

**3** Crown Prince represents Amir at Saudi Al-Janadriyah festival



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## ‘Murdered maid’ found in freezer of closed flat

### Alleged ‘killer couple’ left Kuwait more than a year ago

By Ben Garcia and A Saleh

### Zain reports KD 160 million in net income for 2017; Q4 profit up 16%

KUWAIT: Zain Group, a leading mobile telecom innovator in eight markets across the Middle East and Africa, announces its consolidated financial results for the full-year 2017, and fourth-quarter ended Dec 31, 2017. Zain now serves 46.6 million customers, reflecting a 1 percent decrease year-on-year (Y-o-Y). For the full-year 2017, Zain Group generated consolidated revenues of KD 1.03 billion (\$3.4 billion), down 5 percent Y-o-Y, while consolidated EBITDA for the period decreased by 19 percent Y-o-Y to reach KD 414 million (\$1.37 billion), reflecting an EBITDA margin of 40 percent. Consolidated net income reached KD 160 million (\$527 million), up 2 percent and reflecting earnings per share of 39 fils (\$0.13).

For the fourth quarter of 2017, Zain Group recorded consolidated revenues of KD 262 million (\$868 million), a similar level to the same period in 2016. EBITDA for the quarter reached KD 98 million (\$326 million), reflecting an EBITDA margin of 38 percent. Net income for the period reached KD 37 million (\$124 million), reflecting a 16 percent increase, and representing earnings per share of 9 fils (\$0.03).

Commenting on the results, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Zain Group Mohammad Al-Kharafi said: “The company’s performance during 2017 and especially the last quarter of the year is very pleasing given the various operational, regulatory, social and



Chairman of the Board of Directors of Zain Group Mohammad Al-Kharafi



Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO Bader Al-Kharafi

forex challenges we face across our footprint.” Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO Bader Al-Kharafi said: “The ongoing implementation of our digital lifestyle strategy combined with substantial investment in network technolo-

gy upgrades and cost optimization initiatives is proving successful as we recorded growth in several key financial metrics across many of our key markets for the full-year and fourth-quarter of 2017.” (See Page 17)

KUWAIT: The body of an unidentified woman was found in the freezer of an apartment by police yesterday. The body of the woman, thought to be a Filipina domestic helper, was discovered after police entered the flat in Salmiya after a court order was issued. The apartment had been closed since its renters left Kuwait in November 2016.

Police allegedly found fatal stab wounds on the woman’s neck and torture marks across her body, and identified her employers as the prime suspects in the case, a security source said. Two suspects - a Lebanese man and his Syrian wife - who were renting the flat are wanted for questioning in the case. No immediate cause of death has been announced and the woman’s identity remains uncertain.

Philippine Ambassador to Kuwait Rene Villa was unaware of the case until contacted by Kuwait Times. “We are coordinating with the police, and while there is such a report, we are not sure about the nationality (of the deceased),” the ambassador later told Kuwait Times.

Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte recently implemented a ban on Filipinos working in Kuwait, citing cases of abuse and mistreatment including a high profile case of a Filipina domestic helper committing suicide. There are about 265,000 Filipinos in Kuwait, of which 165,000 are working as domestic helpers.

### Opposition MPs stage sit-in for jailed lawmakers

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: About 15 opposition MPs yesterday staged a sit-in at the National Assembly in support of calls to release two jailed opposition lawmakers and activists on charges of storming the National Assembly. During the Assembly session, the lawmakers placed the pictures of MPs Waleed Al-Tabtabaei and Jamaan Al-Harbash on their seats to press for calls to release them after almost two and a half months in jail.

After the session was adjourned prematurely, the lawmakers moved their protest to the members’ hall in the main building and sat there for some time. The protesters included MPs Al-Humaidi Al-Subaei, Riyadh Al-Adasani, Mohammad Hayef and others. The lawmakers have been demanding that Harbash and Tabtabaei should be released because they are sitting MPs and enjoy parliamentary immunity, and that their sentence is

not final. The two lawmakers were convicted among 67 opposition MPs and activists for storming the National Assembly building in 2011 following a street demonstration against corruption.

Meanwhile, the Assembly yesterday was adjourned prematurely for a lack of quorum, and as a result, could not vote on a draft law setting the number of stateless people or bedoons who could be naturalized this year, and another legislation to allow bedoons to join the Kuwaiti army. After a brief debate, acting speaker Essa Al-Kandari adjourned the session as he did not have the required number to vote on the bills, although 14 MPs submitted a motion for not ending the session before a vote.

Some opposition MPs charged that the lack of quorum was deliberate and orchestrated by the government to prevent the vote. About 110,000 bedoons live in Kuwait, some of whom are deprived of basic human rights of employment and even marriage. A number of MPs even doubted that the new legislation is sufficient to guarantee that bedoons will be employed in the army. Others demanded that the law should guarantee that bedoons secure jobs everywhere and not only in the army.

In other business, the Assembly voted unanimously to ask the government to refer a report on suspected

Continued on Page 11



KUWAIT: Opposition MPs - one of them holding a portrait of jailed MP Jamaan Al-Harbash - stage a sit-in at the National Assembly yesterday. — Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

### Rescuers scour tilting buildings after quake

HUALIEN, Taiwan: Rescue workers pulled survivors and bodies from buildings tilting precariously in the Taiwanese city of Hualien yesterday after an overnight earthquake killed at least seven people, injured more than 250 and left dozens missing. Emergency responders were focusing on a 12-storey apartment block and a nearby hotel, both of which were leaning dangerously with their lower floors pancaked after the 6.4-magnitude

quake hit the popular tourist city late Tuesday. The national fire agency said seven people had been killed across the city, and 260 were injured. Some 67 people remained unaccounted for late yesterday evening.

There were grave concerns for the badly leaning Yun Tsui residential building, which also housed a restaurant, shops and a hostel. Dozens of residents - and several pets - were

Continued on Page 11



HUALIEN, Taiwan: Rescue workers block off yesterday the area outside a building which tilted to one side after a strong quake rocked eastern Taiwan. — AFP

### World’s biggest rocket soars toward Mars after perfect launch

CAPE CANAVERAL: The world’s most powerful rocket, SpaceX’s Falcon Heavy, blasted off Tuesday on its highly anticipated maiden test flight, carrying CEO Elon Musk’s cherry red Tesla Roadster toward an orbit near Mars. Screams and cheers erupted at mission control in Cape Canaveral, Florida as the massive rocket fired its 27 engines and rumbled into the blue sky over the same NASA launchpad that served as a base for the US missions to the Moon four decades ago.

“The mission went as well as one could have hoped,” an ecstatic Musk told reporters after the launch, calling it “probably the most exciting thing I have seen literally ever.” “I had this image of a giant explosion on the pad with a wheel bouncing down the road with the Tesla logo landing somewhere,” he said. “Fortunately that is not what happened.” Loaded with Musk’s red Tesla and a mannequin in a spacesuit, the monster rocket’s historic test voyage captured the world’s imagination.

SpaceX’s webcast showed the Tesla Roadster soaring into space, as David Bowie’s “Space Oddity” played in the background - with the words “DON’T PANIC” visible on the dashboard, in an apparent nod to the sci-fi series the “Hitchhiker’s Guide to the



This still image taken from video shows “Starman” sitting in SpaceX CEO Elon Musk’s cherry red Tesla roadster after the Falcon Heavy rocket delivered it into orbit around the Earth on Tuesday. — AFP

Galaxy”. The Roadster was also outfitted with a data storage unit containing Isaac Asimov’s science fiction book series, the Foundation Trilogy, and a plaque bearing the names of 6,000 SpaceX employees.

Musk posted a live video showing the “Starman” mannequin appearing to cruise, its gloved hand on the wheel, through the darkness of space, with the Earth’s image reflected on the car’s glossy red surface. He tweeted late Tuesday night that the rocket’s upper stage had made a successful final burn, sending the car and its mannequin passenger out of Earth’s orbit, into an orbit around the Sun that brings it close to Mars.

After surviving a five-hour journey through the Van Allen Belt - a region of high radiation - the car now embarks on a journey through space that could last a billion years and take it as far as 400 million km from Earth, the same as a trip around the equator 10,000 times. “Maybe it will be discovered by some future alien race,” Musk told reporters. “What were these guys doing? Did they worship this car?” he mused.

About two minutes into the flight, the two side boosters peeled away from the center core and made their way back toward Earth for an upright landing.

Continued on Page 11

## Local

# Kuwait to host international NGOs conference to feed 1 billion people

## 70 organizations partake in humanitarian conference

WASHINGTON/KUWAIT: Kuwait will host an annual international NGOs partnership conference to feed one billion people, said Chairman of the International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) Abdullah Al-Maatouq. The announcement came as a response to an initiative to feed the poor of all religions and ethnicities, launched during the Alliance of Virtue for the Common Good conference, held in Washington late Tuesday. In his speech during the conference, Maatouq, also Amiri Diwan Advisor, said that the event aims to promote dialogue and peace between all religions and protect human rights. He noted that Islam is based on tolerance, dignified living and equality among all humans.

Maatouq added that the world is in desperate need for peaceful dialogue in the light of the ongoing religious extremism and conflicts. Meanwhile, he said that participants in the conference are pushing to create an international alliance for all religions and peace activists to face the growing challenges. The conference is attended by hundreds of people of different religions around the world. The event includes a discussion seminar on the role of religious virtue and common good, as well as the Washington Declaration which will be issued at the end of the conference.



### Kuwait aids disaster-struck countries

far is great and exceeds expectations, which are important indicators regarding the conference.

#### Prominent entities

Sumait said that among prominent entities participating in the conference are the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and many other international organizations.

Sumait added that GCC organizations participating in the conference are the International Islamic Relief Organization in Jeddah, the Royal Foundation of Bahrain, the Qatar Charity Association, as well as Kuwaiti charitable societies, the Kuwaiti Red Crescent, the Turkish Iraq, Qatar, and Bahrain Red Crescents.

Sumait pointed out that the aim of the conference is to have an active humanitarian assistance, basic needs in the affected areas in Iraq, and activate efforts of local, regional and international humanitarian organizations to implement their programs and projects in Iraq.

He stressed that the International Islamic Charitable Organization looks forward to the conference as a

Council should also abide by other articles of the Charter to boost its legitimacy and credibility, like imposition of sanctions and formation of peacekeeping forces.

Otaibi referred to the use of veto by the UNSC permanent members, and said "over-use of veto by some of the five permanent countries contributed in many cases to undermining the credibility of the decision-making process." The veto, he added, also banned the UNSC from carrying out its role to maintaining international peace and security. "The use of veto by some of the permanent members over the past years showed how these countries were eager to defend their national interest or interest of their allies," he said.

Kuwait, said Otaibi, was among the signatories of a document in which UNSC members pledged not to oppose draft resolutions that address crimes against humanity, genocides and war crimes. "We hope we can reach an agreement through which no veto will be used in humanitarian issues like allowing delivery of urgent relief assistances for civilians, medical evacuation and humanitarian truce," he said. Kuwait hopes this UNSC open discussion, the first since July 2016, would allow all parties to express their views to improve work methods of the Council. "We wish to hear views of everybody so we can keep working to improve working methods of the Security Council, and to build upon previous efforts of our predecessors," he said.

Otaibi commended role of Japan which contributed to issuing Memo 507 last August. This memo, he added, has great benefits because it allowed new members, like Kuwait, to monitor UNSC sessions three months before start of their membership. Such practice, among many others, allows new members to blend smoothly into the council working mechanism, he said. Kuwait is in its second month of its UNSC membership, said Otaibi, but exerted efforts to guarantee transparency and inclusiveness. — KUNA

Sumait said that the Kuwaiti Cabinet has entrusted IICO to organize the conference, noting as well that IICO has formed a higher committee to prepare for the conference and established a number of administrative and logistics teams. IICO chief noted also that his organization has also coordinated efforts with the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) along with the Iraqi officials, to ensure the success of the conference and achieve its humanitarian goals.

Sumait pointed out that the IICO has sent invitations to more than 100 local, regional and international organizations and many leading figures and active international organizations in the humanitarian field, in addition to the conference' agenda, its vision and objectives, indicating that the response so



KUWAIT: Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Khaled Al-Jarallah delivers a speech during the ninth seminar on Kuwait's humanitarian work yesterday.

humanitarian platform to collect and activate local, regional, and international humanitarian aid, and to fully comprehend the humanitarian situation in Iraq, including announcing pledges and contributions in support of the humanitarian situation in the affected areas of Iraq.

Sumait said that the conference is expected to witness a number of meetings during which prominent figures that work in the humanitarian field, at home and abroad to share and talk about the humanitarian situation in Iraq, exchange experiences of some organizations in the relief of the affected and the basic needs of the millions of displaced Iraqis.

With regard to follow-up mechanism after the conference, Sumait said that IICO is scheduled to issue periodic reports on implementation of the pledges, and they have called upon participating organizations to provide the committee with quarterly reports on its humanitarian programs to be implemented in Iraq during the year 2018.

#### Humanitarian projects

Separately, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Khaled Al-Jarallah said that Kuwait continues to execute humanitarian projects around the world to develop life for people in need. Kuwaiti governmental bodies and NGOs are continuously exerting efforts to support economic and social growth in disaster-struck countries, Jarallah said in his opening speech at the ninth seminar on Kuwait's humanitarian work, organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday.

In this matter, he mentioned the efforts of Kuwait



WASHINGTON: Chairman of the International Islamic Charitable Organization Abdullah Al-Maatouq speaks during the Alliance of Virtue for the Common Good conference. — KUNA photos

Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) which executed projects in 106 countries, as well as Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS), Zakat House, Awqaf General Secretariat and charitable societies. The seminar, held in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), aims to shed light on Kuwait's great humanitarian role to aid those affected by natural disasters and conflicts, he said.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Foreign Minister noted that Kuwait's Direct Aid Society had provided over \$1.5 billion to the African continent since 1981, while Rahma International charity provided about \$1 million since 2003. Kuwait also donated \$200 million to Iraq and \$100 million for Yemen to boost education, health and water networks in these two countries deeply affected by war and conflicts. Moreover, he spoke of Kuwait's international conference to reconstruct Iraq to be held next week, as part of Kuwait's commitment to aid people in need everywhere. The conference will see the participation of about 70 countries and over 2,000 companies and businessmen.

Jarallah added that Kuwait had pledged about \$1.6 billion in donors conferences for Syria. The country's recent pledge at London's donors conference for Syria was \$300 million to be provided within three years. It also donated \$15 million to support the Rohingya Muslims during an international conference on the matter. As for the meeting of the US-led international coalition against the so-called Islamic State (IS) on Foreign Ministers level to be held in Kuwait on February 13, Jarallah said the meeting will be the first since the defeat of IS in Iraq. — KUNA

## Kuwait calls for enhanced UNSC role towards global peace, security

NEW YORK: The UN Security Council's (UNSC) role could be enhanced to enable it carry out its responsibility in line with the UN Charter, the State of Kuwait said Tuesday. UN member countries' contributions to decision-making is still weak because of work mechanism and lack of transparency, all under pretext of maintaining efficiency and fast decision-making process, Mansour Al-Otaibi, Kuwait permanent representative to the UN, said.

He was speaking before a formal UNSC open discussion session about the council's work methods, aimed at improving way the council works to improve its capabilities to maintaining global peace and security.

Otaibi, who chairs UNSC for February, said the Security Council witnessed many improvements over the past 25 years, including flow of information to and from the UNSC, the increase in formal sessions, participation of NGOs and civil society groups. "These are positive improvement specially for non-permanent members," he said. Although these improvements improved transparency of UNSC, he said, "we think it is not enough and believe in involvement of member countries, especially those related to the question being raised, and to have consultations before adoption of resolutions, in line with Articles 31 and 32 of the UN Charter."

He said at a time Article 25 of the Charter called for member countries' compliance with UNSC resolutions, the

## Kuwait's Finance Minister pins hopes on Iraq reconstruction conference

KUWAIT/BAGHDAD: A Kuwait-hosted conference on reconstruction in war-battered Iraq could prove instrumental in taking bilateral ties to new levels, Kuwait's finance minister said yesterday. Kuwait's ties with its Gulf neighbor goes far beyond their intertwined fates, Dr. Nayef Al-Hajraf said on the sidelines of his meeting with a contingent of Iraqi journalists, ahead of the 'Kuwait International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq' next week. The Kuwaiti minister stressed that his country is proud to host an event of such magnitude, expressing hope that the His Highness the Amir-hosted meeting will lead to success.

Hajraf pointed out that stability in Baghdad is key to keep security in the region intact, noting that Kuwait will always live up to its reputation as a bastion of humanity and peace. The Iraqi journalists will be meeting with officials from across Kuwait's political spectrum in the run up to the February 12-14



KUWAIT: A group photo of Kuwait's Finance Minister Dr. Nayef Al-Hajraf with a contingent of Iraqi journalists taken yesterday in Kuwait. — KUNA

conference, where international organizations and dozens of governments are expected to announce financial aid to Iraq.

#### Large investments

Iraq's Prime Minister Haidar Al-Abadi had predicted his country to host a large number of investments by several internationally renowned companies after Kuwait's conference on reconstruction in Iraq. Investors are no longer worried about security issues in Iraq, Abadi said in a press conference Tuesday, adding Baghdad has received confirmations by a number of key countries to attend the conference, including the United States, China, and Japan, in addition to

European and Gulf countries.

Participation requests by firms in the event have exceeded the number of assigned seats, he said, noting the conference has asked the participating countries to invite their major companies to the event. The Iraqi Premier also affirmed his country's willingness to host large investments after the conference, noting Iraq has now become an attractive business venue for investors. No miracles are expected from the conference," he said, explaining that the event, however, is part of a number of steps within a comprehensive program for reconstruction of Iraq. Over 400 international businesses are expected to attend the event, alongside dozens of governments. — KUNA



KUWAIT: The Ambassador of Iran to Kuwait Dr. Ali Enayati hosted a reception on the occasion of his country's national day. Senior officials, diplomats, cross section of the Iranian community and media persons attended the event which took place recently at Salwa Al-Sabah Hall. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



## KJA holds general assembly

KUWAIT: Kuwait Journalists Association (KJA) invited members to an ordinary general assembly meeting at 3:30 pm on Monday, February 12, 2018. KJA also announces that in case of lack of quorum, the meeting will be delayed

for half an hour, after which it will be held with whoever is present as stipulated by article 29 of KJA's chart. Only members who paid their annual subscriptions as of Thursday, February 1st, 2018 are eligible to attend, KJA noted.

Local

# Crown Prince represents Amir at Janadriyah opening

## Defense Minister holds talks with Saudi official



RIYADH: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah attends the inauguration ceremony of the 32nd Janadriyah festival. — KUNA photos



KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah meets with the Advisor at the Saudi Royal Court Prince Turki bin Mohammad bin Fahd bin Abdulaziz.

RIYADH/KUWAIT: Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, yesterday attended the inauguration ceremony of the 32nd national festival for heritage and culture 'Janadriyah'. The cultural and folkloric festival is themed 'Glory and Vision'. His Highness Sheikh Nawaf's visit came in response to an invitation extended by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz to His Highness the Amir to attend the inauguration ceremony which took place in Riyadh.

In other news, Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh

Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah discussed yesterday with the visiting Advisor at the Saudi Royal Court, Prince Turki bin Mohammad bin Fahd bin Abdulaziz issues of common concern. The Ministry of Defense said in a statement that Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad lauded the bilateral ties between the State of Kuwait and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Saudi Ambassador to Kuwait Dr Abdulaziz Al-Fayez attended the meeting.

Separately, Minister Sheikh Nasser received the Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait, Aisha Hilal, holding talks on issues of common interest. Similar discussions were held with the Algerian Ambassador to Kuwait Abdulhamid Abdawi. — KUNA



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah meets with Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait Aisha Hilal.



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah meets with Algerian Ambassador to Kuwait Abdulhamid Abdawi.

## Kuwait renews commitment to Palestinian cause

RAMALLAH: Representative of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait, Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan on Tuesday evening reaffirmed his country's commitment to supporting the Palestinian people.

In an address to the opening session of the 'Jerusalem Islamic Youth Capital 2018' conference on Tuesday evening, Roudhan said he is attending the conference to convey a message of solidarity from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the government and people of Kuwait. The event was attended by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. "Kuwait - the country of peace and freedom - believes in the fair cause of Palestine which remains to be the top cause of the Muslim world," he stressed.

"As Humanitarian Leader, His Highness the Amir and the government and people of Kuwait remain steadfast in support of Palestine question," Roudhan, also minister of state for youth affairs, pointed out. He noted that he came from Kuwait, the capital of Arab youth 2017, to join the celebration of Jerusalem designation as Islamic Youth Capital 2018. He expressed hope that the Muslim youth would work diligently for the progress and prosperity of their countries.

Roudhan added that Palestine - the cradle of holy faith, and Jerusalem - the capital of the State of Palestine - will remain the main concern and central question for every Muslim. He paid tribute to Ahd Al-Tamimi - a Palestinian female teenager who was detained by the Israeli occupation forces for resisting their attempt to

break into her home in Al-Nabi Saleh village in the West Bank in late December, 2017.

Roudhan arrived in Ramallah from Jordan aboard a helicopter to take part in the two-day conference. He was warmly welcomed by Palestinian President who appreciated Kuwait support to the Palestinian people. The conference follows the decision of the Islamic youth forum for dialogue and cooperation - the youth arm of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), to show solidarity with the Palestinian people particularly the Arab residents of Jerusalem.

**Great support**

Meanwhile, Abbas welcomed as great demonstration of support the conference of the conference which was held in the West Bank city of Ramallah. "This great demonstration is a timely response to the allegations of some people to associate the holy city to parties other than the Arabs, Muslims and Christians," he said at the opening ceremony of the conference on Tuesday evening. President Abbas thanked the attendees for offering the much-needed political and moral support to the Palestinian people, voicing hope that "the Arab and Muslim brothers" will continue their support until a political settlement to the conflict with Israel is reached.

Referring to the US decision to recognize Jerusalem as capital of Israel, he reiterated that the US decided to undermine its own credibility as mediator and sponsor of the Middle East peace process. The US administration seeks to exclude from the agenda of the Palestinian-Israeli final status peace talks not only Jerusalem issue but that of the refugees as well, he said, citing the recent US decision to withhold big part of funding for the UNRWA. The conference, hosted by the Palestinian presidency, gathered senior level delegates from the Arab countries, including Representative of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait, Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan — KUNA



RAMALLAH: Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas gestures during the 'Jerusalem Islamic Youth Capital 2018' conference. — KUNA

# Kuwait Times

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## Local

## Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Ariel view of Kuwait City during sunset. —KUNA

# KFSD looks to benefit from int'l experiences in major event

## Fifth International Firefighting and Safety Conference and Exhibition

By Nawara Fattahova

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) will hold the Fifth International Firefighting and Safety Conference and Exhibition from March 6 to 8, 2018 titled 'Researches and Studies'. It will be held under the patronage of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah.

The event will be attended by representatives of firefighting departments from the GCC countries and Jordan, in addition to seven international organizations. "We are keen to benefit from international conferences, especially the recommendations of these conferences," said Acting Director General of KFSD and Deputy Director General of the Human Resource Development Affairs Sector Maj Gen Khaled Al-Tarkait during a press conference held yesterday at the Regency Hotel to announce the event.

"The previous conferences were behind launching the hazardous material center and the technical rescue center. These two centers played a key role in dealing with many major accidents, the latest of which was two days back when poisonous gases spread in a house in Khalidiya," he said. The previous conferences focused on many issues.



### Encouraging firefighters to follow latest researches

"They discussed issues such as training on dealing with high-rise buildings and researches, studies and others. Due to our interest in training, we signed a cooperation protocol with a German university specialized in firefighting sciences," stressed Tarkait.

Director of the Ahmadi Fire Service Directorate and head of the Shamel 4 team Moath Al-Hamadi noted that the next training session will be in cooperation with various local authorities and will be part of the upcoming event. "The training will consist of dealing with fire and explosions at an oil refinery, unlike the previous three trainings that dealt with traffic accidents, a collision between two aircraft with debris falling in a residential area, and dealing with floods," he pointed out.

Dr. Hani Al-Habani, supervisor of the workshops, said the main goal of the conference is to encourage the firefighters to follow the latest international researches. "This year's conference will include the Shamel 4 exercise, which is one of the most important exercises in Kuwait, in which 13 public authorities will be participating," he said. The supervisor of the event Abbas Ali highlighted the fact that all the previous conferences were very useful for all participating bodies. He added they are considering holding live training exercises at event sites, but this proposal is under study.



KUWAIT: Acting Director General of KFSD Maj Gen Khaled Al-Tarkait (center) and other KFSD officials attend the press conference. —Photo by Joseph Shagra

## Kuwait Expo 2018 launched

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Public Works Hussam Al-Roumi said Tuesday Kuwait Expo 2018 was part of efforts to honor His Highness the Amir's vision to transform Kuwait into a regional and international financial and commercial hub. Roumi, also Minister of State for Municipal Affairs, told reporters after inauguration of Kuwait Expo 2018, held under auspices of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, that Expo was part of a series of events contributing to "the development of relations in different domains."

Kuwait Expo 2018, he added, would be a suitable opportunity to know first-hand local, regional and international compa-

nies, as well as small and medium-size enterprises. The expo, said Roumi, would contribute to better economic, trade and investment cooperation, as well as exchanging of expertise and building a network of relations. Investors will have a good venue to seal deals during Expo, he said, and Kuwaiti manufacturers would be displaying their products. There are 140 companies from 30 countries participating in the Expo.

New Kuwait 2035 vision aims at making the North Gulf country a lucrative foreign investment environment, said Roumi. The government and parliament of Kuwait, said Roumi, produced a number of financial, economic and investment laws that would make the economic environment more "open, transparent and attractive." The five-day Expo includes side-line exhibitions, like the SMEs, Maker Fair and knowledge-based economy. —KUNA

## Kuwait funds WHO efforts to address health crises

**GENEVA:** A Kuwaiti diplomat said yesterday that his country is eager to finance the World Health Organization's (WHO) Contingency Fund for Emergencies (CFE). The \$500,000 initiative is being done on a voluntary basis to prop up a funding mechanism established to scale up WHO's responses to global epidemics, Kuwait's permanent delegate to the United Nations Ambassador Jamal Al-Ghunaim said.

As he emerged from a meeting with the Executive Director of WHO's emergencies program Peter Salama, Ghunaim said that the purpose of the Kuwaiti aid is to ensure the UN health body is fully equipped to deal with critical cases. He spoke of Kuwait's robust relationship with WHO and the country's close rapport with the health organization in an effort to ameliorate the healthcare system in Kuwait.

Meanwhile, Salama revealed that WHO will be attending a Kuwait-hosted conference on reconstruction in Iraq, a country whose healthcare sector lies in ruin after years of warfare. "This star-studded conference is a testament to Kuwait's profound contributions towards humanitarian



GENEVA: Kuwait's permanent delegate to the United Nations Ambassador Jamal Al-Ghunaim (left) meets with the Executive Director of WHO's emergencies program Peter Salama. — KUNA

causes, "the WHO official pointed out, saying the meeting would help put Iraq on the path to stability." He echoed the Kuwaiti envoy's sentiments and noted that WHO shares a very special relationship with the Gulf country. —KUNA

Local

# Twenty-five projects to help address traffic jams: Official

## Pre-project monitoring hinders implementation

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Director of the roads and land transport authority Ahmed Al-Hessan said the authority has 25 projects in progress and that most of them will be inaugurated this year. Hessan added that the most important of those projects are the southern roads linking Mina Abdullah, Wafra and Sabah Al-Ahmad City, as well as the northern ones linking North Khairan, Sabah Al-Ahmad and the Zour-Wafra road.

Hessan said like other government bodies, the Ministry of Public Works (MPW) has suffered a lot because of lengthy paperwork, adding that the roads authority is trying to overcome such deterrents. "We



**KUWAIT:** Vehicles drive by an overpass under construction in Kuwait. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat



### Kuwait 390th in global traffic scorecard

are trying to cancel pre-project monitoring, which had been hindering many projects. We are almost the only country in the world to have such a system," he said, adding that several other projects will commence this year.

#### 390th worldwide

According to the INRIX 2017 Global Traffic Scorecard about the most congested cities in the world, Los Angeles topped the list, while Kuwait was ranked 390th, following last year's ranking of 325. The study also showed that individuals spent around 22 hours a year behind the wheel in traffic jams (ie 10 percent of time daily).

Asia-wise, Kuwait came fifth amongst Arab cities after Riyadh, Dubai, Jeddah and Fujairah, and 22nd in Asia. The study also showed that commuters in Los Angeles spent 102 hours last year in traffic congestions, followed by those living in Moscow and New York, who spent 91 hours, Sao Paulo 86 hours, San Francisco 79 hours, Bogota 75 hours, London 74 hours and Paris

(which came ninth) with 69 hours.

Country-wise, the study showed that Thailand topped the list of countries where drivers spent the longest hours behind the wheel, followed by Indonesia, Colombia and Venezuela, while Russia came sixth followed by the US and Brazil. The INRIX study analyzed data collected from 38 countries and 1,360 cities, and estimated the cost of the time wasted by drivers in America as \$1,445 annually (that includes their own as well as working time), which adds up to \$300 billion in a country that has 211 million vehicles.

printers, two computers, and a total of 3,978 forged stamps that he admitted to making and preparing for sale. The man was taken to the proper authorities to face charges.

#### Workers hurt

Two laborers fell unconscious in a building under construction in Khaldiya while using a material to prevent water leakage. Shuhada and technical rescue fire centers responded and rescued the two from the basement where they had collapsed. The high concentration of the material also affected one firefighter and two rescue men, who were taken along with the two workers to the hospital. All were later discharged after their condition stabilized.

#### Administrative interference

The government performance follow-up agency urged various ministries to counter any administrative interference in services and liabilities with the aim of simplifying procedures, improving government performance and enhancing work efficiency. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry denied any contradictions of liabilities with the Central Bank and the Capital Market Authority, and stressed that the three bodies only cooperate according to a number of memos of understanding signed in this regard.

## Municipality praised for tackling violations

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** Former municipal council member Ali Al-Moussa hailed the measures taken against construction violations as well as against officials who had not been doing their duties properly. Moussa described the measures taken by Kuwait Municipality in coordination with the Interior Ministry to remove violations by force as a 'brave decision' that proves that executives are working on putting an end to such a negative phenomenon.

Moussa added that many citizens had violated construction laws by building extra unlicensed floors in various areas, which is illegal and alters the general aesthetic features of any residential area. "Some citizens have gone too far by building up to five floors," he added, highly commending the decision by Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Hossam Al-Roumi and Kuwait Municipality Director Ahmed Al-Manfouhi to face this issue and equally enforce the law on everyone.

Meanwhile, Manfouhi stressed that the Municipality does its best to enhance its supervisory role, and in order to do so, it plans to use satellite images by the beginning of 2019 and thus become a pioneer in using this modern technology. He was speaking after signing a contract with the Openware company for computer consultancies of a total value of KD 97,000 to provide the service.

Openware General Manager Eyad Arab said the contract will go into effect within a month and stressed that his company is completely ready to meet all the terms and conditions in the contract. "We are thrilled with this project which will track changes in urban areas around Kuwait through satellite images," he said, noting that the new technology will help the Municipality take the right decisions. Arab also noted that the new system will save much in terms of effort, manpower, time and cost.

## 3,978 forged stamps found

By Hanan Al-Saadoun and Agencies

**KUWAIT:** Police arrested a man who was under the influence of drugs before they discovered his involvement in government stamps' forgery. Criminal Investigation Department detectives found drugs and paraphernalia on the Bangladeshi man, before moving to his place where they found two

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Misery for commuters as snow paralyzes Paris

## Pakistan court convicts 31 over 'blasphemy' lynching

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BERLIN: (Left to right) German Chancellor Angela Merkel, leader of the conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU), Horst Seehofer, leader of the conservative Christian Social Union (CSU) and Martin Schulz, leader of the social democratic SPD party, arrive to give a press conference in Berlin yesterday after conservatives and the Social Democrats sealed a deal on a new coalition, potentially ending four months of political standstill in Europe's top economy. — AFP

# German parties reach coalition deal

## Merkel's conservatives make big concessions

BERLIN: German Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives and the Social Democrats (SPD) yesterday agreed to a coalition deal, taking Europe's economic powerhouse closer to a new government after months of uncertainty that unnerved allies and investors. In a move likely to mean a shift in Germany's euro zone policy, media reported the SPD would take the finance ministry, a post held until recently by conservative Wolfgang Schäuble, widely despised in struggling euro zone states during his eight-year tenure for his rigid focus on fiscal discipline.

