying glasses or DIY gardening kits, there's no shortage of tools to get kids interested in the outdoors. One firm is even offering the chance to raise your own butterflies. For those who'd rather not get their hands dirty, there's Beekeeper Barbie that comes with a hive, bottles of honey and tiny bees.

### There's an app for that

From football-playing robots assuring us that coding is "child's play" to Super Mario mini-drones and augmented reality car races, tech toys are everywhere. Even non-electronic toys are getting in on the act with a plethora of apps offering a more immersive experience with a chosen toy, ranging from playing games to conjuring up holograms for Playmobil's Ghostbusters or creating a movie around your Lego creation.

But the "smarter" toys become, the warier parents grow. A recent KPMG Consumer Barometer survey found that half of German parents fear Internet-connected toys could be hacked or manipulated. The anxiety comes after German regulators last year said the talking "Cayla" doll was a de facto spying device, telling parents to destroy it.



## Parents fear Internet-connected toys

### Winner doesn't take all

The boom in board games is showing no sign of slowing as families try to turn off their screens and spend time together, said Heinrich Huentelmann, a spokesman for German giant Ravensburger. Old classics like Monopoly and Cluedo are perennial favorites, but there's also been a surge in games that have no winners, such as the smash hit Gravitrax where the goal is to build increasingly complex tracks for marble-type balls. "We can't manufacture that one fast enough," said Huentelmann. Also in the spotlight are "cooperation games" where the only way to win is for all players to work together to chase a mechanical cockroach from a castle for example.

### Happy birthday, Lego... and others

Some of the world's best-loved toy brands are celebrating milestone birthdays in 2018, so expect a flood of special edition anniversary toys with more than a hint of nostalgia. Mickey and Minnie Mouse are turning a venerable 90, while Hot Wheels is blowing out 50 candles. To mark the occasion, the "dollar car" behemoth is re-releasing five die-



NUREMBERG: An hostess presents a toy robo chameleon at a booth during the press preview of the international toys fair.

cast cars from its original 1968 line-up. Lego is celebrating a double anniversary, marking 60 years since the iconic bricks first rolled off the assembly line and 40 years since the first Lego figurines or "Minifigs" took the world by storm. "Numbering over four billion, they're the world's largest population group," joked Frederic Lehmann, head of Lego Germany.

### A cheap surprise

Toymakers are taking the "blind bag" craze to the next level this year, betting that children will not just want to collect the ever-more elaborate mini-toys found in surprise packs, but also the matching accessories and play-sets. Known as "collectibles", the cheap dolls or fantasy creatures sold inside opaque packaging are essentially the industry's answer to the "unboxing" trend that caught toymakers off guard a few years ago, when YouTube videos of toys being unwrapped mesmerised kids everywhere.

In 2017, collectibles accounted for eight percent of the global toy market, according to the NPD research firm, making the tiny toys a multi-billion-euro business. "Kids love the surprise element and being able to trade and swap. Key for parents is the low price," said Gary Coppen of the Headstart toy company, which is bringing out baby and pet collectibles whose gender is only revealed in water.

### Move over, unicorns

While the unicorn rage has yet to run its course, and was indeed one of the most recurring themes at the fair, insiders predict the siren call of mermaids will enchant children next. Already the magical creatures were spotted on figurines by toy company Schleich and of course, among the collectibles. "Mermaids will be huge," said Coppen, pointing to a "Merbaby" swimming in a bowl of water. —AFP



NUREMBERG: Gavin Chu from the Chinese robot manufacturer Shenzhen GJI Technology presents the interactive and sensor-equipped Gomer robot.

## YouTube labels state sponsored news as rules tighten

SAN FRANCISCO: YouTube on Friday began labeling news broadcasts that get government money as it vowed to be stricter about content at the globally popular online video-sharing service. A feature being rolled out in the US displays notices below videos uploaded by news broadcasters which receive government or public money, according to a blog post by YouTube News senior product manager Geoff Samek. "Our goal is to equip users with additional information to help them better understand the sources of news content that they choose to watch on YouTube," Samek said. "News is an important vertical for us and we want to be sure to get it right." The move is likely to affect videos from services such as Russia-backed RT, which critics call a propaganda outlet for Moscow, but others as well. The blog post included a screen shot with a disclaimer about the US government-funded Radio Free Asia. The flagging may also apply to state-chartered news organizations such as the BBC and AFP, and US-based public broadcasters. Notices displayed with state-sponsored news broadcasts will include links to Wikipedia online encyclopedia so viewers can find out more about agencies behind the reports, according to Samek.

The feature is nascent and will be refined based on feedback from users. YouTube made a series of changes last year intended to "better surface authoritative news," according to Samek. YouTube priorities for this year include tightening and better enforcing rules at the service, according to chief executive Susan Wojcicki. "The same creativity and unpredictability that makes YouTube so rewarding can also lead to unfortunate events where we need to take a clear, informed, and principled stance," Wojcicki said in an online post. "We realize we have a serious social responsibility to get these emerging policy issues right."

Solutions being worked on include enhanced software smarts and more human review of videos uploaded to YouTube, according to Wojcicki. The number of workers at YouTube and Google focused on content that might violate policies was to increase to more than 10,000. "We're also currently developing policies that would lead to consequences if a creator does something egregious that causes significant harm to our community as a whole," Wojcicki said. YouTube last month announced ramped-up rules regarding when it will run ads with videos as it scrambled to quell concerns by brands about being paired with troublesome content. YouTube late last year pulled 150,000 videos of children after lewd comments about them were posted by viewers. —AFP

## Musk flamethrowers sparking controversy

WASHINGTON: After raising \$1 million by hawking baseball caps, the visionary entrepreneur behind electric carmaker Tesla and private space firm SpaceX says he's set the market alight with his latest idea. Elon Musk announced on his Twitter account Thursday that he has sold out 20,000 flamethrowers, which he joked are useful against a "zombie apocalypse," at \$500 each over about five days. He did not specify what the proceeds will be used for but the previous sale of 50,000 ball caps at \$20 a piece financed his latest startup, The Boring Company.

That firm aims to potentially build tunnels for the Hyperloop One super-high-speed transport project. Some media questioned whether the flamethrowers are a joke but a spokesman for the company assured The Mercury News, a San Jose newspaper, that they are serious, and the pre-ordered products would ship in the spring. The Boring Company could not be reached on Thursday for comment.

The devices, which look something like an assault rifle with a gas canister on top, are the "world's safest," The Boring Company website says. On his Twitter account, Musk joked that the flame gun is "great for roasting nuts" and works against "hordes of the undead or your money back." The

## Plan to protect Indonesian peatlands with aerial mapping wins \$1m

JAKARTA: A plan to use satellite imagery and aerial mapping to protect Indonesia's peatlands—a vast carbon sink and source of much of the country's greenhouse emissions—was awarded a \$1 million prize on Friday. The cutting-edge technology will be used by authorities to clamp down on illegal clearance of the land for plantations, helping to prevent a repeat of annual forest fires that plague the region while also



Elon Musk

flamethrower conforms with California regulations, according to Boring's spokesman, because it emits a tongue of fire less than 10 feet (three meters) long.

Maryland is the only US state to ban the sale of flamethrowers. While the announcement ignited social media, it provoked anger from a California

legislator, after the state in December battled its largest wildfire since at least 1932, at a cost of \$177 million. "We've now seen some of the worst fires in California's history so handing out flame torchers for 500 bucks is a real bad idea and bad public policy," said the legislator, Miguel Santiago. —AFP

reducing the country's carbon footprint.

The government, with the support of international partners, came up with the idea of a competition two years ago to help achieve its commitments under the Paris Agreement on climate change. The winning entry from the International Peat Mapping Team was recognised by the judges for offering "the most accurate, timely and cost-effective methodology for mapping peatlands".

Bambang Setiadi, an Indonesian member of the winning team, told reporters that Indonesia has the largest tropical peatland area in the world. "We need technology to measure the depth of peat domes and water levels," said Setiadi, whose team also included scientists from Indonesia, Germany and the Netherlands. Peatlands are fragile ecosystems formed over thousands of years by the accumulation of dense wet plant material.

When drained or cleared by fire to make way for commercial plantations, such as for palm oil or pulpwood, the carbon is released into the atmosphere. In 2015, Indonesia experienced its most serious fires in some years, worsened by dry weather caused by an El Nino phenomenon, and cloaked large stretches of Southeast Asia in choking smog for weeks. A moratorium on conversions of new peatlands was established in 2011 to improve management and reduce fires. But poor spatial data and overlapping forestry maps are a major hindrance for authorities trying to enforce regulations governing them. Indonesia's geospatial agency, which oversaw the internationally funded competition, said the new mapping technology would be deployed this year. The winning technology combines satellite and aerial LiDAR mapping with on-the-ground measurements to find the depth and extent of wetlands and peat bogs. —AFP

Health

# Anti-dengue vaccine may be connected to three deaths

## Deaths found to have causal link with Dengvaxia

**MANILA:** The Philippines said yesterday the anti-dengue vaccine Dengvaxia may be connected to three deaths in the country, according to a government-ordered inquiry, and that the drug is not ready for mass immunization. Sanofi revealed in November that Dengvaxia - the world's first dengue vaccine - might increase the risk of severe disease in people who had never been exposed to the virus. The news prompted an uproar in the Philippines, where more than 800,000 school-age children had been vaccinated in 2016. "We sympathize with all the families who have suffered the loss of a child. Sanofi Pasteur's mission is to reduce or eliminate suffering for millions around the world through vaccination, including in the Philippines," a spokesman for the French drugmaker said in an emailed statement.



