



5 Architecture students in final act against Bayt Lothan's demolition



6 N Korean leader says nuclear launch button on his desk



11 Complaints over 'intimidating' Arabic signs for Israeli show



16 Man United unlock Everton defence to secure 2-0 win



Rouhani defiant as 10 killed in Iran violence

Trump says 'time for change' • Israeli minister encourages protests

TEHRAN: Ten people were killed overnight in the worst violence yet seen in Iran's protests, local media reported yesterday, as President Hassan Rouhani played down the unrest and vowed those breaking the law would be dealt with. US President Donald Trump, who has repeatedly criticized Tehran over four days of demonstrations, said it was "time for a change" and that the Iranian people were "hungry" for freedom.

Sunday night was the deadliest since the angry demonstrations broke out on Thursday and spread across the country in the biggest test for the regime since mass protests in 2009. Six people were killed in the western town of Tuyserkan after shots were fired, state television reported, while a local lawmaker said two people had been shot dead in the southwestern town of Izeh. Two others, including a teenage boy, were run down and killed by a fire engine stolen by protesters in the western town of Dorud, the state broadcaster said, bringing the total death toll in the protests to 12.

Rouhani tried to play down the unrest, saying: "This is nothing." "Criticism and protest are an opportunity not a threat," he said in a statement on the presidency website, adding that the Iranian people would "respond to the rioters and lawbreakers". "Our nation will deal with this minority who chant slogans against the law and people's wishes, and insult the sanctities and values of the revolution."

Pro-regime rallies were held across several towns

and cities, but videos on social media showed seemingly widespread anti-government protests in cities including Kermanshah, Khorramabad and Shahinshahr. A school for clergy and government buildings were torched in the northwestern town of Takestan and videos showed police using tear gas and water cannon to disperse a small protest in Tehran's Enghelab Square on Sunday evening. The authorities did not give details on who was responsible for the fatal shootings.

The authorities have confirmed more than 400 people were arrested since the outbreak of the unrest, of which around 100 have been freed. Judiciary chief Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani joined Rouhani in warning against illegal action. "Those who have rightful demands must be guided in lawful ways and those who riot and commit sabotage and chaos and set fire to public property... must be confronted decisively," he told the state broadcaster. "The country must have discipline," Larijani added.

Verifying rumors and videos remained challenging due to travel restrictions and sporadic blocks on mobile internet and popular social media sites including Telegram and Instagram. The protests began as demonstrations against economic conditions in second city Mashhad on Thursday but quickly turned against the Islamic regime as a whole, with thousands marching in towns across Iran to chants of "Death to the dictator".

Continued on Page 11



TEHRAN: An image grab taken from a handout video reportedly shows a group of men pushing traffic barriers in a street on Dec. — AFP

Trump threatens to cut Pakistan aid, looks to US midterm polls

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump suggested yesterday he would cut off foreign aid to Pakistan, accusing Islamabad of harboring violent extremists and lying about it. "The United States has foolishly given Pakistan more than 33 billion dollars in aid over the last 15 years, and they have given us nothing but lies & deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools," Trump said in his first tweet of 2018. "They give safe haven to the terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan, with little help. No more!"

Last week, The New York Times reported that the Trump administration was seriously weighing whether to withhold \$255 million in already delayed aid to Islamabad over its failure to better crack down on terror groups in Pakistan. US-Pakistani ties have taken a nosedive under Trump, who in August declared that "Pakistan often gives safe haven to agents of chaos, violence, and terror." Last month, Trump had already hinted that he may cut off the aid for good. "We make massive payments every year to Pakistan."

Continued on Page 11

Saudis, UAE introduce VAT; Oman projects budget deficit

DUBAI/MUSCAT: Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates introduced value-added tax from yesterday, a first for the Gulf which has long prided itself on its tax-free, cradle-to-grave welfare system. Saudi Arabia compounded the New Year blow for motorists with an unannounced hike of up to 127 percent in petrol prices with immediate effect from midnight. They are the latest in a series of measures introduced by Gulf oil producers over the past two years to boost revenues and cut spending as a persistent slump in world prices has led to ballooning budget deficits. The five percent sales tax applies to most goods and services and analysts project that the two governments could raise as much as \$21 billion in 2018, equivalent to 2.0 percent of GDP.

But it marks a major change for two super-rich countries where the mall is king. Dubai has long held an annual shopping festival to draw bargain hunters from around the world to its glitzy retail palaces. Saudi Arabia has deposited billions of dollars in special accounts to help needy citizens face the resulting rise in retail prices. The other four Gulf states - Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and Qatar - are also committed to introducing VAT but have delayed the move until early 2019. None of the Gulf states levy any personal income tax and none have any plans to do so.

The International Monetary Fund has repeatedly



DUBAI: People pose for a selfie during a laser show at Burj Khalifa, the tallest tower in the world, to mark the New Year late Sunday 30, 2017. — AFP

urged Gulf states to diversify their revenues away from oil, which accounts for more than 90 percent of the Saudi budget and 80 percent in the UAE. Both Riyadh and Abu Dhabi asked all companies with earnings of \$100,000 or more a year to register in the VAT system. The UAE finance ministry said that VAT returns will be used "for infrastructure development ... (to) upgrade public services ... and boost UAE economy competitiveness."

The hike in fuel duty in Saudi Arabia was the second in two years. But it still leaves petrol prices as some of the lowest in the world. High-grade petrol rose 127 percent from 24 cents a litre (\$1.09 a gallon) to 54 (\$2.46), while low-grade petrol rose 83 percent from 20 cents a litre (91 cents a gallon) to 36.5 (\$1.66). Duty on diesel and kerosene remained unchanged.

Continued on Page 11

10 killed as plane crashes in Costa Rica

SAN JOSE: Ten Americans flying from a vacation hotspot on Costa Rica's tropical Pacific coast died Sunday when the small plane they had just boarded crashed and burst into flames shortly after take-off, officials in the country said. A list of the passengers given by local media showed five shared the same last name, suggesting they were related. "The government of Costa Rica profoundly regrets the deaths of 10 US passengers and two Costa Rican pilots in the air accident," which occurred in the country's northwestern Guanacaste region, Costa Rican President Luis Guillermo Solis said in a statement posted to social media.

A US State Department official said: "We confirm the deaths of multiple US citizens in an airplane crash in Costa Rica," adding that assistance was being provided to the affected Americans. Costa Rican officials said the plane that came

down belonged to Nature Air, a domestic airline that services routes across the country and also provides aircraft for charter. Guanacaste is a popular vacation destination, especially this time of year, when its pristine beaches and jungle provide a respite for tourists fleeing the northern hemisphere's winter.

Americans are by far the biggest group of tourists visiting Costa Rica. The plane that crashed was a single-engine turboprop Cessna 208 Caravan. Its flaming debris was scattered across a wooded mountain close to the beach town of Punta Islita. Images posted by the country's public security ministry showed blackened wreckage, some in flames, with only part of the tail recognizable. The cause of the crash was unknown.

Solis said in his statement that his government "gives its commitment to do everything necessary to work with the relatives of the victims to give them what they need in this difficult moment." He said emergency services launched into action when the alarm over the crash was given at 12:13 pm (1813 GMT). The process of recovering the bodies continued into the night, with investigations into the causes of the accident set to begin yesterday. — AFP

Trial runs begin of train linking Madinah, Makkah

JEDDAH: Saudi Minister of Transport Nabil bin Mohammad Al-Amoudi on Sunday took the Haramain Express Train on its first full trip from Madinah to Makkah. It was the first journey along the 450 km route to check the readiness of the project before the commercial operation of the service. The project is of strategic importance, and one of the major public transport connections between the two cities, said Amoudi, who is also Chairman of the Board of Directors of Saudi Railways Organization (SRO) and Saudi Railways Company (SAR). In addition to the great benefits for pilgrims, the five-station line will facilitate transport of citizens and expats between Makkah and Madinah throughout the year, the minister noted.

Trial journeys of the train will continue through the coming six months. President of SRO and the Public Transport Authority Rumaith Al-Rumaith said. Many passengers will be invited to try it on certain journeys



MAKKAH: High-speed trains that will link Makkah to Madinah are parked at a station in this holy city on Sunday. — AFP

during weekends. The trips will grow gradually until full commercial operation, Rumaith added, noting that prices of tickets will be "suitable" and reflect the volume of service of the mega project. The consortium building the project will operate it for 12 years, he added.

People will enjoy the Madinah-Makkah

service on 35 trains, speeds of with 300 km/h. Each train accommodates 417 passengers, and will have four business carriages and eight economy ones, along with a diner. Amoudi and Rumaith were accompanied by Spanish Ambassador Alvaro Iranzo and a number of local officials of the project. — KUNA

Local

Amir exchanges New Year greetings with world leaders

Crown Prince congratulates Amir on New Year

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Sunday exchanged cables of congratulations with heads of Arab and friendly countries on the advent of 2018, wishing stability, peace and prosperity for all countries. His Highness the Amir greets GCC leaders on New Year.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir sent cables to leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states to greet them on the New Year. In his cables, His Highness the Amir wished them and all Gulf people a happy New Year. He prayed to God Almighty to bestow more progress, welfare and prosperity on all GCC states in the new year. His Highness the Amir wished Gulf leaders and people everlasting wellbeing and for their countries everlasting security, stability, and welfare.

In the meantime, His Highness the Amir received yesterday congratulations from His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the occasion of New Year and Kuwait's non-permanent membership at

the UN Security Council (UNSC). In a congratulatory letter, His Highness Sheikh Nawaf wished His Highness the Amir



Amir sent cables to GCC leaders

perpetual well-being, and dear Kuwait everlasting bliss and prosperity.

Deep pride

On Kuwait's membership at the UNSC, His Highness the Crown Prince voiced deep pride saying the achievement was the outcome of His Highness the Amir's extensive efforts, to reiterate Kuwait's elevated place on the regional and international scenes.

His Highness Sheikh Nawaf prayed Allah Almighty to bestow eternal security, prosperity and stability on Kuwait.