SPD leader Martin Schulz said earlier this week that his party had ensured an agreement with the conservatives would put an end to "forced austerity" and set up an investment budget for the euro zone. Handing over the crucial finance ministry suggests the conservatives had to make big concessions to get the SPD to agree to renew the 'grand coalition' that has governed Germany since 2013 and secure Merkel's fourth term in office.

Bruised by its worst election result in the post-war era, the SPD had planned to revamp itself in opposition and only agreed to the coalition talks reluctantly. Its 464,000 members still have the chance to veto the deal in a postal ballot. While the talks have dragged on, Europe's biggest economy has moved into overdrive, suggesting that there

may be increased scope for government spending and investment.

In a message posted alongside a photo of Schulz and other SPD negotiators smiling, the SPD negotiators wrote: "Tired but happy. There is a treaty! Finally. Now the final details are being worked into the text." The agreement should allow German to resume its leading role in international affairs and, at least for now, put an end to questions about how long Merkel will stay in her job. The full set of 91 negotiators were to meet at 2 pm to give the deal the green light, negotiators said.

### Multiple challenges

Investors and partner countries had been concerned by Merkel's failure to assemble a government in more than four months at a time when Europe faces multiple challenges, including the need for euro zone reform and Britain's looming departure from the EU. A negotiating source said the SPD would have the finance and labor ministries while media reported the party would also secure the justice, family and environment ministries. Bild newspaper reported that Schulz would become foreign minister, despite having previously vowed not to take a cabinet position under Merkel. Newspaper Sueddeutsche Zeitung said

Schulz would quit as SPD leader and parliamentary floor leader Andrea Nahles was ready to take over.

Hamburg Mayor Olaf Scholz is slated to take over as finance minister, according to sources familiar with the negotiations. Merkel's Christian Democrats (CDU) will get the economy and defense ministries while their Bavarian allies, the Christian Social



### CSU to get Interior Ministry; CDU gets economy, defense

Union (CSU), will provide the interior minister in the form of Horst Seehofer, who talks tough on migration, media reported. The news agency DPA said the conservative acting finance minister, Peter Altmaier, would become economy minister.

The conservative bloc and the SPD began talks about renewing their alliance after Merkel's coalition talks with two smaller par-

ties collapsed last November. Both camps have seen their support wane. An Insa poll on Monday had support for the SPD dropping to 17 percent, below its election result of 20.5 percent. The conservatives slipped to 30.5 percent, suggesting there would be no majority for a grand coalition if an election were held now. The two blocs had aimed to strike a deal on Sunday, but repeatedly extended that deadline as they grappled with reforms to health insurance and employment policy demanded by the SPD.

### Labor measures

After a marathon all-night session, the parties ultimately agreed to cap at 18 months fixed-term contracts imposed by employers without justification, down from 24 months under current rules, a source involved in coalition negotiations said. The source said they also agreed to ban the endless renewal of such contracts.

The SPD had wanted to give employees more security by totally banning employers from imposing short-term contracts without justification. But conservatives balked, arguing that firms needed hiring and firing flexibility to be competitive. On healthcare, the parties agreed to set up a commission to work on a joint fee structure for private

and public patients, a negotiating source said, adding that whether it was ultimately introduced would depend on its feasibility.

Doctors tend to get more money for treating private patients under the current system, so often favour them over public patients. Florian Hense, an economist at Berenberg, said the labor and healthcare reforms, along with more generous pension entitlements, could be expensive. "Germany may pay a price for them with slightly reduced trend growth and a less solidly financed budget after the next recession." That prospect may be a way off, however. The DIHK Chambers of Industry and Commerce raised its 2018 growth forecast for the German economy to a robust 2.7 percent.

Record-high employment, increased job security, rising real wages and low borrowing costs have helped to spur a consumer-led upswing, strengthened recently by a rebound in exports and company investments. "Companies have never been more upbeat," DIHK said in its latest business survey, adding that German firms are boosting investment plans at an unprecedented pace. Alice Weidel, leader of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD), the biggest opposition party, tweeted: "Things could not get worse for Germany," calling the coalition deal "insane" as it did not contain an upper limit for migration. — Reuters

## Palestinian shot dead after stabbing Israeli

HEBRON: A Palestinian stabbed a security guard at the entrance to an Israeli settlement and was shot dead yesterday, the army said, in the latest violence in the occupied West Bank. The guard was lightly wounded at the entrance to the Karmeit Tzur settlement north of Hebron, the army said in a statement. Another security guard opened fire on the assailant and killed him, it added.

Palestinian security sources named him as Hamza Zamareh, 17, from Halhul, near the scene of the attack. Local residents said that Israeli troops arrived at the family home shortly after the attack and began interrogating relatives, while young villagers hurled stones at the soldiers. The Karmeit Tzur attack was the fourth deadly incident in the West Bank since Israeli rabbi Itamar Ben Gal was stabbed to death on Monday near the settlement of Ariel.

In an apparent search for his attacker, Israeli forces raided the West Bank city of Nablus late Tuesday, sparking clashes that left a Palestinian dead. Earlier on Tuesday, Israeli forces shot dead the suspected Palestinian mastermind of a fatal January ambush on another settler rabbi, Raziell



HEBRON: Israeli forces check the scene at the entrance of the Israeli settlement of Karmeit Tzur, north of Hebron in the occupied West Bank, after a Palestinian stabbed a security guard and was shot dead yesterday. — AFP

Shevach. In a pre-dawn raid on the village of Yamoun, near Jenin, troops shot dead 22-year-old suspect Ahmad Jarrar, a member of the militant Islamist group Hamas. The Shin Bet Israeli security agency said that he was armed. Jarrar was the son of a Hamas figure killed by Israeli forces during the second intifada of the early 2000s.

### 'Qassam bullet'

Hamas's armed wing, the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades, claimed Jarrar as a member and welcomed the January 9 attack in which Shevach was shot dead in what Israeli media said was a hail of 22 bullets. "Our

heroes in the occupied West Bank wrote a heroic epic that made the Zionists lose sleep and put their security establishment on alert," the Al-Qassam Brigades said in a statement. It said a "Qassam bullet" was responsible for the murder, though it was unclear if the Hamas leadership was claiming direct responsibility for the attack or whether the cell acted on its own. Israeli forces had been hunting for the assailants since the murder, with roadblocks and checkpoints set up following the attack. Two Palestinians were killed during earlier raids which Israeli security services said were launched to find Shevach's killers. — AFP

## 'Fake' doctor accused of infecting 46 Indians with HIV

NEW DELHI: India is investigating claims an unlicensed doctor infected at least 46 people with HIV by re-using syringes, the latest case to expose the paucity of healthcare in the country of 1.25 billion. Police in Uttar Pradesh have registered a criminal case against Rajendra Yadav, who provided cheap door-to-door medical services to poor villagers in the northern state. India has only limited public healthcare services and that, combined with a lack of regulation, has allowed unlicensed doctors to thrive, particularly in rural areas. The latest case was exposed when government medical screenings uncovered a high concentration of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) cases in the Unnao district of Uttar Pradesh.

"All these 46 cases are from specific localities within our district," Unnao's chief medical officer S.P. Choudhary said. "This is when we decided to dig deeper. Some of the infected blamed the quack and his use of a single syringe." But Choudhary said Yadav, who is still on the run, was unlikely to be the sole factor in the high number of cases. "We don't think that the quack doctor alone could be a factor for these numbers," he said. "The area has a high migrant trucker population, and the prevalence of unprotected sex could be the likely reason."

India has 2.1 million people infected with HIV, according to the United Nations, although the rate of infection is falling. It has an estimated 840,000 doctors—one for every 1,674 people—far fewer than the one per 1,000 people recommended by the World Health Organization. Last week the government announced a national healthcare scheme for half a billion people, but did not give details of how much it would cost or how it would be funded. India spends a little over one percent of GDP on public healthcare—one of the lowest proportions in the world—a sum the government is aiming to increase to 2.5 percent by 2025. — AFP

International

# Maldives top court makes a U-turn, reverses rulings

## Maldives president back in control

**MALE:** Maldives President Abdulla Yameen appeared yesterday to have gained the upper hand in a bitter power struggle after a diminished Supreme Court reinstated the convictions of high-profile political dissidents including the exiled leader of the opposition. The tiny island nation, whose palm-fringed sandy beaches are a major tourist draw, was plunged into crisis last week when the top court ordered the release of nine political prisoners, saying their convictions were flawed.

The ruling appeared to pave the way for the return of Mohamed Nasheed, the country's first democratically elected president and now leader of the opposition, two years after he left his homeland following a controversial terrorism conviction. But Yameen refused to comply with the ruling and instead declared a 15-day state of emergency, curtailing the powers of the judiciary and the legislature, before ordering the arrest of the chief justice and another top judge.

On Tuesday the three remaining Supreme Court judges reversed last week's ruling, reinstating the convictions against Nasheed and eight others. That means the leader of the opposition risks re-arrest if he returns as promised to run against Yameen in presidential elections due

later this year in the honeymoon islands. A statement on Yameen's website yesterday said his administration welcomed the court's U-turn, which the judges had said was made "in light of the concerns raised by the president".

Nasheed, the first democratically elected leader of the Maldives, has accused the president of acting illegally and urged international intervention in the crisis. On Tuesday he called on regional superpower India to send in troops to free the judges and the political detainees. But that is not considered likely in a country where Chinese influence is on the rise. In a statement, India said it was "disturbed" by the president's latest moves and was monitoring the situation closely, but did not directly address Nasheed's request.

### Streets calm

The worsening political turmoil has led several countries to warn against travel to the country, which depends heavily on tourism, at the peak of the holiday season. On Tuesday UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres urged the government to lift the state of emergency, saying he was "seriously concerned about the unfolding situation" in the Indian Ocean archi-

pelago. The streets of the capital Male were calm yesterday with only a limited police presence and no sign of any repeat of the opposition protests that broke out last week.

Yameen has had almost all the political opposition jailed since he came to power, in an escalating crackdown on dissent. This week he ordered the arrest of his estranged half-brother, former president Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, who last year sided with the opposition. Gayoom-president for 30 years until the country's first democratic elections in 2008 - was the only senior opposition figure still at liberty in the Maldives before his arrest on Monday.

Nasheed yesterday demanded his release, saying the 80-year-old former leader had not been eating since his arrest. He also urged the release of Supreme Court judge Ali Hameed, who he said had been ill-treated in detention. Police have arrested three close relatives of Hameed, who was admitted to hospital early yesterday. Judge Hameed and Chief Justice Abdulla Saeed are accused of accepting bribes to impeach the president. Meanwhile police in the Maldives raided a resort owned by another exiled opposition leader, Qasim Ibrahim, and arrested his son on unspecified charges. —AFP



**MALE:** Photo shows the exterior of the Maldives Supreme Court building in Male. The Maldives president yesterday welcomed a Supreme Court move to reinstate the convictions of high-profile political prisoners after he arrested two top judges and declared a state of emergency, plunging the upmarket holiday paradise into chaos.—AFP

## Pakistan's court convicts 31 over campus lynching

**PESHAWAR:** A Pakistani court yesterday convicted 31 people over the campus lynching of a university student who was falsely accused of blasphemy, and sentenced one of them to death, a defense lawyer said. The killing of student Mashal Khan, 23, last year sparked an outcry and raised fresh questions about the misuse of a harsh blasphemy law, which carries a death sentence for insulting Islam or the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Barrister Ameerullah Chamkani told Reuters one of the 31 accused had been sentenced to death, five were jailed for life and the other 25 were jailed for four years.

The court acquitted 26 others out of a total of 57 people indicted by a court late last year. Chamkani said one of the convicts, Imran Ali, had been sentenced to death because he had shot Mashal three times. The accused were students, teachers and some officials of Abdul Wali Khan University named after a secular political leader in northwest Pakistan. They all pleaded not guilty in the trial conducted at a high-security prison due to threats to defense lawyers and government prosecutors, Chamkani said.

Khan was known as an intellectually curious and religious student who liked to debate controversial social, political and religious issues. He was attacked and killed by a mob on the campus on April 13 after a dormitory debate about religion. Blasphemy is a highly sensitive issue in Pakistan, where insulting Islam's prophet is punishable by death. Even a rumor of blasphemy can spark mob violence and there have been cases of people misusing the law to settle scores. At least 67 people have been killed over unproven blasphemy allegations since 1990, according to human rights groups.

In 2011, a bodyguard assassinated Punjab provincial governor Salman Taseer after he called for the blasphemy laws to be reformed. His killer, Mumtaz Qadri, who was executed last year, has been hailed as a martyr by religious hardliners. A political party founded in Qadri's honor has made blasphemy its central issue in the run-up to a general election later this year. The party last year forced the government to retract within a day a change in electoral laws that it deemed blasphemous.

Party supporters also blocked the main road into Islamabad for nearly three weeks last year in a protest against a law minister they accused of blasphemy. The government eventually gave in, agreeing to an army-brokered deal that included the resignation of the minister. Khan's younger brother, Aimal Khan, told reporters he was not happy about the acquittals and his family would decide whether to challenge the court decision. Khan's family say they have been threatened since his death and his two sisters have had to drop out of school while police guard his grave.—Reuters



**HARIPUR:** Pakistani local journalists take images of the court verdict against suspects accused in a blasphemy lynching case pasted on a notice board outside the central jail yesterday. —AFP

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## International

# North Korea leader's sister Kim Yo Jong to visit S Korea

## Kim Yo Jong to make her debut on the world stage

SEOUL: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's 28-year-old sister will make her debut on the world stage when she visits South Korea to attend the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympics tomorrow, Seoul's Unification Ministry said. Pyongyang told Seoul that Kim Yo Jong would accompany Kim Jong Nam, North Korea's nominal head of state, along with Choe Hwi, chairman of the National Sports Guidance Committee, and Ri Son Gwon, who led inter-Korean talks last month, according to the ministry.

Kim Yo Jong would be the first member of the Kim family, born on the sacred Mount Paektu, which is a centerpiece of the North's idolization and propaganda campaign, to cross the border to the South. Her inclusion in the delegation is "meaningful" as she is not only the sister of the country's leader but has a significant position as a senior official of the ruling Workers' Party, the South's presidential Blue House said. "It shows the North's resolve to defuse tension on the Korean peninsula," Blue House spokesman Kim Eui-kyeom told a news briefing.

But the trip could become a source of contention between Seoul and Washington, as she was blacklisted last year by the US Treasury Department over human rights abuses and censorship, while Choe faces a travel ban under UN Security Council sanctions. Kim Yo Jong is vice director of the party's Propaganda and Agitation Department, which handles ideological messaging through the media, arts and culture. Choe had previously worked for the same body. In 2016, South Korea's former spy chief said Kim Yo Jong was seen "abusing power", punishing propaganda department executives for "minor mistakes".

"One of the positives of her visit is that she is someone able to deliver a direct message on behalf of Kim Jong Un," said Shin Beom-chul, a professor at the Korea National Diplomatic Academy in Seoul. "What is problematic is that she's coming with Choe Hwi. ... This raises worries that North Korea likely intends to use this Olympics as a propaganda tool, rather than a possible opening to meaningful dia-

logue with South Korea." The opening ceremony will also be attended by US Vice President Mike Pence, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and other world leaders.

Pence said after talks with Abe in Tokyo yesterday that Washington would soon unveil its toughest ever economic sanctions on North Korea, calling the country the "most tyrannical and oppressive regime on the planet". Choi Kang, vice president of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies in Seoul, said, "The United States would be unhappy to see South Korea trying to undermine all the rigid sanctions that it had worked so hard to put in place by granting exemptions for the sake of the Olympics. Personally, Pence would feel uncomfortable just being in the same place with the North Koreans."

### Top policymaker

Having previously only occasionally appeared in the background, the young heiress has moved to the front and centre of media

photos more recently, assisting her brother at numerous state events. In October, Kim Yo Jong was promoted to the party's politburo, an opaque, all-powerful decision-making body that decides top state affairs. The promotion is a sign Kim Jong Un is consolidating his position by drawing his most important people closer to the centre of power, experts and officials say.

On Tuesday, Kim Yo Jong was seen in state media greeting a North Korean art troupe that has since departed for the South to stage performances during the Olympics. "She could deliver a message from Kim Jong Un in a way that conveys personal seriousness and commitment that even Kim Jong Nam couldn't," Andray Abrahamian, a research fellow at Pacific Forum CSIS in Hawaii, told Reuters. "It may be a sign that Pyongyang is going to pull out all the stops in the next couple weeks, in terms of making plans with Seoul."

### Jubilant cheerleaders

A group of 280 North Koreans arrived yesterday in South Korea, one of the largest peacetime crossings of the inter-Korean border, to spur on athletes from the two sides



PYONGYANG: Photo shows North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un (center) visiting the general tree nursery under construction by the Korean People's Army as Kim's younger sister Kim Yo-Jong (right) looks on. Kim Yo-Jong, the sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un, will visit the South this week for the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics, Seoul said yesterday.—AFP

at the Winter Olympics. Besides the 229-member cheer squad that formed the bulk of the group, there were 26 taekwondo performers, 21 journalists and four North Korean Olympics committee members, including Sports Minister Kim Il-guk. The delegation celebrated its first night in South Korea with a banquet at its hotel, dining on roasted scallops, steak, beef marrow soup and shrimp wrapped in thinly sliced radish, according to a pool report. They arrived a day after a North Korean ferry crossed the border with a 137-strong orchestra to perform during the Games.

### Oil request

After the troupe's Tuesday arrival on the ferry, which is also being used as accommodation, North Korea asked the South to provide oil for refuelling, the Unification Ministry said. Oil is a sensitive item and has taken centre stage in global efforts to curb Pyongyang's nuclear and missile programs, with Washington urging a drastic cut in energy supplies to the isolated country. North Korea has virtually no domestic oil production, and has traditionally imported its fuel from China and Russia.—Reuters



### S Korea reviewing request to refuel N Korea's vessel

## News in brief

### Benedict final 'pilgrimage'

ROME: Pope emeritus Benedict XVI hinted yesterday that he is nearing death and ready for his final "pilgrimage" at the age of 90. "In the slow decline of my physical strength, internally, I am on a pilgrimage to the House (of the Lord)", Joseph Ratzinger wrote in a letter published in the Corriere della Sera daily, which had told him many readers were concerned about his health. The former pope, who will turn 91 in April, said he was moved that "so many readers want to know how this last period of his life is going". "It is a great grace for me to be surrounded, in this last point of a sometimes tiring path, with affection and kindness that I would not have imagined," Benedict added.—AFP

### 5 kids killed in Guinea

CONAKRY: Five young children perished in an arson attack during clashes in central Guinea on Tuesday, as anger over alleged fraud during weekend local elections turned deadly and tensions mounted ahead of the results. Sunday's local elections were the first since the end of the era of military dictatorship and follow eight years of delays blamed on a lack of funds, political infighting and the 2013-16 Ebola crisis. Huts and houses were set on fire in the town of Kalinko, and "five Guinean infants died in the flames", Territorial Administration Minister Bouréma Conde said on television on Tuesday, without specifying their age or identity. Unrest flared in the West African country after the ballot, and one person was killed in western city of Kindia when opposition party supporters clashed with security forces during vote counting on Monday.—AFP

### UK child abuse images

LONDON: One of Britain's most notorious killers, who in 1993 murdered two-year-old James Bulger when he was only 10 himself yesterday admitted having more than a thousand indecent images of children. Jon Venables served eight years in prison for the torture and murder of the toddler in the northwest English city of Liverpool, before being released with a new identity in 2001. He pleaded guilty yesterday to four counts at a hearing at England's Old Bailey central criminal court in London. Venables admitted to having 392 category A images—the most extreme—148 category B and 630 category C images, and to having a "paedophile manual". It is the second time he has been convicted of child pornography offences, having been jailed for two years in 2010 after pleading guilty to downloading and distributing child pornography.—AFP

### Central bank heist

DHAKA: Bangladesh's central bank will file a lawsuit in New York against a Philippine bank over the world's largest cyber heist, the finance minister said yesterday. Unidentified hackers stole \$81 million in February 2016 from the Bangladesh central bank's account with the US Federal Reserve in New York. The money was transferred to a Manila branch of the Rizal Commercial Banking Corp (RCBC), then quickly withdrawn and laundered through local casinos. With only a small amount of the stolen money recovered and frustration growing in Dhaka, Bangladesh's Finance Minister A.M.A. Muhith said last year he wanted to "wipe out" RCBC. Yesterday he said Bangladesh Bank lawyers were discussing the case in New York and may file a joint lawsuit against the RCBC with the US Federal Reserve.—AFP

## Misery for commuters as snow paralyzes Paris

PARIS: Exceptionally heavy snowfall brought public transport in Paris and surrounding regions to a near halt yesterday, spelling misery for commuters after hundreds were forced to abandon their cars to sleep in emergency shelters overnight. Icy streets were largely empty as officials urged people to leave vehicles at home following the 12 centimeters of snow that blanketed the capital, shutting down some tram and commuter rail lines, and almost completely halting bus services.

Officials had opened 46 shelters in the greater Paris region for more than 600 people stranded by the snow, while about 700 had to spend the night at the Montparnasse and Austerlitz train stations in Paris. Some 230 people were had to sleep as best they could at Orly airport. Operations were still disrupted at Orly and Paris's Charles de Gaulle airport yesterday, with some flights facing delays while other travelers remained stuck. At Charles de Gaulle airport, officials announced over

loudspeakers that all suburban train connections to Paris had been cancelled for at least several hours.

A dozen perplexed passengers waited outside a railway ticket office at one terminal. "I tried to get into Paris by train. I was sitting on a train for half an hour and then everyone got up and left," said Paul Farberman, a 66-year-old music industry executive who had just flown in from Los Angeles. "They said there are no trains and no buses," he added. "I love Paris. I would just love to get there and see it." Evacuations were still under way for the 1,500 to 2,000 people stranded on a highway south of Paris, prompting anger from drivers who said the route should have been closed to traffic sooner.

One driver, Antonio De Lemos said he had been "stuck in the snow since 5 pm" and spent the night in his car. "It's a natural event, but it's not normal because they leave all the roads blocked, without salting them" to remove the ice, he said. Forecasts for even lower temperatures are likely to freeze the heavy snow in place, making conditions even more treacherous, the Meteo France weather service said. "We're dealing with an exceptional situation," interior ministry spokesman Frederic de Lanouvelle told AFP, urging people "not to use their vehicles".

### 'Going from cafe to cafe'

Some 25 departments across much of the northern half of France were on alert



PARIS: A picture taken yesterday in Paris shows snow covered railways.—AFP

for snow and black ice, and more snow is expected to hit the country from Friday. Paris police also urged people to leave their cars at home in order to avoid traffic jams and facilitate the work of rescue services and tow trucks. Police had also closed major highways near Paris to lorries, and rail operator SNCF told clients to postpone their trips if possible.

Slobodan, a 46-year-old sales representative, said he had spent the night

"going from cafe to cafe" near the Gare du Nord station in Paris after his train was cancelled Tuesday night. He had been hoping to make it home "to take a shower, change clothes and get back to work at La Defense," the business district west of the capital. But "all trains toward the suburbs have been cancelled since 5:00 am," he said. In addition, school buses were not running in several areas near Paris and other northern and central regions.—AFP

## In a new gamble, far-right Dutch MP targets polls

THE HAGUE: Dutch voters are gearing up for new elections, with looming municipal polls seen as a gamble for far-right anti-Islam MP Geert Wilders and a test of the staying-power of populist politics. A year ago, Wilders barreled his way into second place in general elections, with his Freedom Party (PVV) winning 20 seats in parliament to become the country's main opposition to a new coalition government headed by Prime Minister Mark Rutte's Liberal VVD party. Buoyed by the showing, Wilders is now hoping to snap up seats across local councils in the March 21 vote.

Currently the PVV is only present in The Hague and Almere, but Wilders has widened his horizons and is planning to put up candidates in about 30 municipalities. Parties had until Monday to register candidates, and the municipalities will publish their lists on Friday. Analysts believe however that support for Wilders is waning, with opinion polls showing backing for the PVV down 25 percent from last year. "The PVV's populism has been halted," said Rudd Koole, Dutch politics professor at Leiden University.

### 'One-man band'

Indeed, the PVV's list of candidates is thinly populated—only nine are set to stand in The Hague, compared to about 50 hopefuls from each of the more traditional parties. And winning new PVV recruits is proving hard. The problem is not fear of being identified with extreme right-wing politics, which has "now become accepted, normalized," said Koole. Rather, the issue is the absence of "any party machinery" as the PVV "remains a one-man show" entirely led by Wilders, said Kees Aarts, a political analyst from the University of Groningen. Even Wilders has admitted that he has not had the widest choice of candidates. "As a relatively young par-



BRUSSELS: In this file photo, Dutch far-right politician Geert Wilders holds a press conference in Brussels.—AFP

ty we have to sometimes pick among people that we still don't know very well," he said, quoted by the daily Volkskrant which has called his fresh election bid "a gamble". The result has been a chaotic selection process, and some candidates have swiftly left after being signed up, some put off by what is seen as the party's narrow and over-riding emphasis on its anti-Islam theme.

Others have been caught out by skeletons in their closets. In December, Wilders withdrew his choice to head the PVV's list in Rotterdam after revelations about the man's links to British Holocaust revisionist David Irving. Another candidate left after it emerged she had said she wanted to "hang" Rutte, a third from Utrecht suggested the local mosque should burn, and a fourth from western Zeeland had apparently harassed his wife for three years. "It shows how vulnerable the party is," said Aarts. "The party suffers somewhat from its lack of organization, but so far that had not been held against it." The PVV's biggest test will come in Rotterdam. A majority of residents of Europe's biggest port have foreign roots, including its outgoing, Moroccan-born leader Ahmed Aboutaleb—the country's first immigrant and Muslim mayor.—AFP

## False tsunami warnings spook Americans

NEW YORK: False tsunami warnings flashed on cellphones along the US East and Gulf Coasts on Tuesday morning when a US National Weather Service (NWS) systems test went awry, unnerving Americans from Maine to Texas. The false alerts appeared to have been sent by the private forecasting company AccuWeather, according to cellphone images posted on social media. AccuWeather pointed the finger at the NWS.

"Yikes!" Trish Milburn, a writer of romance novels who lives on Florida's Gulf Coast, wrote on Twitter. "That warning is not what you want to see when you live less than 10 feet (3 meters) above sea level." It was not the first time this year Americans were roused by their cellphones warning of an impending catastrophe. Last month's false alarm was a missile headed for Hawaii. The National Weather Service said its National Tsunami Warning Center issued a routine monthly test message that was misconstrued, spooking people in cities as far apart as Boston and Houston.

"The test message was released by at least one private sector company as an official Tsunami Warning, resulting in widespread reports of tsunami warnings received via phones and other media across the East Coast, Gulf of Mexico, and the Caribbean," the service said in a statement. At least some people who clicked the alert to read the full message saw a disclaimer that the alert was in fact a test, according to screenshots posted online. AccuWeather said the National Weather Service wrongly coded the test as a real warning, confusing its automated alerts system.—Reuters





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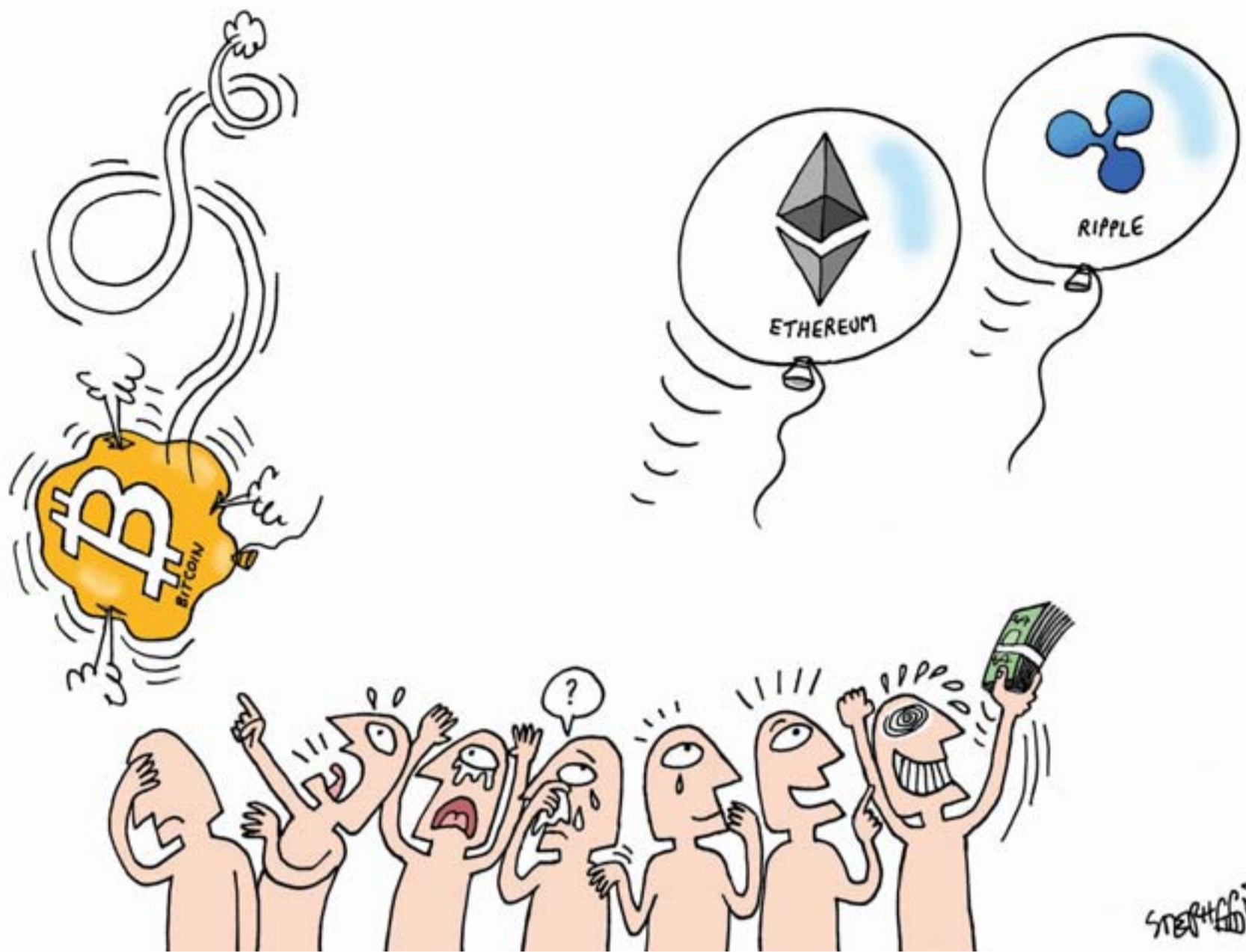
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E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net  
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net



## China tries to charm tech-savvy Taiwan youth

A start-up incubator on the outskirts of Shanghai is laying out sweeteners for budding entrepreneurs: Free office space, subsidized housing rent, tax breaks and in some cases, cash of up to 200,000 yuan (\$31,211.47). The main condition? Be from Taiwan. The center, formally called the Jinshan Cross Strait Youth Entrepreneurship Base, is part of the new face of China's approach towards Taiwan, the self-ruled island Beijing considers a wayward province and over which it claims sovereignty.

More than 50 such bases have sprung up in the past three years across the country, attracting scores of Taiwanese start-ups and their young founders. For China, Taiwan's youth is seen as a key demographic to win over amid souring political relations between Beijing and Taipei. But Taiwan's current government - swept into power with the help of the youth-driven Sunflower Movement - is viewing the success of the incubators and other programs with concern.

Taiwan is one of China's most sensitive issues and Beijing has never renounced the use of force to bring it under Chinese rule. For years its policies towards Taiwan have focused on improving ties with traditional businesses, which still continue. However, analysts and the Taiwan government say that Taiwan student protests in 2014 over a trade pact with China, which became known as the Sunflower Movement, caught Beijing's attention.

"Before 2015, the Chinese mainland government targeted mainly commercial or business interests in Taiwan," said Zhang Zhixin, a research fellow on Taiwan issues at the Shanghai Institute for International Studies. "But after the Sunflower movement, they shifted their focus to winning the hearts of the younger people, because they see them as the future and they see them as the biggest destructive force."