### News prompts an uproar in Philippines

The Philippine Health Ministry halted Dengvaxia immunizations in November. It formed a 10-member panel of experts to determine if the drug was directly connected to the deaths of 14 children after they were given the vaccine. It found it may have been connected to the deaths of three. "Three cases were found to have causal association. They died of dengue even (though) they were given

Dengvaxia. Two of them may have died because of vaccine failure," Health Undersecretary Enrique Domingo told a news conference.

"These findings strengthen the decision of the Department of Health to stop the vaccine. It has failed in some children. Dengvaxia is not ready for mass vaccinations and we would need three to five more years to watch and monitor if there would be other adverse reactions from the vaccine." Mosquito-borne dengue is the world's fastest-growing infectious disease, afflicting up to 100 million people worldwide, causing half a million life-threatening infections and killing about 20,000 people, mostly children, each year. Domingo said the panel's findings would be shared with the justice department, which is considering cases against those responsible for the mass immunization program.

Paediatrician and panel member Juliet Sio-Aguilar, from the University of the Philippines-Philippine General Hospital (UP-PGH), said the team was recommending further studies as it was difficult to directly connect the three deaths to Dengvaxia. No vaccine has a 100 percent success rate, she said. The dengue death rate in the



**MANILA:** Juliet Sio-Aguilar (right), pediatrician and head of the Philippine General Hospital (PGH) expert panel, speaks during a press conference regarding the Dengvaxia vaccine at the DOH headquarters in Manila. — AFP

Philippines was 60 times higher than global rate, Sio-Aguilar said. Sanofi said yesterday the UP-PGH's findings confirmed there is currently no evidence directly linking the Dengvaxia vaccine to any of the 14 deaths.

"In Dengvaxia clinical trials conducted over more than a decade and the over one million doses of the vaccine administered, no deaths related to the vaccine have been reported to us," the company said in a statement.

The Philippines spent 3.5 billion pesos (\$68 million) on the Dengvaxia program to reduce the 200,000 dengue cases reported every year. Sanofi said clinical evidence confirms dengue vaccination in the Philippines will provide a net reduction in dengue disease, including severe dengue. The Philippines has already fined Sanofi a symbolic \$2,000, citing violations in product registration and marketing. — Reuters

## After 24 surgeries, Bangladesh 'tree man' relapses

**DHAKA:** A year ago Abul Bajandar, a Bangladeshi rickshaw-puller dubbed "tree-man" for the bark-like growths that once covered his body, appeared to have made a full recovery from the rare condition that has afflicted him for a decade. But twelve months after doctors declared him all but cured following 24 surgeries, Bajandar's hands are once again covered in the growths that characterise his rare

condition. Surgeon Samanta Lal Sen, who last year hailed his cure as a milestone in medical history, now admits Bajandar's case may be more complicated than first thought. His patient, who has been unable to work for years and whose young family lives in the hospital, says he fears he will never be cured. "I am scared to have any more surgeries. I don't think my hands and feet will be okay again," the 27-year-old told AFP at the Dhaka hospital where he first came for treatment in January 2016. Bajandar suffers from epidermodysplasia verruciformis, an extremely rare genetic condition known as "tree-man disease".

Intrigued by his condition, doctors at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital treated him for free, surgically removing more than five kilos (11 pounds) of growths from his hands and feet. He has been there ever since with his

wife and family, who live together in a small room in the hospital. "We thought we had achieved (a cure). But now it seems to be a time-consuming case," surgeon Sen told AFP. "We will keep on investigating to reach the ultimate success, though it's tough to say how long it will take." This week Bajandar underwent his 25th surgery to remove some of the growths from his hands.

### Fewer than half a dozen cases

For his wife Halima Khatun, life is on hold as she tends to her husband and looks after their four-year-old daughter. "We're grateful for the free treatment, we couldn't have afforded to pay for it," said Khatun, who passes her time in the ward making jewelry for a little cash. Fewer than half a dozen people worldwide have epidermodysplasia verruciformis, according to Sen. Last year the Dhaka Medical College Hospital treated a young Bangladeshi girl suffering from the condition.

Doctors declared surgery to remove the growths a success, but her father later said they had grown back in even greater numbers. He withdrew her from treatment, saying he did not want to watch her grow up in a hospital ward. "Nobody deserves to be in a hospital forever," said a nurse working in the plastic surgery unit. "Unfortunately, he (Bajandar) may have to stay here for a while." Meanwhile Bajandar worries about money, and how he will pay for his daughter's education. "She's growing up so fast," he said. "I always wanted her to become a doctor. But if my condition worsens, how can I even send her to pre-school, let alone a medical college?" — AFP

CLINIC  
PAGE

248 33 199

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What's On

# Symphony Style Hotel Kuwait chefs strike gold at Horeca 2018



Symphony Style Hotel Kuwait played a prominent role and demonstrated its culinary expertise in the recent Horeca 2018, the largest B2B hospitality exhibition in the country, held at the Kuwait International Fair. A team of 10 culinary experts from the award-winning Symphony Style Hotel Kuwait joined hundreds of fellow hospitality professionals in showcasing their talents in a range of live competitions during the seventh edition of the wide-ranging event covering the hospitality, catering and food industry sectors.

Hundreds of the leading chefs competed in live demonstrations and Symphony Style Hotel's food and drinks experts came out on top winning a number of awards: Chef Chinthaka Sandaruwan Gamwara claimed the first gold medal in the Chocolate Carving category. There was more gold for Chef Chinthaka in the Fruit and Vegetable Carving contest, and he claimed silver for the hotel in the Ice Carving. Chef

Gopala Reddy Peram demonstrated his creativity and inventiveness by taking bronze in the Mystery Basket competition, a contest in which the chefs were presented with a closed basket of ingredients from which they had to create a superb dish using at least five of the basket's ingredients.

The strong participation in Horeca 2018, emphasizes Symphony Style Hotel's reputation as a hospitality leader in the region, and highlights its commitment to supporting events that promote local culture and Kuwait as a business and leisure destination. The hotel's senior management expressed their extreme appreciation to the skilled chefs who won this tough competition and gained those remarkable medals; and for their continuous efforts in innovating the most distinguished menus and remarkable variety of flavorsome dishes which make Symphony Style Hotel Kuwait a renowned food destination.



## Ibtikar Al-Kuwait conclude educational training program

The conclusion ceremony of the training program for the Kuwait Innovation Competition took place last Thursday at Kuwait Teachers Society. Teachers, lecturers and students were honored with certificates of thanks and appreciation.



## ICSK Khaitan celebrates Republic Day, Harvest festival

Indian Community School Kuwait-Khaitan proudly commemorated Republic day and celebrated its Harvest festival in an exclusive way with the bustling participation of parents and students on January 25, 2018, in the school premises. The whole campus reverberated with patriotic fervor and enthusiasm and was bedecked in the colors of the Indian flag. The morning assembly was elegantly presented by parents and many of them became nostalgic in memories of their school days.

Principal Gangadhar Shirsath expressed pride in the rich cultural past of the country. He urged every student to work with honesty and dedication for the nation. A medley of patriotic songs sung by the mellifluous school choir literarily caused goosebumps for everyone in pride. Immediately after the Assembly, scheduled Parent-Teacher meeting started.

ICSK Khaitan chose this momentous day to celebrate its harvesting festival too. The program started after Parent-Teacher meeting. Students made rangoli pattern as a part of festivities and the harvest procession started in which students were in different costumes holding various props. Farming, done by students



with the assistance and guidance of their teachers produced good yield and was harvested in the presence of the Principal, Vice Principal and in-charge teachers. The highlight of the day was the novel idea of parents acting as teachers.

First time in the history of Kuwait, selected parents were given classes of their choice to teach. All of them came to school with sufficient preparation and most of them were carrying wonderful teaching aids. Evaluation of these teaching aids was also a part of the program. It was a memorable experience for students since they could see their parents in teachers' roles. Even the teacher parents were so thrilled and saluted the teachers for their hard work and commitment. Memories of this phenomenal day definitely would last for a life time for everyone who was present.