In reply, His Highness the Amir highly appreciated His Highness the Crown Prince's sincere and warm sentiments, wishing the New Year would see further joint efforts for Kuwait to continue on the path to aspired development. His Highness the Amir indicated that winning a non-permanent seat at the UNSC was a success for the Kuwaiti diplomacy, and recognition on the side of the international community of Kuwait's lofty status on the regional and international scenes. His Highness the Amir prayed for eternal security, safety and prosperity for Kuwait. —KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

Happy New Year!

By Attorney Fajer Ahmed



Legalese

Mattis congratulates Kuwait's Defense Minister on new post

WASHINGTON: US Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis called Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah to congratulate him on his new position.

During the conversation, Mattis "expressed appreciation for the longstanding strategic partnership between the United States and Kuwait grounded in the 1991 liberation of Kuwait," the Pentagon said in a statement on Friday.

"Secretary Mattis thanked the minister for his nation's commitment to hosting US troops," according to the statement. He also "welcomed Kuwait's critical help mediating the rift among members of the Gulf Cooperation Council," and emphasized "the importance of deescalating tensions so all partners in the Gulf region can focus efforts against common threats." —KUNA



US Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis (left) and Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Al-Bashir thanks Kuwait for lifting US sanctions

KHARTOUM: Sudanese President Omar Hassan Al-Bashir on Sunday expressed anew gratitude for Kuwait's diplomatic role for lifting US sanctions on his nation. The curbs were lifted after the world acknowledged that Sudan "constituted a prime base for fighting terrorism," said Bashir in a speech marking the independence anniversary. He thanked Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Oman and Arab Maghreb states for supporting African states, namely his nation.



Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir

Washington during era of ex-president Barack Obama partially lifted sanctions, slapped on Khartoum 20 years ago. The former US president, Bill Clinton, signed in 1997 an executive order barring any trade or transactions between US firms or individuals and Sudan.

Sudan in its foreign policy has remained committed to the international partnership for beefing up regional and international security and peace, combating terrorism, money laundering and human trafficking, he said. On Yemen, he affirmed that Sudan's participation in the operation for resorting legitimacy is in line with its adherence to renouncing terrorism and aggression. Bashir re-affirmed support for the Palestinian cause and rejecting the Israeli aggression on the Palestinian people. —KUNA

Kuwait starts UNSC membership amidst global challenges



NEW YORK: An archive photo showing a UN Security Council meeting in progress. —KUNA

NEW YORK: Kuwait commenced its membership at the UN Security Council (UNSC) yesterday, after a 40-year hiatus, amidst many regional and global challenges. Kuwait's Deputy Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, in earlier statements, said that Kuwait will continue being neutral in resolving different issues.

He added that Kuwait would fully cooperate with UNSC's Member States to peacefully end conflicts and wars. Sheikh Sabah also stressed the importance of reforms within the UN organizations to allow them to properly execute their duties around the world. Kuwait will have a two-year membership at the Council and will succeed Egypt in representing the Arab Group in the UN.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's permanent envoy to the UN Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi said that 188 out of 193 UN General Secretariat Member States voted for Kuwait's membership, which shows that the country had gained the trust of the international community. Kuwait's top priorities are to prevent conflicts before they occur, mediation in terms of the UN's articles and

reforming the UN General Secretariat and the UNSC, he noted.

Otaibi affirmed the need of Arab representation in the Council that would meet aspirations of Arab states, to properly demonstrate their cases and issues on the UN's agenda. Otaibi also called for increasing the number of the Council's Member States, adding that Arab countries are demanding a permanent Arab seat at the Council. Making reform in UNSC had been discussed for over 23 years, but it is a very complicated and sensitive issue, said the ambassador. The Council's permanent Member States are not presenting clear points of view and are not effectively taking part in discussions over the matter, he added.

Otaibi said that among the reforms are also demands for granting the right to 'veto' for new members, or limiting the use of veto only to issues regarding world peace and security. The UNSC consists of 15 countries, 10 are elected and five enjoy a permanent membership and the veto right, including the US, UK, France, Russia and China. —KUNA

EQUATE wins Deal of the Year Middle East award

KUWAIT: The EQUATE Group, a global producer of petrochemicals, earned regional recognition by receiving the Investment Grade Bond/Sukuk Deal of the Year Award at the 2017 GFC Media Middle East Awards in Dubai. The award was for EQUATE's debut issuance of \$2.25 billion 144A and Reg S five-year and ten-year dual-tranche bond offering, which was issued during November 2016. The bond issuance is part of EQUATE's long-term financial restructuring plan following the acquisition of MEGlobal in December 2015.

Phisanu Sermchaiwong, EQUATE's Chief Financial Officer, commented on the recognition, "The award is a testament to EQUATE's strong global status and financial position, as well as its significant contribu-

tion to the regional and international industrial sector, and debt capital markets (DCM). The Group's strong position is further supported by investment-grade rating of Baa2 from Moody's and BBB+ from Standard & Poor's. We are very grateful to the financial community for this prestigious recognition of EQUATE's achievements in the financial sector."

EQUATE's two-time oversubscribed bonds were the largest issuance by the private sector in the Arabian Gulf since 2014. The bonds are also the first ever 144A offering that was issued by a Kuwait-based corporation. The success of EQUATE's bonds was followed by an international issuance of \$500 million Sukuk (Islamic bonds) in February 2017 with a maturity date in 2024.



Phisanu Sermchaiwong



EQUATE Group officials received the award from GFC Media.

Local

local spotlight

Expatriate loans



By Muna Al-Fuzai

Muna@kuwaittimes.net

Local newspapers recently published an alarming report on expatriate loans in Kuwait. The report revealed, quoting banking sources, that some banks have tightened the terms of granting personal loans in recent months, especially to expatriates, who number more than 1.1 million employees! The report mentioned that some banks have doubled the minimum salary requirement for consumer loans. One of the banks requires that the monthly salary for personal loans for private sector employees should be around KD 650 to KD 800. The average salary condition in other banks is around KD 400, while one or two banks are still granting loans to expats with salaries ranging from KD 250 to KD 300, but on very strict terms.

According to the new strict regulations, the percentage of expatriates working in the private sector 'unqualified' to obtain loans can be higher than before. The report also stated that the proportion of expatriates working in the private sector whose monthly wages are less than KD 180 is 59.29 percent, while the proportion of those earning between KD 180 and KD 360 is about 24 percent. Those with monthly wages of KD 360 or higher total 16.51 percent, while workers with monthly wages of KD 420 or more form 14 percent of the workforce.

I know that most banks internationally refuse to give credit to small wage earners on the grounds that the risks of financing are very high, especially since it is not expected that the bank will benefit from the service provided to them or get high returns. I know that banks have the right to protect their financial interests and that of their customers, and identify the segments that could be of benefit to the bank. But this behavior can lead to a reduction in the number of beneficiaries of personal credit in the future. The banks claim that they want guarantees of regularity in payments, and are concerned that an expat borrower might be exposed to sudden administrative deportation and the bank will lose its money. This is possible, but how many expat borrowers fall into this category? It could happen to anyone, even those with high incomes.

I see other concerns here. For example, I can't receive a loan to buy a car, because a loan from a bank can only be used to buy a house or renovate one. But this disregards the local community's needs in Kuwait, because you may need a loan for your child's wedding, or to buy a car for your family or even take your spouse for medical treatment overseas. I should get a small loan as long as I have the adequate and appropriate guarantees for repayment. This is my opinion.

This approach by the banks and any new measures will not stop people from applying for loans, but it encourages the spread of so-called cashing companies. People fall victim to the greed of these loan sharks. Borrowers are not protected, and this remains worrying for all. A review of this issue is required on humanitarian and financial grounds, especially with the large number of expatriates in Kuwait. I think establishing a new small financial portfolio for these borrowers - whether citizens or expatriates - with some conditions can be of help and ensure all parties' interests are secured.

Cable thieves confess to nine robberies

By Hanan Al-Saadoun and Agencies

KUWAIT: Power cables thieves who were arrested earlier while attempting to steal from Ardhiya W station, led officers to nine other locations where thefts were committed. Relations and security information department at the Interior Ministry said the stations that were subjected to thefts are: Ferdous area station M, Nahda area state C, Sulaibkhat area station D, Yarmouk area station A, South Surra-Siddiq area station A, Ardiya residential area station C, Sabah Al-Nasser area station D, Jahra - Qasar area station M and Nahda - Sulaibkhat area station E. The statement explains that the suspects sold stolen material to a store run by two Iranians, who were arrested after police raided their store.

No injuries in fires

Firemen dealt with a fire that started in a carpenter shop at the basement of a five-storey building in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh. The building was evacuated and the fire was put out. No injuries were reported, Kuwait Fire Services Directorate Public Relations and Information Department said in a statement. Separately, Shuwaikh and Shuhada fire stations' men responded to a fire that started on the rooftop of a coal factory in Shuwaikh industrial area. The flames were kept from spreading, and losses were limited to materials only.

Twitter restrictions

The government is working on preparing legal rules to regulate Twitter posts, which will apply on personal accounts, websites or applications that appear daily and are not covered by the e-publications law. The expected government rules will take into consideration important restrictions, laws and official bans by Twitter. Al-Anbaa reported. The restrictions will also include the following: Users are not allowed to impersonate others for any purpose, as such acts misguide others and deceive them; Users are not allowed to

Lawmaker demands restrictions on Iraqi fans' entry for security reasons

MP calls for cooperation to open Indonesian helpers' recruitment

By Meshaal Al-Enezi and A Saleh

KUWAIT: Responding to Iraqi minister of interior Qassim Al-Aaraji's announcement that he had asked his Kuwaiti counterpart Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah to allow the entry of Iraqi fans to attend their national team's matches at the 23rd Arabian Gulf Cup, MP Mohammad Barrak Al-Mutair rejected the idea, sending a 'Tweet' in which he called upon Kuwait's government not to open the borders for security reasons, taking into consideration the deteriorated security situations in Iraq and the possibility that terrorists might infiltrate along with the fans.