### Understanding the mainland

There are now at least 53 incubators across China, including in cities such as Deyang in China's central Sichuan province and Shenyang in the country's north-eastern rust belt, according to a list on the website of the Taiwan Affairs Office, which manages Beijing's policies towards Taiwan and established the sites. The Jinshan Cross Strait Youth Entrepreneurship Base is in an office block in the heart of a sprawling industrial zone. It is styled like a Silicon Valley start-up, with brightly colored walls, rows of vacant computer desks and posterboards describing companies working there.

"We want to be a window to young Taiwanese to help them understand the mainland," said Dong Ji, deputy party committee secretary of the industrial zone, which spent about 5 million yuan to set up the center in 2015. Although the centers are open to other mainland and foreign companies, they offer the most financial incentives to those from Taiwan, he said. The facility outside Shanghai now is host to 165 projects, 40 of which are Taiwanese. It aims to increase this number to 100 by next year. He said that the local Jinshan government, which also sees the incubator as an opportunity to bring young talent into the industrial zone, finances the start-ups itself and has given companies 30,000 to 200,000 yuan in cash support. Some have also received 500,000 yuan worth of other support, such as subsidies and tax breaks, he said. No conditions are placed on companies interested in registering at the incubator, he said. "We are working hard, for the cross-straits relationship and Taiwanese youth who come here to start businesses, to create a better environment for them to live and be entrepreneurs," he said.

### Brain drain

Such efforts in China come as Taiwan sees talented workers leave the country amid stagnant wages and economic growth that has lagged behind that of its neighbors. Workers in its tech industry - its strongest sector - are also being lured to China by higher pay. Taipei native Andy Yang, 27, was one of those who went abroad. He moved to Shanghai in 2015 to set up education technology company Bridge+ with four partners. They registered their company at the Jinshan center last year.

"I looked at some opportunities in Taiwan but felt that the difference between the two markets was very big," he said. "Our mainland compatriots are also very curious about Taiwanese people and have in terms of government policies given us many opportunities, so I came." For Wu Chung-hsin, chief executive of virtual reality company Vactor Digital, the Jinshan center has not only sponsored him but has given him business. It has commissioned his company to outfit a 400-sq-m virtual reality exhibition center that will showcase the area's tourist attractions.

"I would not be able to get these sorts of conditions in Taiwan. I asked, but in reality I was advised that what I could get was not as good," he said. Other policies also focus on Taiwan's youth. In July, China's Ministry of Education published a directive on its website asking its universities to relax entrance requirements for Taiwan students. These efforts by China have not gone unnoticed in Taiwan. Relations between the two sides have worsened in recent months amid an increasing number of Chinese military drills near Taiwan and after China unilaterally opened new civilian aviation routes close to Taiwan-controlled islands. —Reuters

## Italy on mission to cut waste, feed hungry

The young Roma woman gingerly touched the oranges and cabbages, bright, fresh and neatly stacked in crates. Francesco Fanoli, an anthropologist, insisted they were hers to take - for free. With a toddler playing in a nearby pram and more mouths to feed at home, the mother took the cache gratefully, telling Fanoli she could not find any work without an identity card. Next up: A range of breads from Viola de Andrade Piroli, a pilates teacher who had just nipped into a nearby shop. The loaves were gratefully received.

Then moments later, 91-year-old Maria Roccatelli turned up - wrapped in a big green jacket and thick scarf to keep out the winter cold, pushed by her son in a wheelchair. They picked up a pineapple, oranges, beans, chicory and cauliflowers and filled two large plastic bags. This should help see them through the week. Roccatelli, who lives in a nearby fourth-floor apartment, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. A regular now, Roccatelli learnt of the project from a stranger on the street. "(She) told me, 'Go there, they give poor people things,' so I came," she said. "Everything helps."

Since September, Fanoli and de Andrade Piroli have spent Saturday afternoons at the Alberone open-air market, a few metro stops from Rome's tourist attractions, cajoling shopkeepers to hand over unsold food and help the hungry. Once the market closes, they put up a cardboard box with a

handwritten sign, "raccolta e distribuzione gratis" ("free collection and distribution") and give it all away. In a nation proud of its produce and with legendary food markets, the initiative is a ground breaker, helping the needy and cutting waste.

### Foodies

Food is a cultural cornerstone in Italy yet the most recent government survey of 400 families showed each one wastes the equivalent of 85 kg of food, worth a combined €8.5 billion (\$10.49 billion), a year. Earlier figures have put food waste as high as 145 kg per family, at a cost of €16 billion. In 2016, Italy passed a law to limit food waste, making it easier to donate unsold food. It is still early to crunch numbers but the signs are good, said Roberto Moncalvo, president of the Italian agricultural association Coldiretti. "In 2017, six out of 10 people we interviewed said they have reduced food waste, a sign that families are now aware of this issue," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation by phone.

Still, much remains to be done. Most of the Alberone Market covers just one short street, but that Saturday, Fanoli and de Andrade Piroli collected 99 kg of food that would likely have gone to rot otherwise. "At the beginning we were collecting between 30 to 50 kilos. Then it started to grow. Now we are on an average of 130, 150 kilos every Saturday," said de Andrade Piroli.

Globally, one third of all food produced, worth nearly \$1 trillion, is wasted every year, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Critics say food waste is not only unethical in a world of rising hunger but environmentally destructive. Most waste happens in the home but market schemes raise awareness, said Paulo Hutter, who runs a non-governmental organization, Eco dalle Citta.

His organization recruited asylum seekers from sub-Saharan and north Africa to collect, recycle and distribute unsold foods at Porta Palazzo, Europe's largest open-air market, situated in the northern Italian city of Turin. This was to foster better relationships between communities and to "show African volunteers doing something useful for poor people," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. — Reuters



Francesco Fanoli and Viola de Andrade Piroli speaking to Roberta Cantalini, who runs a fruit and vegetable stall at the Alberone market, on Jan 13, 2018. — Reuters

## Sardine-tin lamps, wooden fridges: Meet CAR's 'frugal innovators'

The discarded sardine tins, used mayonnaise jars and old tomato cans jumbled together on Kouassi Bafounga's front porch looked like a pile of trash someone forgot to throw out. But retrieving a gleaming lid from the mess, he beams as if he has just found a piece of gold. These everyday objects are treasure to the self-made inventor living in Bangui, the capital of war-ravaged Central African Republic, one of the world's poorest countries.

In his tiny house of crumbling bricks, Bafounga collects what others throw away - and turns it into something useful. He cuts shapes from tin cans and fixes them together with glass, string and a little petrol to produce storm-proof lanterns. Bafounga is a shining example of the "frugal innovation" movement that has its roots in India, inspired by the notion of "jugaad", a Hindi word meaning "improvising with whatever resources are available". This trend of doing more with less has spread all over the world.

Bafounga devised his first lantern in Bambari when he was 15 and living with his older brother after his parents died. Unable to afford school fees and with time on his hands, he began tinkering with scrap materials. Central African Republic's second-largest city still has virtually no street lighting - perhaps not surprising in a country where little more than 10 percent of people had access to electricity in 2014, according to the World Bank. Even in fortunate homes with one or two ceiling bulbs, the light often flickers off soon after sunset due to power cuts that plunge most of the town into darkness. Now aged 35, making and selling lanterns remains Bafounga's way to make a living. "They last until sunrise and cost 1,500 francs (\$2.76) each," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

### 'Fab Lab'

Last year, Bafounga was one of 11 winners in a "Fab Lab" innovation competition run by the French embassy and Alliance Francaise, a French cultural center in Bangui.

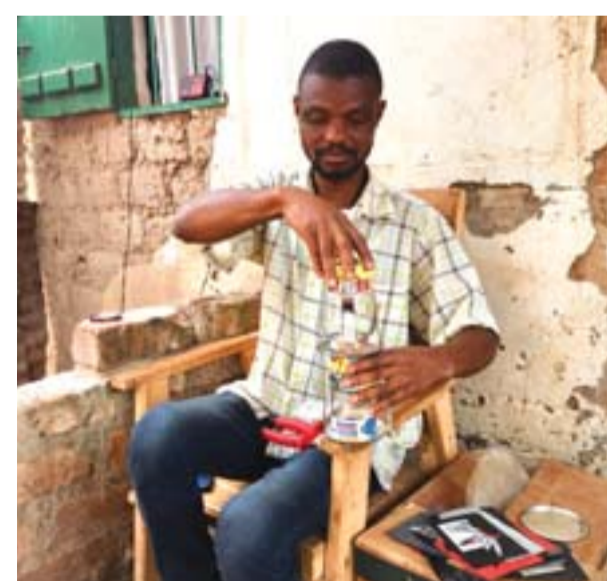
The finalists, chosen from more than 100 applicants, received assistance to develop their products into businesses. The aim is to "move away from handouts and focus on empowering the Central Africans to control their own future", said Dermot Hegarty of the Danish Refugee Council, which runs the scheme along with aid agencies ACTED and Mercy Corps. "Frugal innovation" is important in a country like Central African Republic, Hegarty said. "Access to goods and materials is exceptionally difficult, so you have to be able to use everything at your disposal," he explained. The inventions offer simple solutions to everyday problems. They include a shelling machine for the much-loved peanuts sold at markets and a cheese-maker run by a woman's collective, over half of whom lost their husbands to war and disease.

### Creativity from crisis

In the United States, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology also has a Fab Lab program and runs a "fab academy" that includes classes over the internet, director Sherry Lassiter told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. But Central African Republic - which ranked bottom of all countries in the latest Human Development Index, and has limited internet access - may seem an unlikely place for innovators. The country has been riven by sectarian conflict since 2013 when Muslim-majority Seleka rebels ousted President Francois Bozize, triggering a backlash by predominantly Christian and animist fighters.

Five years into the conflict, marked by successive waves of ethnic cleansing, the humanitarian situation is dire. Almost 70 percent of families lack essentials such as clean drinking water, over three-quarters of the population live in poverty, and close to one-fifth have fled their homes amid violence, according to the World Bank and the United Nations. Some say those pressures - combined with mass unemployment - are what drives people like Bafounga to be creative.

On the streets of Bambari where he grew up, a place where most inhabitants are displaced from their native villages, children play with toy trucks fashioned from sugar boxes and plastic bottle tops, held together with wooden toothpicks. On a dusty roadside, two teenage boys sell lamps consisting of LED bulbs powered by batteries, made brighter by attaching them to old CDs that reflect the light. Adolescents living in straw huts in a camp for displaced people in the middle of the city are busy hammering out buckets from curved sheets of metal, some ripped off homes by armed groups in the clashes that have rocked the area since 2014.



Kouassi Bafounga, inventor of the storm lantern, poses with his creation in the kitchen of his house in Bangui on Jan 16, 2018. — Reuters

### Business ambition

Joel Henri Baliba, 67, used to work in the air force of the infamous self-crowned Emperor Jean-Bedel Bokassa, speaks Russian after a training stint in Ukraine in the 1970s, and is the proud inventor of the country's first wooden refrigerator. Though he retired in 2015, when a friend drew his attention to the innovation competition, he took up the challenge. "A fridge is important for food conservation and also for medicine, but here most people don't have fridges," he said. "The prices are very high, most people can't afford one - that's why I wanted to make something that costs less."

By crafting the outer shell and interior from wood, which is plentiful, and using the usual refrigeration technology, Baliba can sell his product for up to 100,000 Central African francs (\$184) cheaper than conventional fridges. "We also allow people to pay in installments," he said, showing contracts signed with customers. Before the competition, Baliba had never tried to invent anything. "But now I have more ideas!" he said. Along with the other finalists, Baliba and Bafounga have received training in business and entrepreneurship. — Reuters

News

## LA Times sold to local billionaire

LOS ANGELES: The Los Angeles Times is being sold to billionaire physician and investor Patrick Soon-Shiong in a move aimed at reviving the fortunes of the newspaper amid recent turmoil, the publisher announced yesterday. Publishing group Tronc Inc. said it reached a deal to sell the LA Times and San Diego Union-Tribune to Soon-Shiong's Nant Capital for \$500 million plus the assumption of \$90 million in pension liabilities.

The move comes after months of newsroom unrest at the storied Los Angeles daily that has seen three editors in the past six months, and a vote to unionize the journalists. "We are pleased to transition leadership of the Los Angeles Times and The San Diego Union-Tribune to local ownership, and we are certain that the journalistic excellence in Southern California will continue long into the future," said Justin Dearborn, chief executive of Tronc, the name adopted for the group previously known as Tribune Publishing.

Soon-Shiong, a South African-born surgeon whose biotech investments have boosted his net worth to some \$7.8 billion, said in the statement: "We look forward to continuing the great tradition of award-winning journalism carried out by the reporters and editors of the Los Angeles Times, The San Diego Union-Tribune and the other California News Group titles."

The LA Times, like many newspapers, has been downsizing its staff as readers turn away from print to online news platforms. The Los Angeles daily was family-owned for more than a century before being sold to the Chicago-based Tribune Co. in 2000. Tribune Co., which split off its broadcast division and renamed its publishing arm Tronc (for Tribune Online Content), will continue to own the Chicago Tribune, Orlando Sentinel, South Florida Sun-Sentinel, Baltimore Sun and the New York Daily News.

Soon-Shiong, born in South Africa to Chinese parents, has been an investor in Tronc and also owns a stake in the Los Angeles Lakers basketball team. He has been a faculty member at the UCLA medical school and has invested in and donated to medical research. He was a founder of the Cancer MoonShot 2020 program, renamed Cancer



Patrick Soon-Shiong

Breakthroughs, aimed at developing immunotherapies to cure cancer. Soon-Shiong is the latest billionaire to seek to turn around struggling newspapers, following on the heels of Amazon owner Jeff Bezos's purchase of the Washington Post and Boston Red Sox owner John Henry's deal for the Boston Globe.

"I'd say this is good news, but with a caveat," said Dan Kennedy, a Northeastern University journalism professor and author of a forthcoming book on the efforts of Bezos and Henry to remake American newspapers. "Wealthy local ownership is exactly what the Los Angeles Times and the San Diego Union-Tribune need, assuming that Dr. Soon-Shiong is willing to be patient and to respect the independence of the newsroom." Kennedy noted that the businessman has in the past criticized "false reporting" about his own research efforts. "Given that, we'll have to see which Dr. Soon-Shiong shows up in the owner's suite," Kennedy said. — AFP

## Nigerian crypto craze unfazed by bitcoin plunge

LAGOS: While bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies have suffered precipitous falls in recent weeks, the units remain popular in Nigeria where they make it easier to do business. On the surface, digital coins may not seem like a good idea in a country where corruption is rampant and stacks of hard cash are often smuggled overseas. Yet West Africa's biggest economy has the world's third-largest bitcoin holdings as a percentage of gross domestic (GDP), behind Russia and New Zealand, according to Citigroup.

That may be because blockchain technology - public, online ledgers that underpin cryptocurrencies - is liberating Nigerians sidelined by the global financial system as it dramatically improves the ease of doing business. Olaoluwa Samuel-Biyi, a slight 27-year-old entrepreneur, looks the part of an aspiring corporate disrupter, dressed in skinny jeans with dishevelled hair. He first considered using cryptocurrency when credit card firms and other established payment providers refused to partner with his global remittance company, deeming the venture too risky. "They said the markets were too high risk and that people could finance terrorism," he told AFP, laughing. "It's ridiculous."

He realized that the only way he could solve the problem was to use cryptocurrency. "It's so hard to send mon-

ey from Nigeria to Zimbabwe, or from the United States to Sudan," he explained. Banks were "very tedious" and payment companies "generally exploitative", he said. "There's heavy discrimination, definitely. We have to go all around them to succeed."

Samuel-Biyi's company, SureRemit, developed its own virtual token - a kind of custom cryptocurrency like bitcoin or one of the many alternatives such as ether. The tokens are used to buy vouchers, which may be used to purchase goods and pay bills at participating merchants anywhere in the world, cutting out cumbersome middlemen and eliminating fees. In January, SureRemit held its "initial coin offering" (ICO), a form of online crowdfunding where people purchase the tokens to be put in circulation for use in eight countries, mostly in Africa and the Middle East.

The 500 million tokens, each worth two US cents, sold out in just two days and were snapped up by major cryptocurrency players, including South Korea's Hashed, raising \$7 million for the company. "We were expecting scam allegations," said Samuel-Biyi, referring to Nigeria's unenviable reputation for online financial fraud. "But the world really accepted it."

If the token system works, SureRemit stands to take a chunk of the world's remittance market, which was worth \$429 billion in 2016, according to the World Bank. It's hardly surprising that SureRemit was conceived in Nigeria: Remittance flows that year were worth \$19 billion - more than four percent of GDP. Sub-Saharan Africa has some of the highest remittance costs in the world, with the most expensive fees seen within the continent. — AFP

## Rescuers scour tilting buildings...

Continued from Page 1

rescued with ropes, ladders and cranes. But fire department staff at the site told AFP at least four bodies had been pulled out of the building in the day. Of those still missing, the Hualien disaster relief center said, 39 are residents at the apartment block and 13 are guests at the Beauty Stay Hotel - which is on the bottom floors of the Yun Tsui building. One of the people killed at the apartment block was a woman from mainland China, authorities said.

Officials temporarily suspended rescue efforts over fears the building might slip further as engineers raced to push large concrete blocks and steel bars to support the leaning side. Rescue efforts continued as night fell, with emergency responders welding crowbars and torches to search the lower floors for survivors. Continual aftershocks forced rescuers searching the apartment block to run for safety every time they struck. The responders would go back inside when the tremors stopped.

The strongest of them was a shallow 5.7-magnitude quake that was felt as far away as the capital Taipei, around 120 km north of Hualien. One resident who lives nearby told AFP how he watched the tower block partially collapse. "I saw the first floor sink into the ground. Then it sank and tilted further and the fourth floor became the first floor," said Lu Chih-son, 35, who saw 20 people rescued from the building. Chen Chih-wei, 80, said he was sleeping in his apartment on the top floor of the building when the quake struck. "My bed turned completely vertical. I was sleeping and suddenly I was standing," he told AFP. Chen said he managed to crawl to a balcony to wait for rescue, adding that the quake was the strongest he had felt in more than five decades of living in Hualien.

At the Marshal Hotel, which was also leaning and

badly damaged, at least two people were killed when the lower floors collapsed. But most residents got out and authorities said they believed no more people were trapped inside. President Tsai Ing-wen visited the apartment block Wednesday morning. "Now is the prime time for our rescue efforts, our first priority is to save people," she said in a Facebook post. Hualien is one of Taiwan's most popular tourist hubs as it lies on the picturesque east coast rail line and near the popular Taroko Gorge. The government said 17 foreigners sought medical treatment for minor injuries.

Local resident Blue Hsu said some of those carried out of the hotel were foreigners. "The lower floors sunk into the ground and I saw panicked tourists being rescued from the hotel," Hsu told AFP. Some 830 people were in shelters, officials said, while 1,900 houses were without power. Pope Francis expressed solidarity with the victims and encouraged emergency responders in a statement issued by the Vatican yesterday. "His Holiness willingly invokes upon all the Taiwanese people the divine blessings of strength and peace," the statement said.

The quake hit just before midnight (1550 GMT) around 21 km northeast of Hualien, according to the USGS. It followed almost 100 small tremors to have hit the area in the last three days and comes exactly two years since a quake of the same magnitude struck the southern Taiwanese city of Tainan, killing more than 100 people. Most of the deaths from the Feb 2016 earthquake were from the 16-storey Wei-kuan apartment complex, which toppled on its side and buried many residents in the rubble.

The safety of the building was called into question immediately after the disaster, when metal cans and foam were found to have been used as fillers in the concrete and residents said there had been cracks in the structure. Five people were found guilty over the disaster, including the developer and two architects. Taiwan lies near the junction of two tectonic plates and is regularly hit by earthquakes. The island's worst tremor in recent decades was a 7.6-magnitude quake in September 1999 that killed around 2,400 people. — AFP

## Opposition MPs stage sit-in for...

Continued from Page 1

graft in the interior ministry hospitality spending to the public prosecution for investigation. MP Adasani said that the interior ministry's hospitality spending increased from a mere KD 2 million to KD 23 million, a sevenfold rise, and the amount is larger than the same spending by all other ministries. He said that the investigation reports by the interior ministry itself and the budgets committee of the Assembly indicate suspicions of graft and forgery.

MP Ali Al-Deqbasi said that ordinary people are

sent to jail for traffic offenses, so why shouldn't they be punished for major embezzlements. The Assembly also delayed voting on an agreement for opening an office of NATO in Kuwait until the foreign minister is available to answer questions. MP Saleh Ashour asked why should there be a NATO office in the country when Kuwait is not a member of NATO. MP Abdulkarim Al-Kandari said that MPs did not obtain answers to the issues of sovereignty and compensation from the foreign relations panel.

The Assembly also completed the debate on the housing problem, with lawmakers accusing both the government and the Assembly of being unconcerned to resolve the problem. State Minister for Housing Jenan Boushehri said the number of applications for government housing dropped from 110,000 last year to 96,000 currently, but she said that the path is still too long to resolve the problem.

## World's biggest rocket soars ...

Continued from Page 1

Both rockets landed side by side in unison on launchpads, live video images showed. "New Olympic sport - Synchronized Landings!" wrote NASA astronaut Randy Bresnik on Twitter. The third, center booster failed to land on an ocean platform - known as a dromedary - as planned. "It didn't have enough propellant," Musk said, adding that it plunged into the ocean about 100 m away from its landing point. "Apparently it hit the water at 300 miles an hour and took out two of the engines," he added.

Experts said the launch would likely catch the eye of the US space agency NASA, which may consider using the Falcon Heavy as a way to fast-track its plans to reach the Moon again for the first time since 1972. Acting NASA Administrator Robert Lightfoot congratulated SpaceX and called it a "tremendous accomplishment". Kennedy Space Center Director Bob Cabana said "the successful launch of a new vehicle on its first flight is a significant accomplishment they can be very proud of". Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield tweeted: "What we're watching is @SpaceX leaving all other rocket companies in the dust. Congrats to everyone there!"

US President Donald Trump also offered his con-

gratulations, tweeting: "This achievement, along with @NASA's commercial and international partners, continues to show American ingenuity at its best!" Musk replied: "Thank you on behalf of SpaceX. An exciting future lies ahead!" The Falcon Heavy launched from the same NASA pad that was the base for the Apollo-era Moon missions of the 1960s and 1970s. It is "the most powerful operational rocket in the world by a factor of two," SpaceX said.

That means it can carry twice the payload of United Launch Alliance's Delta IV Heavy, at a far lower cost - about \$90 million per launch compared to \$350 million for its competitor. But the Falcon Heavy is not the most powerful rocket ever - just the biggest in operation today. The Saturn V rocket that propelled astronauts to the Moon could deliver more payload to orbit. The Soviet-era Energia, which flew twice in 1987 and 1988, was also more powerful.

The Falcon Heavy is essentially three smaller, Falcon 9 rockets strapped together, adding up to a total of 27 engines. The 70-m tall rocket is designed to carry nearly 64 metric tonnes into orbit - more than the mass of a fully loaded 737 jetliner. It was initially intended to restore the possibility of sending humans to the Moon or Mars, but those plans have shifted and now the Falcon Heavy is being considered mainly as a potential equipment carrier to these deep space destinations, Musk said Monday. Instead, another rocket and space-ship combination being developed by SpaceX, nicknamed BFR - alternately known as "Big F\*\*\*ing Rocket," or "Big Falcon Rocket" - would be the vehicle eventually certified for travelers. — AFP

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## Sports

# Over 200 North Korean cheerleaders spark fashion envy in Pyeongchang

## Cheerleaders were carefully selected, screened for looks, skills and loyalty

**INJE:** More than 200 sharply dressed North Korean cheerleaders decked out in expensive fur smiled and posed for the media and onlookers yesterday after arriving in South Korea for the Pyeongchang Olympics.

The 229 chic young women wore tailored knee-length scarlet coats with fur hats, fur collars, and matching cuffs to ward off the winter chill. "By the way, I love the North Korean cheering squad's outfit. It's quite something! I want that hat!" said one South Korea fan on Twitter.

"I think they are very pretty," said a South Korean onlooker of the women who were part of a 280-member delegation who crossed the Demilitarized Zone that divides the two Koreas at a border post north of Seoul. They were immediately whisked away in a convoy to their hotel in Inje county, a small rural town located 120 kilometres from the Games venue in Pyeongchang.

"I am happy to see you," said one cheerleader, beaming broadly but refusing to disclose their cheerleading routine. "You just wait. If I tell you now, it would be less exciting when you see it."

The cheerleaders are reportedly the product of a careful selection process in North Korea, screened for their family backgrounds, looks, skills and loyalty to the ruling Workers' Party.

The North has sent cheer squads to three international sports events hosted by the South—the 2002 Asian Games in Busan, the 2003 Summer Universiade in Daegu and the 2005 Asian Athletics Championships

in Incheon. One of those in the 2005 group, Ri Sol-Ju, went on to become the wife of North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un. "I don't want to say it but North Korea's cheering squad is quite pretty. You can throw stones at me but the truth is the truth," said another observer on Twitter.

### 'NICE TO MEET YOU'

The young women were given a quick bathroom break at a rest area in Gapyeong, located about halfway to their hotel destination. They strutted past South Koreans onlookers, who snapped out their smartphones for photos of the rare sight.

In the bathroom, the cheerleaders stood side by side in front of the mirror, each checking and fixing their make-up while chatting among themselves. Banners welcoming the North's Olympic participation in the February 9-25 Olympics lined the hilly drive up to the Inje Speedium, a four-star luxury resort with a car racing theme park.

Surrounded by mountains and seemingly secluded, the resort is seen as an ideal spot for enforcing tight security while at the same time maintaining close surveillance on the large group of Northerners.

But hours before the arrival of the guests, the hotel was bustling with media and police officers who had put barriers up at all entrances to the resort. The cheerleaders got off the bus one by one and scurried past



**INJE:** North Korean cheerleaders arrive at the Inje Speedium, a racetrack and hotel complex, in Inje, north of Pyeongchang, yesterday ahead of the Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games. — AFP

“North Korea's cheering squad is quite pretty”

the media, who fired questions at the young visitors ranging from their health to the chilly weather.

Most quickly walked into the building without saying a word but some occasionally smiled and waved at the camera, and said: "Nice to meet you."

At a dinner banquet hosted by South Korea, the cheerleaders—in matching bright red two-piece jackets and skirts complete with Kim Il-Sung and Kim Jong-Il

lapel pins—were seen chatting among themselves at round tables.

"A new era of reconciliation has been opened," said a North Korean delegate leading the cheer squads, referring to a thaw in North and South Korean relations ahead of the Games. The guests were served grilled scallops, shrimp wrapped in pickled radish, barbecued beef, beef stew and fruit. — AFP

## The invisible team: Russia here but not here at Pyeongchang

**PYEONGCHANG:** There is a grey door at the Pyeongchang Winter Games media centre with a sign reading "Olympic Athletes from Russia", but it is rarely open and inside there are no Russian flags or colours.

It is a fitting metaphor for the country's participation in South Korea, where the Russian team is suspended over a doping scandal but 167 of its competitors deemed to be drug-free will take part as "Olympic Athletes from Russia".

Despite officially not competing in the Games, Russia, along with North Korea, has dominated debate in the lead-up to tomorrow's opening ceremony. Russia was suspended from the Games in December over its systemic doping programme, fined \$15 million and its former sports minister, Deputy Prime Minister Vitaly Mutko, was banned for life.

Nevertheless, Russians will still make up one of the largest contingents in Pyeongchang, albeit under a neutral flag—which means standing to the Olympic anthem if they win gold, and a strict absence of Russian colours.

Under stringent conditions imposed by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), no white-blue-red Russian tricolours can flutter anywhere in public—not even from apartments in the athletes' village.

Even if a spectator hands them a Russian flag, they must refuse it. Competitors can hang Russian flags on their bedroom walls, as long as they are out of general sight. Other rules govern what the Russian competitors can wear, even when training or in casual gear.

For instance, they are not allowed to wear any combination of clothing that would create the Russian tricolour—for example white T-shirt, blue trousers and red footwear.

Their social media will be monitored to make sure they call themselves "Olympic Athlete from Russia" or "OAR". The Russians do, however, have a strong incentive to comply with the rules: The IOC is considering lifting Russia's suspension in time for the closing ceremony on February 25.

### HOW DID WE GET HERE?

It is all a far cry from four years ago, when Russia hosted the Sochi Winter Olympics and the country soared to the top of the medals table. For

Russian President Vladimir Putin, who had staked his personal reputation on the Games, and the country's 144 million people, it was an immensely proud moment.

But it is that Olympics which helped propel Russia to where they are today at the Olympics: banned and marginalised, a pariah. Central to blowing the lid on widespread doping across Russian sport was whistleblower Grigory Rodchenkov, the former head of Russia's anti-doping lab.

Rodchenkov, who alleged that Putin personally ordered the doping programme, fled to the United States in 2016 in fear of his life. Putin later ridiculed his claims and called him "an idiot".

That same year, a bombshell report by Canadian lawyer Richard McLaren on behalf of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) accused Moscow of widespread state-sponsored doping that reached its climax at Sochi.

There, said the report, Russian secret agents were part of an elaborate plot to help the country's athletes cheat their way to gold. The nefarious scheme included swapping tainted urine samples for clean ones using a "mousehole" in the Sochi laboratory wall. Russia's track and field athletes were consequently banned from the 2016 Rio Olympics and the whole team was barred from the Paralympics. They remain suspended from the Pyeongchang Paralympics.

### WHAT HAS RUSSIA SAID?

Moscow officials have been united in their fury against Russia's continued isolation at the highest level of sport. There was a rare piece of good news last week when the top court for sport, the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), overturned life bans meted out by the IOC to 28 Russian athletes and staff over doping.

But torpedoing any hopes of a late entry to Pyeongchang, the IOC—who were stunned by the CAS ruling—on Monday said 15 of the 28 would not be invited to South Korea.

The rest of the 28 have either retired or are unavailable for undisclosed reasons. That provoked a furious response from Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, who branded it "a shameful decision". "This decision is unfair, unlawful, amoral and politically charged," he wrote on Facebook, asserting that "its goal is to do political damage to Russia".

The number of Russians at Pyeongchang currently stands at 167 "clean" athletes, but on Tuesday CAS said that Korean-born speed skater Victor An and 31 other Russian athletes had launched a last-ditch appeal against their suspensions. The Russians—including officials and coaches—at the Winter Olympics will be closely watched by the IOC to ensure they stick to the rules as neutrals. — AFP

## From big air to mixed curling, four new events

**PYEONGCHANG:** From high-flying snowboarders to alpine skiers racing side-by-side, four new events aimed at highlighting drama and faster-paced excitement will make their Winter Olympic debuts at Pyeongchang.

Ahead of Friday's opening ceremony, AFP Sport looks at what spectators can expect from the four new disciplines.

### BIG AIR

Spectacular jumps and spins will be on display in Big Air, where snowboarders hurtle down a steep 160-foot (48m) ramp and then perform as many tricks as they can while flying through the air.

It is a bit like ski jumping, but with twirls. Athletes' two top scores will combine for a final total.

Austrian Anna Gasser won the Winter X Games Big Air crown last month in Aspen and Canada's Max Parrot won the men's title. Olympic sport does not get much cooler than this.

### MASS-START SPEED SKATING

A pack of up to 28 competitors begin at the same time for 16 laps of a 400m oval with no lane lines. Expect a few dramatic tumbles in a race filled with strategy and jostling for position.

South Korea's Kim Bo-Reum is the women's world champion, while American Joey Mantia owns the men's world title in a sport he compares to US stock car racing.

## Nigerian women fight fear to make Olympic bobsleigh history

**PYEONGCHANG:** As they prepare to make Olympic history in Pyeongchang, Nigeria's women's bobsleigh team admit they battle their demons every time they climb into the sled. Being billed as "Cool Runnings" reloaded in the West African country's first Winter Games appearance, Seun Adigun and Akuoma Omeoga knelt in silent prayer yesterday before hurtling down the track at breakneck speeds they know could kill them.

"The first time I got in a sled it was honestly terrifying," driver Seun told AFP in an interview after training. "The only thing that saved my peace of mind was that I used to be a gamer, so initially I just treated it like a video game," added the bubbly 31-year-old, who represented Nigeria as a hurdler at the 2012 London Olympics. "That kind of helps dampen the fear because when you get in a sled you really don't know exactly what's going to happen. "We also pray! If there's a ritual that we do that's what it is." Thirty years after the Jamaican men's bobsled team



**PYEONGCHANG:** Axel Jungk of Germany takes a corner in the first Men's unofficial skeleton training session at the Olympic Sliding Centre, during the Pyeongchang 2018 Winter Olympic Games in Pyeongchang. — AFP

ing. "There's bumping, there's drafting, there's strategy," Mantia said. "It's definitely more exciting to watch than standard long-track races."