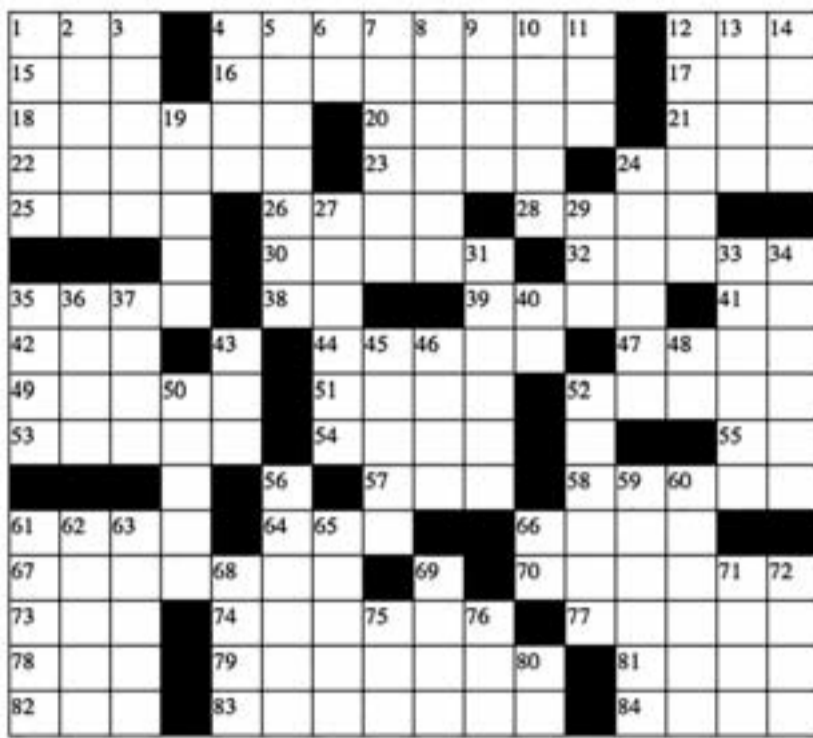






Stars

CROSSWORD 1826



- ACROSS**
- A benevolent aspect of Devi.
  - Characterized by friendship and good will.
  - A unit of absorbed ionizing radiation equal to 100 ergs per gram of irradiated material.
  - A port in southern Lebanon on the Mediterranean Sea.
  - A genus of Scolopacidae.
  - An agency of the United Nations affiliated with the World Bank.
  - A nitrogen-containing base found in RNA (but not in DNA) and derived from pyrimidine.
  - Any of several short-billed Old World rails.
  - Having undesirable or negative qualities.
  - A large fleet.
  - An officer who acts as military assistant to a more senior officer.
  - The sediment from fermentation of an alcoholic beverage.
  - A quantity of no importance.
  - Tropical woody herb with showy yellow flowers and flat pods.
  - The excrement of sea birds.
  - A spoon-shaped vessel with a long handle.
  - (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
  - A radioactive element of the actinide series.
  - (Babylonian) God of wisdom and agriculture and patron of scribes and schools.
  - Half the width of an em.
  - The syllable naming the sixth (subdominant) note of a major or minor scale in solfization.
  - A member of a Turkic people of Uzbekistan and neighboring areas.
  - Kamarupan languages spoken in northeastern India and western Burma.
  - (Babylonian) A demigod or first man.
  - An island in Indonesia east of Java.
  - American dwarf fan palms.
  - In bed.
  - A ductile gray metallic element of the lanthanide series.
  - A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
  - A woman who tells fortunes.
  - Wearing or provided with clothing.
  - The residue that remains when something is burned.
  - A cry of praise or adoration (to God).
  - Unnatural lack of color in the skin (as from bruising or sickness or emotional distress).
  - An associate degree in applied science.
  - Pertaining to one of the small sacs (as in a compound gland).
  - In some classifications considered a genus of the subfamily Lutrinae.
  - A federal agency established to regulate the release of new foods and health-related products.
  - A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
  - (statistics) Approximating the statistical norm or average or expected value.
  - Electronic warfare undertaken under direct control of an operational commander to locate sources of radiated electromagnetic energy for the purpose of immediate threat recognition.
  - A state in the southeastern United States on the Gulf of Mexico.
  - Tropical starchy tuberous root.
- DOWN**
- Occurring or encountered or experienced or observed frequently or in accordance with regular practice or procedure.
  - Black-and-white diving bird of northern seas.
  - An edible seaweed with a mild flavor.
  - Harsh or corrosive in tone.
  - Tropical American aroid having edible tubers that are cooked and eaten like yams or potatoes.
  - Being nine more than forty.
  - Stout-bodied insect with large membranous wings.
  - Roman Emperor who was the adoptive son of Trajan.
  - A small nail.
  - Found pleasant or attractive.
  - The compass point midway between east and southeast.
  - Humorously vulgar.
  - (Old Testament) In Judeo-Christian mythology.
  - Panel forming the lower part of an interior wall when it is finished differently from the rest.
  - Covered or protected with or as if with a case.
  - Crested screamers.
  - Hardy evergreen dioecious shrubs and small trees from Japan.
  - A white linen liturgical vestment with sleeves.
  - A member of the Iroquoian people formerly living east of Lake Ontario.
  - (law) A gift of personal property by will.
  - Hard white substance covering the crown of a tooth.
  - An informal term for a father.
  - According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
  - A soft white precious univalent metallic element having the highest electrical and thermal conductivity of any metal.
  - United States liquid unit equal to 4 quarts or 3.785 liters.
  - A region of Malaysia in northeastern Borneo.
  - (pathology) An elevation of the skin filled with serous fluid.
  - A public promotion of some product or service.
  - A genus of Ploceidae.
  - (Roman Catholic Church) A book containing all the prayers and responses needed to celebrate Mass throughout the year.
  - A notation cancelling a previous sharp or flat.
  - Make lighter or brighter.
  - Having or provided with a belt.
  - A large number or amount.
  - State in northeastern India.
  - The main city of ancient Phoenicia.
  - The sciences concerned with gathering and manipulating and storing and retrieving and classifying recorded information.
  - Plant with an elongated head of broad stalked leaves resembling celery.
  - A tax on employees and employers that is used to fund the Social Security system.
  - Toward the mouth or oral region.
  - Type genus of the Ranidae.
  - Horny projecting mouth of a bird.
  - A rotating disk shaped to convert circular into linear motion.
  - A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.

Friday's Solution

B	B	S	L	A	P	I	D	A	T	E	L	A	C	
A	L	A	O	P	E	R	E	T	T	A	O	N	E	
L	A	N	B	O	D	I	C	E	R	A	N	I	D	
D	E	A	F	D	I	T	A	D	U	G	L	I		
A	L	A	C	I	D	L	A	D	Y					
R	A	E	L	A	C	E	D	N	A	I	A	S		
O	N	S	E	T	B	N	A	A	D	M	E			
T	I	C	T	A	C	A	T	O	M	P	E			
H	M	O	K	E	P	I	I	A	P	E	T	U	S	
K	A	N	G	A	R	O	O	S	C	A	P	U	L	A
O	L	E	A	I	S	L	A	M	S	H	R	E	W	
V	S	T	I	R	S	T	A	B						
A	G	N	I	E	C	S	E	M	I	H	A	R	D	
D	I	R	A	C	A	D	I	T	C	N	A	B		
A	L	E	S	A	V	A	N	N	A	H	E	C	M	
D	A	M	T	R	A	B	E	A	T	E	D	E	S	

STAR TRACK

- Aries (March 21-April 19)**  
Aries, every new leaf you look under brings newer and more important knowledge. You have findings that could help now and into the future: your plans are about to manifest. The new cycle you have entered pushes for growth and transforming thoughts into actions. Others are attracted to your humor and laughter. Members of the opposite sex could take notice of you throughout the day and evening. Your little quirks could be considered endearing to some; you enjoy playing pranks on someone totally unsuspecting. You may gain enlightenment on a sticky situation you find yourself in. A chance to work out of town for your company could change your professional direction. Decide where you truly want to be in the world and make it happen. Aries.
- Taurus (April 20-May 20)**  
Taurus, friendships with those who have done well and live in a certain way makes you happy. You're rattled when you aren't surrounded by lovely things and peaceful vibrations; work on strengthening these vibrations. Friends are important relationships, without them you aren't as productive; you don't want to be alone. Your personality and humor play important roles in your dealings with clients or customers. News regarding your home is encouraging; home is where you're the happiest. An opportunity comes that could allow you to do your work from home and have travel be less necessary. Your quirks are appreciated by someone you are working with who likes different approaches; your taste and design talents are admired and sought. Taurus.
- Gemini (May 21-June 20)**  
Gemini, your true appreciation lies in the every day things in life: being able to go to the grocery store, having a roof over your head and a healthy life. You're not able to communicate your thoughts to others with clarity. You could be uncomfortable in your own skin, as though you can't figure out where you belong. You enjoy nice things and living the quality of life you want. The energy of your home is warm and healing; someone comes along that needs your support. Stretch, move, let your body unwind and free the tension you're dealing with. Your heart is open to love of the romantic kind. The new cycle you have entered indicates that you can drop your guard just enough to explore the possibilities. You may partner with someone to make money. Gemini.
- Cancer (June 21-July 22)**  
Cancer, there's hesitation when a nice opportunity for a new job appears: turning this down may not make sense to anyone but you. This could mark the beginning of a new career track you'd never considered before. You aren't able to understand why you desire to go in opposite directions of where you'd planned to go. Emotions run hot as an issue comes to light regarding a younger person; you meet someone you suspect of being sneaky and underhanded. Whether the clash is with an adult or child, you don't hesitate to speak out. You investigate an issue or event that's pricked your curiosity for some time. May be a good time to begin a cooking or yoga class. Don't let your inquisitive mind create embarrassment for you or someone you love. Cancer.
- Leo (July 23-August 22)**  
Leo, your relationships, whether professional or personal, are your most important concerns at this time. If you lose sight of the nice things in life you become restless and dissatisfied; allowing a realistic attitude has helped you in the past and will do so today. Connections and associations take center stage as you form a new network of friends or work mates. If you feel downhearted and thwarted in some of your efforts pick up on this vibration and change it. You could rescue animals or volunteer at a homeless shelter, but regardless you'd do something you feel makes a difference. Your timing is right on and many people benefit from this right now; you can't seem to do enough in your mind but your efforts are appreciated so much more than you know. Leo.
- Virgo (August 23-September 22)**  
Virgo, low energy is indicated throughout the day but you have the opportunity to take care of this and recharge. Using this time to examine what's at the root of being downhearted helps you focus on changing this vibration. A difference in habits is called for; perhaps this is a good time to start that yoga or cardio workout you have considered. You enjoy good fiction that creates a new world for you to explore; every creative mind needs relief from overload. Your close knit relationships represent security and support; someone who loves you would like another chance. When you speak people listen and easily understand your points and opinions. The day ends a nicely with a rich sense of accomplishment and positive outcomes you cherish and value. Virgo.