Recruitment

MP Khalil Al-Saleh called on local authorities to meet their Indonesian counterparts' demands with regards to domestic helpers' status, in order to resume the recruitment of Indonesian domestic workers into Kuwait. The lawmaker explained in a statement that the recruitment of domestic helpers from Indonesia was suspended over special regulations and conditions for providing Kuwait with domestic helpers, including a minimum monthly salary of KD 100 to be directly deducted from sponsors' accounts, in addition to other penal measures. Saleh urged the foreign ministry and the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development to work hard on resuming the provision of Indonesian laborers to help cut down the recruitment cost to only KD 300. Saleh stressed that India and the Philippines now prefer sending laborers to Europe and America, especially educated ones who receive up to \$1,000 monthly. Getting laborers from African countries that know little about our traditions is too dangerous and many of them have been involved in crimes and murders.

Water security

Responding to an inquiry made by MP Majed Al-Mutairi, the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) denied intentions to import fresh water from outside, and stressed that constant studies were in progress to find various water resources that would help achieve water security. The ministry explained that a local company had proposed importing water, but no decision was made. The proposal might be taken into consideration if feasibility studies show that the cost of importing water is less than producing water locally through desalination.

Overdue allowances

MP Mohammed Al-Howailah demanded undoing the Civil Service Commission's (CSC) decision on cutting down the salaries of doctors dispatched on scholarships and demanded paying all scholarship students overdue allowances. Howailah stressed that it was unacceptable to make such decisions "that will negatively affect scholarship students," and called for providing them with the most suitable atmosphere to help them achieve success. Howailah stressed that dispatched scholars had their own financial obligations and reminded that His Highness the Amir had called for supporting youth studying abroad to make things easier for them instead of distracting them between focusing on their studies and enduring the burdens of the high cost of living. Howailah called the Ministry of Higher Education to investigate the reasons behind delaying dispatched scholars' allowances and called for

have more than one account in order to sabotage or influence opinions of others; Words or expressions that carry threats are not allowed as well as verbal offenses when dealing with others; Sharing of personal or confidential data such as credit card numbers is not allowed even with approval from the person; Pornographic material is not allowed in personal photographs that appear in the background or even in the headline; Twitter is not to be used for disturbing or attacking others.

Smuggling foiled

Kuwait International Airport customs officers foiled an Asian man's attempt to smuggle nearly eight kilograms of marijuana into the country. Director General of the Customs Directorate Jamal Al-Jalawi said the inspection systems noticed foreign objects in the suspect's luggage so it was searched manually and drugs were found. Separately, Drugs Control General Department (DCGD) officers found eight drums of 250 thousand Captagon tablets on the coastline of Failaka Island. Police was informed by a citizen regarding the drums.

Intruder arrested

An Iraqi man stormed into the house of a Kuwaiti family in Saad Al-Abdullah while under the influence of drugs. The incident took place when police found the suspect in an abnormal condition inside a stolen car without an ID. To escape police, the man ran into a house, scaring its residents. The intruder was arrested after fierce resistance and was identified as an ex-convict who served jail time in several drugs offences, and the car he was driving was stolen from Ardhiya in 2009. He was sent to concerned authorities.

Reckless driving

A Kuwaiti teenager was chased and arrested for reckless driving and driving without license. He was sent to concerned authorities and the car was impounded.

Thefts

Farwaniya detectives arrested a domestic helper for stealing from her employer. The employer filed a complaint about a stolen diamond jewelry with an estimated value of KD 9,000. The Filipina domestic helper confessed to the theft and the jewelry was returned to the owner.



KUWAIT: Iraq's starting eleven pose for a group picture ahead of the 2017 Gulf Cup of Nations football match between Iraq and Yemen at the Kuwait Stadium in Kuwait City on December 29, 2017. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

forming a special committee to review rises in the cost of living in the countries where those scholars are dispatched to look into increasing their allowances accordingly.

Progressive Movement

The Kuwait Progressive Bloc recently announced changing its name to Kuwait Progressive Movement in view of the changes that took place over the past seven years since the bloc was founded.

Live ammunition drill

Kuwait Army Moral Guidance Directorate announced that marine forces will conduct a live ammunition drill on January 3 and 4, 2018 from 7:00 am till 5:00 pm in the marine area located 16.5 miles off Jelai'a Cape all the way to Garouh island and the area located 6 miles off eastern Zour Cape all the way to Um Al-Maradem island. Thus, all fishermen and picnickers are advised to stay away from the designated areas.

Railway project

The Ministry of Public Works (MPW) stressed that the railway project will not be offered for bidding until all obstacles along its route were removed. MPW added that the project's initial feasibility study was made by Ernst & Young (financial advisors), Atkins

(technical advisors) and Ashort as legal advisors in 2012 before another one was made in 2016 under the supervision of the Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP). MPW added that the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) and the Ministry of Services were contacted to locate and remove route obstacles.

Roads Authority

The Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport's Deputy Chairman Soud Al-Naqi said that the authority held a meeting two weeks ago with officials from the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and parliamentary financial affairs committee to discuss the departments that will be transferred from MOI to the authority. Naqi said that a meeting will be held following the new year vacation with chairman Ahmed Al-Hessan to discuss the authority's strategy to focus on mega projects such as that of the railway.

Small businesses

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry intends to increase the number of activities included in the small business projects to 60, including food and catering, said informed sources, noting that coordination with the food authority and Kuwait municipality is in progress to monitor and inspect such activities.

Kuwait Times
SUBSCRIBE OR RENEW
KD 25
PAINTBALL KUWAIT
your subscription for one year for only kd 25 and get 4 free tickets to Paintball Kuwait valued at kd 37
Call now +965 248 33 199 - 248 333 58 Fax: +965 248 35 620 - 248 35 621
www.kuwaittimes.net

Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Silhouette of Kuwait City during sunset. — KUNA

Traditional cafes still standing tall despite passage of time



KUWAIT: While many people in Kuwait choose to have their coffee and leisure beverages at high-end cafes and malls, there are some who prefer the comfort of a traditional cafe, which still stands tall despite the passage of time. Historically, traditional cafes were considered as hangouts for merchants and dhow captains; however, these places became more inclusive, allowing people from all walks of life to attend and have a good time.

"Traditional cafes were and still are simple and up to the point, providing clients with Arabic coffee and tea," heritage researcher Mohammad Jamal said. He indicated that by the early 1900s, traditional cafes started to offer cold beverages to customers.

Other than drinks, such cafes provided their own entertainment with music played on phonographs, in addition to card and traditional board games. Jamal noted that most traditional cafes were situated near the old sea ports and the merchants market with the oldest



one being cafe 'Bu Nashi', a Kuwaiti citizen with roots in Hassa region in modern day Saudi Arabia. Other similar cafes began to sprout all over Kuwait since 1920s with several of them providing new services and brands of coffees and teas for clients, said Jamal. Traditional cafes in Kuwait were sometimes the focal point for serious upheavals, said Jamal who pointed out that Suleiman Al-Shimaimri cafe, established in 1978, was the target of a terror attack in July 1985. The attack, aimed at creating disunity in Kuwait, failed to achieve its goal due to the solidarity of the Kuwaiti people, affirmed Jamal.

Cafe owner Suleiman Al-Shimaimri died during the assault, noted Jamal. Meanwhile, the heritage researcher indicated that modern cafes with a traditional feel have been established since the mid-1990s up to the early 2000s, a sign that no matter how much time passes, such facilities will remain as a stable of Kuwaiti culture and traditions. — KUNA

Kuwait National Museum marks diamond jubilee

KUWAIT: Celebrating its diamond jubilee yesterday, the Kuwaiti National Museum showcased 60 years of

efforts in preserving the history and culture of the country for future generations.

Speaking on the occasion, Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Archaeology at Kuwait University (KU) Dr Hassan Ashkanani said that the museum was established before the arrival of the first foreign excavation teams in 1958.

The museum was supervised by Ahmad Al-Othman who attended the opening ceremony in 1957, said Dr Ashkanani who indicated that Othman handed the

responsibility to Tareq Rajab, the first official director of the facility. In the beginning, Kuwaiti and foreign excavation teams were focused on the historical sites in Failaka Island, but the museum was not only dedicated for displaying artifacts from the Island, it was also dedicated to preserving Kuwaiti culture and history, said Dr Ashkanani. The Kuwaiti academic revealed that the museum's official building was opened in February 23, 1983 after years of renting buildings and sites to display the contents of the facility.

Dr Ashkanani revealed that the museum's building was designed by Michel Ecochard, a renowned French architect and urban planner, adding that the facility had several displays showcasing the history and heritage of Kuwait, the region's ancient history, and other artifacts and documents. In celebrations of the museum's long history and achievements, a publication, which took five years to finish, will be issued soon with around 3,773 pictures depicting the history of the museum and its contents, said Dr Ashkanani. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Boom Al-Muhallab in Kuwait National Museum. — KUNA



A view from inside the museum.

Local

Architecture students in final act against Bayt Lothan's demolition

Cultural legacy that stood for more than 60 years



By Athoob Al-Shuaibi


KUWAIT: Student associations at Kuwait University's Faculty of Architecture are making a last stand objecting to the demolition of Bayt Lothan on social networking sites. They have launched a campaign in which artists and talented people are invit-

ed to state their objections with artistic works against the demolition of Bayt Lothan, which had been considered a historical, heritage and cultural legacy of Kuwait for more than 60 years.

A student spokesperson Ahmed Al-Saffar said architecture students had submitted proposals and architectural and economic solutions to take advan-

tage of the building without having to demolish it, but to no avail. He noted that the interest of architecture students and their teachers in historical buildings is not limited to Bayt Lothan. "Similar actions were made opposing plans to demolish other historical buildings, such as Shamlan Mosque," he added.

Bayt Lothan (House of Lothan) is a 4,000 sq m building constructed in the 1930s by its owner Sheikh Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah in Salmiya. It was used as a resort in the summer and spring and was transformed by the heirs of the palace into a cultural center that sponsors young talents in various arts, theater and media.



MORRIS GARAGES

MG ZS

DESIGNED TO CHASE

#ChaseEveryDream



- 6 YEAR/200,000 KM WARRANTY
- 6.3L/100 KM FUEL ECONOMY
- LARGEST INTERIOR SPACE IN ITS CLASS
- TOP-OF-THE LINE ENTERTAINMENT INCLUDING 8" TOUCHSCREEN, ARKAMYS SOUND SYSTEM, APPLE CARPLAY AND ISMART APP.