### ALPINE TEAM

Alpine team competition will feature two men and two women from 16 nations in head-to-head giant slalom runs on a course that demands short and rapid turns.

It's on February 24, the penultimate day of the Olympics, and is the final Alpine ski event. France captured the world title last year, with Slovakia second and Sweden third.

### MIXED CURLING

"It's fast-paced, it's high energy, a lot of athleticism, a different dynamic on the ice," Canada's Kaitlyn Lawes says. Mixed-doubles curling is played by two players, one male and one female on each team. Just 22 minutes are available to talk strategy—normally it is 38 minutes.

And with only two players instead of the usual four, more nations could mount a threat.

"In today's fast-paced world, I think a 90-minute game is going to be more popular than a three-hour game," says Canada's John Morris. — AFP



**PYEONGCHANG:** Nigeria's women's bobsleigh and skeleton team members Seun Adigun, Ngozi Onwumere, Akuoma Omeoga and Simidele Adeagbo attend a welcoming ceremony for the team in the Olympic Village in Pyeongchang ahead of the Pyeongchang 2018 Winter Olympic Games. — AFP

took the sports world by storm at the 1988 Calgary Olympics—immortalised in the hit Hollywood movie "Cool Runnings"—Nigeria's women are poised to become Pyeongchang's unlikely stars.

But it still takes nerves of steel to launch yourself down an icy mountain in an oversized tin can at 150kph (93mph). "Of course you have to think about the dangers," said the Texas-based Seun, who invited fellow runners Akuoma and Ngozi Onwumere to com-

pete in the two-man bobsleigh in September 2016. "You have to accept it and embrace it before you can actually apply what you need to protect yourself. "It's a ripping run of speed and being jolted around and sucked down into the bottom of the sled, whether it's head first or bum first—you roll with the punches," she chuckled. "It's very similar to being thrown down a hill in a trash can—you just don't really know where you'll end up sometimes." — AFP

Sports

# Norway's comeback king Svindal favourites for Olympic gold

Svindal has the chance to become the oldest man ever to win

**PYEONGCHANG:** Norway's Aksel Lund Svindal bears all the scars from horrific crashes and career-threatening injuries as mementos of a tough life on the piste, but at the age of 35, he heads into Sunday's men's downhill as one of the favourites for Olympic gold.

In the final chapter of a brilliant career, Svindal has the chance to become the oldest man ever to win an alpine skiing gold medal at the Pyeongchang Games. Durability is something of a trait in Norwegian skiers.

Svindal's boyhood idol Kjetil Andre Aamodt won Super-G gold at Turin in 2006 aged 34, a record until Austria's Mario Matt won the slalom at Sochi four years ago, also at the age of 34.

Lasse Kjus won gold in the combined as a 23-year-old on home snow in Lillehammer in 1994 and was still competing in three events at the Turin Games as a 35-year-old. Svindal, who won gold, silver and bronze in Vancouver in 2010, failed to medal in Sochi and has been plagued by injuries in recent years but the Norwegian looks to have hit form at just the right time.

So far this season he has won World Cup races in downhill at Beaver Creek and Val Gardena, and picked up a victory in Super-

G at Kitzbuehel in January. "I'm really happy I'm back because, honestly, the last two years were not super easy. A big knee injury is probably the worst injury you can have as a ski racer," he told Reuters. Svindal certainly is back.

He sits second in the World Cup down-

hill, he said.

**BOUNCING BACK**

Svindal's last two seasons have ended prematurely due to knee injuries. Those came on top of an absence of nearly a year following a massive crash in 2007 and another long layoff four years ago with an Achilles tendon injury he sustained kicking a ball around with his team mates.

Nothing epitomises the courage and durability that Svindal has shown throughout his career than the way he turned the Colorado venue of Beaver Creek from being the scene of a nightmare to one of his favourite courses.

In November 2007, Svindal was at his peak when he tumbled dramatically down the piste after misjudging a jump in training while racing along at 120 km per hour on the tricky Golden Eagle section.

He was left unconscious on the slope, with a deep gash in his left buttock caused by one of his skis. He also broke a bone in his back and had several fractures to his face.

He was rushed to hospital where he was to spend three weeks and it was a full 10

“Knee injury is probably the worst you can have as a ski racer”

hill standings-behind Switzerland's Beat Feuz-and also faces a strong challenge from in-form 24-year-old German Thomas Dressen, who won the prestigious Kitzbuehel downhill last month.

The Norwegian, however, remains focused on getting the one prize that has so far eluded him. "If I could choose one race to win this year, it would be the



Aksel Lund Svindal

months before he returned to action. Yet returning to Beaver Creek, a year after that bloody crash, Svindal put the bad memories aside and won both downhill and Super-G in spectacular style and set up a season where he regained his overall World Cup crown. As if to emphasise his mental

strength, the Norwegian has since won three more downhill World Cup races at Beaver Creek. Having lost his mother, who died in childbirth when he was eight years old, the popular Norwegian's friendly demeanour has sometimes masked his steely determination. — Reuters

## Hirscher wants first gold to cap career

**PYEONGCHANG:** Marcel Hirscher has dominated World Cup skiing for the past six seasons, but the Austrian admitted yesterday a first "amazing" Olympic gold medal would be the icing on the cake.

Despite winning six overall World Cup crystal globes between 2012-17, with 55 victories and 120 podiums, Hirscher has just one individual medal at a Winter Games, silver in the slalom in Sochi in 2014.

The 28-year-old finished a heart-breaking fourth in the giant slalom in both Sochi and Vancouver four years earlier, where he also came in fifth in the slalom. "It would be an amazing success, not a life-changing or career-changing success, but it would be really nice to have," Hirscher said of an Olympic gold.

"What is 100 percent sure is that I will go for it, that's the plan. Plans don't always work out, but you never know. "It can be that the dream comes true but it can also be that I finish the Olympic Games with just one silver." Asked whether things were different now than for Sochi, a relaxed Hirscher said: "Yes! Having 55 World Cup wins and six big crystal globes." "If I'm done tomorrow it will be fine anyways, it was an amazing career."

One of Hirscher's main rivals in the giant slalom will be American Ted Ligety, who will be hunting a third Olympic gold despite having enjoyed nowhere near the success of the Austrian on the World Cup circuit. But Ligety said Hirscher's lack of Olympic success would not detract from his legacy.



STOCKHOLM: File photo shows Marcel Hirscher of Austria competes during the FIS Ski World Cup parallel slalom city event in Stockholm, Sweden, on January 30, 2018. — AFP

"It's important to win a gold medal, I think it's an important piece of rounding out a legacy like his, but at the same time... it doesn't change the fact he's one of the greatest of all time," Ligety said.

The American was quick to add: "Hirscher's been very dominant this year, but the Olympics are different from the World Cup so hopefully the race goes differently from how it has been in the World Cup!"

**A BIG HONOUR**

Hirscher dubbed Ligety's praise "a big honour".

"Every athlete is here wanting a gold medal and hopefully pushing it as hard as possible," he said.

"Now I'm missing that Olympic gold medal, I'm here on a mission and we'll see how it works.

"The only thing I can do is have fun with

this and see where I'm ending up after these Olympics."

Hirscher said the winner on the speed events track at the Jeongseon Alpine Centre piste could well be the one whose team finds the right "set-up", nailing down the correctly edged and waxed skis so they work the most efficiently on the hard-packed snow and in bitterly cold conditions.

The clue was "testing, testing, testing and playing with all the experience we have, the whole team, and hoping we're making the right decisions when it comes to waxing, edging". "You know if you have the right set-up on the race day. You know if you have it after two turns or if it's a complete mess, but not during testing. The race hill is always different from training hills, but it's the same for every racer." But some good news for Ligety was that Hirscher backed his "on-point" rival to thrive on the snow. — AFP

## Canada's women are on a drive for five

**PYEONGCHANG:** The Canadian women's ice hockey team head into the Winter Olympics as the underdogs to a top-ranked US squad, but they know they have a mission to fulfill: a fifth straight gold medal.

Canada have failed to take home gold just once since the women's game debuted at the Winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan, in 1998. Most often they have had to get past the United States, winners of that first-ever gold, to earn the top spot on podium.

This year is sizing up to be no different, except that a revenge-motivated Team USA are slightly favored and are as eager to end their own drought as the Canadians are to extend their good fortune.

"We're really confident with where we're at," Canada head coach Laura Schuler said at a news conference yesterday. "I know we've got a great team, a great team with probably the best chemistry, the best group of girls that I've ever, ever had an opportunity to coach, and when you have that, good

things happen."

Teams Canada and USA have battled to a near standstill over the last several months in the run-up to the Pyeongchang Games, which run from Feb. 9-25. They split an exhibition series 3-3, but ahead of that, the US captured gold at the 2017 women's world championships - their fourth straight in that competition.

"I think the rivalry between Canada and the US has been there since the inception, and that every single time we've ever faced the US it has been a one-goal difference, it's gone into overtime, it's a back-and-forth hockey game, it's best-on-best competition, and I think that's what makes it so great," said Schuler, who played on the 1998 team that captured silver.

Canada open their Olympic campaign on Feb. 11 against the Russians and then take on Finland before meeting their archrivals on Feb. 14. Schuler's players say they aren't looking past those first two games, though.

"We can't take any team for granted. We're on a mission here," said forward Meghan Acosta, one of Canada's assistant captains. "When we look too far ahead that's when we lose sight of our goals."

They are also not worried about having their southern neighbors seen as the team to beat this year, either. "They're too shy to say it, but we love being the underdog," team Canada General Manager Melody Davis said. "We'll take that any day." — Reuters

## ABK sponsors 'Guide Their Sight with Your Heart' walkathon



Ali Al Baghli (ABK) with the winners and KISR officials.



Dr. Mane Al Sudairawi (KISR) honoring Ali Al Baghli (ABK)

**KUWAIT:** In celebration of 'World Braille Day', Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) sponsored the 'Guide Their Sight with Your Heart' Walkathon for the second consecutive year. The event was organized by the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) and took place on Thursday, February 1, 2018, at the Boulevard, Salmiya.

Under the patronage of Dr Samira A.S. Omar - Director General of KISR, hundreds of participants walked the 2 kilometer distance to raise awareness on the daily challenges faced by the visually impaired individuals around the world.

In appreciation of ABK's efforts and sponsorship, Ali Al Baghli - Senior Manager, Corporate

Communications at ABK was presented with a trophy from the KISR team honoring their long-standing commitment to supporting people with special needs.

World Braille Day is annually celebrated on January 4, the birthday of the Braille inventor, Louis Braille. The day recognizes the contributions of

Louis Braille in helping blind and visually impaired people to read and write. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) around the world use this day to create awareness about the challenges faced by visually impaired individuals and to encourage businesses and governments to create economic and social opportunities for the blind.

## Sports

# Maxwell century powers Australia to T20 win over England

## 58-ball century including 10 fours and four sixes

### SCOREBOARD

**HOBART, Australia:** Complete scoreboard in the second Twenty20 tri-series match between Australia and England at Bellerive Oval yesterday:

England	
J. Roy c Tye b Richardson	9
A. Hales c&b Agar	22
D. Malan c Tye b Maxwell	50
E. Morgan c Warner b Maxwell	22
J. Buttler c Maxwell b Stoinis	5
S. Billings c&b Agar	10
D. Willey st Carey b Maxwell	3
C. Jordan not out	16
A. Rashid c Stoinis b Stanlake	1
T. Curran c Warner b Tye	6
M. Wood not out	5
Extras (lb2, w4)	6
Total (9 wickets: 20 overs)	155
Fall of wickets: 1-16 (Roy), 2-60 (Hales), 3-94 (Morgan), 4-109 (Buttler), 5-122 (Billings), 6-126 (Malan), 7-126 (Willey), 8-127 (Rashid), 9-137 (Curran)	
Bowling: Stanlake 4-0-43-1 (2w), Richardson 4-0-27-1, Tye 4-0-28-1, Stoinis 2-0-16-1 (2w), Agar 3-0-15-2, Head 1-0-14-0, Maxwell 2-0-10-3.	

Australia	
D. Warner c Hales b Willey	4
D. Short c&b Rashid	30
C. Lynn b Willey	0
G. Maxwell not out	103
M. Stoinis c Billings b Wood	6
T. Head b Willey	6
A. Carey not out	5
Extras (lb4, w3)	7
Total (5 wickets: 18.3 overs)	161
Fall of wickets: 1-4 (Warner), 2-4 (Lynn), 3-82 (Short), 4-98 (Stoinis), 5-127 (Head)	
Did not bat: A. Agar, A. Tye, K. Richardson, B. Stanlake	
Bowling: Willey 3-0-28-3 (1w), Wood 3-3-0-26-1, Jordan 4-0-34-0, Curran 4-0-39-0, Rashid 4-0-30-1 (2w).	
Result: Australia won by 5 wickets	

**HOBART:** Glenn Maxwell slammed a last-ball six to score a masterful century and lead Australia to a five-wicket victory over England in the second tri-series Twenty20 international in Hobart yesterday. Maxwell, who earlier took three wickets in two overs, was man of the match with an unbeaten 103 as the Australians chased down England's 155 for nine in the 19th over.

Maxwell, who was controversially dropped from Australia's one-day team for the recent series against England, responded with a 58-ball century including 10 fours and four sixes at Bellerive Oval. "It was nice to get one over the rope and finish the job," Maxwell said.

"For us to start the series the way we have has been outstanding. We haven't had a lot of success in T20 cricket for the last few years. "Missing out on the one-day squad and not playing any part in the Ashes, it was

“For us to start the series the way we have has been outstanding”



**HOBART:** Australia's batsman Glenn Maxwell (R) plays a shot from the England bowling as wicketkeeper Jos Buttler (L) looks on during their Twenty20 cricket match at Bellerive Oval in Hobart yesterday. — AFP

obviously where I wanted to be this summer.

"I had to do a lot of work behind the scenes and I feel I've done that and got back into the Aussie colours." Maxwell had a big moment on 59 when his lofted drive found the fingertips of long-off fielder Jason Roy. But Maxwell stood his ground and although umpire Gerald Abood's soft signal was out, the television umpire deemed Roy did not complete the catch. Australia had a rocky start to their run chase when David Willey dismissed David Warner and Chris Lynn in the space of three balls. But Maxwell rebuilt the innings with stands with D'Arcy Short (30), Travis Head (6) and Alex Carey (5 not out) to secure victory.

Willey finished with three wickets for 28 off three overs. England, troubled by Australia's spinners, lost their last six wickets for 33 in registering a below-par total of 155. Dawid Malan cracked 50 off 36 balls with five fours and two sixes but England fell away after reaching 94 for two in the 10th over.

Maxwell captured three for 10 and Ashton Agar took two for 15 as Australia sent England's middle order tumbling. Kane Richardson (1-27) began the damage by removing dangerous opener Jason Roy for nine, before Malan hit his lively half-century.

He was supported by Alex Hales with 22 from 15 balls, and captain Eoin Morgan, also 22 from 14 balls. Hales was the first of two caught-and-bowled wickets for Agar. When Morgan went, caught by Warner off

Maxwell, it sparked a middle-order collapse.

Jos Buttler (5) fell cheaply, caught by Maxwell off Marcus Stoinis (1-16), while Sam Billings (10) popped a return catch to Agar. Malan was caught in the deep by Andrew Tye for Maxwell's second wicket and David Willey (3) was dismissed next ball to give Alex Carey his first international stumping.

Maxwell's hat-trick ball was wide of the leg-stump line. Adil Rashid (1) got the toe end of the bat on a shot off paceman Billy Stanlake and was well caught by Stoinis, while Tom Curran (6) was well held by a backpedalling Warner after failing to pick Tye's knuckle ball.

Chris Jordan hit the final ball for six to finish with 16 from 11 balls, with Mark Wood on five not out. Tye finished with 1-28. — AFP

## Najla Al-Jeraiwi, ooredoo's first female brand Ambassador

**KUWAIT:** ooredoo, is proud to announce sponsoring Kuwaiti triathlete Najla Al-Jeraiwi as its first female brand ambassador for the current season 2018-2019. The sponsorship comes in alignment with the company's commitment to enriching youth and supporting their passions and also the company's dedication to empowering women.



Najla Al-Jeraiwi

Al-Jeraiwi was the first Arab female triathlete representative in the 17th Asian Games, South Korea and the first GCC representative in UCI Road World Championships 2016. She was also the runner-up in the ATU African Triathlon & Pan Arab championship and the GCC cycling champion in both Time Trial and Road race. Al-Jeraiwi is currently the national champion of Kuwait in both triathlon and cycling. She has come in the top 3 in multiple regional triathalons - her next race will be this upcoming March in the Abu Dhabi World Triathlon series

In a statement regarding this, ooredoo Kuwait's Corporate Communications Senior Director Mijbil Alayoub said, "We have great pride in the achievement of our young promising Kuwaiti female triathlete Najla Al-Jeraiwi. Our commitment to supporting youth and empowering women is deep-rooted within our core values in ooredoo Kuwait. We hope to see more success in the future, and we look forward to bigger achievements on an international scale."

Supporting youth and empowering women is among ooredoo's top priorities through its CSR strategy. The company signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs in 2017, to support youth projects and initiatives. ooredoo is continuously working with the Ministry to enrich youth experience in a variety of fields, with a focus on volunteerism.



## Aboodka lift Wheelchair Basketball cup

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** "Aboodka" handicapped basketball team

became champion of the first wheelchair local basketball tournament, which concluded on Tuesday night at Kuwait Handicapped Sports Club.

The final match was attended by the honorary president of the club Al-Sheikha Sheikh Al-Abdallah Al-Sabah, Undersecretary of Youth Affairs Ministry Sheikh Zain Al-Sabah, club deputy president Nasser Al-Ajmi, Secretary General Abdallah Al-Azmi, Treasurer Saad Al-Azma, as well as tournament sponsor Abdallah Al-Jasser.

Aboodka defeated Lakers 44-42 in a very exciting and competitive match and was decided with the final

whistle. Third place went the Olympic team which defeated Tahreef 55-49.

Best player cup went to Mohammad Hawash, scorer Mohammad Al-Ghareeb. Club treasure and tournament director Saad Al-Azma said the tournament was of a good technical level, during which several promising players were discovered and may join the national team. He said the tournament that was organized on the occasion of Kuwait's celebrations of its national, liberation days and the 12th anniversary of HH the Amir ascension to power, was a good opportunity to prepare tournament to be held in Jordan in March.



IEAS and CSK team to meet in the finals

IISM and KIS battled with ICS. ICS came out swinging, scoring minutes after the start. Usama Awadh was the player who gave ICS the deserved lead. ICS were relentless in their attacking prowess and left KIS with little choice but to play a more conservative and defensive game. Anas Khan and Kevin Mahesh seemed to have a good understanding of the game as they kept prodding the KIS defense for a shot on goal. ICS claimed all three points as it headed into the second round of matches.

On the other side, we had the IEAS and IISM struggled to breakdown each other's defense. IEAS had to dig deep and defend the various attacks in their box but their goalkeeper was well aware of the danger and kept a clean sheet throughout. The game ended in a 0-0 draw and each team took one point into the next round.

**Round 2:** The second round saw CSK take on KIS and IISM take on UIS. IISM opened scoring early on with Atif scoring the goal putting his team 1-0 in the lead. UIS seemed eager to get back on level terms launching several quick counter attacks in response to the goal. Nevertheless, the IISM goalkeeper was vigilant at his post. After the break, UIS were back in the game with Adhil scoring the equalizer to make sure his team got one point as the match ended in a 1-1 draw.

Simultaneously, CSK opened their own scoring after a good spell of attack. After halftime, CSK doubled their lead only to have KIS Abdullah score and reduce the goal difference. But CSK were not to be held back as they responded brilliantly with another goal and gaining back their 2 goal cushion. The highly entertaining match ended 3-1 with CSK

taking all three points. Goal scorers of CSK were Emad, Alric and Alvin.

**Round 3:** IEAS took on UIS in the last round and CSK faced ICS. CSK seemed equally matched with ICS as both teams struggled to make a breakthrough but could not. The match though quite engaging ended in a goal-less draw. IEAS was on the offensive right from the start, having a lot ball possession. The goalkeeper for UIS was impressive; as he saved a lot of the goal-ward bound shots. The first half ended with a goalless draw but after halftime, Aaron D'Souza from IEAS finally broke the deadlock and gave them the lead.

After what was a riveting day of fast-paced youth football, IEAS will take on CSK in the finals, which will be held with the annual UGC Men's Football Tournament Final on 2nd March 2018.

## UGC Interschool under-15 football tournament 2018

**KUWAIT:** The United Goans Centre (UGC) held its Inter-school under-15 football tournament on February 3. The schools that took part were: Indian English Academy School (IEAS), Unite Indian School (UIS), Kuwait Indian School (KIS), Indian Central School (ICS), Carmel School Kuwait (CSK) and India International School Mangaf (IISM).

**Round 1:** In the first round of matches, IEAS took on

Sports

# Swansea hit eight in FA Cup rout, Huddersfield advance

## Biggest FA Cup win in their history

**LONDON:** Swansea racked up the biggest FA Cup win in their history as Tammy Abraham and Nathan Dyer inspired an 8-1 thrashing of Notts County in Tuesday's fourth round replay.

Despite fielding a much-changed side, Swansea settled any potential nerves with two goals in the space of as many first-half minutes at the Liberty Stadium. Swansea striker Abraham put the Premier League club in front from close range on 18 minutes, with Dyer swiftly adding another on the break.

Dyer made it 3-0 on the half-hour with a low shot from the edge of the penalty area, before Noor Husin got County on the scoresheet after 36 minutes. There was, though, to be no fairytale comeback for the League Two promotion chasers, as Abraham scored again in first-half stoppage time.



Kyle Naughton made it 5-1 with a deflected volley following a corner on 53 minutes and Wayne Routledge curled in a sixth before midfielder Tom Carroll crashed home a well-taken seventh on 65 minutes.

Daniel James marked his debut with a goal on 84 minutes to complete the rout. Swansea's demolition job means boss Carlos Carvalhal can look forward to a fifth round trip to Sheffield later, the Championship club who sacked him earlier this season.

Carvalhal has made an impact since arriving at the

Liberty Stadium just a few days after departing the Owls on Christmas Eve, with Swansea beating both Liverpool and Arsenal to drag themselves out of the Premier League relegation zone.

"It is important if it is the best result in the history (of the club), but the most important thing is the attitude of the players that made all the difference," Carvalhal said. "I spoke to them before the game that we have a challenge tonight. I am very proud of the players as they accepted the challenge."

## Huddersfield will face Man United

Top-flight strugglers Huddersfield will face Manchester United in the fifth round after winning 4-1 at second-tier Birmingham after extra time. Birmingham had taken the lead on 52 minutes when Che Adams turned on the edge of the penalty area to drill in a low shot. Huddersfield were soon level when Blues defender Marc Roberts inadvertently knocked the ball past keeper David Stockdale for an own goal. Steve Mounie headed Huddersfield in front four minutes into extra time. Rajiv van la Parra scored from a rebound to swiftly make it three, before Tom Ince drove in a fourth on 106 minutes to secure the Terriers a clash against United, who lost 2-1 at the John Smith's Stadium in October.

Rochdale, struggling in League One, caused an upset as they beat Championship side Millwall 1-0 to



**SWANSEA:** Swansea City's English midfielder Nathan Dyer (L) vies with Notts County's Afghan midfielder Noor Husin during the English FA Cup fourth round replay football match between Swansea City and Notts County at The Liberty Stadium in Swansea, south Wales on Tuesday. — AFP

book a fifth round home date against either Tottenham or Newport, who meet at Wembley later. With Millwall fielding a weakened team, Ian Henderson ignored the

dreadful condition of the Spotland pitch to settle a scrappy game when he slotted home from close range after 53 minutes. — AFP

## Di Maria fuels PSG as Marseille hit 9 in French Cup

**PARIS:** Angel Di Maria scored a hat-trick as holders Paris Saint-Germain defeated second-tier Sochaux 4-1 on Tuesday to reach the French Cup quarter-finals, while Marseille demolished Ligue 2 outfit Bourg-en-Bresse 9-0.

The Argentine winger headed PSG, who were playing without the rested Neymar, ahead inside the first minute at the Stade Bonal in eastern France, but twice former winners Sochaux levelled through Florian Martin before the quarter hour.

Edinson Cavani restored the lead for Unai Emery's team on 27 minutes when he turned in a Layvin Kurzawa cross at the far post, and Thiago Silva then rattled the crossbar with a header from a corner. Di Maria added a third just prior to the hour with a composed finish after he was released in behind the home defence by a pass from Italian midfielder Marco Verratti. He completed his hat-trick just three minutes later by forcing home a rebound from close range after Sochaux goalkeeper Lawrence Ati Zigi parried a fierce shot from Cavani.

Dani Alves finished the game in goal for PSG after Kevin Trapp was sent off in the closing stages for a foul outside his area on Sochaux striker Thomas Robinet. "The goal today was to advance beyond this round of the French Cup without injuries," said Emery, whose side travel to Real Madrid next week for the first leg of their Champions League last 16 tie.

"We're very happy with (Di Maria)," added the Spaniard, who has seen the revitalised Argentine score nine goals in 10 matches since the turn of the year. "He deserves to be in the squad, in the starting XI, like all the other players. My opinion of him hasn't changed today, he's an important player for us."

### MITROGLOU, OCAMPOS SHINE

Earlier, both Kostas Mitroglou and Lucas Ocampos scored hat-tricks as in-form Marseille crushed a hapless



**SOCHAUX:** Paris Saint-Germain's Uruguayan forward Edinson Cavani (L) scores a goal despite Sochaux's Ghanaian goalkeeper Lawrence Ati Zigi (R) during the French Cup round of sixteen football match between Sochaux (FCSM) and Paris Saint-Germain (PSG), on Tuesday at the Auguste Bonal stadium in Sochaux. — AFP

Bourg-en-Bresse in a heavily lopsided last 16 tie. Rudi Garcia's side, who are second in Ligue 1 after thrashing Metz 6-3 last week, romped into a 4-0 lead inside 20 minutes at the struggling Ligue 2 side and showed no mercy against hapless opponents. "We had an actual nightmare, the two sides were a world apart," admitted Bourg-en-Bresse coach Herve Della Maggiore. "We watched them play." Despite making six changes to the starting XI, Marseille ended the tie as a contest with early goals from Luiz Gustavo, Dimitri Payet, Ocampos and Mitroglou.

Greek international striker Mitroglou has struggled to nail down a place in the team since joining from Benfica last year, but he strolled through the vacant home defence

to score the fifth before half-time. Argentinian Ocampos grabbed his second early in the second half, although he was made to wait to complete his treble as Marseille went a game-high 23 minutes without scoring before he headed home. Mitroglou quickly got back in on the act as some more awful defending allowed him to nod in his seventh goal for the club, before Clinton N'Jie wrapped up the scoring with number nine from the penalty spot. Marseille have now won eight and drawn one of their last nine matches in all competitions, scoring 30 goals in the process.

But they fell well short of their record win-a 19-0 French Cup victory over Stade Raphaelois in 1933. — AFP

## Bayern hit Paderborn for six to reach German Cup semis

**MUNICH:** Bayern Munich dismantled third-tier Paderborn to sweep into the German Cup semi-finals with a thumping 6-0 win on Tuesday. The lower league side, who suffered successive relegations after playing in the Bundesliga three years ago, began brightly but were swiftly out-classed by visiting Bayern, who have won the competition a record 18 times. Kingsley Coman gave Bayern the lead after 19 minutes, sweeping home from close range after Arjen Robben had missed his kick, and the France forward then teed up Robert Lewandowski with a delightful pass for the second.

Bayern effectively ended Paderborn's resistance four minutes before half-time when a beautiful long ball from Mats Hummels found Joshua Kimmich, who beat the keeper at his near post with a calm finish. Bayern landed a further blow 10 minutes into the second half when Corentin Tolisso headed home unmarked from a corner. Robben curled the ball home from the edge of the area and then tapped in from close range to complete an emphatic win late on. Bayer Leverkusen also reached the last four after fighting back from 2-0 down to beat Werder Bremen 4-2 after extra time. Max Kruse and Aron Johannsson had given Bremen a two-goal lead inside seven minutes, but Julian Brandt scored either side of halftime to drag Leverkusen back into the match.

Karim Bellarabi and Kai Havertz then scored late in extra time to complete a superb turnaround. The semi-final lineup will be completed when last year's runners-up Eintracht Frankfurt host Mainz 05 and VfL Wolfsburg visit Schalke 04 in the remaining quarter-final ties.



**LEVERKUSEN:** Leverkusen's German forward Kevin Volland (R) and Bremen's Serbian defender Milos Veljkovic (L) vie for the ball during the German football Cup DFB Pokal quarter-final match Bayern 04 Leverkusen versus SV Werder Bremen on Tuesday in Leverkusen. — AFP

Meanwhile, Mueller has played down fears he could miss Bayern Munich's home Champions League last 16 match against Besiktas in a fortnight after limping out of a German Cup win. Mueller, Bayern's captain with Manuel Neuer currently injured, badly bruised his thigh colliding with Paderborn's goalkeeper Michael Ratajczak in the

build-up to Kingsley Coman's opening goal. Mueller played on, but came off after 32 minutes raising fears he could miss Bayern's home Bundesliga match against Schalke this Saturday, plus their key home European match against Besiktas on February 20, with the last 16 return in Istanbul on March 14. — Agencies

## Evra, kicked out of Marseille, joins West Ham on free transfer

**LONDON:** West Ham signed former Manchester United defender Patrice Evra on a free transfer yesterday, with the Frenchman set to link up again with former boss David Moyes. Evra has won multiple league titles and the Champions League in an illustrious career but his spell at Marseille ended abruptly in November after he launched a kung-fu kick at a supporter.



Patrice Evra

Evra, who joins the Hammers on a contract until the end of June, worked with Hammers manager Moyes during his time at Old Trafford and is looking forward to linking up with his old boss. "I'm really happy to be a Hammer, to be back in the Premier League and I love this game," said the left-back. "When you have to make a deal and money is not the issue, the deal could be done in five minutes," added the Evra in a statement on the club's website. "The main thing was for me to join West Ham and to help my teammates to win as many games as we can. "It was the fastest thing I have done in my life, because both parties wanted to work together, so it was very easy to make an agreement." West Ham are 12th in the Premier League with 12 matches to play, but are only three points above the teams in 18th and 19th, two of the three relegation places.

Evra's departure from France came after he lashed out in response to a group of supporters who had come to the pitchside to berate him for what they considered sub-par displays. The 36-year-old, capped 81 times by France, was hit with a season-long ban that only applies to UEFA club competitions. Alex Ferguson took the Senegal-born player to Manchester United from Monaco in January 2006, and won five Premier League titles and the Champions League. After spending his final season at Old Trafford working under Moyes, the defender moved to Italian champions Juventus in 2014 and enjoyed more domestic success before moving back to France in January 2017.

Evra's career has been dogged by controversy, not all of his making. At the 2010 World Cup in South Africa he led a revolt of the French players against coach Raymond Domenech.

A year later, while playing for United, Evra was the target of a racist insult from then Liverpool striker Luis Suarez. The Uruguayan was banned for eight matches and fined over the incident. — AFP



Matches on TV  
(Local Timings)

SPAIN COPA DEL REY

Valencia v Barcelona  
beIN SPORTS HD 3

23:30

**12** Over 200 North Korean cheerleaders spark fashion envy in Pyeongchang



**14** Maxwell century powers Australia to T20 win over England



**15** Swansea hit eight in FA Cup rout, Huddersfield advance



ORLANDO: Elfrid Payton #2 of the Orlando Magic shoots the ball against the Cleveland Cavaliers at Amway Center in Orlando, Florida. — AFP

## Cavs buried by Orlando 'avalanche'

### Harden bags 15,000th career point

**LOS ANGELES:** LeBron James and the Cleveland Cavaliers crashed to yet another humiliating defeat against the Orlando Magic on Tuesday as James Harden scored his 15,000th career point to extend Houston's winning streak to five games.