Wordsearch Puzzle

More 80's Songs

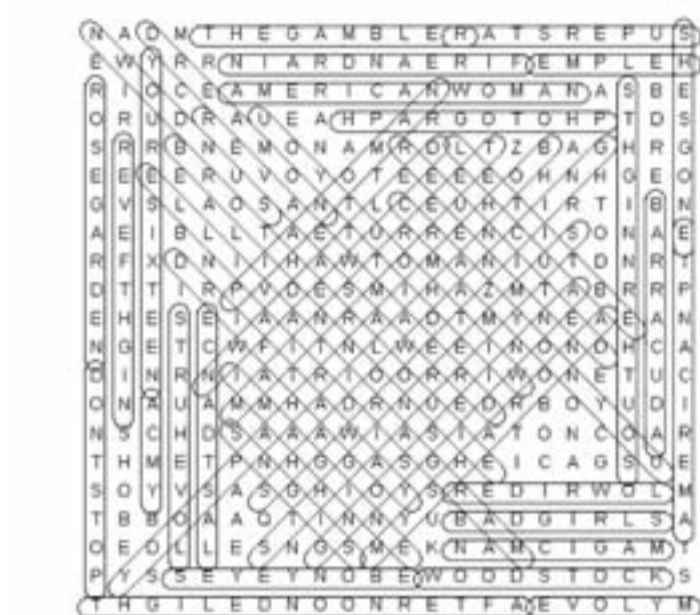
Find and circle all of the 1980's song titles that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the title of an Elton John song.



- |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| AFRICA<br>ALWAYS<br>AMERICA<br>BEAT IT<br>BROKEN WINGS<br>CALL ME<br>CONTROL<br>CRUISE<br>DOWN UNDER<br>ENDLESS LOVE<br>FAITHFULLY<br>FAME<br>FAST CAR<br>FREEDOM | GLORIA<br>GUILTY<br>HEARTBREAKER<br>HEAVEN<br>HOLD ME<br>HUMAN<br>HUNGRY HEART<br>INFATUATION<br>KOKOMO<br>LA BAMBOLA<br>LET'S DANCE<br>MAGIC<br>MANIC MONDAY<br>MONEY MONY | NEVER<br>NOTORIOUS<br>OUR HOUSE<br>PASSION<br>PATIENCE<br>PINK HOUSES<br>PURPLE RAIN<br>ROCK ON<br>SAILING<br>SARA<br>SATISFIED<br>SHOUT<br>SONGBIRD<br>SUUKYAKI | SUSSUDOIO<br>THE FLAME<br>THE LOOK<br>THE ROSE<br>TIME<br>TOO SHY<br>TRUE<br>TRULY<br>TWO HEARTS<br>VACATION<br>VOICES CARRY<br>WE BELONG<br>WHIP IT<br>YOUR LOVE |
|---|---|--|---|

Friday's Solution

More 70's Songs



- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| AFTERNOON DELIGHT<br>AMERICAN PIE<br>AMERICAN WOMAN<br>ANNIE'S SONG<br>BAD GIRLS<br>BARRACUDA<br>BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY<br>BROTHER LOUIE<br>CRAZY ON YOU<br>DELTA DAWN<br>DON'T STOP | DREAM ON<br>DREAM WEAVER<br>DRIFT AWAY<br>EBONY EYES<br>FIRE AND RAIN<br>HELP ME<br>IMAGINE<br>LAST DANCE<br>LET IT BE<br>LOVE HURTS<br>LOW RIDER | MAGIC MAN<br>MAIN STREET<br>MARGARET<br>MY LOVE<br>MY SHARON<br>NIGHT FEVER<br>PHOTOGRAPH<br>PIANO MAN<br>REUNITED<br>ROSE GARDEN<br>SHADOW DANCING | SHE'S GONE<br>SIGNS<br>SOUTHERN NIGHTS<br>SUMMER NIGHTS<br>SUNDOWN<br>SUPERSTAR<br>THE GAMBLER<br>WITHOUT YOU<br>WOODSTOCK<br>Y.M.C.A.<br>YOU'RE SIXTEEN |
|---|---|---|--|

Hidden words: AMERICA BREAD NAZARETH HEART BLONDE BOSTON CHICAGO ABBA QUEEN KISS

Daily Sudoku

3		5		1		9	
		9	1		4	2	
		2		9		3	6
		7				6	
		6			2		
		8		9			
1	2		5		9		
6		5		1	8		
9		8		2		1	

Friday's Solution

4	3	5	8	9	1	2	6	7
7	1	6	3	2	4	8	9	5
8	2	9	5	6	7	1	3	4
9	7	4	2	8	5	6	1	3
5	6	1	7	3	9	4	2	8
3	8	2	4	1	6	5	7	9
1	5	3	9	4	2	7	8	6
6	4	8	1	7	3	9	5	2
2	9	7	6	5	8	3	4	1

# Classifieds

Sunday, February 4, 2018

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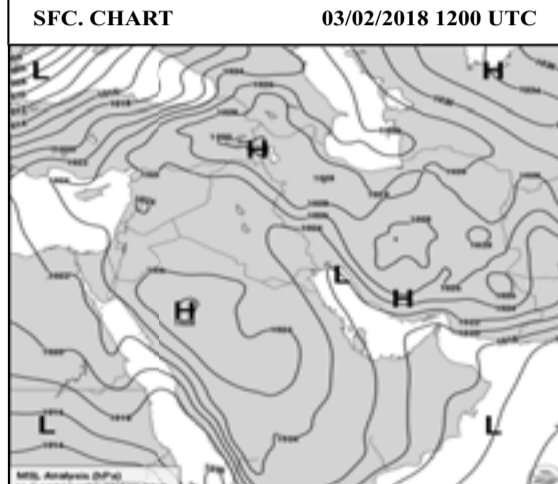
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## Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

**BY NIGHT:** Cold with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 12 - 35 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

**BY DAY:** Fair with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 35 km/h.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings	
STATION	MAX. REC.	MIN. EXP.	SFC. CHART 03/02/2018 1200 UTC	
KUWAIT CITY	22 °C	12 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	22 °C	07 °C		
ABDAILY	22 °C	06 °C		
BUBYAN	-- °C	-- °C		
JAHRA	22 °C	08 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	21 °C	12 °C		
SALMIYAH	20 °C	12 °C		
AHMADI	21 °C	12 °C		
NUWAISIB	23 °C	08 °C		
WAFRA	22 °C	08 °C		
SALMY	20 °C	03 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Sunday	02/04	Fair	23 °C	07 °C	NW	15 - 35 km/h
Monday	02/05	Partly cloudy	23 °C	09 °C	NW-VRB	06 - 26 km/h
Tuesday	02/06	Partly cloudy	24 °C	09 °C	VRB-SE	06 - 26 km/h
Wednesday	02/07	Warm	25 °C	10 °C	VRB-NW	06 - 26 km/h

TOMORROW PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	05:15
Sunrise	06:36
Zuhr	12:02
Asr	15:07
Sunset	17:28
Isha	18:47

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	21 °C
MIN. Temp.	04 °C
MAX. RH	58 %
MIN. RH	19 %
MAX. Wind	NW 57 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

**URGENTLY REQUIRED**

- Pastry Chef
- Barista
- Café Worker
- Accountant

Preferred Filipinos and Indians

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## Airline

American Airlines	22087425	Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
	22087426	Egypt Air	22421578
Kuwait Airways	171	Swiss Air	22421516
Jazeera Airways	177	Saudia	22426306
Jet Airways	22924455	Middle East Airlines	22423073
FlyDubai	22414400	Lufthansa	22422493
Qatar Airways	22423888	PIA	22421044
KLM	22425747	Bangladesh Airlines	22452977/8
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6	Indian Airlines	22456700
British Airways	22425635	Oman Air	22958787
Air France	22430224	Turkish Airlines	22453820/1
Emirates	22921555	Aeroflot	22404838/9
Air India	22438184		

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page ([www.kuwait-airport.com.kw](http://www.kuwait-airport.com.kw))

**DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION**

## Flight Schedule

Arrival Flights on Sunday 4/2/2018				Departure Flights on Sunday 4/2/2018			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
JAI	572	Mumbai	00:05	JZR	176	Dubai	13:40
JZR	125	Bahrain	00:10	FDB	076	Dubai	13:45
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
KAC	504	Beirut	00:30	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
KAC	102	London	00:50	AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:15
JZR	539	Cairo	00:50	JZR	124	Bahrain	14:30
PGT	858	Istanbul	00:55	KAC	673	Dubai	15:05
THY	772	Istanbul	00:55	FDB	060	Dubai	15:10
RJA	642	Amman	01:05	KAC	785	Jeddah	15:25
UAE	853	Dubai	01:45	QTR	1079	Doha	15:30
DLH	625	Bahrain	01:45	SV	A501	Jeddah	15:45
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:45
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:50
JZR	555	Alexandria	02:15	KAC	743	Dammam	16:05
QTR	1086	Doha	02:20	PAL	669	Manila	16:10
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	KAC	619	Doha	16:10
KLM	446	Bahrain	02:30	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
WAN	548	KTM	02:40	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	OMA	646	Muscat	16:35
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:55	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:40
KAC	414	Bangkok	03:05	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:40
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:05	FEG	932	Alexandria	16:45
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10	KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	QTR	1073	Doha	17:15
QTR	1076	Doha	03:50	KAC	503	Beirut	17:15
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	JZR	240	Amman	17:15
QTR	1090	Doha	04:05	JZR	266	Beirut	17:15
KAC	382	Delhi	04:15	KAC	283	Dhaka	17:30
KAC	418	Manila	04:25	FDB	052	Dubai	17:40
KAC	1544	Cairo	04:25	UAE	858	Dubai	17:45
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:35	KAC	357	Kochi	17:45
KAC	284	Dhaka	04:50	KAC	361	Colombo	17:45
FDB	069	Dubai	04:55	RJA	641	Amman	17:55
THY	770	Istanbul	05:05	WAN	415	Beirut	18:00
JZR	609	Hyderabad	05:10	KAC	331	Trivandrum	18:00
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:20	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
JZR	143	Doha	05:25	SV	511	Riyadh	18:15
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	05:30	JZR	538	Cairo	18:15
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	358	Kochi	05:40	JZR	184	Dubai	18:30
KAC	344	Chennai	05:50	JZR	608	Hyderabad	18:40
KAC	678	Dubai	06:00	KAC	381	Delhi	18:50
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:10	FDB	064	Dubai	19:10
KAC	362	Colombo	06:25	WAN	115	Bahrain	19:20
QTR	8511	Doha	06:25	UAE	876	Dubai	19:30
WAN	338	Alexandria	06:40	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
BAW	157	London	07:10	QTR	1081	Doha	20:00
FEG	933	Sohag	07:30	RBG	556	Alexandria	20:05
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:35	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:05
FDB	053	Dubai	07:35	GFA	218	Bahrain	20:15
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00	JZR	554	Alexandria	20:30
JZR	557	Alexandria	08:15	FDB	058	Dubai	20:35
JZR	1541	Cairo	08:20	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	20:40
UAE	855	Dubai	08:35	KAC	301	Mumbai	20:50
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	KAC	353	Bengaluru	20:55
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	OMA	648	Muscat	21:20
IRC	528	Ahwaz	09:05	KAC	1543	Cairo	21:20
QTR	1070	Doha	09:10	DLH	624	Bahrain	21:30
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:40	QTR	1089	Doha	22:00
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	KAC	411	Bangkok	22:05
WAN	342	Sohag	10:15	KAC	205	Islamabad	22:10
MSC	415	Sohag	10:15	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:10
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	203	Lahore	22:10
WAN	114	Bahrain	11:00	ME	403	Beirut	22:20
QTR	1074	Doha	11:20	ALK	230	Colombo	22:25
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:30
WAN	134	Doha	11:55	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:35
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	KAC	383	Delhi	22:40
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:10	UAE	860	Dubai	23:00
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50				
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00				

## Lifestyle | Movies

HOLLYWOOD HONORS ITALIAN  
STAR **GINA LOLLOBRIGIDA**

Italian screen legend Gina Lollobrigida was honored with a star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame Thursday to celebrate a half century as one of the world's most iconic leading ladies. The Golden Globe-winning star, 90, has appeared in about 60 movies but her big breakthrough came when she starred alongside Humphrey Bogart in John Huston's 1953 romp "Beat the Devil." Italians dubbed their answer to Elizabeth Taylor "the most beautiful woman in the world" after she starred in her signature movie "La Donna piu bella del mondo" (1955).

"What can I say? I'm very moved. I didn't expect, after so many years, to be back here and to have all this love," Lollobrigida said, speaking in English. "I was very spoiled in America, even when I came the first time, and I did the first movie with MGM, with Frank Sinatra. I remember they treated me like a queen. I will never forget that." She thanked fans for making her famous across the world, declaring that the movies, unlike other artforms, were "magic" and that working made her "feel alive."

Tiziana Rocca, the general director of the ongoing Filming on Italy festival in Los Angeles, described

“ Beautiful but Dangerous ”

Lollobrigida as a "legend" with an "outstanding career." The actress, once a famous Italian pin-up, is perhaps best known for her performance in the 1956 US movie "Trapeze," in which she starred alongside Burt Lancaster and Tony Curtis. Born Luigina Lollobrigida in Subiaco, Italy on July 4, 1927, she was a model and beauty pageant contestant in her youth. She finished third in the 1947 Miss Italia pageant.

Lollobrigida won the first of her three David di

Donatello Awards from L'accademia del Cinema Italiano as best actress in 1956 for "Beautiful but Dangerous." Affectionately known as "La Lollo" by fans, she also won the award in 1963 for "Imperial Venus" and 1969 for "Buona Sera, Mrs Campbell." As well as Sinatra, Lollobrigida worked with luminaries including Errol Flynn ("Crossed Swords"), Bob Hope ("The Private Navy of Sgt O'Farrell") and Sean Connery ("Woman of Straw").

She made two films with Rock Hudson—"Come September" and "Strange Bedfellows"—while other memorable movies include "Trapeze," "The Hunchback of Notre Dame," "Solomon and Sheba" and "Hotel Paradiso." In the 1970s Lollobrigida turned her interest to photojournalism and today she keeps busy with photography and sculpture.—AFP

Italian actress Gina Lollobrigida attends the ceremony honoring her with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, in Hollywood, California. — AFP



## 'Winchester' star Jason Clarke on gun control and ghosts

On a once-isolated stretch of land in the Californian city of San Jose stands a bizarre-looking Victorian mansion that, according to legend, is the most haunted house in the world. Commissioned by Sarah Winchester, the heiress to the Winchester Repeating Arms Company, the 160-room manor was constructed piecemeal, with no overall masterplan, by crews toiling 24 hours a day for decades.

To many it stands as a bizarre monument to a woman's madness but Winchester herself saw it as a kind of astral holding cell for the hundreds of spirits seeking revenge after being killed by her company's rifles. It seems incredible that such perfect horror fodder has never been made into a movie but directors Michael and Peter Spierig, the Australian twins behind "Daybreakers" and "Jigsaw," are about to rectify that.

"Winchester" stars Jason Clarke as Eric Price, a fictional psychiatrist summoned in 1906 by the real-life Sarah Winchester, played by Helen Mirren, when her company insists she be evaluated for her mental fitness. On the surface, "Winchester" works as a taut haunted house story. But to Clarke, it also serves as an allegory for the gun control debate, which has been raging in the United States for decades but gained impetus after the 1999 Columbine High School massacre.

"Gun control, profiteering from arms, is an ongoing debate: responsibility for where you're at because of what came before you or what you did," Clarke, 48, told AFP in an interview ahead of the movie's release on Friday. "You've got a woman who is able to live in this world (only) because of what she did. And if you put it in the time—the West was won, I guess, we'd reached the coast—there was just blood and slaughter and destruction the whole way across."

## Stairways to nowhere

In the movie, Clarke's character is an opium addict with his own demons, who thinks the task of declaring Winchester insane will be straightforward—until things go



In this file photo actor Jason Clarke poses for photographers during the Toronto International Film Festival in Toronto, Ontario. — AFP

bump in the night and he realizes it is he who is being manipulated. Horror is often dismissed by critics as the least worthy of cinematic genres but, says Clarke, acting in tense, frightening movies requires a technical discipline not always apparent in other forms of acting.

"I enjoyed learning and being taught by both the brothers how to be in a scary movie," he said, listing aspects of body language and timing which are part of the visual language of horror cinema. "They are where a lot of directors cut their teeth and learn their craft... I prefer films like this that have intelligence behind them. They're not just slasher films or gratuitous, everyone's getting massacred."

The most bizarre features of the so-called Winchester Mystery House—now a popular tourist attraction—include a maze of confusing halls, stairways to nowhere, 2,000 doors, several of which open into blank walls, 47 fireplaces, trap doors, turrets, towers and a seance room. Much of the house was destroyed by the historic 1906 San Francisco earthquake.

Clarke recalled two months of physically demanding filming in a replica of the house in Melbourne, getting

beaten up by "ghosts" and thrown around by the simulated quake before decamping for a final few days to the real-life property in San Jose. "To then walk onto it a couple of days later on the other side of the world was very strange. There's nobody in the house. I was setting up when I got there and I went for a wander and got lost," Clarke said.

## Lazy and bloated

"It's a very disorienting strange place—stairways to nowhere and just the way that it's built. Even though every room is completely different it's hard to get your bearing." Clarke—who, for the record, says he doesn't believe in ghosts—has built up a reputation for critically acclaimed independent films and blockbusters that make you think. It's not that he's averse to the odd brainless action movie—see Roland Emmerich's "White House Down" or the much-maligned "Terminator: Genisys"—but Clarke speaks passionately about the need for actors to take responsibility for their output.

In recent years the Australian actor has been a CIA torturer in Kathryn Bigelow's "Zero Dark Thirty" and starred in sci-fi actioner "Dawn of the Planet of the Apes." Baltasar Kormakur's true-story survival epic "Everest" and Baz Luhrmann's adaptation of F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby." At a Q&A in Los Angeles for one of his most recent projects, Dee Rees's multiple Oscar-nominated racial drama "Mudbound," the actor lamented the "lazy and bloated" ubiquity of blockbuster franchises, calling on actors to commit to projects that teach audiences something about the world.