SAFETY RATINGS



ADEL ALGHANIM AUTOMOTIVE
عادل الغانم للسيارات

MG SHOWROOM
Shuwaikh Industrial Area
Airport Road no. 55
+965 97228405 | +965 97228409
+965 97228401 | +965 22282801/2

mg-kw.com
@mgkuwait
@mgkuwait
/mgkuwait





Echoes of escaped Brazilian slaves live on in Rio de Janeiro

Reporters face an obstacle in corruption-hit Bulgaria

Page 8

Page 9



PAJU, South Korea: A woman looks through binoculars during a visit to the Imjingak peace park near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) dividing the two Koreas in the border city of Paju. Kim Jong-Un vowed North Korea would mass-produce nuclear warheads and missiles in a defiant New Year message yesterday, suggesting he would continue to accelerate a rogue weapons program that has stoked international tensions. —AFP

'Nuke button' ready for use, N Korea warns

Kim says North Korea will mass-produce nukes

SEOUL: Kim Jong Un yesterday warned the United States that he has a "nuclear button" on his desk ready for use if North Korea is threatened, but offered an olive branch to South Korea, saying he was "open to dialogue" with Seoul. After a year dominated by fiery rhetoric and escalating tensions over North Korea's nuclear weapons program, Kim used his televised New Year's Day speech to declare North Korea "a peace-loving and responsible nuclear power" and call for lower military tensions on the Korean peninsula and improved ties with the South. "When it comes to North-South relations, we should lower the military tensions on the Korean Peninsula to create a peaceful environment," Kim said. "Both the North and the South should make efforts." Kim said he will consider sending a delegation to the Winter Olympics Games to be held in Pyeongchang, South Korea, in February. "North Korea's participation in the Winter Games will be a good opportunity to showcase the national pride and we wish the Games will be a success. Officials from the two Koreas may urgently meet to discuss the possibility," Kim said.

South Korea said it welcomed Kim's offer to send a delegation to the Pyeongchang Games and hold talks with the South to discuss possible participation. "We have always stated our willingness to talk with North Korea any time and anywhere if that would help restore inter-Korean relations and lead to peace on the Korean peninsula," a spokesman for the presidential Blue House said. "We hope the two Koreas will sit down and find a solution to lower tensions and establish peace on the Korean peninsula."

Lee Hee-beom, president of the Pyeongchang Organizing Committee, said the organization welcomed participation by the North Koreans. "The (organizing committee) will discuss relevant matters with the South Korean government as well as the International Olympic Committee," he said in a statement. South Korean President Moon Jae-in has said North Korea's participation will ensure safety of the Pyeongchang Olympics and proposed last month that Seoul and Washington postpone large military drills that the North denounces as a rehearsal for war until after the Games. Moon took office in May last year pledging to engage Pyongyang in dialogue and restore strained ties after nearly a decade of conservative rule in the South. But North Korea has so far snubbed his overtures for warmer ties, including an offer to hold inter-Korean military talks about ceasing hostile activities along the border, as it tested missiles at an unprecedented pace and lambasted joint military drills between Seoul and Washington.

Rather than encouraging US measures that "threaten the security and peace of the Korean peninsula," Seoul should instead respond to overtures from the North, and "stop nuclear

war exercises with foreign forces, Kim said. Asked by reporters to comment on Kim's speech, US President Donald Trump simply said "we'll see, we'll see", as he walked into New Year's eve celebration at Mar-a-Lago, his elite resort in Florida.

The US State Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Kim's New Year's address.

'Reality, not a threat'

North Korea tested intercontinental ballistic missiles and conducted its sixth and most powerful nuclear test in September in defiance of international warnings and sanctions, raising fears of a new conflict on the Korean peninsula. After testing what Pyongyang said was its most powerful intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), capable of delivering a warhead to anywhere

in the continental United States, at the end of November, Kim declared his nuclear force complete.

He continued that theme in his New Year's address, announcing that North Korea would focus on "mass producing nuclear warheads and ballistic missiles for operational deployment" in the coming year. This, Kim said, was "irreversible with

any force", making it impossible for the United States to start a war against North Korea. "The whole territory of the US is within the range of our nuclear strike and a nuclear button is always on the desk of my office and this is just a reality, not a threat," he said, while emphasizing that the weapons would only be used if North Korea is threatened.

Kim's customary New Year's speech is closely watched for indications of the policy direction the unpredictable and reclusive leader is likely to pursue in the coming year. Beyond listing military accomplishments, Kim also outlined economic gains as part of his two-pronged policy of developing his country's economy and military. Despite increased international sanctions imposed over the weapons program, North Korea made progress in areas like fabrics, shoes and tractors, Kim said. While Kim is keen to declare his weapons program a success, he is unlikely to completely end his contentious testing regime, said Scott LaFoy, a ballistic missile analyst at the website NK Pro, which monitors North Korea. "I'm still very skeptical of the 'complete' thing they've been talking about, if only because we've seen so much activity in regards to the submarine launched ballistic missile program," he said. "I think a slowdown (in testing) is very realistic, though." Kim seems likely to tone down his weapons testing at least ahead of the Olympics, said Nam Sung-wook, a North Korea expert at Korea University in Seoul. "What North Korea is most afraid of is being forgotten in the international arena," he said. "Without launching missiles and conducting a nuclear test, North Korea will be in the spotlight just by attending the Winter Olympics." —Reuters



N Korea leader offers an olive branch to South

Pakistan can mean their future is secured: they are likely to be granted land and will benefit from the best resources and training in the country. As a result such colleges play an outsized role in Pakistan's education system, which has been woefully underfunded for decades.

Military might

According to a 2016 government study, a staggering 24 million Pakistani children are out of school, with a larger share of girls staying home than boys 12.8 million compared to 11.2 million. Hundreds of boys study at the cadet colleges across the country. But girls are still not allowed in these elite schools, with the special college at Mardan the one exception.

"Such colleges can help girls qualify to be part of the armed forces, foreign service, civil services or become engineers and doctors," said retired Brigadier Naureen Satti, underscoring their importance in the long fight for equality by Pakistan's women. In starched khaki uniforms and red berets Durkhanay and her classmates march the parade ground, stepping to the beat of a barking drill instructor, before racing to change into physical training and martial arts kits.

The military is widely seen as Pakistan's most powerful institution, and has ruled the country for roughly half of its 70-year history. Under the current civilian government it is believed to control defense and foreign policy. Women, however, have largely been shut out for the course in a country routinely ranked among the world's most misogynistic, and where they have fought for their rights for



MARDAN: Pakistani cadets parade at the Pakistan Army's first Girls' Cadet College in Mardan. —AFP

decades. Previously they were only allowed to serve in administrative posts. But military dictator Pervez Musharraf opened up the combat branches of the army, navy and air force to women beginning in 2003.

'Game changer'

The military would not disclose how many of its members, which a 2015 Credit Suisse report said number more than 700,000 active personnel, are currently women. But a senior security official told AFP on condition of

anonymity that at least 4,000 are now believed to be serving in the armed forces. He gave no further details, and it is unclear how far the women have managed to foray from their administrative past, though some have managed to become high profile role models including, notably, Ayesha Farooq, who in 2013 became Pakistan's first ever female fighter pilot.

The Girls' Cadet College principal, retired brigadier Javid Sarwar, vowed his students would be prepared for whatever they wanted to do, "including the armed forces". —AFP

India court orders rape victim's baby exhumed for test

NEW DELHI: An Indian court has ordered the exhumation of the remains of a baby born to a teenage rape survivor so that a paternity test can be conducted, police said yesterday. The ruling came after the teenage mother withdrew an allegation of rape against a Delhi businessman. Police say the teenager is aged between 14 and 15 and had initially accused the man of raping her repeatedly when she visited the capital New Delhi in February. She gave birth to a baby girl in October, but the child died a few days later. Police arrested the suspect in July and charged him with raping a minor. It is not unusual for victims to withdraw allegations of rape in India, often under pressure from friends or family of the defendant, or in return for a financial settlement.

"The court has issued the orders but we are yet to get a copy," an investigating officer told AFP on condition of anonymity yesterday. "We will exhumate the body as per the order for conducting DNA tests." India has a grim record of sexual assaults on minors with over 36,000 cases of rape or sexual assaults reported in 2016, according to government data. A UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2014 said one in three rape victims in India was a minor and expressed alarm at the widespread sexual abuse of children. In November, a court in northern India convicted two men for repeatedly raping their 10-year-old niece. She became pregnant and DNA samples from the baby were used to convict one of the uncles. —AFP

Pakistan's girl cadets dream of taking power

MARDAN: At a revolutionary school in Pakistan, Durkhanay Banuri dreams of becoming military chief, once a mission impossible for girls in a patriarchal country where the powerful army has a severe problem with gender equity. Thirteen-year-old Durkhanay, a student at Pakistan's first ever Girls' Cadet College, established earlier this year in the deeply conservative northwest, brims with enthusiasm and confidence as she sketches out her life plan. "I want to be the army chief," she said. "Why not? When a woman can be prime minister, foreign minister and governor of the State Bank, she can also be chief of the army staff ... I will make it possible and you will see." The dreams of many women in the region were once limited to merely leaving the house. Durkhanay and her 70 classmates in Mardan, a town in militancy-hit Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province roughly 110 kilometers (70 miles) from Islamabad, are aiming much higher. Cadet colleges in Pakistan, which are run by the government with officers from the military's education branch, strive to prepare bright male students for the armed forces and civil services. Their graduates are usually given preference for selection to the army, which in

International

Crossing the river a major challenge in Iraq's Mosul

Districts still devastated months after IS was forced out

MOSUL: It used to take Ahmad Meyssar just a few minutes to reach his university across a bridge over the river Tigris in Iraq's Mosul. But now—with whole districts still devastated some five months after the Islamic State group was forced out—the journey takes him over two hours as most of the vital links between the two halves of the city remain in ruins. "To be sure of being on time for the start of lessons at university at eight in the morning," the 20-year-old student says he sets off "at around 5:30 or six".