In Orlando, James scored 25 points but it was not enough to prevent the Cavs from slumping to a 116-98 loss in a roller coaster game. Cleveland looked to be in the mood for an emphatic win after piling on a massive 43 points in the first quarter and powering to 67-51 at half-time. But Orlando dominated the second half, outscoring the Cavs 65-31 in the final two quarters to complete a crushing win before their home fans. A grim night for Cleveland also saw coach Tyrone Lue leave court-side midway through the second quarter with an undisclosed illness. Lue did not reappear and reportedly watched the remainder of the game from the locker room. Orlando were sparked by 34 points from Jonathon Simmons, on a night when all of Orlando's starters cracked double digits.

Cavs star James pinpointed a disastrous third quarter when Orlando poured on 41 points for the loss. "They hit some big-time shots in the third quarter," James said. "The snowball turned into an avalanche in

the third. A 41-point quarter is hard to come back from." James said Lue's illness had also affected the team. "Unfortunately he's sick and that's all we heard," James said. "He's the captain of our ship so it's a tough blow." The Cavs face the Minnesota Timberwolves on Wednesday back in Cleveland, who have already beaten the Cavs this season.

"We've got a great opportunity tomorrow against a team that beat us up pretty good before," James said. "We look forward to the challenge. We've got to come out and sustain the challenge."

#### HARDEN MVP?

In New York meanwhile, Rockets star Harden brought up 15,000 career points on as Houston swept to a 123-113 win over the Brooklyn Nets to maintain pressure on Golden State at the top of the Western Conference.

Harden finished with 36 points as the Rockets bagged a fifth straight victory to improve to 39-13, two wins back from the Warriors.

Chris Paul had 25 points, with Clint Capela adding 18 and Gerald Green contributing 16 points from the bench. Harden was bombarded with chants "M-V-P!" during the game but said afterwards he was not thinking about personal honours. "Just want to win, and put ourselves in the best position that we can for post-season and then we'll take it from there," Harden said.

Golden State meanwhile were thumped 125-105 by Oklahoma City Thunder. Paul George and Russell Westbrook combined to dismantle the Warriors defence. George finished with 38 points while Westbrook added 34.

Kevin Durant led the scoring for the Warriors with

33 points against his former team. Draymond Green was ejected for the third time this season after lobbing the ball at an official.

In Toronto, Kyle Lowry scored 23 points as the Raptors closed to within two games of the Boston Celtics at the top of the Eastern Conference with a 111-91 victory. Raptors ace Lowry made eight rebounds with four assists while C.J. Miles came off the bench to score 20 points in 15 minutes on court. DeMar DeRozan had 15 points, with six assists and three rebounds. Kyrie Irving had 17 points for the Celtics on his return from injury. Irving later shouldered blame for the loss.

"As one of the veterans on this team, I've got to be better than that," he said. "This one is on me. Kind of just taking responsibility and trying to be better going forward." The Raptors' win puts Toronto at 37-16, second overall in the East. Boston remain in top spot on 39-16. In New York, Knicks star Kristaps Porzingis suffered a season-ending knee injury as his team were downed 103-89 by the Milwaukee Bucks. Porzingis landed awkwardly after a dunk and twisted his left knee. An MRI scan later confirmed a torn anterior cruciate ligament. — AFP



### Porzingis' season over as Knicks suffer Bucks rout

defence. George finished with 38 points while Westbrook added 34.

Kevin Durant led the scoring for the Warriors with

### Kohli magic leads India to big win over South Africa

**CAPE TOWN:** India captain Virat Kohli continued his excellent recent form by smashing a sparkling unbeaten century to lead his side to a comprehensive 124-run victory over South Africa in the third One-Day International at Newlands yesterday.

Kohli made 160 not out from 159 balls as India, who had been put into bat, posted 303 for six in their 50 overs, before restricting their hosts to 179 all out to

take a 3-0 lead in the series.

South Africa's brittle batting lineup, without injured stalwarts Faf du Plessis, AB de Villiers and Quinton de Kock, were stifled once more by the Indian spinners as Kuldeep Yadav, who took career-best figures (4-23 in 9 overs), and Yuzvendra Chahal (4-46 in 9 overs) strangled their innings.

The fourth match will be played at the Wanderers in Johannesburg on Saturday. The imperious Kohli now has four centuries in his last six 50-over innings. He survived being given out leg before wicket to Kagiso Rabada before he had scored when a review showed he had got the faintest of edges to the ball.

After that he was sublime as he put on 139 for the second wicket with Shikhar Dhawan (76 from 63 balls) to lay the platform for India's sizeable score. "You're

always looking for someone to bat until the end and it's amazing if you do it as the captain," Kohli said at the post-match presentation.

"I was cramping towards the end but I knew I had to stay until the end to get us to 300. These are the times you're tested mentally as well as physically." When South Africa captain Aiden Markram (32) and innings top-scorer JP Duminy (51) put on a rapid 78 for the second wicket, the hosts were given hope.

Yet the introduction of the excellent Chahal and Yadav, who took eight wickets for 69 runs between them, pegged the innings back.

Yadav had Markram stumped by MS Dhoni and Chahal ripped through the middle-order, including the wicket of debutant Heinrich Klaasen (six). Dhoni's stumping of Markram took him to 400 ODI dismissals,

the first Indian wicket-keeper to reach that mark.

"Everything is disappointing about this. Yet again we were not up to the mark. We've only got ourselves to blame, we have to try harder," Markram said.

"We've come across them (the spinners) before and if after all that time we're still struggling to pick them, it speaks of their quality."

#### Scores in brief:

**India** 303-6 in 50 overs (S. Dhawan 76, V. Kohli 160 not out).

**South Africa** 179 in 40 overs (J. Duminy 51; Y. Chahal 4-46, Kuldeep Yadav 4-23).

**Result:** India won by 124 runs.

**Series:** India lead the six-match series 3-0.

**Toss:** South Africa. — Agencies



## Business

# Yas Island showcases region's #1 family and leisure destination

## Miral's CEO hosts company's first Kuwait roadshow

**KUWAIT:** As the region's top family entertainment and leisure destination celebrates its 10th anniversary year, Yas Island yesterday presented its unique portfolio of immersive experiences and world-class attractions while providing a 'sneak peek' of what's in store for visitors in 2018 during a roadshow in Kuwait.

Miral CEO, Mohamed Abdalla Al-Zaabi, met with local media to highlight the successful journey of Yas Island over the last decade and how it is constantly evolving and innovating its attractions, parks and in-bound tourism opportunities to become the favorite destination for families in the region.

Yas Island yesterday presents a rich portfolio of unique attractions and theme parks creating immersive experiences for visitors from the region and around the world all in one destination just seven minutes away from flights arriving into Abu Dhabi airport.

The island is home to two world-class theme parks including Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, the world's first Ferrari branded theme park offering unique entertainment experience through a winning mix of 37 Ferrari inspired rides and attractions, and Yas Waterworld, an Emirati-themed waterpark and home to more than 43 rides, slides and attractions. Together the parks and Yas Island as a destination have been recognized for excellence in more than 17 international awards from both the industry and travellers themselves.

Visitors can enjoy a wide variety of options on Yas Island's catering to all tastes and age groups, from enjoying a tranquil getaway with plenty of fun under the sun at Yas

Beach, to satisfying luxury shopping desires in the biggest shopping destination in Abu Dhabi emirate with more than 2.5 million square footage of retail and entertainment, at Yas Mall.

Yas Island also features Yas Marina Circuit, one of the most technologically-advanced Formula 1 circuits in the world and a home for motorsports in the Middle East, as well as Yas Marina, a vibrant venue offering dining, fitness and leisure facilities in a stunning marine setting.

In line with its vision to attract more than 48 million visits by 2022, Yas Island continues to expand its portfolio of world-class attractions by bringing new theme parks, attractions and unique projects arriving to the destination in 2018 and beyond.

During the event, Al-Zaabi confirmed that a new world-class theme park and a unique record-breaking activity destination are on track to launch this year: Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi, with 90 percent construction completed, will open its doors this summer; and CLYMB, a one-of-a-kind sports and entertainment facility, set to impress with the widest flight chamber ever and the

### Yas Island celebrates its 10th anniversary



world's tallest indoor climbing wall.

In addition, Yas Island's calendar of major 2018 events was revealed, with 22 events in the first half of the year on weekly basis until mid-May. Upcoming live entertainment and sporting action includes the world-famous Harlem Globe Trotters, The Illusionists, a Brazilian Carnival and a total of seven family festivals, which are entirely free to the public.

"We are very excited to share these updates on incredible



bring together Bugs Bunny, Scooby Doo, and other famous characters under a stylized cartoon sky, as well as 'Metropolis' which will transport guests to a Manhattan-styled city of towering skyscrapers and featuring characters such as Batman, Superman and Wonder Woman.

The other attraction opening its doors this year during the second half of 2018, the record-breaking sports and entertainment venue, CLYMB, will feature a 9.75-meter-wide (32-foot) flight chamber, the facility will be a game-changer for indoor skydiving, while also offering the highest climbing wall at a soaring 43 meters, as well as a series of other walls that are suitable for all ages and abilities.

The Miral CEO also emphasized how Yas Island will continue to evolve as a leading destination for family entertainment and leisure, with evolving smart connectivity and state-of-the-art mobility solutions that will create a seamlessly connected 'wall-less' destination where guests can plan their visit with a simple touch of their smartphone or device.

## Gulf Bank announces winners of its exciting campaign 'Spend & Fly to Europe'

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank recently announced the names of 25 lucky winners of its "Spend & Fly to Europe" Campaign, whereby Credit and Debit cardholders were offered the chance to win two (2) roundtrip tickets to any of 12 selected destination in Europe on Emirates Airlines, by entering a raffle draw upon using their Debit Card abroad and using their Credit cards locally or abroad. The draw was held on Sunday 28 January 2018 in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Gulf Bank would like to congratulate to all 25 lucky winners who won two (2) Emirates economy roundtrip tickets to Europe: Abdullah Abdulaziz Abdullah Albuti, Abdulrahman Ulogi, Mohammed Ali Abdulfatah, Mohammad A D Alaradi, Henry Coutinho, Mohammad HH Khalil, Abdulrahman Valiyakath, Mubarak F G Alazmi, Khaled Alhasan, Sara Najeeb Hussain, Bader Milfi Almutairi, Krishna Kumar, Omar Abdulaziz Almutawa, Babu Mara, Fathiyah Sulaiman Dawoud, Gulfam Asniq Hussain, Mohammed Khaled Mohammed Aldlamah, Adlah Alsharhan, Rashelle Tome Gracias, Riad Almousa, Fadel Mohammed Jaber Almari, Hamad Mekhlif Awad Alshemmari, Yaqoub Yousef Abdullah Altemeemi, Hussein Abdullah Hussein Jassem and Nawal Abdulaziz Ahmed Almusallam.



### NBK Capital Monthly Markets Review

## Global and GCC markets close first month of 2018 on a positive note

**KUWAIT:** Global equities have kicked off 2018 with positive performance for the most part. The MSCI All Country World Index is up 5.6 percent in January. In the US, Congress was unable to agree on a budget for 2018 resulting in a federal government shut-down. This was short lived as Congress moved to extend the deadline to February 8, 2018 (today) in an effort to find common ground. In Europe, Germany's political parties have come to an agreement in terms of forming a framework government although a final vote within the Social Democratic Party is still pending. Also, bailout funds were released to Greece following its push of additional reforms as part of the bailout program. In Asia, the Bank of Japan left its monetary policy unchanged. In terms of commodities, Gold and Brent were each up 3.3 percent with Brent closing during the month above \$70 pbl, its highest in almost four years.

In the US, the January Markit Manufacturing Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) came in at 55.5 climbing 0.4 from December's number while the Services PMI held flat at 53.3 compared to December. Initial Jobless Claims dropped to 230,000 in its latest reading while the Unemployment Rate for January came in at 4.1 percent unchanged from December's figure. Durable Goods Orders increased to 2.9 percent in December from 1.7 percent in November led by aircraft and vehicle orders. Housing Starts and Building Permits in December fell compared to November by 8.2 percent and 0.1 percent, respectively, while Retail Sales grew 0.4 percent month on month in December. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for Q4 on a preliminary basis came in at 2.4 percent. US equities in January performed positively with the S&P 500 and Dow Jones closing up 5.6 percent and 5.8 percent, respectively.

In the UK, the Markit Manufacturing PMI in January dropped compared to December although remained above 50 at 55.3. The Markit Services PMI in January came in at 53 decreasing 1.2 from December's reading. The Consumer Price



Index (CPI) in December increased by 0.4 percent when compared to the previous month while Retail Sales dropped 1.5 percent month on month compared to November. Consumer Confidence remains negative although has improved from December's reading increasing from -13 to -9. GDP for Q4 on a preliminary basis came in at 0.5 percent slightly higher than Q3's reading of 0.4 percent.

### UK equities in the red

In Europe, the Markit Manufacturing PMI held constant at 59.6 from December's reading while the Service PMI increased to 58 from December's figure of 57.6. On a preliminary basis, the CPI year on year dropped from 1.4 percent in December to 1.3 percent in January while Consumer Confidence held steady in January at 1.3. Retail Sales in December on a month on month basis contracted 1.1 percent after growing 1.5 percent in the previous month.

### European equities

In Japan, month on month exports and imports in December grew by 9.3 percent and 14.9 percent, respectively. Both exports and imports grew in December by a rate lower than that registered in November. The CPI for December year

on year increased by 1.0 percent surpassing November's rate of 0.6 percent. Retail Trade month on month in December grew by 0.9 percent although was below November's growth of 1.8 percent. The Consumer Confidence came in at 44.7 unchanged from December yet below expectations of 44.9.

### Japanese equities

In China, the trade balance for December was in a surplus at CNY 362 billion, an increase of 37 percent from the previous month. Imports and Exports for December year on year increased by 18.7 percent and 10.8 percent, respectively. The MSCI Emerging Market Index closed up 8.3 percent in January while the Shanghai SE Composite ended January in the green up 5.3 percent.

The GCC equity market performed well in January with the MSCI GCC Countries Index up 5.8 percent. Only Oman's equity market was down for the month of January shedding 2.0 percent. The best performer in the GCC was Qatar's equity market up 8.0 percent followed by Saudi Arabia up 5.9 percent, Abu Dhabi up 4.6 percent, Kuwait up 2.6 percent, Bahrain up 1.4 percent and Dubai up 0.7 percent. Egypt's equity market was flat registering a minimal gain of 0.2 percent.

## EXCHANGE RATES

### Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.752
Indian Rupees	4.695
Pakistani Rupees	2.720
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.946
Nepali Rupees	2.957
Singapore Dollar	228.630
Hongkong Dollar	38.448
Bangladesh Taka	3.604
Philippine Peso	5.842
Thai Baht	9.524

GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	80.227
Qatari Riyal	82.630
Omani Riyal	781.315
Bahraini Dinar	798.860
UAE Dirham	81.932

ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	19.700
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	16.985
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.207
Tunisian Dinar	126.860
Jordanian Dinar	424.050
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.004
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	33.406

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	300.650

Euro	374.910
Sterling Pound	421.960
Canadian dollar	241.290
Turkish lira	80.500
Swiss Franc	324.500
Australian Dollar	239.620
US Dollar Buying	299.450

GOLD	
20 Gram	260.52
10 Gram	133.18
5 Gram	67.43

### Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	300.100
Canadian Dollar	242.420
Sterling Pound	425.125
Euro	375.360
Swiss Frank	280.865
Bahraini 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	4.685
Pakistani Rupees	2.715
Bangladesh Taka	3.640
Philippines Peso	5.830
Cyprus pound	17.865

Japanese Yen	3.735
Syrian Pound	1.585
Nepalese Rupees	2.940
Malaysian Ringgit	78.045
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	48.075
Thai Bhat	10.530
Turkish Lira	80.000

### BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
British Pound	0.413805	0.421305
Czech Korune	0.006744	0.016044
Danish Krone	0.045932	0.050932
Euro	0.366698	0.374198
Georgian Lari	0.120704	0.120704
Hungarian 0.001111	0.001301	0.001301
Norwegian Krone	0.034416	0.039616
Romanian Leu	0.063046	0.079896
Russian ruble	0.005267	0.005267
Slovakia	0.008925	0.018925
Swedish Krona	0.033761	0.038761
Swiss Franc	0.314836	0.325836
Australian Dollar	0.228391	0.240391
New Zealand Dollar	0.213233	0.222733
Canadian Dollar	0.234701	0.243701
US Dollars	0.296550	0.300970
US Dollars Mint	0.297050	0.300970

### Asia

Bangladesh Taka	0.003249	0.003833
Chinese Yuan	0.046492	0.049992
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036364	0.039114
Indian Rupee	0.004188	0.004829
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002667	0.002847
Korean Won	0.000266	0.000281
Malaysian Ringgit	0.073506	0.079508
Nepalese Rupee	0.002999	0.003169
Pakistan Rupee	0.002522	0.002812
Philippine Peso	0.005829	0.006129
Singapore Dollar	0.222666	0.232666
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001689	0.002269
Taiwan	0.010162	0.010342
Thai Baht	0.009183	0.009733

### Arab

Bahraini Dinar	0.790912	0.799412
Egyptian Pound	0.014079	0.019797
Iranian Riyal	0.000083	0.000084
Iraqi Dinar	0.000197	0.000257
Jordanian Dinar	0.419429	0.428429
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000148	0.000248
Moroccan Dirhams	0.021893	0.045893
Omani Riyal	0.774591	0.780271
Qatar Riyal	0.078291	0.083231
Saudi Riyal	0.079087	0.080387
Syrian Pound	0.001273	0.001493
Tunisian Dinar	0.121829	0.129829
Turkish Lira	0.074562	0.084862
UAE Dirhams	0.080430	0.082130
Yemeni Riyal	0.000977	0.001057

Business

# EU hikes growth projections for eurozone; bloc to expand by 2.3%

## ECB urges banks to clean up before next crisis

**BRUSSELS:** The European Commission raised its growth projections for the eurozone yesterday, more confident than ever that the solid economic recovery in Europe will endure through 2019.

The commission, the EU's executive arm, said the 19-country single currency bloc's economy would expand by 2.3 percent in 2018, up from a previous forecast of 2.1 percent made in November.

Growth would then continue at a solid pace next year, with the eurozone economy expanding by 2.0 percent in 2019, instead of the earlier-predicted 1.9 percent. "The euro area is enjoying growth rates not seen since before the financial crisis," said EU Economic Affairs Commissioner Pierre Moscovici.

"Unemployment and deficits continue to fall and investment is at last rising in a meaningful way." All signs are that the European economy, long a global laggard, is now firing on all cylinders. Official data last week showed that growth in the eurozone shot up in 2017 to 2.5 percent, with unemployment currently at a nine-year low.

The news was especially positive for France, the eurozone's second biggest economy, which saw its forecast revised sharply higher to 2.0 percent for this year. This was up from the 1.7 percent prediction just three months ago, and will be the first time the country will reach the psychologically important threshold since 2011. It will also likely mean enough growth to keep

France clear of breaching the EU's deficit limit, which is set in terms of the size of the economy.

Brussels said that the EU-27 as a whole, minus exiting Britain, would expand by 2.5 percent this year and 2.1 percent in 2019. Britain meanwhile would expand far below that level, at 1.4 percent in 2018 and 1.1 percent in 2019. However, the commission, which is also leading the EU-Britain divorce talks, markedly increased the UK's growth estimate for 2017 to 1.8 percent. In November, the EU said Britain would only reach 1.5 percent growth. Powerhouse Germany meanwhile, will remain above the two percent threshold, expanding by 2.3 percent in 2018 and 2.1 percent next year.

Eurozone banks have made progress since the financial crisis, but must do more to put their houses in order during economic good times, European Central Bank (ECB) watchdogs said yesterday.

"Certain banks must do more. In particular, they must clean up their balance sheets," chief ECB supervisor Daniele Nouy told reporters in Frankfurt. Top of the watchdogs' list is a 760-billion-euro (\$940 billion) mass of bad loans that was still weighing on banks' balance sheets in the third quarter of 2017, a figure that had fallen by 200 billion over two years.

So-called non-performing loans (NPLs) — on which borrowers have failed to keep up with repayments — "drag down profits, they divert resources that could be put to more productive use, and they keep banks from



**BRUSSELS:** European Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs Pierre Moscovici gestures as he presents the EU Winter 2018 Interim Economic Forecast at the European Commission in Brussels yesterday.—AFP

financing the real economy," Nouy said.

"Banks should use the good times to reduce NPLs... once a downturn sets in, it will become much harder," she added. For its part, the ECB will lay out more clearly how it expects banks to set aside cash to cover the risks of future bad loans in an update to its guidance.

With the banking sector more robust, plans to establish a eurozone-wide deposit insurance scheme known as EDIS could advance "a step further", Nouy continued.—AFP



### British growth to drop to 1.4% in 2018

## X-cite by Alghanim Electronics receives three service awards

**KUWAIT:** X-cite by Alghanim Electronics, Kuwait's largest electronic retailer, was recognized by the Kuwaiti Public Relations Association as having the best social media channel, online store and call center in the retail electronics sector in 2017. The event, under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, was attended by His Highness the Amir's representative, the Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and State Minister for Economic Affairs, Hind Al-Sabeeh, the Head of the Amiri Protocol, Sheikh Khaled Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah and the head of Kuwait's Public Relations Association Jamal Al-Nasrullah, who awarded X-cite the prestigious awards as part of its efforts to enhance its communication activities and networks as well as to develop the public relations and customer service sectors in Kuwait.

Kuwait's Public Relations Association dedicates this prize to shed light on the distinguished efforts and achievements of companies and organizations in the fields of public relations and customer service across all industries from both the public and private sectors. The event also featured a number of workshops about the strategies of public relations and customer service targeted at employees of ministries

and organizations. Based on the role of the Kuwaiti Public Relations Association in developing public relations and customer service sectors in government and private sectors, the Public Relations and Customer Service Award was created to push these sectors forward and measure the extent to which their employees apply international standards. These awards recognize the nature of X-cite and the field it operates in, further highlighting the multi-conglomerate's continuous efforts to provide exceptional and unrivalled service online, in stores and everywhere else.

This award also aims to award excellence in the realm of public relations and customer service. The Association took into account the institutional work and the extent of cooperation between the departments to provide the best services to customers. The ever-evolving art of providing superb customer service relies on employees' ability and skill to engage with the public and customers, solid expertise that has been distinguished by the Association with these prestigious awards.

The judging committee consisted of local and international PR and customer service experts who evaluated the participating entities with the highest international standards, including serving customers while meeting their needs, distinguished social contributions, excellent media presence and other relevant factors.

Through its customer-centric concept, X-cite offers customers competitive quality and prices to serve every segment of its customer-base, providing them with the highest level of service, engaging with them through various mediums and earning their trust by offering services and promotions. X-cite also enables customers to shop from the comfort of their homes through its free mobile app and website at [www.xcite.com](http://www.xcite.com).



## India's CB keeps interest rates unchanged

**MUMBAI:** India's central bank kept interest rates at a seven-year low yesterday, citing concerns over accelerating inflation and rising oil prices as a reason not to cut them. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said the benchmark repo rate—the level at which it lends to commercial banks—would remain unchanged at 6.0 percent.

The decision was in line with analysts' expectations. "The MPC (monetary policy committee) notes that the inflation outlook is clouded by several uncertainties on the upside," the RBI said in a statement. "Therefore, need for vigilance around the evolving inflation scenario in the coming months," it added. It

referred to "a pick-up in global growth" and rising commodity and oil prices as likely to contribute to heightened inflation. The bank also said the Indian government's recent announcement of financial support for farmers could be an inflationary factor.

Rising food and oil prices spurred India's retail inflation to a 17-month high of 5.21 percent in December, significantly above the RBI's target of around four percent. India is a net importer of oil and was affected by the jump in world crude prices of around 15 percent last year. Analysts expect inflation to rise further after the government announcement in the budget earlier this month that it would raise minimum support prices for agricultural produce. India's economic growth slumped to an annualized 5.7 percent in the first quarter of the current financial year—the lowest in three years. The introduction of a new national goods and services tax last year and a controversial 2016 move to withdraw all high-value banknotes from circulation were blamed for the dip.—AFP



## 2017 Year End Results for Mobile Telecommunications Company - Zain

The Board of Directors of Mobile Telecommunications Company K.S.C.P. would like to announce to its shareholders that the company achieved a Net Profit of **KD 160 million (USD 527 million)** for the twelve months ended 31 December 2017.

The Board proposed a cash dividend of 35 Fils per share. The proposal is subject to General Assembly and statutory approvals.

The Board would like to express gratitude to all customers and shareholders for their confidence and assures them of the company's commitment to excellence and profitable growth.

Board of Directors

46.6 MILLION	3,398 USD MILLION	1,367 USD MILLION	527 USD MILLION	13 CENTS
	1,030 KD MILLION	414 KD MILLION	160 KD MILLION	39 FILS
CUSTOMERS	REVENUES	EBITDA	NET INCOME	EPS

Business

# S&P, Dow rise; Europe in jittery recovery

NEW YORK: US stocks overturned early losses to trade broadly higher yesterday as some buyers returned to a market still shaking from a record fall for the Dow Jones Industrial Average earlier this week. Falls for major technology stocks kept the tech-heavy Nasdaq just 0.1 percent in the red, but the Dow and the S&P 500 both recovered from premarket falls of up to 1 percent to trade around half a percent higher.

"It looks like a little bit of a stabilization trade overnight," said John Brady, senior vice president at futures brokerage R J O'Brien & Associates in Chicago. "I don't know if it's over, but a market range may be established."

By 9:42 am ET (1442 GMT), the Dow was up 127.27 points, or 0.51 percent, at 25,040.04. The S&P 500 rose 11.5 points,

or 0.43 percent, to 2,706.64 and the Nasdaq Composite was down 10.5 points at 7,102.62.

Gains in industrial and consumer discretionary stocks led advances on the S&P and the Dow. A wild session on Tuesday had seen the Dow swing more than 1,100 points from peak to trough and ended with the benchmark S&P 500 recording its best day since just before President Donald Trump's election in 2016. Traders are still braced for more volatility as they try to figure out if the swings of the past week are the start of a deeper correction or just a temporary blip in the US market's nine-year bull run.

The pivotal gauge of S&P 500 volatility, the VIX, opened at a relatively elevated 31 points and was at 24.91 just after the

opening bell in New York. The VIX on Tuesday hit a more than two-and-a-half year high above 50, after trading, on average, below 20 for months. European stock markets mounted a modest recovery yesterday but Wall Street appeared headed for more volatility a day after spectacular price swings kept breathless investors on the edge of their seats.

Earlier, Asian stocks had failed to profit from a late Tuesday upswing in New York as markets nervously pondered the outlook for leading interest rates and their potential impact on economic growth.

"Coming off yesterday's whipsaw session that saw a sharp upside reversal, US stocks are giving back some gains in early action, with the recent spike in volatility keeping the markets skittish," analysts at

the Charles Schwab brokerage said. The Dow index was down around 0.3 percent at the start of trading, but price fluctuations appeared again to be rapid.

"Volatility is back, and investors had better get used to it," said Lee Wild, head of equity strategy at Interactive Investor.

Key European markets clawed back around a third of the previous day's sharp losses. Following recent strong gains, a global stocks sell-off began Friday when bright US unemployment data sparked concern of high inflation and in turn faster-than-expected increases to US interest rates.

Wild noted that "just as markets cannot keep rising forever, they must also stop falling at some point, but it's still unclear whether we've reached a level where buyers see value again".

However, as the day wore on selling began to kick in. By the end of its session, Tokyo had added just 0.2 percent having opened almost three percent up-while Shanghai lost 1.8 percent and Seoul plunged 2.3 percent by the close.

Analysts have been eyeing an increase in US bond yields that has been triggered in large part by a recent weakening of the dollar. The dollar continues to be the main driver on the currency markets due to "the perception the Fed are going to be more hawkish than anticipated this year," said David Madden, market analyst at CMC Markets UK.

"There (are) growing concerns (that) the US central bank will hike interest rates four times this year."

Bitcoin meanwhile surged once more, to around \$8,000, a day after it slid to stand below \$6,000 for the first time since mid-November. Despite yesterday's strong recovery, it remains well down on its record high of almost \$20,000 reached just six weeks ago. — Agencies

### Asian rally fades

In Asia, traders began the day on a bright note as they took their lead from a recovery on Wall Street overnight.