"Hopefully there's a whole world out there that you can show them and I think in films, if all we make is sausage all people will want is sausage," Clarke tells AFP, asked his view on the proliferation of superhero movies. "Yes, films need to make their money back—it's an expensive business and people need to be paid for what's involved—but just because you can, it doesn't mean you should."—AFP

Aaron Sorkin:  
I have  
writer's block  
most days

Academy Award-winning screenwriter Aaron Sorkin revealed on Thursday he goes to bed most nights having not succeeded in putting a single word to paper. The 56-year-old mastermind behind NBC's "The West Wing" and big screen productions "The Social Network" and "Moneyball" recently turned to directing, working from his own Oscar-nominated screenplay for "Molly's Game." "I have to say this—directing is really hard. But I loved every minute of it," he told a discussion panel of Hollywood writers in Beverly Hills.



In this file photo, director Aaron Sorkin attends the Variety's Creative Impact Awards and 10 Directors to watch at the 29th Annual Palm Springs International Film Festival at Parker Palm Springs in Palm Springs, California. — AFP

"One of the things that I loved, other than the people I was working with, was that you may have a hard day at the office, but at the end of the day you've done a day's work. As a writer, with me, not only is that not always the case, for me it's hardly ever. I'm not kidding. Most nights I go to bed having written nothing and not knowing what I'm going to do tomorrow morning." Sorkin, who is reportedly Hollywood's highest paid screenwriter at \$4 million a movie script, has a standing offer to reboot "The West Wing" but is much in demand for big screen movies and has repeatedly refused.

He advised writers finding themselves on a roll in the evening to stop and go to bed, even if they know exactly how the scene is going to play out, so that they have something to dive into the following morning. "It takes me months and months of doing what to the untrained eye what might look a lot like lying on the couch and watching ESPN. But I'm really searching for an 'intention and obstacle,' he added.

## Finger painting

"I do a lot of research, not really knowing what I'm looking for and hoping I'm just going to trip over something and it will get me someplace else. But for me, without a strong intention and obstacle—someone wants something and someone is standing in their way to get it—it's finger painting." Sorkin was speaking at "Beyond Words 2018," a discussion among nominees for the Writers Guild of America Awards in Beverly Hills on February 11.

The panel included Guillermo del Toro and Vanessa Taylor ("The Shape of Water"), Greta Gerwig ("Lady Bird"), Emily V. Gordon and Kumail Nanjiani ("The Big Sick"), James Mangold and Michael Green ("Logan"), and Jordan Peele ("Get Out"). Peele revealed that he broke down in tears as he was writing an intense scene in which his protagonist Chris (Daniel Kaluuya) is hypnotized into believing he is trapped in a mind state called "the sunken place" as memories of his mother's death come back to him.

"It was a cathartic thing. I wouldn't describe it as fun," said Peele, who is nominated for two statuettes at the March 4 Oscars, for writing and directing. "But the thing that stops so much of my art, if I let it, is when I lose track of why I want to tell the story—what the most fun thing can be." Gerwig, also nominated for writing and directing Oscars for coming-of-age tale "Baby Bird," said she had the "literal opposite thing" from Peele's mantra tacked up on her message board—the motto, "Don't be afraid to be bored."—AFP

Joyalukkas offers  
'Be Mine' diamond  
jewelry collection  
to celebrate  
Valentine's Day

Jewellery brand Joyalukkas continues to capture hearts all over the globe with a million world-class designs and award-winning service. For the month of February, the world's favorite jeweler shines once again with a glittering new collection of love-inspired diamond, pearl and 18K gold jewellery in time for Valentine's Day.

Till February 17, 2018, shoppers can fall in love with a gorgeous selection of necklaces, earrings, bangles and rings with unique heart designs in the limited edition Be Mine Collection.

"The Be Mine Collection is a special line of diamond jewelry," says Joy Alukkas, Joyalukkas Group Chairman & MD. "But this exclusive collection for Valentine's Day 2018 is truly extraordinary. We are sure the shoppers will fall in love with these unique designs and enjoy them as gifts for their loved ones and even themselves," he added.

Along with the launch of the limited edition Be Mine Collection, shoppers can also enjoy special cashback offers and discounts across Joyalukkas over 140 showrooms in 11 countries.

O'Shea Jackson Jr:  
Straight Outta  
dad Ice Cube's  
long shadow

O'Shea Jackson Jr was lavished with acclaim for hip hop biopic "Straight Outta Compton"—but the sweet taste of his first big success was soured by claims of nepotism. Detractors suggested the untested actor had landed the role of his own father Ice Cube in F. Gary Gray's chronicle of the rise and fall of legendary hip-hop group N.W.A. only by virtue of the family connection. Jackson confounded his critics with a stunning debut, and has been proving them wrong ever since, first as a darling of the festivals circuit with indie comedy "Aubrey Goes West," and now as an action star.

"I love that people doubt me because it just pisses me off and makes me get my ass up to go and put the work in," the 26-year-old told AFP in a recent interview to promote his latest project, heist movie "Den of Thieves." "That's the Kobe Bryant in me. I love it, bring it on." Jackson was born in 1991 — the year his dad was getting his big acting break in John Singleton's acclaimed social drama "Boyz n the Hood"—and grew up in LA's distinctly leafy, unhoodlike San Fernando Valley.

Encouraged by Ice Cube, he began rapping in his late teens, and before long father and son were performing together. But his first love was film, and Jackson enrolled on a screenwriting degree at the University of Southern California. He'd shown no serious commitment to acting when Cube suggested Jackson play him in "Straight Outta Compton," bringing in acting coaches to get his son up to speed for a somewhat daunting debut acting role.

Giving the lie to the nepotism charge, Jackson was pitted against hundreds of other actors in an intense, two-year selection process that involved numerous acting classes, auditions, callbacks and chemistry tests. A big priority was placed on sessions recording N.W.A. hits, which Jackson sailed through, and, finally, a screen test for executives at Universal.

## 'Eat some crow'

Ice Cube, who has since described seeing his son playing him on set as a "Back to the Future" moment," was clear when the film came out that he had allowed his son no special treatment. "I knew that people would think I



This file photo shows O'Shea Jackson Jr. attending the premiere of STX Films' 'Den of Thieves' at Regal LA Live Stadium 14 in Los Angeles, California. — AFP

just gave him the job. So I wanted him to be more than ready. I wanted him to be a great actor by the time we started to shoot," Cube told People magazine.

The surprise summer hit of 2015, "Straight Outta Compton" raked in \$200 million with its depiction of the larger-than-life members of the group that revolutionized the music industry, inventing what we all now know as "gangsta rap." Reviewers noted with admiration that Jackson not only looked uncannily like his father—those distinctive, arched eyebrows deserved an Oscar of their own—but he had also managed to get the voice, facial expressions and mannerisms down to a tee.

Despite the acclaim, Jackson turned to low-budget indie for his next role, unconvinced that he had managed to extricate himself from Ice Cube's aura. "I credit that to 'Ingrid Goes West'—being able to go to Sundance and having people that wouldn't normally go see 'Straight Outta Compton' see that I'm not just a one-trick pony," he says.

"You can't typecast me. I'm here to work... I try to be extremely professional any time on set, and to show that maybe you got to eat some crow a little bit when it comes to O'Shea." "Ingrid Goes West" stars Aubrey Plaza as a disturbed, unstable woman who moves to California to meet an Instagram celebrity (Elizabeth Olsen) and ends up in a relationship with her landlord, played by Jackson. It turns as an aspiring screenwriter fantasizing about getting his Batman script filmed, despite having no rights to the franchise, provides much of the emotional and comedic heart of the movie. —AFP

Lifestyle | Fashion



**SIMOF-2018**  
(INTERNATIONAL FLAMENCO FASHION WEEK)

Models present creations by Pedro Bejar during the Simof 2018 (International Flamenco Fashion week) in Sevilla. — AFP photos



Fashion industry sets new guidelines to fight sexual misconduct

Ahead of New York Fashion Week the industry is unveiling new professional guidelines to combat the kind of sexual harassment and assault allegations plaguing some of the world's most renowned fashion photographers. Designers, show producers and photographers are asked to provide spaces "where models can change in privacy" at runway shows, according to recommendations sent by Council of Fashion Designers of America president Diane von Furstenberg.

The text, released Thursday, referred those who have "in any way felt threatened or unsafe" to resources compiled by the Model Alliance, which combats sexual harassment. "The current climate has been marked by brave women and men and their revelations about an unacceptable culture in politics, sports and entertainment, as well as in fashion," von Furstenberg said in a message accompanying the guidelines.

The CFDA's move ahead of Monday's Fashion Week kick-off comes amid the #MeToo movement and the wave of sexual misconduct accusations that have accompanied it, targeting fashion figures including photographers Terry Richardson, Bruce Weber and Mario Testino. All three once widely celebrated photographers are now barred from collaborating with Vogue and Vanity Fair publisher Conde Nast.

“Where models can change in privacy”

Conde Nast recently unveiled a "Code of Conduct" that seeks to "safeguard the dignity and well-being" of workers. It has namely banned the use of unaccompanied models younger than 18, and all shoots involving nudity or sexually suggestive poses must be approved by the subject in advance. Alcohol and illegal drugs also have been barred. The group extended the policy to its entire stable of publications around the world.—AFP



In this file photo Designers Donna Karan, left, and Diane von Furstenberg as they watch the Ralph Lauren Collection 2017 show in his garage in Bedford, New York. — AFP

# Egypt unveils tomb of ancient priestess



Egyptian Minister of Antiquities Khaled Al-Anani, center, visits the tomb of an Old Kingdom priestess on the Giza plateau on the southern outskirts of Cairo. — AFP photos



A general view shows well-preserved and rare wall paintings inside the tomb of an Old Kingdom priestess.