Across the Nineveh region where Iraq's second-largest city is located, some "90 percent" of the 70 bridges have been totally or partially destroyed, said Marwan Abderrazaq from the local roads department. Some of Mosul's bridges were blown up by IS jihadists as they faced a nine-month Iraqi onslaught, while others were destroyed by government forces and the firepower of a US-led coalition backing them up. They have been reduced to pillars jutting out of the waters of the Tigris or collapsed into piles of concrete.



'90%' of the bridges totally or partially destroyed

Traffic problems

For millions of residents in Mosul and the broader region the disappearance of the bridges they used to rely on has turned daily life into an arduous obstacle course. Thanks to support from the World Bank and United Nations two temporary bridges have gone up in Mosul and three more are under construction. That means locals no longer have to make lengthy detours to the few towns where the river could be traversed. But the limited options still mean that student Meyssar and

others wanting to cross still face major delays. Hundreds of cars lined up as they queued to reach the other side on a recent morning, forming a traffic jam that stretched for several kilometers. The frustrating waits occur daily at the two functioning bridges—even for pedestrians. Fathiya Subhi, 44, carries one of her children on her shoulders as she looks to reach the other side of the river. She is making the crossing by foot as she "cannot afford the taxi fare" across. With the bridge choked full with cars and scooters it takes her over 30 minutes just to dodge and weave her way across the 330-metre (1,000-foot) bridge. "We cannot live like this!" she exclaims. "When the government returned didn't it also have to rebuild everything for the people living here?"

Changing habits

The jams and delays crossing the river have forced taxi driver Yahya Ahmed to change the way he works. He has decided that from now on he is going to stick to the eastern side of the river where he lives and will no longer take passengers to the other bank. "Before we used to cross from one side to the other without thinking about it," Ahmed, 37, says. "But now it takes two-and-a-half hours so I just work on one side." Engineer Hussein Nabil is at work helping to try and rebuild what residents called the "Old Bridge" that ran across the centre of Mosul since it was built in 1934. But he says the metallic structure will only be "restored in six months" and it will take until August-over a year after Baghdad announced Mosul's "liberation"—for the first cars to be able to cross.—AFP



MOSUL: An Iraqi boy carries a girl on his back while fleeing from the Old City of Mosul during the Iraqi government forces' offensive to retake the city from Islamic State (IS) group fighters. — AFP

Iran protests, the timeline

TEHRAN: Mass demonstrations have hit towns and cities across Iran in the biggest wave of protests since unrest over a disputed election in 2009. Sparked by high living costs and the struggling economy, the protests began in second city Mashhad but quickly spread and turned against the Islamic regime as a whole. Officials have confirmed 12 dead and hundreds arrested, while President Hassan Rouhani has called for calm. Here is how the protests have unfolded:

Mashhad

A few hundred demonstrators gather in Mashhad and several other towns on December 28 to protest high prices after a call reportedly goes out on the Telegram social messaging service. Videos on reformist media show protesters focusing their ire on the moderate president, but there are also slogans lambasting the entire Islamic regime and Iran's involvement in conflicts around the Middle East. An official in Mashhad says 52 people were arrested for chanting "harsh slogans" at the rally.

Trump's warning

The next day, larger-scale protests flare up in more cities including the western city of Kermanshah and key religious centre Qom, where footage shows hundreds of demonstrators chanting "Death to the dictator" and "Free political prisoners". An official in Tehran says that "less than 50 people" gathered in one of the city's squares as the protests spread to the capital. First Vice President Eshaq Jahangiri suggests hardline opponents of Rouhani's government may be behind the demonstrations, warning that the protests could slip beyond their control. The US State Department says it "strongly condemns" the arrest of protesters in Iran and urges "all nations to publicly support the Iranian people". President Donald Trump wades in on Twitter, insisting that Iranian authorities "respect their people's rights" and warning Tehran that "the world is watching".



TEHRAN: Iranian students run for cover from tear gas at the University of Tehran during a demonstration driven by anger over economic problems, in the capital Tehran. —AFP

Deadly clashes

On December 30, regime supporters rally around the country for officially sanctioned demonstrations to commemorate the defeat of the 2009 protest movement. Interior Minister Abdolrahman Rahmani Fazli calls on the public to avoid "illegal gatherings" as "they will create problems for themselves and other citizens".

The authorities also rebuff Trump's comments insisting that they are "irrelevant" and "opportunistic". Protests grow in Tehran as scuffles break out at the city's main university. Videos later show demonstrators attacking a town hall, overturning a police car and burning the Iranian flag. Unverified footage on social media claims to show thousands marching through the western cities of Khorramabad, Zanjan and Ahvaz. A regional official confirms that two people were killed in clashes in the western town of Dorud during an "illegal protest" on Saturday evening, but insists security forces did not fire on the crowd.

On December 31, Interior Minister Fazli

warns that those who "damage public property, disrupt order and break the law" will "pay the price". Officials say 200 people were arrested during the demonstrations in Tehran and another 80 in Arak, some 300 kilometers away. In a bid to stall further protests, the authorities block access to online messaging services, including Telegram, that they accuse of helping to spread the protests. Rouhani finally breaks his silence as he insists people are "absolutely free" to express their anger but "criticism is different to violence and destroying public property."

Despite the call for calm, the deadly unrest continues as videos on social media show demonstrations hitting areas across the country for a fourth night. Iranian media and officials report that 10 people died in protests overnight—six in shooting in the western town of Tuyserkan, two shot dead in southwestern Izeh and two more run over by a stolen fire engine in Dorud. In a second statement on January 1, Rouhani plays down the unrest as "nothing" and insists that the Iranian people will "respond to rioters and lawbreakers".—AFP

Compass Group chief and 5 others killed in plane crash

SYDNEY: The chief executive of British catering giant Compass Group Plc and four members of his family were killed when the seaplane they were flying in crashed into a Sydney river on New Year's Eve. Richard Cousins, 58, chief of the world's biggest catering firm, died together with Emma Bowden, 48, Heather Bowden, 11, Edward Cousins, 23, and William Cousins, 25, according to Detective Superintendent Mark Hutchings of the New South Wales Police. Australian media identified the dead as the CEO's two sons, his fiancée and her daughter. The pilot, Gareth Morgan, 44, also died.

Cousins had been due to retire on March 31. Compass said the new chief executive, Dominic Blakemore, would now start on Jan 1 instead of April 1 as originally planned. Compass, with annual turnover of almost 23 billion pounds (\$31 billion), employs around 550,000 people around the world providing food services to schools, the armed forces and office

workers. Blakemore, who has worked at Compass since 2012 with roles as both finance director and head of the group's European operations, has a background in accounting. He has also held senior financial roles at British food groups Caddbury and Birds Eye Iglo.

Compass Chairman Paul Walsh said in a statement: "The thoughts of everyone at Compass are with Richard's family and friends, and we extend our deepest sympathies to them." "Richard was known and respected for his great humanity and a no-nonsense style that transformed Compass into one of Britain's leading companies," he added. Cousins led Compass over the past 11 years. He was widely credited with turning the company's business around and making Compass into one of the FTSE 100's best-performing firms, and had also been named as one of the world's best-performing CEOs by Harvard Business Review.

He joined Tesco as an independent director in 2014 at the height of the British supermarket chain's accounting scandal, stepping down from that role at the start of 2017. The family are believed to have been flying back to Sydney from an exclusive waterfront restaurant in Jerusalem Bay when the plane crashed, the BBC reported. Police are working with the Australian Transport Safety Bureau to recover the wreckage of the plane, which is submerged in 13 meters of water near Cowan, north of Sydney. — Reuters

Mudslide survivors living back in danger zone

FREETOWN: Four months after the landslides that killed her husband and more than a thousand others, Mariama Kamara has returned to the mountainside that collapsed onto their home to live in an unfinished building. Kamara is one of hundreds of Sierra Leoneans recently kicked out of three government camps set up in the wake of the August 14 disaster, when heavy rains caused the partial disintegration of Sugar Loaf mountain, now a red rock scar looming over the country's capital.

That day, heavy rains lashed the slopes left bare by chronic deforestation in Freetown, and huge boulders suddenly detached, rolling onto informal settlements, crushing shacks and

enveloping entire households in the Regent district in red mud. "We are back again at Regent, trying to pick up what is left after the disaster," Kamara told AFP, breastfeeding her eight-month-old son while sitting on a cinder block. Handed \$280 (235 euros) by the British government and the World Food Program to start a new life as a widow with three young children, the 27-year-old felt she had little choice but to return to the danger zone she had fled. "I sold some of the handouts to pay transport fare for my two children to go to my mother, until I find a suitable place," she explained, describing how she ended up living in one of four unrecognized settlements in the Regent area. There are fears another landslide could strike Regent when the next rainy season rolls around.

The school with no roof

Despite the lack of sanitation and shelter, a school still operates in the ruined mountain district, with around 300 children learning to read and write in a building with no roof, doors or windows. Many of the students were orphaned in August. Francis Abu Sankoh, a community leader, said the government had

told him everyone eking out a precarious living had to get out by mid-November, but he refused to co-operate. "We will not force these people to leave while they still have nowhere else to stay," he told AFP, saying he knew of nearly 200 households living in half-finished structures in Regent.

Relief workers are meanwhile exhausted after four months filling in for a government that is too under-resourced to carry out basic disaster management, with the Red Cross handing out its own payments of \$300 to 1,000 people in late December. "We have played our part to respond to the emergency, and it is time to release the affected victims," said Father George Crisafulli, Country Director for Don Bosco Fambul, an orphanage turned halfway house for homeless Sierra Leoneans. "It is the responsibility of government to provide financial support and housing for them," Crisafulli added, as he prepared for the imminent departure of around 100 pregnant women and new mothers.

He noted that the government had promised to give financial assistance to child victims via a mobile money wallet, but they were yet to receive anything. —AFP

Job Vacancy PA to the CEO

A multinational agency based in Kuwait has an opening for a Personal Assistant to the CEO.