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report							
Wednesday, February 07, 2018							
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing				
Price Index	▲ 33.72	6,657.85	6,624.13				
Weighted Index	▲ 2.27	409.50	407.23				
KSX 15	▲ 10.87	941.28	930.31				
Trades							
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
IFG	396	396	97,757	38,712	2	396	▲ 0.0
NAPESCO	799	799	15,500	8,390	4	799	▲ 0.0
ENERGYH	29.0	25.0	29,250	734	7	28.0	▲ 3.0
GPI	31.9	30.8	913,814	28,119	41	30.9	▲ 0.0
ABAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	70	▲ 0.0
<b>Oil &amp; Gas</b>			<b>1,061,321</b>	<b>75,964</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>964.02</b>	<b>▲ 2.50</b>
KFCO	225	225	390	88	1	225	▼ -14.0
BPOC	715	705	967,243	402,715	51	707	▲ 2.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	680	▲ 0.0
ALQURAN	343	335	324,295	110,395	32	340	▲ 0.0
<b>Basic Materials</b>			<b>891,928</b>	<b>513,198</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>1301.94</b>	<b>▼ -11.30</b>
KCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	470	▲ 0.0
CABLE	435	423	20,100	8,520	5	435	▲ 0.0
SHIP	201	196	19,363	3,889	2	196	▼ -4.0
PCEM	1,040	1,040	1,000	1,040	1	1,040	▲ 20.0
PAPER	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	290	▲ 0.0
MRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	65	▲ 0.0
ADCO	245	240	1,000	241	2	245	▲ 13.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	120	▲ 0.0
NICBM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	198	▲ 0.0
EQUIPMENT	38.0	36.2	125,176	4,572	23	36.2	▼ -1.8
NCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	▲ 0.0
GYPBUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	▲ 0.0
SALBOOKH	58	50	143,210	7,454	23	52	▲ 0.0
AOLTY	864	855	652,148	560,878	96	859	▲ 0.0
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	331	▲ 0.0
CLEANING	60	60	261,760	15,677	10	60	▲ 0.0
KOL	120	112	2,763,243	322,994	159	112	▼ -5.0
KPCP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	151	▲ 0.0
HUMANSOFT	3,598	3,520	57,857	205,594	25	3,551	▲ 26.0
NAFAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	880	▲ 0.0
GFC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	64	▲ 0.0
SHOOTING	23.5	21.0	395,010	8,829	16	23.3	▲ 0.1
CGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	459	▲ 0.0
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56	▲ 0.0
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	790	▲ 0.0
ALFAC	380	370	420,025	155,790	20	370	▲ 0.0
MUBARRAD	72	72	25,000	1,795	2	72	▲ 1.0
LOGISTICS	54	52	3,376,131	178,699	127	52	▲ 0.0
SCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	79	▲ 0.0
GCEM	82	81	700,001	56,932	11	81	▼ -4.7
QIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	70	▲ 0.0
FCEM	73	73	50,000	3,625	2	73	▲ 1.0
RWEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	86	▲ 0.0
SPEC	69	60	940	58	19	69	▲ 0.8
<b>Industrials</b>			<b>9,911,994</b>	<b>1,536,857</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>1864.53</b>	<b>▲ 4.40</b>
PAPOC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	80	▲ 0.0
CATTI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	230	▲ 0.0
DANAH	74	71	66,750	4,870	10	74	▼ -8.5
FOOD	1,055	1,045	14,067	14,741	5	1,045	▲ 0.0
<b>Consumer Goods</b>			<b>88,817</b>	<b>19,610</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>828.99</b>	<b>▲ 0.70</b>
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,100	▲ 0
YIACO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	192	▲ 0
<b>Health Care</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1599.87</b>	<b>▲ 0.00</b>
KCN	1,050	1,050	48,500	50,925	4	1,050	▲ 0
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	246	▲ 0
SULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	67	▲ 0
CABLETV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	18.0	▲ 0
IFAHR	170	152	16,000	2,580	4	170	▼ -20
OLAFUEL	115	115	12,059	1,456	11	115	▼ 0
MUNTAZAHAT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	71	▼ 0
JAZEERA	630	625	10,163	6,395	5	629	▼ 6
SOOR	118	115	47,681	5,525	11	115	▼ 3
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	124	▲ 0
ALRAI	114	115	22,899	2,608	3	115	▲ 0
Jiyad	90	80	4,054,456	342,687	241	85	▲ 4
Meezan	788	762	130,986	101,435	13	790	▲ 8
<b>Consumer Services</b>			<b>4,542,294</b>	<b>513,581</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>882.74</b>	<b>▼ -5.90</b>
ZAIN	470	455	4,020,956	1,957,348	318	467	▲ 13
COOREDOO	1,150	1,002	34,440	36,515	27	1,060	▼ -100
AAN	29.5	27.6	2,273,450	63,515	77	28.0	▼ -1
VIVA	774	745	22,285	16,682	36	774	▲ 54
<b>Telecommunications</b>			<b>6,351,131</b>	<b>1,874,060</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>656.21</b>	<b>▼ -2.60</b>
NBK	745	734	3,736,336	2,767,623	314	745	▲ 13
GBK	243	239	844,564	203,283	27	239	▲ 0
CBK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	420	▲ 0
ABK	301	300	14,000	4,211	2	300	▼ -1
ALMUTAHED	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	340	▲ 0
KIB	227	223	1,039,086	234,306	59	225	▲ 1
BURG	314	310	1,410,255	437,198	58	310	▼ -4
KFIN	562	567	3,294,124	1,523,167	183	569	▲ 4
BOURBAN	465	460	593,281	274,693	63	460	▲ 0
AUB	209	207	3,093,987	644,279	45	207	▲ 0
ITHMR	59	52	18,397,579	901,484	334	53	▼ -1
WARBANK	225	222	711,874	159,002	57	222	▲ 0
<b>Banks</b>			<b>31,106,096</b>	<b>7,549,245</b>	<b>1,142</b>	<b>942.23</b>	<b>▼ -1.90</b>
KNS	284	284	283,150	80,415	4	284	▲ 14
GNS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	790	▲ 0.0
ANS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	435	▲ 0.0
WNS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	68	▲ 0.0
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	192	▲ 0.0
FTI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	63	▲ 0.0
WETHAQ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	39.0	▲ 0.0
BKQWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	▲ 0.0
<b>Insurance</b>			<b>283,150</b>	<b>80,415</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1039.98</b>	<b>▲ 7.90</b>
Trades							
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
SOKOUK	47.0	46.0	105,257	49,545	49	47.0	▲ 1.8
KRE	59	58	2,148,132	125,927	60	59	▼ -0.2
URC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	74	▲ 0.0
NRE	121	119	299,639	24,756	10	119	▲ 1.0
SRE	348	348	185,000	64,380	10	348	▲ 0.0
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	396	▲ 0.0
AREEC	164	160	168,484	27,107	8	162	▼ -3.0
MASSALEH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	40.5	▲ 0.0
ARABREC	34.9	33.0	149,100	4,954	8	33.4	▲ 0.5
ERESCO	34.4	34.0	229,999	7,827	12	34.0	▲ 0.1
MABANEE	780	725	752,050	565,385	40	760	▲ 34.0
INJAZZAT	92	92	100	92	1	92	▲ 2.0
INVESTORS	16.9	16.4	4,499,036	74,898	83	16.7	▲ 0.5
IRC	30.0	28.0	141,748	4,000	20	28.9	▲ 0.9
ALTUARGA	92	90	237,486	21,486	8	91	▼ -0.5
SANAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	28.0	▲ 0.0
AAVANRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	74	▲ 0.0
AQAR	75	73	10,440	782	3	75	▲ 1.4
ALADARIA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	34.0	▲ 0.0
MAZAYA	110	107	9,568,990	1,029,986	92	107	▼ -2.0
TUARA	66	65	200,237	11,771	5	66	▲ 10.9
TAAAMEER	32.1	30.0	1,071,600	33,285	27	30.1	▼ -0.9
ARKAN	87	87	342,000	29,782	22	87	▼ -0.3
ARGAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	180	▲ 0.0
ABYAAR	22.4	20.8	2,310,786	48,955	53	20.9	▼ -0.2
MUNSHAAH	85	83	1,363,300	113,965	45	84	▲ 0.7
FIRST							

Business

# Al-Sayer hosts Fikra program contestants to experience Lexus

30 applicants out of 350 being screened for Fikra program 3rd edition



**KUWAIT:** In support of the strategic CSR commitment towards national youth, who are pillars of sustainable development for the nation, Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer & Sons and Lexus a subsidiary of Al-Sayer Holding hosted ambitious finalists of the 3rd edition Fikra program at Lexus Center Shuwaikh as part of their intensive entrepreneurship training.

Fikra Program 3rd Edition received over 350 applications to screen 30 applicants to go through the idea presentation process to select 15 final contesting teams.

### Partnership to Empower New Generation of Entrepreneurs

Lexus brings the legacy of creating first time technologies to the world, and in the same spirit, it partners with Fikra program which encourages new ideas. Lexus has earned a worldwide reputation for high-quality products with exceptional attention to the detail as well as exemplary customer service in each business process. The aim of

the Al-Sayer Lexus Tour was to convey the brand's passion in imaginative technology and unmatched innovative process to exhilarate business performance among the enthusiastic Fikra team for their future endeavors.

During the facility tour the invitees benefited from the walk through and explanation of the following:

1. Processes, sales tools, capacity, models varieties, technologies at the sales floor
2. Craftsmanship, divisions, service process, Kaizen, Lexus standards at the Service Department.
3. A presentation about Lexus brand history, global and



## 15 final teams to be selected for training

identity for our customers and market, and we hope each Fikra potential future entrepreneurs gained valuable inputs to apply in their business and succeed with bright future.

After the tour and presentation, each member of the

local activities and marketing efforts

According to Mahmood Mohamad Abou-Zahr Business Director Lexus Division "we are glad to welcome the talented team chosen by Fikra Team. Every process in our Sales, Service, Marketing and Customer management operations is well defined to offer an insightful learning experience. We train our team to become a unique Lexus

Fikra team pitched in with their business ideas, and shared learning and unique experience in Al-Sayer's Lexus sales, service and marketing divisions. According to Ibrahim Al-Fouzan Vice Chairman of Sustainability Steering Committee "As part of the cultural fabric of Kuwait and Middle East, ALSAYER is committed to advance sustainable practices, to make sure our next-generation is empowered to take bold steps towards entrepreneurship. We see our strategic engagement with Fikra Program towards building tremendous value for youth community."

Fikra Program is held under the patronage of Khaled Al-Roudhan, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of State for Youth Affairs and is proudly supported by Ministry of State for Youth Affairs; The National Fund for SME Development; Gulf Bank; Al-Hamra Real Estate Company; Ali Abdulwahab Al-Mutawa Commercial Co; Markaz Financial Center; Lexus Kuwait as a part of Al-Sayer Group; and Grand Cinemas. Fikra Program is managed by Cubical Services Business Incubator.

## Treat yourself to Jazeera Airways' special business class offer!

**KUWAIT:** Jazeera Airways, Kuwait's leading air carrier operating regionally and internationally, announces a special Business Class offer of 25 percent off on all return fares across the entire network. The seasonal offer that starts on February 11 and ends February 15 is accompanied by exclusive Business Class benefits to ensure a premium experience throughout the journey.

Return fares start from as low as KD 105 to Doha, KD 130 to Dubai, KD 150 to Hyderabad and KD 155 to Beirut.

Business Class passengers are guaranteed a welcoming start at the Kuwait International Airport, where travelers can use dedicated check-in counters and priority passport control. Complimentary access is provided to the flagship Jazeera



Lounge, situated near the boarding gates, with free Wi-Fi, hot and cold food buffet and refreshing beverages.

On board the flight, travelers can look forward to being seated in an elegant cabin fitted with leather seats and a vacant middle seat for greater privacy and ample work space. A complimentary Business class menu is offered as well as a dedicated cabin crew. Jazeera Business Class includes a free baggage allowance of 50kg to all destinations (Egypt 60 kg) and carry-on allowance of two pieces of hand baggage weighing up to 15kg.

## Automatic check-in for Lufthansa passengers for a relaxed start

**KUWAIT:** Lufthansa passengers will now be able to start their journey feeling more relaxed: From now on, they will benefit from an automatic check-in procedure for all flights within Germany and to destinations in Europe. The boarding pass for flights booked up to 24 hours before departure will then be sent automatically to the passenger 23 hours before departure - with no need for any manual check-in. This saves time and makes travel preparations easier. In order to use this new service, the Lufthansa customers only have to deposit their personal details in their Miles & More account or Lufthansa iD profile.

Want to change your seat or cancel your check-in? Want to activate an electronic luggage tag at home or download eJournals? All the services that customers have been able to use so far are now also available with the automated check-in procedure. The service is being offered for flights within the Schengen area as well as for bus and train travel on the Lufthansa Express Rail and Bus. Automatic check-in is not



possible with air travel not completely within the Schengen area. In this case, passengers will still be asked to check in manually. Anyone no longer wishing to use the service can deactivate the option at any time in their customer profile. Customers with no Lufthansa iD or Miles & More profile can also sign up for automatic check-in using the link in their booking confirmation. The service will then only be valid for that particular flight.

Last year Lufthansa was awarded the "IATA Fast Travel Platinum Award" for its range of self-service options. With the award, IATA honors airlines that offer at least 80 percent of their passengers self-service options in the area of

check-in, boarding or baggage claim services.

### The Lufthansa iD

The Lufthansa iD is the key to enjoying a personalized travel experience. After a quick and easy registration process, travelers can log in on a laptop, tablet or smartphone with their e-mail address. They then have the chance to store personal details, attitudes and preferences (e.g. seat, meals, preferred airport) in their profile and to change them at any time. This speeds up the booking process, since the stored information, such as name, contact or payment data, are automatically filled in when the flight is booked.

## VIVA launches 'Scratch & Win' offer this Friday at Avenues branch

**KUWAIT:** VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, will receive customers on Friday (tomorrow) at its Avenues Mall branch 'exclusively' with a 'Scratch & Win' offer amid amazing February's offers launched recently.

Customers will enjoy 'Scratch & Win' vouchers on a 'first come first serve' basis once they subscribe to any of VIVA's voice or data postpaid plans. The vouchers allow them to instantly win one of plenty valuable instant prizes including ATVs, LED screens and smart devices.

Every Friday during February, VIVA's customers will benefit from special offers at its Avenues Mall's branch.

VIVA is the fastest-growing telecom operator in Kuwait. Launched in December 2008, VIVA makes things 'More' for its customers by transforming communication, information and entertainment experiences. The company has rapidly established a pioneer position in the market through its customer centric approach. VIVA's quest is to be the mobile brand of choice in Kuwait by being transparent, engaging, energetic and fulfilling. VIVA continues to take a considerable share of the market by offering an innovative range of best value products, services and content propositions; a state of the art, nationwide network and world-class service.

## Gulf Bank holds biggest Kuwaiti salary account draw today

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank is holding its Kuwaiti salary account draw today (8 February 2018), where the lucky winner of its big KD 250,000 cash prize will be announced. The Bank is happy to hold this event at The Scientific Center located in Salmiya, Kuwait's premier science and educational organization.

The event kicks off at 4 pm with fun activities and programs, with a great lineup of children's activities. There will be a performance by Fahed Al-Salem, who will be singing a medley of Kuwait songs new and old, accompanied by Mohamad Al-Sarraf of The Concert. Gulf Bank will be represented by MCs - Mijren Al Mijren and Nawaf Al-Jazzaf from Corporate Communications; In addition to Ahmad Al-Matari, from Human Resources.

The bank will also be holding its always pop-

ular 'Catch the Cash' money box game, which offer the audience a chance to win cash prizes on the spot. Gulf Bank invites people of Kuwait to join this exciting event and enjoy the fun activities for both adults and children. The actual draw will take place at 8pm, and name of the lucky winner will be announced on the spot as well as live on 88.8 FM Kuwait Pulse radio station. 'Diwaniyat Al-Yaqout and Al-Ansari show,' who will be present at the event and interacting with the audience.

Gulf Bank's salary account is tailored for Kuwaiti customers, and allows them to benefit from many unique offers by transferring their

salaries to Gulf Bank, including the opportunity to either receive a KD 100 cash gift upon transferring their salaries to Gulf Bank or an interest free loan. Customers must have a minimum salary of KD 500 and are fully eligible for the offer following their first salary transfer to Gulf Bank. Additionally, customers can also enjoy a one year free of charge Visa or MasterCard credit card, as well as a chance to apply for loan up to KD 70,000, or a consumer loan up to KD 15,000.

The Scientific Center is a premier institution in Kuwait, aim to simplify science and promote environmental awareness in a fun-filled learning experience.

## Embraer says still in talks with Boeing on tie-up

**SINGAPORE:** Brazil's Embraer said yesterday it was still in talks with US aerospace giant Boeing on combining their commercial air operations into a new company. The comments

by Embraer's commercial chief executive followed a Brazil newspaper report Tuesday that Boeing had presented a plan to Brazil's government which would give it a stake of up to 90 percent in the new venture.

"At this stage, Embraer has not received a proposal," John Slattery told a media briefing on the sidelines of the Singapore Airshow. "The reason is that parties continue to act identifying structures that might work." Boeing and Embraer have been in talks to combine their operations, which would see Boeing holding up to 90 percent of the new company to

be based in Chicago, a person familiar with the talks told AFP Tuesday. Embraer's military operations would not be affected by the transaction and would remain under Brazilian control, that person said. Both companies in December confirmed the talks in a filing to the Brazilian securities exchange.

It follows the deal struck by Boeing rival Airbus last year with Canada's Bombardier, which saw the European giant take over the C Series aircraft program. Should both deals go ahead, it could extend the Boeing-Airbus duopoly into the regional jet market. — AFP

## Technology

# Huawei launches P smart, the smartphone with personalized photography functions

**KUWAIT:** Huawei has introduced the all new P smart with Full View display and exceptional features for consumers' everyday use. Huawei P smart continues the design language of the sought-after P Series characterized by simplicity and elegance - a slim metallic body, flat smooth rear surface, with striking aesthetics.

Huawei P smart's Full View display brings an immersive viewing experience, while the enhanced camera qualities provide advanced bokeh effects and unique photography functions, such as the beauty camera and gesture shot. The smartphone also introduces four intelligent sensing functions- facial recognition, gender recognition, 10-level skin improvement and automatic perception that lets you perfectly capture unforgettable photos and flawless selfies.

The P smart skillfully hides three antennas in the upper and lower parts of the metallic body to avoid the traditional three-section design's impact on body aesthetics while ensuring seamless communication experience. With an ingenious architecture and a beautiful body with 2.5D curvy screen design, HUAWEI P smart feels even more compact and comfortable in hand. HUAWEI P smart also features a unique One-touch Split-screen mode supporting the simultaneous running of two apps offering you even more possibilities of mobile operations.

Combining 13MP + 2MP rear dual cameras and 16-level dual shot blurring, Huawei P smart makes your photos impressive and stereoscopic. Further, with high-precision camera sensors, high-density phase detection pixels, the 13Mp HD camera focuses on real time, accuracy and speed, thus accurately capturing exciting moments. In order to improve photography at night, Huawei P smart features five groups of precision lenses, bringing cleaner, purer photos in low light.

#### Fast and intuitive feature use

Huawei P smart also includes the new EMUI 8.0 oper-



ating system (OS) (based on Android 8.0), taking usability to new levels for fast and intuitive feature use. P smart features Kirin 659 processor made with a process for mid-range and high-end chips characterized by better energy performance. EMUI 8.0 uses the latest enhanced file processing system that reduces and cleans system fragmentation quietly while reducing file fragmentation, allowing your smartphone to run faster and more smoothly.

Huawei P smart Series is equipped with Fingerprint 4.0 solution, fingerprint recognition within 0.3 seconds bringing an enhanced user experience. Huawei has also combined fingerprint recognition with other functions to develop ground-breaking apps such as fingerprint navigation, fingerprint shot and alarm clock deactivation with fingerprint, realizing a faster, more intelligent user experience from Huawei P smart. Additionally, with Huawei's artificial intelligence (AI) technology, HUAWEI P smart offers more



high-quality, convenient scenario experiences, such as One-touch Split-screen, Phone Clone, Huawei Share and Dual Bluetooth Connections. In order to enhance the battery life of smartphones with a full view, HUAWEI P smart features a 3,000-mAh battery in combination with the

Intelligent Power-saving technology 6.0, which supports background real-time detection of power-hungry apps, comprehensive power consumption test and one-key optimization to save power significantly and help extend battery life greatly.

## Elon Musk, the visionary Tesla and SpaceX founder

**SAN FRANCISCO:** From cars to rockets, Elon Musk dreams big. On Tuesday, the South African-born entrepreneur combined both of those passions, blasting one of his Tesla electric cars into space aboard his own rocket. It was the latest feat for the 46-year-old Silicon Valley billionaire who has been hailed as a leading innovator and visionary.

Born in Pretoria, on June 28, 1971, the son of an engineer father and a Canadian-born model mother, Musk left South Africa in his late teens to attend Queen's University in Ontario. He transferred to the University of Pennsylvania after two years and earned bachelor's degrees in physics and business. After graduating from the prestigious Ivy League school, Musk abandoned plans to pursue further studies at Stanford University.

Instead, he dropped out of school and started Zip2, a company that made online publishing software for the media industry. He banked his first millions before the age of 30 when he sold Zip2 to US computer maker Compaq for more than \$300 million in 1999. Musk's next company, X.com, eventually merged with PayPal, the online payments firm bought by internet auction giant eBay for \$1.5 billion in 2002.

After leaving PayPal, Musk embarked on a series of ever more ambitious ventures. He became the chairman of electric carmaker Tesla in 2004 and it was a Tesla roadster that was sent into orbit on Tuesday from a Cape Canaveral launchpad. SpaceX's webcast showed Musk's cherry red car soaring into space, as David Bowie's "Space Oddity" played in the background-with the words "DON'T PANIC" visible on the dashboard, in an apparent nod to the sci-fi classic the "Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy." Powering the car on its journey towards an orbit near Mars was a massive Falcon Heavy rocket built by Musk's space exploration company SpaceX, founded in 2002.

#### SolarCity and Hyperloop

Musk serves as chief executive officer and chief technology officer of SpaceX, which has become a leading supplier of private space launches. In 2012, SpaceX sent its Dragon cargo ship to the orbiting International Space Station. After some early crashes and near-misses, SpaceX has also perfected the art of landing booster engines on solid ground and on ocean platforms, rendering them reusable.

SpaceX recently announced that two private citizens have paid money to be sent around the Moon in what would be the farthest humans have ever traveled to deep space since the 1970s. Besides being the head of SpaceX and Tesla, Musk is the chairman of SolarCity, a solar panel installer recently bought by Tesla. Musk has also promoted research into an ultra-fast "Hyperloop" rail transport system that would transport people at near supersonic speeds.

Musk's jokingly-named The Boring Company aims to potentially build tunnels for the Hyperloop One super-high-speed transport project. "He is a visionary who has some key passions which he pursues with vigor," Jackdaw Research chief analyst Jan Dawson said of Musk. "He doesn't sit around and wait for people to do something about them; he goes out and does it himself." Some of his ideas have prompted questions and he has raised eyebrows with a theory that the world as it is known may be a computer simulation. Musk has also said he wants to make humans an "interplanetary species" by establishing a colony of people living on the Mars. —AFP



Elon Musk

## Five features to consider before buying a premium TV

**KUWAIT:** When it comes to buying TVs there's a lot of different features to consider. Traditionally, consumers focused on two key features: size, and cost. However, this is a sentiment of the past, and today consumers are demanding UHD-quality TV, as they gain a better understanding of what these features really mean and how much they matter when it comes to increasing immersion. Despite this, it's not always easy to know what you should be prioritizing when buying a high-quality TV, but keeping this in mind, here is a rundown of features that you should consider before purchasing your next TV.

#### 1 Color Volume

Color volume is a standard for evaluating a TV's ability to produce accurate colors at all luminance levels; so the higher the color volume, the better the TV is at producing rich, and precise colors. This standard emerged as a way to evaluate a UHD of 4K TV's ability to produce immersive viewing experiences, and how well they perform under a variety of lighting conditions. If a TV's color volume is low, the depicted image will exceed a TV's peak luminance, and so will appear washed out and faded, making the overall viewing experience suffer. Color volume is a feature which manufacturers are in constant competition over, and are always exploring ways to deliver peak picture quality.

#### 2 HDR

HDR adds much more color, brightness, and contrast to images displayed on HD or UHD TVs. HDR was developed to provide whiter whites, blacker black, and colors which are more true-to-life, and the results are lifelike visuals that portray images accurately, as the producer intended. Where the old technology of SDR might lose details in the shadows or glare, HDR produces sharper contrast through different conditions. However, Samsung's QLED TVs support HDR10+, which adds a more dynamic range of light and dark ratio to images, delivering even greater contrast, more vibrant colors, and allows images to be enhanced on a scene-by-scene basis.

## Chinese police don high-tech glasses to capture suspects

**BEIJING:** Chinese police are sporting high-tech sunglasses that can spot suspects in a crowded train station, the newest use of facial recognition technology that has drawn concerns among human rights groups. In a scene reminiscent of the dystopian sci-fi television show "Black Mirror", officers in the central city of Zhengzhou are wearing the digital shades amid the crush of travelers heading home during Chinese New Year, the busiest time for the country's transit system.

So far, the technology has allowed police to nab seven suspects accused of crimes ranging from human trafficking to hit and runs, as well as another 26 people who were using fake IDs, according to the state-owned People's Daily, quoting the city's police department. The system is part of China's efforts to build a digital surveillance system able to use a variety of biometric data—from photos and iris scans to fingerprints-



#### 3 Refresh rate

A TV's refresh rate affects the smoothness of the picture, as it is the number of times that an on-screen image is refreshed per second. TVs with a higher refresh rate will, generally, provide a more seamless show, with minimal motion blur, and will create a more immersive experience. This will be particularly important to you if you watch a lot of fast-paced action films, and a high refresh rate will take your experience to the next level.

#### 4 HDMI and connections

HDMI is an industry standard which transmits visual and audio data between devices, and so higher-quality HDMI cables will support higher transfer speeds. Therefore there will be more bandwidth to enjoy 4K UHD, and HDR content, and so, how a TV handles its HDMI, amongst other connections, can greatly influence its set-up, and the ease of which the device integrates into a living space.

#### 5 Smart TV

Smart TVs are in high demand due to their capability of connecting to the internet to allow users to stream video content, browse the web, and run a variety of apps. It is now the norm to stream



over-the-top (OTT) services, as more people are enjoying a dynamic, and broad, range of entertainment due to the convenience of apps. Samsung's QLED TVs have a range of smart apps, services and features which make it easy to enjoy high-quality UHD and HDR content. These features also include the TV PLUS app, which organizes your on-demand content, and mirrors the channel menus of

traditional TV providers. This is all managed through the One Remote, which connects other devices via a single, intuitive control. So, if you're looking for a new premium TV, make sure you look for these important features. Determining which features are most important to you will help you make an informed decision as to what TV is best for you, and your living environment.



**ZHENGZHOU:** This photo taken on February 5, 2018 shows a police officer wearing a pair of smartglasses with a facial recognition system at Zhengzhou East Railway Station. —AFP

grams have drawn fierce criticism from human rights organizations and privacy advocates, who are concerned by their potential for abuse. —AFP

Health

# Red pandas rescued in Laos stir fears over Asia's exotic pet trade

The discovery of red pandas there is virtually unheard of

**BANGKOK:** The rescue in Laos of three endangered red pandas trafficked from China has raised fears the rare animals are increasingly being coveted by exotic pet owners. Landlocked Laos, which borders China and Vietnam, is a key transit hub in the global trade in illegal wildlife, but experts say the discovery of red pandas there is virtually unheard of. Six of the cat-sized bears were found on January 12 inside northern Laos during a random stop of a van travelling from China, one of their few remaining habitats.

“

Also targeted for their fur

”

Three died later after the rough journey but the remaining three were sent to a sanctuary run by the Free the Bears NGO in the northern tourist town of Luang Prabang, where they are recovering well. “They have already made it through their initial two

week quarantine period which has allowed us to move them to larger cages where they have more room to climb,” Rod Mabin, regional communications director with Free the Bears, told AFP. The group shared recent footage of the ring-tailed red pandas munching on leaves and eating fresh fruit while occasionally staring up in apparent puzzlement at the camera.

**Highly vulnerable**

With habitats under threat in the Eastern Himalayas and China, red pandas are considered endangered and highly vulnerable to infectious diseases. But their copper fur, cute appearance and small size also make them easy candidates for the exotic pet trade. According to an assessment from the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, the interest in red

pandas as pets may have grown partly in response to the increasing number of “cute” images of the animals shared on social media.

“This is a very unusual confiscation as red pandas had never before been seen in Laos,” Mabin said. “The most likely explanation is that the animals were destined for either a private zoo or the exotic pet trade.” The animals are also targeted for their fur. Ang Phuri Sherpa, Nepal country director for the Red Panda Network, said the mammals are difficult to find outside of their habitats in the dense bamboo forests across countries including Nepal, Bhutan, India, China and Myanmar.

Citing a Laos media report, Sherpa said an initial investigation indicated they were being brought for the pet trade or on the way to Thailand, stressing the need for countries to exert “extra effort curbing [the] illegal trade.” Discussions are ongoing over where the creatures will live once fully recovered. “Whether that is at the sanctuary in Laos or in the wild in China is yet to be determined,” Free the Bears Mabin added. — AFP



**LUANG PRABANG:** This handout taken by NGO Free the Bears on January 15, 2018 and received by AFP yesterday shows one of three red pandas at the Free the Bears sanctuary after being confiscated from wildlife traffickers. — AFP

## Ants used as drug manufacturers for humans?

**PARIS:** Ants naturally produce powerful germicides against bacteria and fungi, said a study yesterday that targeted the industrious insects as possible drug factories for humans. The discovery of ants' pharmaceutical prowess comes as the armoury of effective antibiotics developed by humans over the last 100 years dwindles in the face of growing germ resistance.

Experiments with 20 ant species found antimicrobials on 12 of them, a team reported in the Royal Society Open

Science journal. “This means ants are probably a good place to look if you want to discover new antimicrobial compounds,” study co-author Clint Penick of the Arizona State University said. Ants produce the compounds in special glands often referred to as their “chemical factories”.

“Ants coat their bodies with secretions from these glands, and some ants distribute these antimicrobials around their nests similar to how we would use antiseptic cleaners in our homes,” said Penick. The team tested the ant-manufactured chemicals on a usually harmless bacterium commonly found on human skin, *Staphylococcus epidermidis*.

Compounds produced by different species varied in their germ-killing effectiveness, the researchers found. The chemicals have yet to be tested on bacteria capable of causing human disease. “It is important to note that there have been over 15,000 ant species described, and each

species is likely to produce many different compounds that could have antimicrobial action,” said Penick.

**How do they do it?**

“We have taken the first steps to identify which ant lineages have the highest potential to produce antibiotics that work against human diseases, but there is much work left to identify the chemicals that work as antibiotics and to figure out how to synthesise them.” Insects which live in large, tightly-knit social groups—ideal breeding grounds for disease—have long been thought to be a promising source of new antibiotics, Penick said. But until now, very few have actually been tested.

Ants use their chemical defences against a number of microbial invaders. These include several bacteria, and a fungus that turns the ants into “zombies” by releasing chemicals that hijack the insect's central nervous system,

effectively taking its body for a ride before killing it. A key question is why ant-attacking pathogens have not developed resistance to antimicrobials that the insects have presumably been using for millions of years, whereas many human-developed drugs lose their potency within just decades.

Another key finding of the study concerned the eight ant species which did not produce an antimicrobial, at least none that was effective against the bacterium being tested. If a species does not produce antimicrobials, it means they must have found another way to protect themselves against disease, the team said. “We are excited to learn how some of these ant species might be doing that,” added Penick. The UN describes growing drug resistance—caused partly by overexposure to antibiotics—as a “global health emergency”, risking a future in which people die of ailments easily curable today. — AFP

CLINIC

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## Global Medical Center Welcomes

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## What's On

# AOU honors former president Prof Moudhi Al-Humoud



By Faten Omar

A ceremony was held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Talal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of The Arab Open University, to honor former President of the Arab Open University (AOU), Prof Moudhi Al-Humoud. The ceremony was held on Tuesday at Sheraton hotel in Kuwait city and witnessed a presence of the Board members and a number of faculty and administrative staff of the AOU.

Advisor to the Amiri Diwan Dr Yousef Hamad Al Ibrahim on behalf of HRH Prince Talal Chairman of the Board, welcomed the attendees into the ceremony. He praised the role of the Arab Open University and honoring Humoud in recognition of her great leadership and efforts throughout her presidency of the University that was characterized by integrity and loyalty. The Board announced that Prof Mohammad Ibrahim Al-Zakri as President of the AOU.

On his behalf, Zakri thanked and

appreciated Prof Humoud for her great efforts throughout her presidency of the University that resulted in essential changes in all academic, administrative and financial areas. He also commended her personal qualities, acceptance of other views, humility, cooperation, and sincerity wishing her all success in her life. He added "we are here to honor an icon of Kuwait and a character with a multitude of talents. We are serving in this university to give the right of education for everyone no matter who or where they come from. Humoud was also passionate enough to create a special major for deaf and dumb students."

For her part, Prof Moudhi said that every year she spent in the university was an experience she was tremendously proud of. "I spend 9 years in the Arab Open University and we accomplished a lot. Not alone but with our team work that developed the university all over the world. I thank Kuwait, our glorious III Amir, Prince Talal, university's staff, students, my family and all the ones who supported me."



## V4 entertains cross-cultural audience at Abdulhussein Abdulredha Theater



By Ben Garcia

The Visegrad Group, comprising of four countries - Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia - hosted its first concert in Kuwait. Visegrad, known to many in Europe as V4, jointly arranged the event to celebrate its 27 years of cultural and political alliance at the Abdulhussein Abdulredha Theater in Salmiya. V4 was formed in 1991 for the purposes of advancing military, cultural, economic and energy cooperation among members.

Hungary is the current chairman of the alliance, so it invited the famous Hungarian-based performer Iren Lovasz Groove and Voice Trio. They demonstrated a unique fusion of different musical worlds. It was classy ethno-ambient world music which was not only magical and spiritual, but also enthralling. Their music is based on archaic Hungarian folksongs representing the natural elements of water, fire, earth and air. Guest



musicians from Slovakia and Poland also demonstrated their talents through songs and musical instruments. Mihaly Bayer, Hungarian Ambassador to Kuwait, said the event was initiated by the four countries headed by Hungary to showcase their culture and common roots.

"We are close allies - we are brothers, so

we want to show the world our unity and cooperation. We have musical bands and people in the music industry to entertain us. We all understand the language of music, so we hope to entertain our visitors too, who are of different nationalities. This is traditional music that can truly move hearts and souls," Bayer said.

## KFH patronizes Kuwait Riders Bike Show

Kuwait Finance House (KFH) patronized Kuwait Riders Bike Show organized by Kuwait Dragons team on the occasion of the national days' celebrations. The event brought together over 2000 motorbikes and 600 classic cars under the supervision of a constellation of skillful motorists on the levels of the Arab world and the region. KFH sponsorship of the event came as part of its eventful program tailored to celebrate the festivities marking the glorious

57th National Day, the 27th Liberation Day. The Bike Show not only attracted bikers, it was also a family event with live entertainment, competitions and exciting contests to everyone. Bikers from all around the Middle East participated in this exciting show held in Kuwait. Shaikh Mohamed Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah honored KFH in recognition of its key role in assuming the social responsibility and supporting the national and sports activities.



Sheikh Mohamed Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah honoring KFH.

## IMF Middle East Center holds event for Kuwait interns

The IMF Middle East Center for Economics and Finance (CEF) hosted an event benefiting 19 young Kuwaiti interns from the Kuwait Capital Markets Authority (CMA) as part of the latter's Training Program for Recent Graduates. The program seeks to introduce the CMA's young graduates to the financial and economic institutions operating in Kuwait, and in general help in expanding the participants' knowledge and skills to enable them to compete in the labor market.

During the event, CEF officials gave

detailed presentations about the objectives and work of the IMF, and an overview of its global operations. They also briefed the participants on the key mission of the CEF, which is hosted by the State of Kuwait with support from the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA). The CEF's central role is to support the capacity-building efforts of Arab League countries through training of public sector officials in economics and finance, as well as to produce research and lead conferences, seminars and symposiums of benefit to policymakers in the Arab World.