Egyptian archaeologists yesterday unveiled the tomb of an Old Kingdom priestess adorned with well-preserved and rare wall paintings. Antiquities Minister Khaled al-Enany told reporters that the tomb on the Giza plateau near Cairo was built for Hetpet, a priestess to Hathor, the goddess of fertility, who assisted women in childbirth. The tomb was found during excavation work in Giza's western cemetery by a team of

Egyptian archaeologists led by Mostafa Waziri, secretary general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities.

The antiquities ministry said the cemetery houses tombs of top officials from the Old Kingdom's Fifth Dynasty (2465-2323 BC), and that several have already been dug up since 1842. The newly discovered tomb "has the architectural style and the decorative elements of the Fifth Dynasty, with an entrance leading

to an 'L' shaped shrine", the ministry said. "The tomb has very distinguished wall paintings in a very good conservation condition depicting Hetpet standing in different hunting and fishing scenes or... receiving offerings from her children," it said.

The paintings also show scenes of musical and dancing performances as well as two scenes featuring monkeys-domestic animals at the time-one picking and eating fruit and the

other dancing in front of an orchestra. Waziri said the paintings were unusual. "Such scenes are rare... and have only been found previously in the (Old Kingdom) tomb of 'Ka-Iber' where a painting shows a monkey dancing in front of a guitarist not an orchestra," he said.

That tomb is located in Saqqara, a necropolis about 20 kilometers south of Cairo. Enany told reporters the new tomb includes "a purification basin on which are engraved the

name of the tomb's owner and her titles". "A German expedition had found in 1909 a collection of antiquities carrying this lady's name, or a lady who has the same name, and these antiquities were moved to the Berlin museum at the time," he said.

"And 109 years later, we find this tomb that carries Hetpet's name," Waziri said archaeologists will continue to excavate the site and hope to make new discoveries.—AFP

## PRESERVED IN TIME: WWII BUNKER HIDDEN UNDER PARIS TRAIN STATION

It lies hidden deep beneath Paris's bustling Gare de l'Est railway station, its sprawling subterranean rooms and sparse furniture pristinely preserved if a little dusty. Originally built a few years before World War II for luggage storage, the underground bunker was repurposed after war broke out. French railway

historian Clive Lamming said its 1939 overhaul was to provide "a place to retreat in case of an air attack" so staff could keep the trains running east towards Germany.

Leading this AFP reporter through a concrete air lock and heavy door to the shelter, he said: "The concern was gas." "We remembered World War I—a perfectly airtight place was needed," he added. With its three-meter thick concrete ceiling, it was designed for about 70 people to be able to take refuge in the small rooms of the 120-square-metre shelter.

But, in the end, the bunker never really saw any action—Paris was largely spared from air attacks during WWII, and there was little danger of poison gas. After France's defeat in 1940 and Nazi occupation, the bunker was requisitioned by the Germans and traces of their presence remain, including a sign that

reads "Notausgang" (emergency exit). "In my opinion, it hasn't been finished," said Lamming, as a high-speed TGV train loudly rumbled overhead.

### Sleeping Beauty

Today, few of the thousands of travelers passing through the busy central Paris station will likely have any inkling of the time capsule under their feet. Just a discreet trapdoor on the platform opens up to reveal a staircase leading down to the bunker, which is not publicly accessible except on certain occasions. "For 80 years, it has been 'Sleeping Beauty'," Lamming said. "Everything is in mint condition from 1939."

Entering the machine room is like stepping back into the 1930s, with the old contraptions, dials, copper piping and Bakelite handles only in need of a good polish. The room also has two

bicycles. If the power went out, ventilation would have been provided by batteries—if they failed, anyone sheltering in the



This picture shows French historian Clive Lamming posing in a World War II bunker.

bunker was to hop on the bikes and pedal to circulate fresh air. Other rooms also feel frozen in time, like the telephone exchange with its tangle of wires, but most are more spartan, furnished with a few period tables and chairs where staff could have directed the train traffic above.

The shelter was designed to host 72 workstations, and some yellowing documents remain. There is even a bed. Post-war, with its purpose now passed, it gradually took on an almost mythic status among employees of SNCF, France's national train operator. "The aim is to preserve it," especially as the shelters built in other stations at the time have all disappeared, said the SNCF branch in charge of stations. Chances to visit are rare as the bunker was not built for large crowds but it does open up for annual Heritage Days events.—AFP



This picture shows the interior of a World War II bunker located under the Gare de l'Est in the French capital Paris. — AFP photos



## New French film raises ghosts of Nazi medical horrors

A new documentary about the scale of Nazi medical experiments has reopened old wounds in France as one of the country's leading universities investigates whether its stores still contain the remains of some Jewish victims. Dr Michel Cymes, the star of a French television medical advice program, believes that the remains of some of the 86 Jews tortured and mutilated by SS doctor August Hirt may still be in the anatomy collection of the University of Strasbourg. He first raised the theory in his 2015 bestseller, "Hippocrates in Hell", and repeated the claim in a new film of the same name shown on French TV this week.

The documentary, which trended on Twitter after it was broadcast, raised awkward questions about how part of the "Jewish skeleton collection" Hirt assembled at the university during the war may have survived in its stores. The remains of Jews on which Hirt tested mustard gas at the Natzweiler-Struthof concentration camp near the Alsatian city were supposed to have been buried after it was liberated in 1944. But after Cymes' claims, the university is now conducting an

inquiry using outside experts into the contents of 20 boxes found in its collection which bear Hirt's name.

### One of worst Nazi figures

The Swiss-born anatomist was "one of the worst Nazi figures", according to Dr Raphael Toledano, a specialist on Nazi medical experiments. He was convinced that the Jewish race was on the point of extinction and wanted to study the skulls of "Judeo-Bolsheviks". Cymes, both of whose Polish-born grandfathers perished at Auschwitz, said he had little idea how extensive Nazi medical experiments had been until he started his own investigation.

"I knew about doctors like Josef Mengele and Carl Clauberg and I thought they were two or three others like that, but then I discovered how vast the phenomenon was," he said. His eyes were opened when he began looking in detail at the Nuremberg trials of 23 doctors which began in 1946, and in particular a post-war account of the Nazis' activities by the French naval physician, Francois Bayle. His now almost forgotten book was a "mine of information", Cymes said.

"He noted down everything he heard, it's encyclopedic, an enormous piece of work". When he came to write his own book Cymes said he tried to use his medical knowledge to "describe what the victims would have felt so that people would realize the suffering of these (human) guinea pigs".

### Ethics turned upside down

Nearly 70 percent of German doctors were members of the Nazi party, according to Cymes' documentary. From 1933 onwards when Hitler came to power, medical ethics "were turned upside down", Cymes said. "The individual was nothing, the people was everything." The small number of doctors tried for war crimes at Nuremberg either worked in concentration camps or used prisoners for medical experiments of "unspeakable cruelty", said Telford Taylor, the prosecutor at the trials.

Others took part in the "Aktion T4" program to "eliminate people were considered to carry hereditary illnesses", said Sorbonne historian Johann Chapoutot, who reckons that between 70,000 and 200,000 died

in the push between 1941 and 1945. In the film, Cymes used testimony from experts such as Evelyn Shuster, of the University of Pennsylvania, and the surgeon and historian Yves Ternon from the University of Montpellier to show the scale of the cruelty and slaughter. He concentrated on the atrocities committed by Karl Gebhardt, the personal physician of SS chief Heinrich Himmler, and his assistant Dr Herta Oberheuser. But he also noted how the head of the "Aktion T4" program, Viktor Brack, wanted to sterilize all Jews using X-rays, which he thought "be good value for money", writing to Himmler that it could be "carried out on several thousand subjects in a very short time".

While Sigmund Rascher, the SS doctor at the Dachau camp near Munich, tested how the body stood up to the cold and a lack of oxygen, Cymes said that the documentary and the investigation into Hirt will not be the end of his inquiries. "The subject is very personal for me and even though it is psychologically hard maybe I will continue digging for other films," he said.—AFP

Lifestyle | Features



Dachshunds and their owners take part in the city's first 'Sausage Walk' in Hong Kong. — AFP photos

# The long and the short: Hong Kong sausage dogs go walkies

**HONG KONG:** In a city that likes to dress up its dogs, 50 dachshunds gathered in Hong Kong yesterday wearing everything from patterned winter jumpers to dapper tweed. It was Hong Kong's first "sausage walk", emulating popular mass dachshund

been inspired to get owners and dogs together after adopting 10-year-old rescue dachshund Jai Jai six months ago. "They're very cool dogs, very chilled out. He's very relaxed and likes to be with people," Gallagher said, holding Jai Jai, who was sporting a fleece-lined grey tweed hoodie with leather buckles. The group congregated first at one of the city's few dog parks, on its famous harbor front.

As they embarked on their walk, they ran the gamut of delivery drivers, loaded trolleys and Saturday shoppers on the streets of the busy Sheung Wan neighborhood. "Hong Kong is not a dog-friendly city," said Ivan Lo, who had brought dachshunds Kaka and CC for the walk. "But they are good friends for us, for humans, so we still want to own one." Gallagher said he hoped 2018 would see improvements in Hong Kong's canine landscape—the walk ended in a dog-friendly cafe.