Role Responsibility

- Works autonomously to provide secretarial/ administrative support
- Prepares complex correspondence, reports, presentations, agendas, minutes, etc. using business software applications (e.g. Microsoft Word, Excel)
- Co-ordinate senior management meetings/ events/ conferences
- Receive and direct incoming calls, visitors, mail and email; prioritising actions as required
- Maintain files, records, calendars and diaries
- Edit PowerPoint documents (not designing from scratch)

The Ideal Candidate

To be successful in this role you will embody the following qualities.

- Experience of providing senior level support
- Ability to handle sensitive information & retain confidentiality at all times
- Experience of managing multiple important tasks and prioritising accordingly
- A clear communicator with attention to detail
- A flexible and proactive team player
- An organised individual able to work to deadlines
- Strong administrative and IT skills with Microsoft Office Suite
- Decisive with ability to manage ambiguity and create simplicity from the complicated
- Pro-active and thinks ahead to avoid potential issues and to provide solutions
- Preferably a university graduate and bilingual (Arabic and English)
- Minimum 5 years' experience with transferable residence

If you are confident you can excel in this role, please email your most recent CV to Jobsinkwt8@gmail.com

International

Reporters face an obstacle in corruption-hit Bulgaria

Holder of EU presidency 'worst press freedom violator'

SOFIA: Cartoonist Hristo Komarnitski and his colleagues had no illusions: launching a satirical journal was always going to be tricky in Bulgaria, new holder of the EU presidency but also ranked as the bloc's worst press freedom violator. But they didn't expect that the country's main newspaper distributor, run by a business tycoon MP, would simply block the first issue of their "Prass-Press" journal when it launched in March.

None of the 10,000 copies reached the newspaper stands. "We had no idea about all the problems that were about to hit us," Komarnitski said. "There is no alternative for us, no choice... The (media) situation is going from bad to worse," he added, although Prass-Press continues to appear on the internet and is distributed by hand by volunteers in the provinces. As Bulgaria prepares to take the rotating EU helm on January 1, its press industry is mired in "corruption and collusion between media, politicians, and oligarchs," according to Reporters Without Borders (RSF).

Since joining the bloc a decade ago, Bulgaria has tumbled down in the annual RSF press freedom ranking from sharing the 35th place with France in 2006 to 109th out of 180 countries in 2017 - by far the worst placed EU member state. Some observers say there is, paradoxically, a correlation between this deterioration and Bulgaria's desire to improve its image as the bloc's poorest and most corrupt country. Authorities want "Brussels (to) believe that there is progress" in their anti-graft fight and therefore try to muffle investigative journalism, according to opposition newspaper columnist Svetoslav Terziev, who also teaches journalism at Sofia University.

“Media situation is going from bad to worse”

'Chronic' self-censorship

Like in other ex-communist countries, Bulgaria has a large number of media outlets, but ownership tends to be opaque and concentrated in the hands of a few. "It is like Russian dolls - when you open one, there is another one inside. There is an official owner of the media outlet but everybody knows that it is not the actual owner, there is someone else behind," said Christian Spahr, head of the regional media program of the German Konrad Adenauer foundation. Dominating the country's powerful media elite is oligarch Delyan Peevski, the wealthy newspaper distributor who thwarted the launch of "Prass-Press". The 37-year-old tobacco and construction mogul heads an empire of media outlets, whose actual size remains unknown due to opaque ownership.

According to RSF, he controls nearly 80 percent of the newspaper distribution. Peevski is also a favorite target of the "Prass-Press" cartoonists—a fact which may not have played in their favor.

"But we don't go as far as our fellow cartoonists in Britain or France, who are much more brutal," Komarnitski insisted. Bulgaria's entanglements between political and economic interests have transformed journalism into an obstacle course for reporters. More than 90 percent of the Bulgarian journalists polled recently by the Association of European Journalists declared that interference with their work was frequent. "Self-censorship has become a chronic illness," the study summed up.

'Sicily-style' threats

In 2016, "Prass-Press" cartoonist Chavdar Nikolov



SOFIA: Bulgarian cartoonists Chavdar Georgiev (left) sells the first issue of the satirical bi-weekly journal 'Prass-Press' in the center of Sofia. — AFP

saw all his comic strips deleted from the websites of the media group that he worked with, after he depicted Prime Minister Boyko Borisov as chief of a civil militia hunting migrants. Also last year, television journalists found themselves threatened with sacking by a lawmaker during a live broadcast. Physical aggression is also common, according to reporters. Atanas Chobanov from

the investigative website Bivol.bg said he and his colleagues were regularly subjected to intimidations "with Sicily-style messages". The US International Research and Exchanges board (IREX), a non-profit group campaigning for independent press rights, has denounced the "visible political pressure" on leading Bulgarian national media. — AFP

'Historic' turning point in Italy's migrant crisis

ROME: The year 2017 marked what Italian authorities hope was a turning point in the nation's struggle to manage a chaotic and deadly rush of migrants to its shores. Italian Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni this week called it a pivotal moment in Italy's "historic transition from immigration managed by criminals to controlled, legal and safe migration". While migrants who made the perilous journey across the Mediterranean in rickety boats still numbered nearly 119,000, it was a roughly one-third drop over the previous year. However, Italy's effort to tackle the issue has not been without controversy, including its moves to enlist the help of powerful militias to curb traffickers' activity.

Still the situation as 2017 closes, is vastly different than the first half of the year. Between January and June, Italy saw a nearly 20 percent jump in the number of migrants arriving by sea, while asylum applications exploded as its EU neighbors—France, Switzerland and Austria—had closed their borders. In just the last three days of June, a total of 10,400 people landed in Italy as its neighbors refused to allow even a single ship of migrants rescued off the coast of Libya to dock.

With legislative elections on the horizon—now set for March 2018—immigration has been a key issue, particularly for Italy's right and the populist Five Star Movement (M5S). Italy has tried to adapt how it handles the migrants on its soil, trying to prioritize smaller reception centers believed to help new arrivals get on their feet. Still tens of thousands of asylum seekers languish in large shelters, feeding into the mutual dis-



The Aquarius (center), a former North Atlantic fisheries protection ship now used by humanitarians SOS Mediterranee and Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors without Borders), is seen during a rescuing operation in the Mediterranean sea. — AFP

trust of surrounding neighborhoods.

'Inhuman'

But everything began to change in July as migrant boat departures from Libya suddenly dropped. The downward trend continued to the point that sea arrivals over the past six months have fallen by 70 percent compared with the same period last year. The drop has been attributed to a controversial combination of an Italian-led boosting of the Libyan coastguard's ability to intercept boats and efforts to seek the assistance of powerful militias. There have also been moves to tighten Libya's southern borders, accelerate repatriations directly from Libya and measures to stem the flow of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa through transit states such as Niger and Sudan. It seemed to pay off as in

early December, with the Libyan navy saying a total of 80,000 migrants were rescued or intercepted in 2017. However, harrowing accounts emerged of desperate migrants throwing themselves overboard in order to avoid being sent back to the chaos in Libya.

Migrants intercepted or rescued by the Libyans are usually held in detention centers to await repatriation, but waiting times are often long and conditions deplorable. International outrage over the situation was stoked in November by a CNN television report on migrant Africans being sold as slaves in Libya. It got to the point that the EU's decision to help Libya intercept migrants trying to cross the Mediterranean and return them to detention centers was condemned as "inhuman" by the United Nations human rights chief, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein. — AFP

Venezuela ham shortage hits holiday meals

CARACAS: Shortages in Venezuela have now hit an essential part of traditional Christmas and New Year's meals, leaving frustrated citizens with a new holiday chorus: "We want our ham!" Ham has been in short supply, sending people fed up with shortages of this and other essentials into the streets to protest. "We didn't have it for Christmas and it won't be here for the New Year," complains Miriam Brito during a protest in Caracas. Similar small demonstrations have multiplied throughout Venezuela, but the government of President Nicolas Maduro—whose country was once one of the wealthiest in Latin America—has promised that ham would be among foods sold at subsidized prices.

Brito said she has gone four months without receiving food subsidies. "They lied to us with ham," said Brito, 40, the mother of a seven-year-old daughter. Falling oil prices, political unrest, and corruption have decimated the economy under Maduro, leading to chronic food and medicine shortages, and inflation which the IMF forecasts will exceed 2,300 percent in 2018. In November, creditors and ratings agencies declared the government and state-run oil firm PDVSA to be in partial default for missing interest and principle payments on bonds.

About 100 people bang on saucepans around Brito and use rope, tires and debris to set up a street blockade. Venezuelans earn a minimum of roughly 450,000 bolivars per month, \$135 at the official exchange rate, and \$4.50 on the black market which is considered the



CARACAS: A woman confronts riot police during a protest for the shortage of food in Caracas. — AFP

reference rate. That's also the non-subsidized price for 1.5 kilograms (3.3 pounds) of pork, putting it out of reach for Brito, a cashier whose salary barely exceeds the legal minimum.

'We have been sabotaged'

When it's available, subsidized meat sells for 30 times less. Aside from missing their seasonal ham on the bone,

protesters complain about water and electricity shortages, which occur despite the fact that the country has the world's largest proven reserves of oil. Maduro acknowledged glitches in the distribution of ham but blamed an international boycott linked, according to him, to severe economic sanctions imposed by Washington, and to sabotage by Portugal, which exports the ham. — AFP

News in brief

Two Christians killed

CAIRO: A gunman killed two Copts celebrating the New Year in an Egyptian alcohol shop early yesterday, judicial and security sources said - the latest deadly violence against the Christian minority. The shooting came just three days after a gunman, identified as a wanted jihadist, killed nine people in an attack on a church south of the capital. An assailant rode up in the back of a motorcycle taxi and opened fire on the liquor store in Cairo's twin city Giza at around 1:30 am, when the streets were still bustling with New Year revelers, the sources said. The store's Coptic owner survived but two of his friends who were celebrating with him were killed. Police are still investigating the motive of the attack, the sources said. Alcohol consumption is forbidden by Islam and liquor stores, most of which are run by Copts, have come under attack in the past by hardline Muslims who believe they should be banned. On January 2 last year, a Muslim slit the throat of a Coptic liquor store owner in the Mediterranean coastal city of Alexandria.