# Classifieds

Thursday, February 8, 2018

**Kuwait Times**  
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**STATE OF KUWAIT**  
 DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION  
 METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 6819 - 6817  
 Fax: (+965) 24348714  
[www.met.gov.kw](http://www.met.gov.kw)



## Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

**BY DAY:** Warm with light variable wind, with speed of 06 - 20 km/h.

**BY NIGHT:** Cold with light to moderate variable wind to north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 07/02/2018 0000 UTC	
KUWAIT CITY	24 °C	15 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	26 °C	08 °C		
ABDALY	25 °C	09 °C		
BUBYAN	-- °C	-- °C		
JAHRA	27 °C	12 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	23 °C	12 °C		
SALMIYAH	21 °C	16 °C		
AHMADI	22 °C	15 °C		
NUWAISIB	25 °C	12 °C		
WAFRA	26 °C	10 °C		
SALMY	25 °C	11 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Thursday	02/08	Warm	27 °C	10 °C	NW	15 - 35 km/h
Friday	02/09	Warm and some scattered clouds will appear	25 °C	08 °C	NW-VRB	08 - 30 km/h
Saturday	02/10	Partly cloudy	24 °C	08 °C	VRB	06 - 22 km/h
Sunday	02/11	Partly cloudy to cloudy	26 °C	10 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 28 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	05:12
Sunrise	06:33
Zuhr	12:02
Asr	15:05
Sunset	17:31
Isha	18:49

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	27 °C
MIN. Temp.	09 °C
MAX. RH	56 %
MIN. RH	15 %
MAX. Wind	S 28 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

**REQUIRED**  
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 • FEMALE AND MALE  
 • VISA IS TRANSFERABLE  
 SEND YOUR CV BY WHATSAPP:  
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**SITUATION VACANT**  
 House Driver required for reputed Kuwaiti family. Must have transferable visa and English speaking. Please contact: 66079496. (C 5378) 5-2-2018

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
 I, HYDER ALI SHAIK S/o KHADAR SAHEB SHAIK holder of Indian Passport No. L4103327 & Civil ID No. 264072704364 has changed my name from HYDER ALI SHAIK to HYDER ALI SYED hereinafter in all my dealings and documents, I will be known by name of HYDER ALI SYED. (C 5379) 6-2-2018

**CAREER OPPORTUNITY**  
 Danah Universal School Of Kuwait is looking for dedicated, hardworking and professional candidates for the following positions:

**Academic Positions:**

- ◆ Vice Principal (Native Speakers)
- ◆ Academic Coordinator (Native Speakers)
- ◆ Head Of Department (Science & Math)
- ◆ Social Worker
- ◆ Math Teacher (Elementary & High School Dept.)
- ◆ English Teacher (Middle School Dept.)
- ◆ Science Teacher

**Non-Academic Positions:**

- ◆ Registrar

Following will be observed while short listing the candidates:

- Qualification: Minimum Bachelor's in relevant subject (Preferably Masters) for teacher's position and Masters and/or PhD for the position of VP & Academic Coordinator.
- Experience: Minimum 5 years' experience in any reputable institution in the same field.
- Must be familiar with American Curriculum
- Health: No chronic disease likely to affect performance
- Shortlisted candidates will be contacted via Email. Please make sure the email address and contact no. in the application are correct.

All interested candidates are requested to email their CV at:  
**info@aldanahbsk.net**

**SITUATION VACANT**  
 A Kuwaiti family looking for a decent driver. Who speaks English or Arabic with a valid Kuwaiti license and above 30 years. Salary negotiable. Please call 99788463 (C 5380) 8-2-2018

**Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is**  
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 For labor-related inquiries and complaints: Call MSAL hotline 128  
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**CHEF**  
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**Chefneeded965@gmail.com**

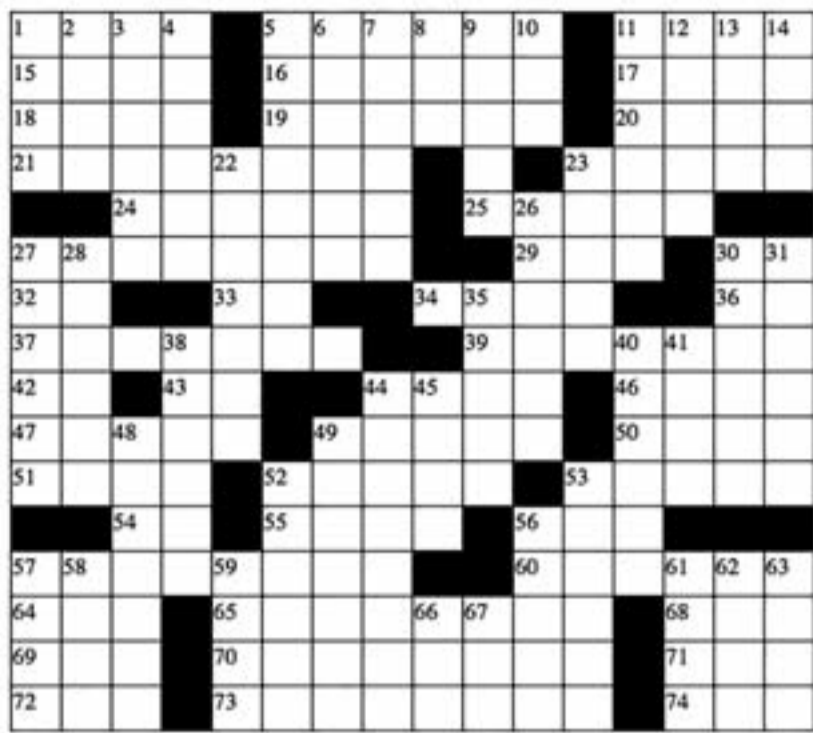
Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page ([www.kuwait-airport.com.kw](http://www.kuwait-airport.com.kw))

## DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Thursday 8/2/2018				Departure Flights on Thursday 8/2/2018			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
JAI	572	Mumbai	00:05	AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	JZR	528	Asyut	00:15
KAC	504	Beirut	00:30	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:30
JZR	539	Cairo	00:50	FDB	072	Dubai	00:35
KAC	102	London	00:50	PIA	240	Sialkot	00:40
PGT	858	Istanbul	00:55	MSC	412	Asyut	01:00
THY	772	Istanbul	00:55	JAI	571	Mumbai	01:05
RJA	642	Amman	01:05	JZR	502	Luxor	01:30
WAN	416	Beirut	01:05	KAC	142	Doha	01:45
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30	KAC	677	Dubai	01:50
UAE	853	Dubai	01:45	KAC	417	Manila	02:00
DLH	625	Bahrain	01:45	THY	773	Istanbul	02:30
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:30
AXB	395	Kozhikode	02:00	SAI	442	Lahore	02:30
ETH	620	AddisAbaba	02:15	DLH	625	Frankfurt	02:45
JZR	555	Alexandria	02:15	AXB	396	Kozhikode	02:55
QTR	1086	Doha	02:20	KAC	351	Kochi	03:05
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	ETH	621	AddisAbaba	03:05
KLM	446	Bahrain	02:30	UAE	854	Dubai	03:40
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	QTR	1087	Doha	03:40
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:55	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:55
MSR	606	Luxor	03:05	KKK	1269	Istanbul	03:55
ETD	305	AbuDhabi	03:10	OMA	644	Muscat	03:55
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	THY	765	Istanbul	04:00
QTR	1076	Doha	03:50	MSR	607	Luxor	04:05
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	ETD	306	AbuDhabi	04:05
KAC	382	Delhi	04:15	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
KAC	544	Cairo	04:25	LMU	511	Cairo	05:00
KAC	418	Manila	04:25	QTR	1077	Doha	05:30
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:35	FDB	070	Dubai	05:45
FDB	069	Dubai	04:55	KAC	303	Mumbai	06:05
JZR	609	Hyderabad	05:10	JZR	560	Sohag	06:25
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:20	DHX	172	Bahrain	06:50
JZR	143	Doha	05:25	THY	771	Istanbul	06:50
THY	770	Istanbul	05:25	JZR	164	Dubai	06:55
KAC	358	Kochi	05:40	RJA	643	Amman	07:05
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
KAC	344	Chennai	05:50	KAC	167	Paris	07:35
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:10	JZR	902	Baku	07:50
KAC	362	Colombo	06:25	KAC	501	Beirut	08:00
KAC	678	Dubai	06:30	KAC	413	Bangkok	08:10
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:30	KAC	791	Madinah	08:35
WAN	342	Sohag	06:35	FDB	054	Dubai	08:35
JZR	529	Asyut	06:50	KAC	787	Jeddah	08:40
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:50	BAW	156	London	08:55
BAW	157	London	07:10	KAC	613	Bahrain	08:55
KAC	204	Lahore	07:10	WAN	133	Doha	09:00
QTR	8511	Doha	07:35	KAC	117	NewYork	09:00
FDB	053	Dubai	07:35	QTR	8512	Doha	09:05
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:35	JZR	534	Cairo	09:10
JZR	503	Luxor	07:45	KAC	561	Amman	09:40
WAN	332	Alexandria	08:00	KAC	741	Dammam	09:45
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00	KAC	101	London	09:45
UAE	855	Dubai	08:35	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45
IRA	667	Esfahan	09:00	KAC	671	Dubai	09:45
ETD	301	AbuDhabi	09:05	KAC	515	Tehran	10:00
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	UAE	856	Dubai	10:00
QTR	1070	Doha	09:10	IRA	668	Mashhad	10:00
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	541	Cairo	10:00
FDK	803	Damascus	10:00	ETD	302	AbuDhabi	10:10
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	KAC	773	Riyadh	10:10
IRA	673	Ahwaz	10:10	KAC	617	Doha	10:15
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	QTR	1071	Doha	10:20
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00	KAC	155	Istanbul	10:25
WAN	114	Bahrain	11:00	FDB	056	Dubai	10:40
MSC	403	Asyut	11:15	JZR	778	Jeddah	10:40
QTR	1074	Doha	11:20	RSB	7867	IQA	11:00
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	SVA	513	Riyadh	11:00
NIA	161	Cairo	11:35	FDK	804	Damascus	11:00
WAN	134	Doha	11:45	IRA	672	Ahwaz	11:10
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:25
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:10	JZR	786	Riyadh	12:00
FEF	933	Sohag	12:40	JZR	776	Jeddah	12:00
JZ	R561	Sohag	12:45	SYR	342	Damascus	12:00
FD	B075	Dubai	12:45	MSC	404	Asyut	12:15
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	VIZ	202	IQA	12:30
KAC	742	Dammam	12:50	QTR	1075	Doha	12:30
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	NIA	362	Alexandria	12:35
AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:15				
KAC	792	Madinah	13:20				



CROSSWORD 1830



ACROSS

- 1. A boy or man.
5. Characterized by undue haste and lack of thought or deliberation.
11. Consisting of one of two equivalent parts in value or quantity.
15. Large hairy humanoid creature said to live in the Himalayas.
16. Call forth.
17. (Old Testament) The eldest son of Isaac who would have inherited the Covenant that God made with Abraham and that Abraham passed on to Isaac.
18. The officer below the master on a commercial ship.
19. Larval mite that sucks the blood of vertebrates including human beings causing intense irritation.
20. One of a pair of long straps (usually connected to the bit or the headpiece) used to control a horse.
21. Causing alarm or fear.
24. Draw back, as with fear.
25. American professional baseball player who hit more home runs than Babe Ruth (born in 1934).
27. A famous waterfall in Venezuela.
29. (sports) The chief official (as in boxing or American football) who is expected to ensure fair play.
32. A colorless and odorless inert gas.
33. A heavy brittle metallic element of the platinum group.
34. A complex red organic pigment containing iron and other atoms to which oxygen binds.
36. A radioactive metallic element that is similar to tellurium and bismuth.
37. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
39. Filled with a great quantity.
42. The local time at the 0 meridian passing through Greenwich, England.
43. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
46. An intensive care unit designed with special equipment to care for premature or low-birth-weight or seriously ill newborn.
47. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
50. A translucent mineral consisting of hydrated silica of variable color.
51. Lacking sufficient water or rainfall.
54. A state in the eastern United States.
55. An elaborate song for solo voice.
57. Expressing pain or agony.
60. Small striped semiterrestrial eastern American squirrel with cheek pouches.
64. The 19th letter of the Greek alphabet.
65. Of or relating to the science of acoustics.
68. Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).
69. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
70. French symbolist poet noted for his free verse (1842-1898).
71. An adult male person (as opposed to a woman).
72. A mature blood cell that contains hemoglobin to carry oxygen to the

bodily tissues.

- 73. Having lost freshness or brilliance of color.
74. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.

DOWN

- 1. (classical architecture) A molding for a cornice.
2. Heal or recover.
3. Used in an attack.
4. Capital of the state of South Dakota.
5. Sauce for pasta.
6. A genus of tropical Asian and Malaysian palm trees.
7. A small low-powered electrically powered vehicle driven on a special platform where there are many others to be dodged.
8. An awkward and inexperienced youth.
9. Earlier a god.
10. A wooden pin pushed or driven into a surface.
11. Of or concerning this.
12. An association of nations dedicated to economic and political cooperation in southeastern Asia.
13. The habitation of wild animals.
14. A reserve of money set aside for some purpose.
22. (British) A minicar used as a taxicab.
23. A special lineage.
26. A large fleet.
28. Either of a pair of thick-walled tubes that carry urine from the kidney to the urinary bladder.
30. A medicinal drug used to evoke vomiting (especially in cases of drug overdose or poisoning).
31. A small node.
35. Selected as the best.
38. A large Yoruba city in southwestern Nigeria.
40. Of or relating to or consisting of enol.
41. Monotypic genus of palms of Australasia.
44. Either of 2 species of the genus Roridula.
45. A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
48. Temporary living quarters specially built by the army for soldiers.
49. The outermost region of the sun's atmosphere.
52. A unit of pressure equal to one newton per square meter.
53. Situated in a particular spot or position.
56. A percussion instrument consisting of vertical metal tubes of different lengths that are struck with a hammer.
58. Clothing of a distinctive style or for a particular occasion.
59. A metrical unit with unstressed-stressed syllables.
61. God of love and erotic desire.
62. A feeling of strong eagerness (usually in favor of a person or cause).
63. An inactive volcano in Sicily.
66. An enclosed space.
67. Hormone released by the hypothalamus that controls the release of thyroid-stimulating hormone from the anterior pituitary.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Aries, charting your course flows in this phase of your life: this is a prosperous time as you accumulate material and financial securities. You encounter rules that thwart your effort: study them and figure out how to make them work for you. A meeting with superiors goes well when you clearly express your views. Most important now is figuring out how to add to your nest egg. You're called on to take people to a certain place by just telling them about it: this could indicate a tournament or church fair. You shine as you work with others toward a common goal. A dangerous situation is avoided with your input. You spend time with someone who appreciates your tricks and easier way of doing things; you enjoy a special treat tonight, Aries.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Taurus, those you're close to warm your heart and cause you to feel grateful. It is important to you to receive praise concerning your special abilities and talents. The energy of taking risks is strong: during this new phase, you should step in and try something new such as stock market or other investments that hold your interest. You step in to help when someone is in dire need: your tendencies to assist shine. A difficult situation grows worse until you discover what started the problem in the first place; tread lightly as you move toward repairing this. It is very important to tend to your own business and not let the problems of others distract you. Someone surprises you with a thoughtful gift or card; you find you are secure and happy this evening, Taurus.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Gemini, friends ask for your help in giving a party like a shower or house warming. Your organizational and cooking skills prove very helpful. This event should go wonderfully and without a hitch. Your listening skills come in quite handy as you attend a fast-paced meeting. A clear understanding of your motives and actions is a positive experience. A serious discussion with someone opens your eyes to some unknown facts; as you let this roll through your thoughts you could actually see a different way to approach a difficult situation. People enjoy your personality and story-telling talents; you could find yourself center stage at a gathering after work. This evening brings an idea for a new look for you or your home or garden, Gemini.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Cancer, you have a desire to reach for the stars, as though nothing is impossible to achieve. Let this time of confidence serve you well as you take risks in new areas things you have kept inside can now comfortably be revealed. Political, religious or other controversial topics stir your blood and could create friction. Everyone is entitled to their opinion, right you may experience having a hard time staying calm; breathing and stretching are very helpful in these areas. Someone asks for your input on a personal problem; be careful with this one as it could be turned on you. Your favorite place is home and there just happens to be plenty to do there at this time; later is a perfect time to finish up a chore or task that takes more than one pair of hands, Cancer.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Leo, a hot, emotional issue is brought to light when someone contacts you with inflammatory information regarding the past of someone close to you. You're drawn to interact with neighbors or members of your immediate family. An unruly situation arises that causes blocks and levels of frustration you're not prepared to deal with. Harsh words could be communicated by you to someone else if you're not careful. You want very much to tell someone how you feel about behavior they exhibited; be careful, for you might just get some hurtful words in return. A sense of pulling away from disruptions and conflicts dominates later today. Surround yourself with the comforts of home as you relax and recharge after a trying day that does finally end well, Leo.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Virgo, your determination to reach goals is exploding across all areas of your life. Extreme self-discipline is prominent as you strive to meet physical, mental, emotional and material goals. You absorb the positive energy available to you now; every thought, every move, every action you take is preplanned and within your boundaries. You take your feelings to task and question why they are what they are; don't dissect and push yourself too hard for this could cause harm. If you experience the feeling of being blocked or cut off from certain people or situations, you could actually enjoy this time away from circumstances that could be sources of stress. You understand the attitudes of those you spend time with; take care of you this evening and no one else, Virgo.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Libra, your well-being is front of mind. Physical, mental, emotional, spiritual balance is what you desire and today you do something about it. A strong, positive self-image drives everything you do, nothing that doesn't promote your agenda of being your best is tossed to the side. You reinvent methods of caring for your home and engaging with your work; you work to overcome temptation to stray off the path you have committed to. A like-minded person invites you for a quick lunch; this person agrees with you on an important issue. Domestic disruption is indicated regarding where you live; this shouldn't last long. A neighbor may compliment your taste in color, design and comfort of new furniture; you try a new, interesting beverage tonight, Libra.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Scorpio, ambition and confidence soar to new heights as you enter a new cycle of productivity. New work or job opportunities open up with interesting perks. You feel good about the future, no matter what comes; this new attitude is a definite plus in reaching your goals. An enjoyable group of people invites you to join them on an adventure. Reading and watching certain films generate new thoughts and ideas. Your presentation goes very well because of your ability to state what you think in an understanding way; verbal skill can make the difference in gain or loss! You look forward to the approaching weekend and make plans to go somewhere different. Good times ahead as you continue to look deeply into what motivates your thoughts and actions, Scorpio.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Sagittarius, you insist on respect from someone in particular; this person is a hard one and isn't able to comply. You stay on the path, tried and true and refusing to quit. You're relentless when it comes to reaching your goals and accomplishing everything on your list; these are priorities for you at this time. Assigning people to specific duties comes with ease as you build a talented team for an important project or event. An old friend pops in for a visit and lends a sympathetic ear over lunch or coffee. You could discover serious problems you had no idea about; emotions could run high regarding this if you don't handle it in the proper manner. You look closely at the high points in your life; you enjoy comforts and privileges many others don't have, Sagittarius.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Capricorn, wanting to learn more is normal for you; you're thrilled to uncover an unusual opportunity to do so with a noted instructor. We learn valuable lessons in many different settings, not necessarily in a school room! Spiritually, you seek to see the whole big picture, not just the immediate one. Your personality is bubbly and inviting; this works well in a meeting or group discussion later. A new position becomes known and you're tempted to apply; if you wish to do so, the time is definitely now according to the stars. Take a deep breath and make a decision. Self-awareness is strongly indicated at this time. You strive to make the changes you know you need; success is indicated. Affairs of the heart are likely to be most important now, Capricorn.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Aquarius, your leadership is sought regarding new ways to raise funds; perhaps this means a charitable organization or a client that needs funding on a new project. A social opportunity arises which causes inner conflict; be careful as there could be someone who is opposed to your involvement with this event. Give this great consideration! You feel great satisfaction in your ability to support and take care of yourself. You feel a strong need to break with the mundane, boring or usual ways; there may be an opportunity to do just that. There's an idea of a new way to approach something sensitive in a personal situation; follow your heart on this one. Put your feet up and relax with a good book or film with a fun partner you enjoy tonight, Aquarius.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Pisces, your flair for unique and interesting objects is strong. Put your thoughts on paper before they evaporate. You share time with someone who not only admires your quirks, but shares them. Your lack of attention or comment regarding a certain situation could be taken as either agreement or disagreement; sometimes you just have to be honest. This is a time of creating new and exciting items or plans. You could be reminded of old habits you have long ago abandoned. You are complimented on your taste and looks when you attend a special celebration or get together. Look deeply into a long standing negative situation that could get worse if you make a mistake; try to put your prejudices aside as you take an honest look at what is true, Pisces.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Movie Actresses 1

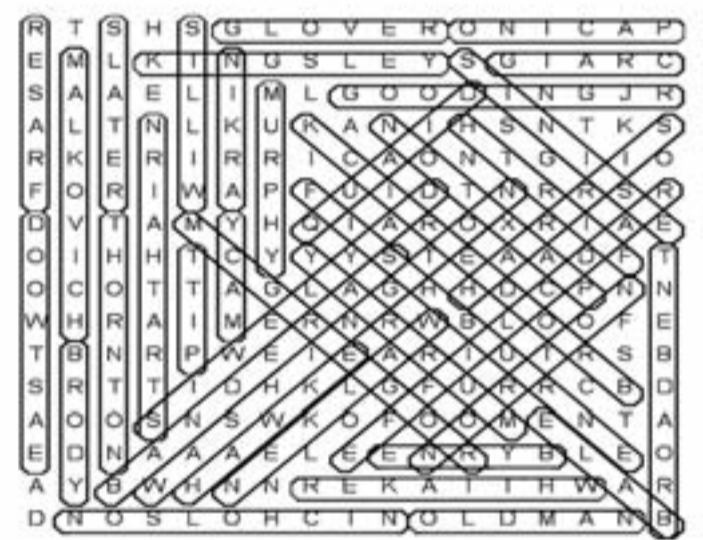
Find and circle all of the Movie Actresses that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the name of a movie for which Jodie Foster won an Oscar.



- ADAMS, Amy; ALBA, Jessica; ALLEN, Joan; BARRYMORE, Drew; BERRY, Halle; BIEL, Jessica; BLANCHETT, Cate; BLETHYN, Brenda; BLUNT, Emily; CLOSE, Glenn; CONNELLY, Jennifer; CUSACK, Joan; CUTHBERT, Elisha; DAVIS, Hope; DENCH, Judi; DIAZ, Cameron; FANNING, Dakota; FOSTER, Jodie; GUGINO, Carrie; HATHAWAY, Anne; HUNTER, Holly; HUSTON, Angelica; JOLIE, Angelina; KEENER, Catherine; LANE, Diane; LANGE, Jessica; MCDORMAND, Frances; MIRREN, Helen; MOORE, Demi; PALTRON, Anna; PAQUIN, Gwyneth; RICCI, Christine; SWANK, Hilary; THERON, Charlize; THOMPSON, Emma; WATSON, Emily

Yesterday's Solution

Movie Actors 3



- ARKIN, Alan; BALE, Christian; BANDERAS, Antonio; BROADBENT, Jim; BRODERICK, Matthew; BRODY, Adrian; BYRNE, Gabriel; CRAIG, Daniel; DAY-LEWIS, Daniel; EASTWOOD, Clint; FIRTH, Colin; FISHBURNE, Laurence; FRASER, Brendan; GLOVER, Danny; GOODING JR., Cuba; HARRIS, Ed; HAWKE, Ethan; KINGSLEY, Ben; MACY, William H.; MALKOVICH, John; MCGREGOR, Ewan; MURPHY, Eddie; MURRAY, Bill; NICHOLSON, Jack; NORTON, Edward; OLDMAN, Gary; PACINO, Al; PAXTON, Bill; PITT, Brad; QUAIL, Dennis; RADCLIFFE, Daniel; SINISE, Gary; SLATER, Christian; STRATHAIRN, David; THORNTON, Billy Bob; WALKEN, Christopher; WASHINGTON, Denzel; WHITTAKER, Forest; WILLIS, Bruce

The hidden movie title is: THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND

Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



## Lifestyle | Gossip



## BYRNE won't return for X-Men: Dark Phoenix

Rose Byrne won't be returning for 'X-Men: Dark Phoenix'. The 38-year-old actress has confirmed that her character Moira MacTaggart won't be appearing in the next installment of the movie franchise but she is looking forward to see how Jessica Chastain - who will play an unknown character that is being referred to as Smith - will fare in the upcoming movie. She told CinemaBlend: "Unfortunately, Moira is not showing up. I wish she was. I had such fun on 'X-Men: Apocalypse'. I love that cast. It is a really fun, what do you call it? Superhero film ... ensemble, exactly. I can't wait to see what [Jessica Chastain] does, 'cause I'm such a fan." Meanwhile, Rose previously insisted that men still get better acting roles but she is glad to have seen "some changes" have been made. She said: "Most things I read, I still would much rather play the guy. There have been some changes, but I wish there was more ... "You gravitate to where you

want to go, but so much is out of your control. I was doing all of this really heavy, dramatic stuff, and I just needed a break ... You have to be aggressive in this business. You have always got to push for what you want. Working with Glenn [Close, on 'Damages'], she was the hardest worker ever. She was constantly pushing." And Rose had slammed the movie industry for being "forgetful and unforgiving". She shared: "It helps you see how far you've come: from living on unemployment in LA in my early 20s until now. And it's a great way to do that to yourself and help you to be grateful to be working. It's really important. But for my life, every day is still every day. It accumulates slowly in that sense. It's just you looking at yourself in the mirror, if you know what I mean? So it's a strange thing to quantify. This business is such a forgetful and unforgiving one so I'm always a true skeptic about any grandiose statements about my career."



## THE BACKSTREET BOYS to collaborate with the Spice Girls

The Backstreet Boys want to collaborate with the Spice Girls. The 'I Want It That Way' hitmakers would love to release a song with the girl group - which includes Victoria Beckham, Geri Horner, Mel B, Mel C and Emma Bunton - after they set plans in motion for a reunion. Sharing a collage of the Spice Girls and the Backstreet Boys, AJ McLean wrote on Instagram: "I'm just saying??? Who wants to see this dream, and long mentioned rumor become a reality. Would you come? I know it's super late and I should be asleep which I'm finally about to be but after I saw the post earlier today from @emmabunton page my eyes lit up my heart got excited and the wheels in my crazy head started spinning so??? As they say " if you build it they will come ". #makeithappen #supertour #bsbandspeicegirls? Now let that thought settle in. Good night all.

(sic) Meanwhile, Nick Carter previously revealed the Backstreet Boys are hoping to do an "epic tour" with the Spice Girls. He said: "There's been talks about it, you know? But I think it's all about them kind of getting the girls together, and they're doing things with their families and everything. We're always open to going on tour with them. I think it would be an epic tour if we ever did it." The boy band have also been working on new music, with Steve Aoki recently revealing that he has been making EDM music with the group. Speaking about the 90s boyband - which includes Nick, Kevin Richardson, AJ, Brian Littrell, and Howie Dorough - said: "We are working on music together. If it's going to be on their album or my album, I'm not even sure. We [him and Nick] live in the same neighborhood so he came into my studio. They just care about making good music."

## Metallica's late bassist honored with Cliff Burton Day

Metallica's late bassist Cliff Burton has been honored with his very own 'Cliff Burton Day' in his hometown of Castro Valley, California. The musician was just 24 years old when he died in a tour bus crash in Sweden in September 1986, and in his memory the local council has permitted the annual day for Burton, who joined the legendary heavy metal band in 1982. Sharing the official document confirming the celebration of his life on February 10, Metallica wrote on Twitter: "It's official! The Board of Supervisors from Alameda County has just proclaimed February 10th, 2018, which would have been Cliff's 56th birthday, 'Cliff Burton Day.' Thanks to all of the fans who got behind this initiative. We love that he remains so revered." The iconic bass player performed on Metallica's first three studio albums, 'Kill 'Em All', 'Ride the Lightning' and 'Master of Puppets'. It was whilst touring the latter record that Burton sadly lost his life in the tragic incident. However, his legacy lives on and he even received a posthumous writing



credit for the song 'To Live Is to Die' from the band's fourth LP, 1988's '...And Justice for All'. He was also inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame with the band - now comprised of James Hetfield, Lars Ulrich, Kirk Hammett and current bass player Robert Trujillo - in April 2009, 23 years after his death. The memorial day came about after a petition was launched on change.org by mega-fan Robert Souza, who called on the Castro Valley Municipal Advisory Council to issue the request. And after all agreed it was a great idea, it then went to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, who finalized the plans yesterday. Before joining the 'Nothing Else Matters' group, Burton was in the band Trauma, and he was spotted by Hetfield and Ulrich at their concert at the famous Whiskey a Go Go in Los Angeles. They were so impressed with his skills that the whole band relocated to San Francisco so that he would take on the role, as he had refused to move to Hollywood. The rocker was replaced by Jason Newsted originally, but Trujillo took over the reins in 2003.

## WARWICK DAVIS is always up for Star Wars roles



Warwick Davis says it's "always a delight" to be asked to be in a 'Star Wars' movie. The 47-year-old first starred as Ewok Wicket in 'Episode VI: Return of the Jedi' back in 1983, and since has starred in four movies in the hit sci-fi franchise including 1999's 'Star Wars: Episode I - The Phantom Menace', 2015's 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens' and 2017's 'Star Wars: The Last Jedi', and is set to appear in the spin-off 'Solo: A Star Wars Story'. But despite the latest movie 'The Last Jedi' hav-

ing a mixed reaction from fans and critics alike, Davis said he will always love 'Star Wars' and will always be open to taking on roles in the franchise. Speaking to the Metro newspaper, Davis said: "I had a cameo in the casino sequence [in 'The Last Jedi'] - it's always a delight to be asked. "I wasn't aware it had divided opinion but all movies divide opinion - some people will like it, some people won't. I'll always love 'Star Wars'. It's a piece of entertainment, it's not about making political statements. It's just there for people to enjoy. You go in there and are supposed to lose yourself in the world the director has created. 'Star Wars' has always been a great example of that - it's pure escapism and you can forget the 21st century for a couple of hours. That was George Lucas's philosophy with 'Star Wars' - to make a fun adventure." Davis was announced by Ron Howard to be joining 'Solo' after the film's director subtly revealed the actor will appear in the hotly-anticipated movie in a currently unspecified part. Responding to a fan on Twitter, the movie's director Ron Howard wrote: "Glad you are asking for one! I directed @WarwickADavis for the 1st time in 30 years today. It made me happy. (sic)" And Davis was also full of praise for Ron, adding on his own social media account: "Reminded me what a wonderful experience #Willow was, made so by your expert direction & friendship. After 30yrs, you've still got the magic! (sic)" The film - starring Alden Ehrenreich as a young Han Solo - hits cinemas this May.

## JOVOVICH RETEAMS WITH HUSBAND ANDERSON FOR HUMMINGBIRD



Milla Jovovich is re-teaming with her husband Paul W.S. Anderson for new sci-fi action thriller 'Hummingbird'. The 'Resident Evil' star has been announced to play the lead in the movie, replacing 'X-Men: Apocalypse' star Olivia Munn, who was previously attached to the project, according to Deadline. Milla, 42, will play a female assassin whose latest mission leads her to discover shocking secrets about her own past. The Black List script was originally written by John McClain but Milla's husband and 'Resident Evil' director Paul has been brought in to pen the rewrite. Milla and Paul last worked together on 2016's 'Resident Evil: The Final Chapter', the fifth installment in the franchise. The movie grossed \$312 million at the global box office, including \$160 million in China. Marcus Kryler and Fredrik Akerstrom, directors of the video game 'Battlefield 1' will helm the movie. Milla has just finished filming the 'Hellboy' reboot, in which she plays villain Blood Queen. Originally titled as 'Hellboy: Rise of the Blood Queen', it is being reported that the reboot will simply go by the name of 'Hellboy'. Unlike the original franchise by Guillermo del Toro - which was PG13 - this film, from 'Dog Soldiers' helmer Neil Marshall, will be R-rated, following in the footsteps of other successful R-rated movies including 'Deadpool' and 'Logan'. The upcoming project has been in the pipeline for some time, but the reboot has gone ahead without original director del Toro, who couldn't agree with the studio's vision for the movie.