For Isabella Redmayne, six, who came with dog Boris, the pleasures of owning a dachshund were simple. "He's six-years-old like I am and he licks me on my face. He likes to go to sleep on his blanket and he's really soft," she said, adding that she hoped he would make new friends yesterday. — AFP



Hong Kong is not a dog-friendly city

get-togethers in Britain. The band of excitable dogs and their owners carved a path through the heart of the city on a chilly morning, taking in footbridges, seafood markets and roadside temples en route. Organiser Mat Gallagher said he had



## CHEATING ENCOURAGED IN NEW MONOPOLY VERSION

Do not pass Go. Do not collect \$200: Just steal it. A new version of the decades-old board game Monopoly encourages players to cheat, but plastic handcuffs will leave them "locked up" if they are caught. The aim of the game remains as it has been since its creation in 1935: to become the richest player through buying properties and collecting rent.

But a recent study "revealed that nearly half of game players attempt to cheat during Monopoly games, so in 2018, Hasbro decided it was time to give fans what they've been craving all along," a statement from Monopoly's manufacturer said. The "Cheaters Edition" will be available this autumn. It adds 15 cheat cards covering the most common types of traditionally unsportsmanlike play such as moving tokens more spaces than allowed by the dice, avoiding rent, or stealing money from the bank.

If they can get away with it before the next players' turn, the "cheaters" will be rewarded with Monopoly money, a hotel, or \$200 from the bank. "But get caught and you'll pay the consequences! Pretend handcuffs will leave offenders "chained" to the board until they are released," Hasbro says. In another change, there is no longer a designated banker. Each player controls the central money pool during his or her turn-making it easier to pull off a heist.

While Hasbro says it "has finally decided to embrace our less-than-honest fans by encouraging them to partake in those iconic (yet sometimes unspoken) Monopoly moments," the new version has its detractors. "Monopoly is a horrible game," and a cheaters' monopoly would be even more so, Edward Castronova, a specialist in media and games at the University of Indiana, told AFP on Friday.

More broadly, the game is "a completely inaccurate simulation of real economies. If Monopoly's model were accurate, there would only be one company in the world, instead of billions and billions." More than 275 million copies of Monopoly, in various versions, have been distributed in 114 countries. — AFP

## JAPAN'S 'INSTA-GRAN' FINDS FAME WITH WACKY SELFIES

Amadcap Japanese great-grandmother armed with a camera and an appetite for mischief has shot to fame for taking side-splitting selfies—many of which appear to put her in harm's way. Closing in on her 90th birthday, Kimiko Nishimoto tweaks the nose of fear: she has amassed more than 41,000 followers in just two months since she started regularly posting her hilarious snaps on Instagram. The goofy photos show the fun-loving pensioner riding a broomstick like Harry Potter or, even more alarmingly, knocked over in an apparent traffic accident.

"I've actually never injured myself taking a photo," Nishimoto tells AFP in an interview at her home in Kumamoto, western Japan. "I'm always focusing hard on taking a fun photo so I really don't think about the danger too much," she explains. Nishimoto, who only took up photogra-

phy aged 72, reveals she quickly became hooked on the hobby after being invited to join a local class. "I love my camera," adds the sassy octogenarian, who has three grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. "I even sleep with it by my bedside, just in case. I always have it close."

A decade later she secured her first solo exhibition—held in her home town—but Nishimoto's recent decision to showcase snaps of her daredevil stunts on social media has now catapulted her to stardom. Such is her celebrity now that many fans were shut out of her exhibition at a Tokyo gallery in December as it struggled to cope with the crowds. "At first I didn't even know that my photos were that popular," the former housewife muses with a twinkle in her eye, adding: "It's not so much that I'm trying to shock people, I just take photos that I find funny. It's just a bit of fun really."

Born in 1928 — the year Emperor Hirohito was enthroned and Walt Disney created Mickey Mouse—Nishimoto is disarmingly young at heart and possesses a wicked sense of humor. She manages her social media accounts herself through her smartphone, while her son helps her to set up some of the shots. Many of Nishimoto's photos show her face contorted in mock anguish. In one instance she is shown having seemingly fallen off a bike as a car speeds past, narrowly avoiding catastrophe. In another, she is whizzing along on her motorized buggy while fighting off a flock of angry birds. In a more risqué image that could

pass for a kidnapper's ransom photo, she is seen wrapped in a garbage bag. "It's not like ideas just suddenly pop into my head but wherever I go I think about what it would be fun to dress up as in that place," she chuckles.

### Frisly fairy

And if you thought modern technology and fancy editing gadgets were for kids, think again. Nishimoto's mastery of montage techniques has her "levitating" in several pictures—sometimes as a frilly fairy, or while offering a prayer to her late husband's shrine. "My husband passed away five years ago but even today I still show him photos I've taken," explains the rambunctious senior. "He was always so supportive of whatever I chose to do." These days Nishimoto lives with a humanoid robot called Pepper, a model sold in Japan to keep the elderly company and bought for her by her son—although she confesses she has little time for the chatty droid these days.

"Oh, I haven't switched it on for quite a while," she sniffs, reaching for the power button. "It's more trouble than it's worth, the silly thing!" After fetching her camera from her cluttered home studio, Nishimoto slips into a fluffy one-piece dog suit to take photos of herself in costume chained to a post in her garden. "To be honest I don't think too deeply about what photography means to me," she muses. "I just want to try and bring joy to people. Taking photos is the secret of my happiness. I'll keep doing it for as long as I'm alive." — AFP



In this picture, Kimiko Nishimoto, dressed in a dog costume, gestures during a self photo shoot outside her house in the western Japanese city of Kumamoto. — AFP photos



In this picture, Kimiko Nishimoto gestures in front of her picture on the opening day of her photo exhibition in Tokyo.

# Lifestyle

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2018



Models present creations by Alejandro Santizo during the Simof 2018 (International Flamenco Fashion week) in Sevilla.— AFP

## Book culture returns to Iraq's post-jihadist Mosul



Iraqis buy and sell books on a pavement in the former embattled city of Mosul.

Literary cafes, poetry readings and pavement bookstalls—Mosul's cultural scene is back in business, months after Iraqi forces ousted the Islamic State group from the city following three years of jihadist rule. At the "Book Forum" cafe, men and women, young and old, sit passionately debating literature, music, politics and history. Drinking tea, coffee and juice, some smoke nargileh water pipes while an oud player takes the stage to accompany a poet about to read from his work.

Opposite, the only wall not covered with bookshelves is instead host to a gallery of portraits—medieval Iraqi poet Al-Mutanabbi is pictured alongside Palestinian Mahmoud Darwish and a series of abstract paintings. A few months ago, opening a mixed-gender literary cafe in

Iraq's second city would have been unthinkable—punishable by flogging or death under IS rule. But with the jihadists gone, Fahd Sabah and his partner have set about realizing their dream.

"While we lived under the yoke of IS, I told myself that it was an absolute must to open this place," Sabah said. "There was a need to inform people, to enlighten minds, to bring new ideas." Like many young graduates in Iraq, the 30-year-old engineer had few prospects of finding employment. So as soon as the jihadists were driven out of Mosul, he set about finding a venue and preparing to open a cafe, putting his savings into the venture. Within a month, it was up and running. It was worth the sacrifice, he said. His project aims to create "a new con-

sciousness to overcome this terrible period and the damage left by the war".

### 'Reforming spirits'

Iraqis are renowned in the Arab world for their literary culture. Mosul, capital of Nineveh province and sitting at the crossroads of ancient trading routes, long boasted a parade of booksellers along its famous Al-Nujaiifi Street. But IS methodically destroyed and burned books and destroyed libraries. After the jihadists were evicted six months ago, a handful of activists set up the "Book Pavement" market outside the city's battle-scarred university.

Ali Najam, 23, comes every Friday to scour the stalls of second-hand booksellers next to the concrete carcass of a building disemboweled by

bombs. Today, he has picked up an English edition of "Love in the Age of Cholera" by Colombian Nobel Laureate Gabriel Garcia Marquez. "People badly need culture and to build their consciousness after the hardships they went through," Najam said. "There's a need to rebuild people's spirits, which is even more important than rebuilding the houses and the city."

Yunis Mohammad, a 33-year-old writer, said that despite the destruction, "Mosul will be rebuilt thanks to the brains of its young people, its intellectuals". Abdelmonim al-Amir, head of Nineveh province's writers' union, said he wants the world, which associates Mosul with "blood, destruction and desolation", to know that the city has another face. "Inhabitants and artists must make the human, cultural and aca-

demical dimensions of Mosul shine," he said. So far, everything is being done on limited means, in a city devastated by war, crippled by unemployment and held back by the slow pace of reconstruction.

"The public authorities in charge of culture must now do their duty," said writer Hamed al-Zubaidi. Hind Ahmed, a 31-year-old engineer, said the mission was important to Iraq, which in December announced the "liberation" of the country and the "end of the war" against IS. "Now the land has been liberated we must free minds and ideas," she said, dressed in a white veil dotted with butterflies over a beige coat. Iraqis must "give everyone the opportunity to participate," she added. "Men and women."—AFP



Iraqis gather at a cultural cafe named "Book Forum" in the former embattled city of Mosul. — AFP photos