Liverpool park blaze

LIVERPOOL: A blaze has destroyed every vehicle left in a 1,600-capacity car park serving the British city of Liverpool's indoor arena, police said yesterday. The Liverpool International Horse Show, taking place in the northwest English city's neighboring 11,000-seater arena, was cancelled due to the fire, which broke out after dark on Sunday. Nobody has been seriously injured in the blaze, the local Merseyside Police said, while all horses are accounted for. "Initial investigations indicate that an accidental fire within a vehicle caused other cars to ignite," the force said. "We believe that all vehicles parked in the car park have been destroyed and advise owners to contact their insurance companies." Liverpool Mayor Joe Anderson said the blaze started in a four-wheel drive vehicle on the third level. Horses which had been on the first level were moved to the arena, he added. "The flames and the smoke was unbelievable," said Kevin Booth, 44, who was heading to the horse show with his family. "It was frightening. We could hear the bangs of car windows exploding," he said.

Viral 'slap video'

JERUSALEM: Israeli authorities have filed charges against a Palestinian woman after a video showing her and her cousin slapping and kicking two Israeli soldiers in the occupied West Bank went viral. Nour Tamimi, 20, had on December 15 along with Ahed Tamimi, 16, accosted two soldiers in their village of Nabi Saleh in the occupied West Bank. The soldiers were in the yard of a home to prevent Palestinians from throwing stones at Israeli motorists nearby, according to the charges filed at the Ofer military court on Sunday. Ahed Tamimi's family says the incident occurred in the yard of their home. A video shows the cousins approaching two Israeli soldiers and telling them to leave before shoving, kicking and slapping them. Ahed Tamimi is the most aggressive of the two in the video. The heavily armed soldiers do not respond in the face of what appears to be an attempt to provoke rather than seriously harm them. They then move backwards after Ahed Tamimi's mother Nariman becomes involved.

International

Pakistan plans to take over charities run by Islamist leader targeted by US

India and US blame LeT for 2008 Mumbai bombings

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's government plans to seize control of charities and financial assets linked to Islamist leader Hafiz Saeed, who Washington has designated a terrorist, according to officials and documents reviewed by Reuters. Pakistan's civilian government detailed its plans in a secret order to various provincial and federal government departments on Dec 19, three officials who attended one of several high-level meetings discussing the crackdown told Reuters.

Marked "secret", a Dec 19 document from the finance ministry directed law enforcement and governments in Pakistan's five provinces to submit an action plan by Dec. 28 for a "takeover" of Saeed's two charities, Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) and the Falah-e-Insaniyat Foundation. The United States has labeled JuD and FIF "terrorist fronts" for Lashkar-e-Taiba ("Army of the Pure" or LeT), a group Saeed founded in 1987 and which Washington and India blame for the 2008 attacks in Mumbai that killed 166 people.

Saeed has repeatedly denied involvement in the Mumbai attacks and a Pakistani court saw insufficient evidence to convict him. The LeT could not be reached for comment. The Dec 19th document, which refers to "Financial Action Task Force (FATF) issues", names only Saeed's two charities and "actions to be taken" against them. The FATF, which is an international body that combats money laundering and terrorist financing, has warned Pakistan it faces inclusion on a watch list for failing to crack down on financing terrorism.

Asked about a crackdown on JuD and FIF, Interior Minister Ahsan Iqbal, who co-chaired one of the meetings on the plan, responded only generally, saying he has

ordered authorities "to choke the fundraising of all proscribed outfits in Pakistan". In a written reply to Reuters, he also said Pakistan wasn't taking action under US pressure. "We're not pleasing anyone. We're working as a responsible nation to fulfil our obligations to our people and international community."

Spokesmen for the JuD and FIF both said they could not comment until they receive official notifications of the government's plans. "We don't have any intimation about any crackdown so far," FIF spokesman Salman Shahid told Reuters. "No one has asked us about our work or assets." Saeed could not be reached for comment. He has frequently denied having ties to militants and says the charitable organizations he founded and controls have no terrorism ties. He says he promotes an Islamic-oriented government through doing good works.

Move could spark concern in Pakistan powerful military

First major move

If the government follows through with the plan, it would mark the first time Pakistan has made a major move against Saeed's network, which includes 300 seminaries and schools, hospitals, a publishing house and ambulance services. The JuD and FIF alone have about 50,000 volunteers and hundreds of other paid workers, according to two counter-terrorism officials. Participants at the meeting raised the possibility that the government's failure to act against the charities could lead to UN sanctions, one of the three officials said. A UN Security Council team is due to visit Pakistan in late January to review progress against UN-designated "terrorist" groups.



LAHORE: Pakistani youth holding an umbrella are silhouetted during sunset on the outskirts of Lahore. — AFP

"Any adverse comments or action suggested by the team can have far-reaching implications for Pakistan," the official said. The Dec 19th document gave few details about how the state would take over Saeed's charities, pending the plans submitted from the provincial governments. It did say it would involve government entities taking over ambulance services and accounting for other vehicles used by the charities. It says law enforcement agencies will coordinate with Pakistan's intelligence agencies to identify the assets of the two charities and examine how they raise money.

The document also directs that the name of JuD's 200-

acre headquarters, Markaz-e-Taiba, near the eastern city of Lahore be changed to something else "to make it known that the Government of Punjab (province) solely manages and operates the Markaz(headquarters)". The move to seize the charities could spark some concern from the powerful military, which has proposed plans to steer Saeed and the JuD into mainstream politics. The military did not respond to a request for comment. In August, JuD officials formed a new political party, the Milli Muslim League, and backed candidates who fared relatively strongly in two key parliamentary by-elections. — Reuters

Anti-China protesters march in Hong Kong

HONG KONG: Angry protesters marched through Hong Kong yesterday against what they described as suppression by Beijing, days after Chinese authorities ruled that part of a city rail station would come under mainland law. Semi-autonomous Hong Kong has been ruled under a "one country, two systems" deal since Britain returned it to China in 1997 and enjoys rights unseen on the mainland, including freedom of speech and an independent judiciary. But a string of recent incidents have fuelled concern over the erosion of its autonomy and rule of law, including the jailing of prominent pro-democracy activists.

Campaigner Joshua Wong, who joined thousands of protesters at the march yesterday, said suppression by China's Communist Party government had worsened in 2017. Wong, 21, was jailed in August over his role in the Umbrella Movement mass pro-democracy protests of 2014 and is on bail pending an appeal against his six-month sentence. "In 2018, I hope that every Hong Konger can become an avenger, and win back the core values eroded by Beijing," Wong said. Many of the protesters were angry at the so-called "co-location" agreement, which would bring part of a new rail terminus in the heart of Hong Kong under mainland law.

The high-speed link to the sprawling southern mainland cities of Shenzhen and Guangzhou is due to open this year, with plans for a joint immigration checkpoint that would see mainland police and other officials based in the Hong Kong terminus. The station is on Hong Kong's famous harbourfront in Kowloon, not on the border with the mainland further to the north. China's top legislative body approved the project last week. The final stage before implementation is



HONG KONG: An unidentified man (center) is surrounded by pro-democracy protesters prior to being led out of the recently reopened Civic Square after they claimed he tore up a protest sign, during the annual New Year's Day pro-democracy rally in Hong Kong. — AFP

a vote by Hong Kong's legislative council, which is weighted towards Beijing.

'Severe threat'

Pro-democracy lawmakers, campaigners and some in the city's legal community say the plan is a violation of Hong Kong's mini-constitution, the Basic Law, which says national laws do not apply to Hong Kong with a few exceptions. Hong Kong's pro-Beijing government argues the rail set-up is for the convenience of passengers and both local and Chinese authorities insist it does not

impinge on the city's autonomy. "I find it ironic that the legally illiterate are explaining what the rule of law is," said office worker Patrick Tang, 48, of Beijing's ruling on the rail link. Teacher Simon Woo, 47, who joined the march with his wife and daughter, said the "survival of Hong Kong is under severe threat", citing the rail terminus agreement as one of the main reasons he was protesting. The march culminated at a forecourt outside the government's headquarters known as Civic Square, a traditional protest area recently reopened to the public after being shut down during the 2014 rallies.—AFP

Firecrackers kill in east Germany

BERLIN: Firecrackers left two people dead, a child injured and five people requiring amputations during New Year celebrations in Germany, police and emergency services said yesterday. A 35-year-old man and a 19-year-old died when fireworks went off in their faces in the eastern state of Brandenburg, regional police said on Twitter. A firework thrown by a group of youths left an 11-year-old boy with severe facial injuries in the same region, regional daily Markische Allgemeine reported. The paper described the firework as a "Polish rocket" sold on the Polish border and which typically contains more explosive than those which retail in Germany. In Berlin, five people had hands or fingers amputated after suffering severe injuries with fireworks leaving 21 people hurt overall in the capital, according to hospital officials. Firework-related accidents, fires and assorted injuries are a regular feature of New Year celebrations in Germany.

Nearly 200 hurt

In another development, nearly 200 people were injured during traditionally raucous New Year celebrations in the Philippines despite President Rodrigo Duterte's order limiting the use of firecrackers, the health minister said yesterday. The order signed in June restricted the noisy explosives to community fireworks displays in an attempt to curb the bloody merrymaking that leaves scores of Filipinos dead or injured each year.

The Philippines is mainly Catholic but the violent New Year festivities draw on ancient superstitions and Chinese traditions, with people firing guns and setting off powerful fireworks in the belief the bangs will drive



MANILA: A child injured by firecracker is seen at the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center in Manila yesterday, after New Year's celebrations. — AFP

away bad spirits. Health Secretary Francisco Duque said 191 people were hurt during the 2018 revelry-down 77 percent compared to the average over the past five years-but added his department might recommend a total firecracker ban to ensure zero casualties.