## Mercy star Bailey has no ambitions for adventure

Jonathan Bailey would rather go up the Thames in a "Jacuzzi dingy" rather than circumnavigate the globe. The 29-year-old actor stars in tragic biopic 'The Mercy' about Donald Crowhurst - a yachtsman who tries to complete a circumnavigation without actually circling the world in order to win the 1968 Golden Globe Race. Tragically, Crowhurst never returned home and his last log entry in 1969, revealed he either fell or jumped overboard and drowned. However, for Bailey, this sailing feat is not for him and he admitted he would rather take it easy by going up the River Thames. Speaking exclusively to BANG Showbiz at the world premiere of 'The Mercy' at Curzon Mayfair in London on Tuesday night, Bailey said: "No, I'm alright for adventure. I will up the Thames in one of those Jacuzzi dingys." The new film - which is helmed by 'The Theory of Everything' filmmaker James Marsh - also stars Colin Firth as Crowhurst, Rachel Weisz, David Thewlis and Mark Gatiss and Bailey admitted he was hooked from first hearing the story. He said: "When I met him [James Marsh], he is just lovely and brilliant and he is really intelligent and sensitive. The story is unbelievable. I hadn't seen the documentary but it's a story that's known in my dad's generation. You know they know about it. It's just an extraordinary feat of insanity so it was a no brainer." When speaking about his co-stars, Bailey had nothing but praise for them but joked he was glad he didn't have to "bear the emotional weight of the film". He said: "A lot of my stuff is with David Thewlis and he is lovely and so thankfully our scenes didn't have to bear the emotional weight of the film, so we had a good time. "And the little scenes I have with Colin and Rachel were great and they are really brilliant in it." — Bang Showbiz



## Osbourne 'not retiring' from performing

Ozzy Osbourne is not retiring from performing completely. The Black Sabbath rocker announced his final solo world tour, a two-year jaunt of the globe entitled the 'No More Tours 2' - which is a reference to a tour of the same name which he conducted in 1992 - on Tuesday, but has reassured fans that he still plans to do the odd show here and there. In an interview with Rolling Stone conducted after the announcement, the 69-year-old rocker said: "I'm not retiring. It's 'No More Tours', so I'm just not doing world tours anymore. I'm still going to be doing gigs, but I'm not going on tour for six months at a time anymore. I'd like to spend some time at home." Ozzy - known as The Prince of Darkness - wants to spend more time with his family after recently welcoming his eighth grandchild into the world, Minnie, his son Jack Osbourne's third child. On why he's giving up touring, he said: "I've experienced fantastic things: it's been an incredible journey. "I just need to slow it down a little. "I enjoy being a grandfather. "I don't want to go through another generation of Osbournes without seeing them grow up." Ozzy will be doing Black Sabbath classics such as 'Paranoid' and 'Crazy Train' on the tour, but after the Birmingham band retired themselves from touring, he insists he didn't take away anything from their final concerts, only that he has "more control" now. He said: "Black Sabbath is a completely different thing. When I was in Black Sabbath, I was just a singer with a band called Black Sabbath. Now it's Ozzy Osbourne, and I have more control over what's going on than I did with Sabbath." Announcing the final tour, Ozzy said: "I've been extremely blessed to have had two successful music careers. I'm looking at this final tour as being a huge celebration for my fans and anyone who has enjoyed my music over the past five decades." The 'War Pigs' singer is to be joined by longtime collaborators Zak Wylde, Blasko, Tommy Clufetos and Adam Wakeman on the run, and will be supported by Stone Sour. 'No More Tours 2' kicks off with a pair of festival shows in Florida - Jacksonville's Welcome to Rockville and Fort Lauderdale's FortRock on April 27 and 29 respectively - before he jets off across Central and South America and Europe, before heading back to the US in August.

Lifestyle | Music & Movies

# BOLLYWOOD'S 'MENSTRUAL MAN' MOVIE TARGETS INDIAN TABOO

A Bollywood movie about an inventor who created a revolutionary machine that makes cheap sanitary pads hits screens this week, challenging taboos surrounding menstruation in socially conservative India. Arunachalam Muruganantham is nicknamed India's "menstrual man" for transforming the lives of poor women forced to use items like old rags, sand and leaves during their periods. He has been lauded by India's government and is now getting the star treatment with Bollywood A-lister Akshay Kumar portraying him in "Pad Man", releasing on Friday.

It is the latest socially conscious movie to come out of a film industry known more for producing complex love stories featuring handsome heroes and elaborate dance routines. Muruganantham hopes the movie will help raise awareness about the importance of menstrual hygiene in patriarchal India where women, particularly in rural areas, are frequently shunned during their monthly cycles.

"Menstruation is still a taboo subject in India and a tough subject for a film," he told AFP by phone from his home state of Tamil Nadu in southern India. "But I read the script and I was also on the sets to guide them. I think (R.) Balki (the writer and direc-

tor) has handled the subject beautifully. "People will talk about personal hygiene and it will give hope to the younger generation to do innovative things," he added.

Muruganantham's remarkable story began in the late 1990s when he was

“  
Menstruation is still a taboo subject in India and a tough subject for a film  
”

shocked to discover that his wife was using newspaper and dirty cloths during menstruation because sanitary pads were too expensive. He decided to do something about it and started experimenting with different designs using cotton. His first few prototypes were not very successful and

quickly his wife and sisters refused to be guinea pigs any longer. When other women in the village balked at his requests to try his products he started testing them on himself, using a football bladder and animal blood. Muruganantham was mocked and ostracized by fellow villagers, and his wife even left him for a while, but he remained undeterred and intensified his search. After two years he discovered that sanitary pads are made from cellulose found on trees.

**Risky**

Muruganantham also learnt that the machine which ground down the pulp before turning it into napkins cost hundreds of thousands of dollars so he decided to create his own. In four years he had invented an easy-to-use device which could produce pads at a third of the cost of the commercially produced ones. The machines themselves were also vastly cheaper at around 75,000 rupees (\$1,170). "I wanted to make sure that technically we did not go wrong, so he agreed to supervise," Balki, the director, said of Muruganantham's role on set.

Actresses Radhika Apte and Sonam Kapoor star alongside Kumar whose character based on Muruganantham is called Lakshmi. The 50-year-old actor, whose films

regularly rake in more than one billion rupees (\$15.6 million) at the box office, is no stranger to starring in movies with an important message. Last year's comedy, "Toilet: Ek Prem Katha" (Toilet: A love story), focused on the lack of toilets in India and the problem of open defecation. It was a soaraway success, grossing upwards of \$2 billion rupees, but Balki says a film about periods is an altogether different proposition. "Pad Man is possibly the riskiest film Akshay has done because of the taboo, unexplored subject," he told AFP.

Several million more Indian women are now estimated to use sanitary pads thanks to Muruganantham. His company, Jayaashree Industries, has more than 2,000 units across the majority of India's states and also exports to dozens of countries. The machines also provide employment to thousands of rural women. In 2014 he was included in Time magazine's list of 100 most influential people in the world. Two years later India's government awarded Muruganantham one of the country's highest civilian honors. The release of "Pad Man" is set to elevate his fame further but he insists he won't be letting it go to his head. "The cause is becoming big, but I am remaining the same," he told AFP. — AFP



This file photo shows Indian actor Akshay Kumar (right) addressing the media as Gujarat state Chief Minister Vijay Rupani (left) looks on, during the promotion of the film 'Pad Man' in Ahmedabad. — AFP

## ED SHEERAN AND LITTLE MIX LEAD GLOBAL AWARDS NOMINATIONS

Ed Sheeran and Little Mix lead the nominations for the brand new Global Awards. The 'Perfect' singer and the girl group - comprised of Perrie Edwards, Jesy Nelson, Jade Thirlwall and Leigh-Anne Pinnock - have each been shortlisted in four categories each for the ceremony, which takes place at London's Hammersmith Eventim Apollo on March 1. They will go head-to-head for Best Song as 'Shape of You' by Ed and the girl's duet with Stormzy, 'Power', is up against Camila Cabello's 'Havana', Niall Horan's 'Slow Hands' and Shawn Mendes, 'There's Nothing Holdin' Me Back'.

Smooth, Radio X, Gold and LBC - to create a platform to recognize the best in music, entertainment and news. Sam Smith, Kasabian, Rita Ora, Andrea Bocelli and Martin Garrix are set to perform at the glitzy bash. The Best Song, Best Group, Best Male, Best Female and Best British Artist or Group categories are determined by public vote. Voting is open now via the Global Player app or via global.com. Voting closes on February 22.

**The Global Awards nominations are as follows:**

- 1. Best Song (public vote)**  
Camila Cabello, 'Havana' (feat. Young Thug)  
Ed Sheeran, 'Shape Of You'  
Little Mix, 'Power' (feat. Stormzy)  
Niall Horan, 'Slow Hands'  
Shawn Mendes, 'There's Nothing Holdin' Me Back'
- 2. Best Group (public vote)**  
Clean Bandit  
Coldplay  
Little Mix  
Take That  
The Chainsmokers
- 3. Best Male (public vote)**  
Ed Sheeran  
Justin Bieber  
Liam Payne  
Niall Horan  
Shawn Mendes
- 4. Best Female (public vote)**  
Ariana Grande  
Camila Cabello  
Dua Lipa  
Selena Gomez  
Taylor Swift
- 5. Best British Artist or Group (public vote)**  
Dua Lipa  
Ed Sheeran  
Liam Gallagher  
Liam Payne  
Little Mix
- 6. Rising Star Award**  
Dua Lipa  
Jax Jones  
Mabel  
Stefflon Don  
Yungen
- 7. Mass Appeal Award**  
Ed Sheeran  
James Arthur  
P!nk  
Paloma Faith  
Sam Smith
- 8. Best RnB, Hip-Hop or Grime**  
Drake  
J Hus  
Mabel  
Post Malone  
Stormzy
- 9. Best Pop Dance**  
Calvin Harris  
Craig David  
David Guetta  
Martin Garrix  
Sigala
- 10. Best Indie**  
Blossoms  
Florence + The Machine  
Kasabian  
Liam Gallagher  
Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds
- 11. Best Pop**  
Charlie Puth  
Liam Payne  
Little Mix  
Rita Ora  
Shawn Mendes. — Bang Showbiz



Little Mix are also up for Best Group along with Clean Bandit, Coldplay, Take That and EDM duo The Chainsmokers. Ed has stiff competition from Justin Bieber, One Direction bandmates Liam Payne and Niall Horan, and Shawn Mendes for Best Male. The flame-haired star and Little Mix will also battle with Dua Lipa, Liam Gallagher and Liam Payne for Best British Artist or Group. The 26-year-old singer/songwriter has been shortlisted for Mass Appeal Award along with James Arthur, P!nk, Paloma Faith and Sam Smith. While Little Mix are up for Best Pop with Charlie Puth, Liam Payne, Rita Ora and Shawn Mendes. Former Oasis stars and bitter siblings Noel [High Flying Birds] and Liam Gallagher will battle it out to be crowned the winner of Best Indie act, with Blossoms, Florence + The Machine and Kasabian also in the running. Ashley Tabor OBE, Global's Founder & Executive President, said: "Today we revealed the shortlisted nominees for The Global Awards, celebrating the biggest stars of music, news & entertainment. We can't wait to honor the winners and nominees with our listeners on the big night on March 1st in London. It promises to be an incredible evening!"

The new awards show was launched by radio brand Global, and aims to combine its diverse roster of stations - Capital, Capital XTRA, Heart, Classic FM,

# The Hollywood Vampires are coming to tear up the UK

The Hollywood Vampires will tour the UK for the first time ever this summer. Alice Cooper, Johnny Depp and Joe Perry's legendary supergroup are bringing their electric show to Birmingham, Manchester and Glasgow this June, topping off the short run at London's The SSE Arena, Wembley on June 20. The trio will be joined by The Darkness and The Damned at the four concerts. The Vampires began on Hollywood's Sunset Strip at the iconic Rainbow Bar & Grill's upstairs bar, and over the years has featured the likes of the late John Lennon and The Who's Keith Moon. Shock rocker Cooper, actor and guitarist Depp and Aerosmith star Perry released their self-titled LP in 2015, which featured guest appearances from Sir Paul McCartney and Foo Fighters' Dave Grohl.

Speaking about what rock star credentials are required to be a member, 'Poison' hitmaker Cooper - who founded the group - said: "To join the club, one simply had to out drink all of the members. "I would walk in on a typical night and John Lennon, Harry Nilsson, Keith Moon - who would usually be in a costume like a maid or a chauffeur - Bernie Taupin, Jim Morrison and Mickey Dolenz would be there. The next week might be Bernie Taupin, Jimi Hendrix, Jim Morrison and Mickey Dolenz." And on what to



**Hollywood Vampires**

expect from the forthcoming shows, 'Pirates of the Caribbean' star Depp warned it could get bloody. He added: "There will be rumbling in ears and there might be blood trickling out of one ear." And Perry concluded: "I don't say things like this often, but this band is (bleeping

good." The UK tour announcement comes after Cooper said he'd love to have the band play Somerset's Glastonbury festival in the future.

Speaking exclusively to BANG Showbiz last year, he said "I would love to. I would love to bring a little vampirism to Glastonbury. I'm just saying, we're open to it. The Alice Cooper show might scare everyone to death but the Vampires I think would be OK." 'Pirates of the Caribbean' star Depp, 54, is no stranger to Glastonbury, having already performed a surprise warm up with Kris Kristofferson at the music extravaganza last weekend. But whilst Cooper acknowledges the fact Depp is able to jam with anyone, he thinks Hollywood Vampires' usual set list would be too long. He continued: "He [Johnny] plays with everybody. Johnny will go and play with [Paul] McCartney, he'll play with the [Rolling] Stones, he'll play with everybody. But when he's with our band it's a full on show. It's 28 songs." Tickets for the tour go on sale on Friday.

The Hollywood Vampires' UK tour dates are as follows:

- June 16, Birmingham Genting Arena
- June 17, Manchester Arena
- June 19, Glasgow The SSE Hydro
- June 20, London - The SSE Arena, Wembley.

— Bang Showbiz

# US TRAIN ATTACK HEROES RETURN TO PARIS AS EASTWOOD FILM OPENS

The three Americans who foiled the Thalys train terror attack in France in 2015 have returned to Paris where the Clint Eastwood film about their heroics opened yesterday. Spencer Stone, Alek Skarlatos and Anthony Sadler, who play themselves in "The 15:17 to Paris", were reunited in a cinema in the French capital where emergency services crews who tended the injured after the attack were among the audience. Some of them also play themselves in the drama which retells how the three childhood friends from California overpowered a Moroccan jihadist armed with an AK-47 on the Paris-bound high-speed service from Amsterdam carrying more than 500 passengers.

"I hope you like the film. We wanted to be exact about what happened," said Skarlatos, 25, an Oregon National Guardsman who served in Afghanistan. US Air Force Airman Spencer Stone charged at Ayoub El Khazzan after he wounded another passenger and managed to disarm him of the AK-47 and of a pistol which jammed as El Khazzan tried to shoot him. Stone was slashed with a bolt cutter around the neck as Skarlatos and Sadler knocked the attacker unconscious and then "hog-tied" him. The three were hailed as heroes both in the United States and in France, where they were awarded the Legion of Honour, the country's highest decoration.

"I reprised my role as a nurse," said Nathalie Capron, who looked after the injured when the train pulled into Arras station in northern France.



(Left) Director/producer Clint Eastwood, actors Kyle Eastwood, Alison Eastwood and Scott Eastwood arrive for the world premiere of "The 15:17 to Paris" at the Warner Bros Studios SJR theatre in Burbank, California.

Playing herself made it feel weirdly "less natural", she told AFP after the preview screening for cast and crew in the French capital last week.

The film - which opens in cinemas in the US and the UK on Friday - follows the course of the friends' lives, from their childhood struggles to the series of unlikely events leading up to the thwarted attack.

**'We could all be dead'**

Hollywood legend Eastwood's last two films - "Sully" and "American Sniper" - were also about real-life heroes, but this is the first time he has used the real protagonists to play themselves. The 87-year-old, who makes no apology for his gung-ho patriotism, said he wanted to "make people aware that they have the strength to do (extraordinary) things themselves and I think this story is a champion of all that. "There could have been a lot of people killed, (the attacker) had a lot of ammunition, he had a very reliable gun." If his young stars hadn't acted it could have been a slaughter, he said in a filmed interview with the cast released to promote the movie.

Skarlatos, who appeared on the "Dancing With the Stars" US television show after the attack, said that "knowing each other since we were very young, it was the icing on the cake that we got to play ourselves. "If anything went differently we would probably all have been dead," he added. "Never in a million years did I think that we would play ourselves in a Clint Eastwood movie," said Stone. "We knew he took a chance on us and we didn't want to disappoint him." — AFP



Former US National Guardsman Alek Skarlatos, former US Air Force staff sergeant Spencer Stone, director/producer Clint Eastwood and Anthony Sadler arrive for the world premiere of "The 15:17 to Paris".



Director/producer Clint Eastwood arrives for the world premiere of "The 15:17 to Paris" at the Warner Bros Studios SJR theatre in Burbank, California. — AFP photos

## Tom Ford has gone **vegan** - but will still use fur in his designs

The 56-year-old designer has adopted a plant-based diet and admitted it has made him question the use of animal skins in his creations, but he has decided to "limit" what he uses and in the future will only use real skins if they are "food byproducts". He said: "I've been vegan for about the last year. When you look at how most of our meat, our animal products, are raised, from a health standpoint, I didn't feel that I should eat those things anymore. "The fur thing - of course, is a natural thing. [Going vegan] starts to make you question that. I have started using much more fake fur. I'm not yet ready to say that I'm fur-free.

"Now, however, I have limited the fur in these collections and going forward to food byproducts, which

does not sound very sexy. "I'm selling you a food byproduct!" That means cowhide, it means shearling, it means not doing fur that is raised purely for its pelt. "No mink, no fox. I have used a lot of fake fur this season. I've also used some shearling and what is called pony in the industry but it is not pony, it is cowhide. There's longhaired cowhide and shorthaired. "So I have been very conscious of using animal skins that are food byproducts. Because whether I'm consuming meat or not, other people are, so these are things that are collected."

Tom also admitted he is reluctant to use fake fur because it is "terrible" for the environment and it doesn't get used for anywhere near as long as real animal

skin. He told the Los Angeles Times newspaper: "I'm also very torn about this because fake fur is terrible for the environment. People think of fake fur as a disposable thing. They buy it, they wear it a few seasons, they throw it away, it doesn't biodegrade. It's a petroleum product. It is highly toxic.

"And then, you could argue that tanning leather is a highly toxic process. A fur coat gets recycled. People wear them for 30 years, they give them to their kids, then they turn them into throw pillows. So I don't know the answer to that. I've been very honest, and it's probably going to get me in all sorts of trouble with everybody, but I don't know the answer."

And though he is vegan, the 'A Single Man' director

can't help but "cheat" with his favourite sugary desserts. Discussing his love of donuts, he admitted: "I do cheat with baked goods. That's true. I will eat a baked good that clearly has some eggs in it. But I don't eat eggs and I don't drink milk: I use almond milk. And I don't eat any animal flesh, I don't eat fish, I don't eat chicken, I don't eat meat. But yes, I do cheat with some baked goods, because most vegan baked goods just don't do it like a box of Hostess doughnuts. And I still eat a lot of sugar. "I mean, I don't drink. I don't smoke. Now I don't eat any meat. I'm essentially vegan. But, yes, sugar." — Bang Showbiz



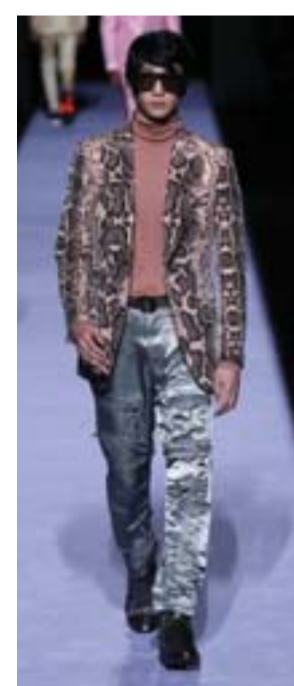
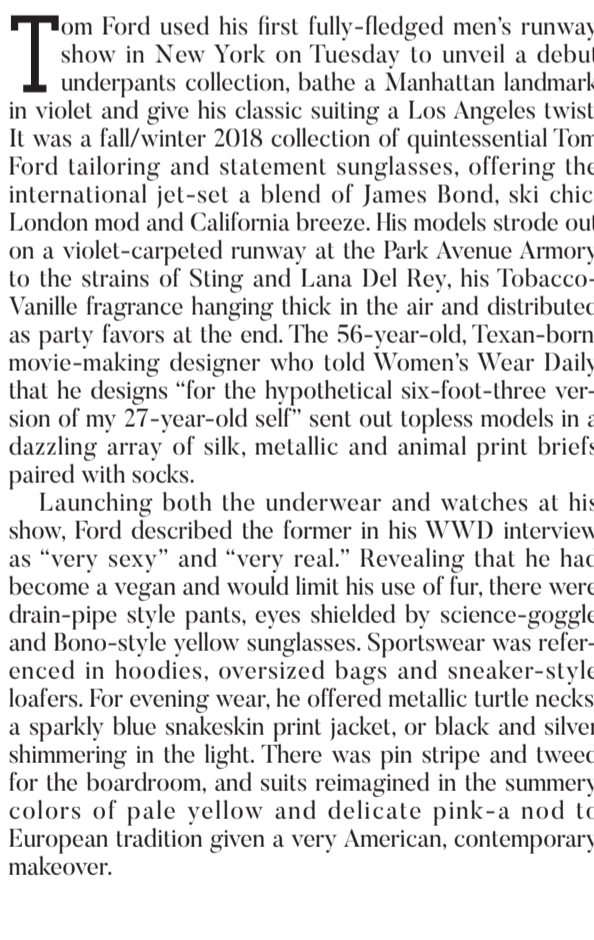
Designer Tom Ford walks the runway at the conclusion of his Tom Ford Men FW18 Collection at Park Avenue Armory in New York City. — AFP photos

## Underwear gets the Tom Ford brief at **NY Fashion Week**

Tom Ford used his first fully-fledged men's runway show in New York on Tuesday to unveil a debut underpants collection, bathe a Manhattan landmark in violet and give his classic suiting a Los Angeles twist. It was a fall/winter 2018 collection of quintessential Tom Ford tailoring and statement sunglasses, offering the international jet-set a blend of James Bond, ski chic, London mod and California breeze. His models strode out on a violet-carpeted runway at the Park Avenue Armory to the strains of Sting and Lana Del Rey, his Tobacco-Vanille fragrance hanging thick in the air and distributed as party favors at the end. The 56-year-old, Texan-born, movie-making designer who told Women's Wear Daily that he designs "for the hypothetical six-foot-three version of my 27-year-old self" sent out topless models in a dazzling array of silk, metallic and animal print briefs paired with socks.

Launching both the underwear and watches at his show, Ford described the former in his WWD interview as "very sexy" and "very real." Revealing that he had become a vegan and would limit his use of fur, there were drain-pipe style pants, eyes shielded by science-goggle and Bono-style yellow sunglasses. Sportswear was referenced in hoodies, oversized bags and sneaker-style loafers. For evening wear, he offered metallic turtle necks, a sparkly blue snakeskin print jacket, or black and silver shimmering in the light. There was pin stripe and tweed for the boardroom, and suits reimaged in the summery colors of pale yellow and delicate pink—a nod to European tradition given a very American, contemporary makeover.

The show comes a decade after the designer, who shot to fame at Gucci, launched his eponymous men's label. Apart from a show to open his London store, he has previously done small men's presentations. Now based in Los Angeles, but having previously lived in London, Ford is best known for his sharp suits, which start at \$5,000 off the rack. "Living in Los Angeles is making my clothes, both men's and women's, more relevant," he told WWD. "Much of the rest of the world, they want luxurious pieces but they are dressing in a more casual way." Men's Fashion Week closes Wednesday. Ford will unveil his women's fall/winter collection at the same Park Avenue Armory set today. — AFP



Models walk the runway at the Tom Ford FW18 Collection at Park Avenue Armory on February 6, 2018 in New York City.

Lifestyle | Fashion



Models walk the runway at the Carlos Campos fashion show during New York Fashion Week Mens' at Skylight Modern in New York City.

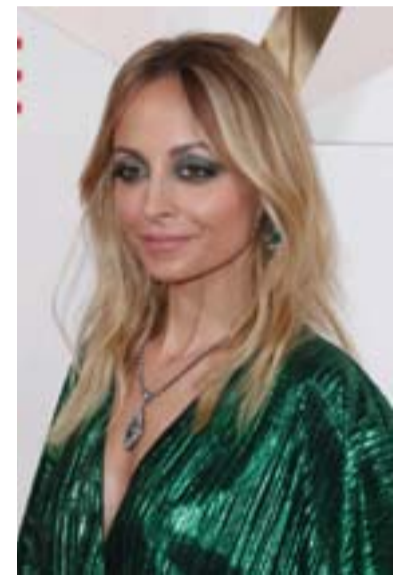


Carlos Campos (center) and his creative team walk the runway during New York Fashion Week Mens' at Skylight Modern.



Nicole Richie loves the 'amazing' power of make-up

The 36-year-old designer - who has children Harlow, 10, and Sparrow, eight, with husband Joel Madden - thinks cosmetics are great for transformation without hiding who a person really is. She said: "Make-up has power. You can transform yourself into another being, which I think is really amazing. "I know women who feel most like themselves when they have a full face of makeup on and that makes them feel strong about themselves. "We as women have every tool that we need in order to feel our strongest, best self. I don't think that makeup has to hide you. I think it can accentuate what you already have." But Nicole feels most empowered by fashion and her choice of clothes is very much influenced by her mood.



She told People Style: "My fashion choices are extremely emotional. "I am somebody who likes a lot of color around me. It elevates me. I'm very passionate about color and I know that it has a direct effect on the energy that I have around me. "And so when I'm putting something on, that definitely changes the way that I feel and the way that I approach the day." And at the moment, the 'Candidly Nicole' star's beauty focus is on her hair and she's enjoying letting her natural locks "breathe". She said: "I really love my hair ... I was bleaching it, and coloring and doing everything so I just needed to give it a break to let it grow. I'm not shooting right now so I'm not coloring it, I'm just letting it breathe. It feels really nice. "Right now I really do feel 100 percent in my own skin. I feel the most like myself. I could cut it off in a week, who knows? All of my hair decisions have been very much on the fly. But right now I'm really just enjoying living." — Bang Showbiz

Behbehani Watch World - a new star shines in the Avenues Mall

With over 55 years of experience in the world of watches, and in a new step towards expansion and development in services, Mohammed Saleh and Reza Yousef Behbehani have opened their fourth branch under a new name - Behbehani Watch World - at the Avenues Mall (Phase II) as part of their constant pursuit to satisfy their customers in general and the classic Swiss watches lovers in particular, and to be closer to them wherever they are. With a classy presentation and a wide variety of classic and modern watches brands, now you can enjoy a unique experience when specifically visiting this showroom in a distinctive and convenient shopping ambience.

Once you enter Behbehani Watch World showroom in the Avenues Mall, you will have a unique sense of comfort and elegance, and you will be attracted to the astonishing decorations and advanced display devices that are professionally distributed around the place, allowing you to easily navigate between all brands exhibited. Also, you will definitely notice the company's attention to details, starting from the attractive main entrance, through the creatively distributed lighting to allow the visitors to clearly identify all the watches displayed.

All the watches have been carefully selected for you from the most famous Swiss Watch Manufacturers to be displayed in the best inspiring ways possible. This will enhance your shopping experience and give you the pleasure of discovering high-end watches artwork that represent the top of the Swiss craftsmanship where the passion and proficiency of watchmakers is shown in every piece designed to represent the personality and taste of the wearers, and their desires for exceptionality and glam.

In the unique and prestigious ambience of Behbehani



Watch World at the Avenues Mall, you can identify the exceptional collections of the latest Swiss brands that we represent in Kuwait:

- BALMAIN, ROAMER, MIDO & SILVANA classic watches
- CERTINA, MONDAINE & GLYCINE watches that combine classic and contemporary
- SWISS MILITARY HANOWA, FORTIS & LUMINOX watches with their bold sporty designs
- Accessories from the English RAPPORT brand, that are designed to maintain the functionality of the auto-



matic watches including the leather covers that preserve your valuables.

On the occasion of the opening of the new branch in the Avenues Mall, Mr. Mohammed Al Kassas, General Manager of Behbehani Watch World, said: "The outstanding service and the superior style of sales are the cornerstones of Behbehani's Watch World approach. Our specialized team will give you a pleasant shopping experience accompanying you on a tour to identify the world of craftsmanship and uniqueness in our brands, which embody the Swiss experience in the watch industry."

It is worth mentioning that Behbehani Watch World Company owns a series of showrooms for various watches and jewelry brands. In addition to the new showroom in the Avenues Mall, our showrooms are located in Al-Salmiya, Salem Al-Mubarak Street "Northern Salmiya Building", Kuwait City showroom in Abdullah Al-Salem Street and Al-Jahra Showroom in Al-Jahra governorate.

# Lifestyle

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2018



A woman sells decorations ahead of Lunar New Year celebrations in Hong Kong yesterday. The Lunar New Year will be celebrated on February 16, and marks the start of the Year of the Dog. — AFP

## KYLIE JENNER INTRODUCES BABY STORMI WITH AN INSTAGRAM SNAP



Kylie Jenner

**K**ylie Jenner, the youngest of the celebrity Kardashian clan, revealed on Tuesday that she had named her new baby daughter Stormi, and posted the first picture of her. Jenner, 20, posted a close-up photo on her Instagram account showing a baby dressed in pink clasping her pink manicured thumb. The

post was titled simply "Stormi." Jenner announced on Sunday that her child with rapper TravisScott was born on Feb 1 and apologized for keeping her pregnancy secret from her 101 million Instagram followers and other fans.

Jenner has parlayed her family's "Keeping Up with the Kardashians" reality TV show into a

lucrative cosmetics line. Stormi is the second of three additions to the Kardashian clan this year. Half-sister Kim Kardashian and her rapper husband Kanye West announced the arrival in January of their third child, a girl they called Chicago, who was born to a surrogate. Jenner's other half-sister, Khloe Kardashian, is seven

months pregnant with her basketball player boyfriend Tristan Thompson. Stormi joins Kardashian cousins North, Saint, Reign, Dream, Mason and Penelope. — Reuters



Snow covered trees are pictured yesterday following heavy snowfall in Paris. — Photo by Mariam Al-Zanki



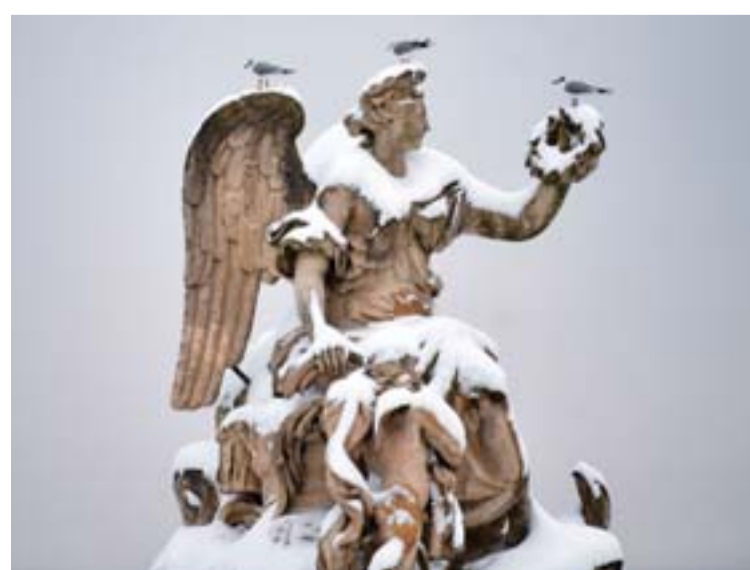
Snow covered trees are pictured yesterday following heavy snowfall in Paris. — Photo by Mariam Al-Zanki

## Snow beautifies Paris further



A picture shows the castle of Chambord under the snow, in Chambord, central France. — AFP

**H**heavy snow has blanketed beautiful Paris creating additional features of beauty and attraction across the city amid warnings the bad weather may paralyze daily life and transports. Although many Parisians are enjoying the heavy snow fall, authorities fear it will turn into ice as the temperature is falling below zero. — KUNA



Seagulls stand on a snow-covered statue in the gardens of the Palace of Versailles.—AFP



People walk through the snow covered alley of the Champ de Mars following heavy snowfall in Paris. — AFP