"We are relatively pleased-relative because there are still injuries but pleased because of the substantial reduction in fireworks-related injuries," Duque told reporters as he thanked Duterte for issuing the order. Asked how to further minimize injuries, Duque said: "I think the end goal really is to ban fireworks completely." Duterte, 72, won elections in mid-2016 vowing to strictly enforce law and order measures. He has also waged an unprecedented drug war which has claimed thousands of lives and led rights groups to warn he may be orchestrating crimes against humanity. — Agencies

Echoes of escaped Brazilian slaves live on in Rio de Janeiro

RIO DE JANEIRO: Hundreds of years after Brazilian slaves first fled to rebel communities called quilombos, remnants of those outposts of freedom live on in the heart of Rio de Janeiro. Often the quilombos were established in remote places-better to get away from pursuers. However, three founded in Rio have survived as living testaments to a tradition at the core of Brazil's complicated racial history. Of course, Afro-Brazilians do not need to escape slavery anymore, but in a country riven by racial inequality and historic injustices, the quilombos now serve as focal points for resistance of a more contemporary kind.

The Sacopa quilombo is one of the city's best kept secrets, a beautiful area of tropical forest that has ended up being surrounded by the high-rent Lagoa Rodrigo de Freitas neighborhood. Back in the 19th century, long before the fancy apartment buildings sprang up, this was where slaves seeking freedom would gather, starting new lives. The population grew and, around it, so did Rio. "We're still here because I have been very stubborn. They tried everything to take this land from us but we have the rights," said Luiz Sacopa, 74, who is the eldest living descendant of the original slaves.

He says he has lost count of the attempts by people to oust the quilombo. One neighbor planted marijuana on the plot to try to incriminate them. Then, citing noise complaints, the Rio state court stopped the quilombo from hosting cultural events like feijoada feasts and classes in capoeira, a dance-like martial art developed by fugitive slaves. That was "a very hard blow," Sacopa said. "We were very respectful, always ending everything by 8:00 or 9:00 pm," said another family member, Jose Claudio Torres Freitas, during an event staged on official Black Consciousness Day.

"This is the only day we're allowed to do anything," he said. The modern-day quilombos like Sacopa do have some legal protection. In 2003, then leftist president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva signed a decree regularizing boundaries and titles for descendants of quilombo slaves, who are collectively known as quilombolas. However, the bureaucratic procedures are complex and while the three quilombos in Rio de Janeiro have been recognized, they are still waiting for the second stage of the paperwork to be completed.

Swallowed up

The Pedra do Sal quilombo, right in the center of Rio near the port, is where many slaves went soon after arriving on ships from Africa. The site is also rich in cultural significance as a key location in the development of the still thriving Afro-Brazilian religion candomble. But legal uncertainties mean few of those from the 25 families descending from the original Pedra do Sal community live there anymore. "The neighborhood wasn't like this back then-it was very isolated," said Damiao Braga, the quilombola leader. "But it was gradually invaded and swallowed by the city. There were many disputes, including with the Catholic church." Even recognition from UNESCO for the nearby Valongo Wharf, where slave ships used to dock, has not helped much. "We have international support but the disputes remain. Empty buildings have been taken over and once that happens, it's not easy to reverse," Braga said.—AFP

Indian state leaves 13 million citizens off the register

NEW DELHI: Around 13 million people living in northeastern India's largest state have been left off a controversial draft list of citizens released yesterday by authorities, who are under pressure to identify and expel illegal immigrants. Assam has long struggled to curb immigration from neighboring Bangladesh and is the only Indian state to compile a register of citizens.

The latest draft list includes only 19 million of the state's more than 32 million residents. It was prepared on the orders of the Supreme Court, which is hearing a series of claims to Indian citizenship from undocumented residents of the state. But there are also concerns the Assam state government, which is led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), could use the issue to target the state's Muslim minority.

Political leaders have vowed to deport anyone staying in the state illegally, although it is far from clear that Bangladesh would accept them. Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal sought Sunday to reassure anyone left off the draft list, saying every "bona fide Indian citizen" would eventually be included. The BJP won elections in the state in 2016 after promising to root out illegal immigrants from mainly Muslim Bangladesh and protect the rights of indigenous groups. Migrants have long been accused of illegally entering the state from Bangladesh and taking land, causing tensions with local people and sporadic outbreaks of communal violence.—AFP

Analysis

Kuwait Times
Established 1961
The First Daily in The Arabian Gulf

THE LEADING INDEPENDENT
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF
ESTABLISHED 1961

Founder and Publisher
YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN

Editor-in-Chief
ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-ALYAN

EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
FAX : 24835620/1
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163
ACCOUNTS : 24835619
COMMERCIAL : 24835618

P.O.Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait.
E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

Cartoon for the Soul



Here is what US should do about Yemen

Ambassador Nikki Haley pulled no punches at her Dec 14 media conference in a US Air Force hangar at Anacostia-Bolling. Taking what she called the "extraordinary step" of displaying missile parts that had been declassified for the event, she told reporters that it was Tehran that had supplied the equipment used by Houthi militants trying to attack the civilian airport in the Saudi capital of Riyadh. "The evidence is undeniable," she said. "The weapons might as well have had 'Made in Iran' stickers all over it."

Haley, Washington's ambassador to the United Nations, had a clear objective in her speech: To bolster international support for Washington's efforts to hold Tehran accountable for what she called its worsening behavior. "The fight against Iranian aggression is the world's fight," she said. "International peace and security depends on us working together."

The United States, Western Europe, the Gulf Arab states, and the UN Security Council have long been concerned about Tehran's arms smuggling and its violations of UN resolutions. UN sanctions monitors have documented several shipments of small arms, rocket-propelled grenade launchers and ammunition destined for the Houthis that likely originated in Iran. The fact that Houthi militants are increasing the range of their missile launches and are beginning to target Riyadh lends credence to Washington's suspicions of Iranian technology being exploited against Saudi Arabia.

The Trump administration, however, would be deluding itself if it believes Iran is the sole cause of Yemen's troubles. The unfortunate reality of the situation is that millions of Yemenis are the primary victims of a cruel and unforgiving contest for power and influence between far more powerful nations. And regrettably, the United States is a big part of the problem.

While it may be convenient to simply write off Yemen's civil war as yet one more sectarian skirmish in an Arab world infected by polarization and historical grievance, the fighting in the region's poorest country goes beyond that simplistic paradigm. The rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia, the two biggest powers in the Middle East and the countries with the largest war-chests, interpret the region's politics as a zero-sum game where compromise is neither possible nor advisable.

For Saudi Arabia, any gain for Iran is seen as a loss for Riyadh's geopolitical power and regional leverage. The most recent example was the Saudi attempt to force Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri to step down over his unwillingness to more forcefully confront Hezbollah, the powerful Iran-backed group that is part of Hariri's ruling coalition. While the pressure on Hariri to leave office failed after he returned to Beirut to continue in government, the ordeal demonstrated the extent to which the Saudis will attempt to curtail their arch-rival's geopolitical influence.

For Riyadh, both the Houthis and Hezbollah are symbols of Iran's malignant intentions in the region. The Saudi Press Agency and official statements from senior Saudi officials label the Yemeni movement as an "Iranian armed militia group". In comments last November, Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Jubeir claimed that the Houthis would not have been able to continue their operations without Tehran's military support. Overall, Riyadh has made it clear that its air campaign in Yemen is as much about preventing further Iranian entrenchment on the Arabian Peninsula as it is about restoring Yemen's internationally-recognized government - if not more so.

No Bystander

The United States may not be an active combatant in Yemen's war, but it is not a bystander either. And at the same time the US continues to provide military and logistical aid to one side of the conflict, Washington continues to rightly insist that intra-Yemeni peace talks are the only way of ending the war and that all combatants must cooperate with the UN special envoy. US officials have failed to explain how taking sides while supporting the UN-facilitated peace process are not contradictory objectives. Nor has the White House sufficiently explained how US national security interests are promoted by playing a part in an intense geopolitical proxy war whose continuation has helped Al-Qaeda grow its ranks and the Islamic State double in size.

The administration perhaps has not given an explanation because there is no good one to give. Indeed, Washington's policy in Yemen in regard to the civil war is ineffective at best and a contributor to the conflict at worst. If the United States is genuinely serious about promoting a peace process, it should work within the Security Council to impose economic sanctions and travel bans on all individuals, regardless of provenance, deemed responsible for human rights abuses and obstructing the diplomatic process and intensify its focus on international extremist groups that threaten Americans at home and abroad. Washington must also devote more attention to conflict-ending negotiations than it has in the past.

Unfortunately, there have been no suggestions from the Trump administration that it will stop a policy not only fueling an increasingly dangerous regional proxy war, but one the US Congress has not had the opportunity to debate and authorize as required under the constitution. Washington must recognize its mistakes before further damage is done, because the longer the war goes on the more misery will be thrust upon the Yemeni people - and the more damage there will be to America's reputation. —Reuters

Once centers of hope, political parties are dying

There's little difficulty in showing that some of the most venerable political parties of the democratic world may be facing terminal crises. The difficulty is in determining if government by a party or parties - the sustaining base of administrations the democratic world over - can last. On most material measures, the world is getting better - less poverty, more education and literacy, healthier people (though few believe it). But not for the established political parties which often helped make it so. That is because the parties are at the mercy of a series of vast movements, global rather than bounded by the nation state.

In the United States, the Republican party of Abraham Lincoln has been seized by Donald Trump, a man who often seems to prefer autocracy to democracy. The shift is driven by forces as disparate as an increasingly precarious and resentful workforce (nearly 60 percent of American workers are paid by the hour), a white backlash against the Obama presidency and a corporate world which rejoices in a new tax plan that richly rewards the rich. Voters may turn against the Republicans in the 2018 mid-term elections, but the Democrats, having lost a presidential election they expected to win, have not yet found either a leader or a unified message.

In Europe's leading state, Germany, the narrow victors in the September federal election - the center-right CDU/CSU - embark in January on talks with the center-left Social Democrats, coalition partners in the previous government. Both parties, with decades of often-distinguished political struggle and governance behind them, do so with reluctance; both fear the growth of new parties, sign of a de-alignment from the establishment, winning support from around 40 percent of the electorate.

In the UK, the Conservative government seeks an exit from the European Union while a barely suppressed civil war rages within it. The far-left commands the Labour opposition. In France, all of the established parties have been marginalized in the national assembly by a wave of political neophytes in the newly created En Marche movement - a support group for presently all-powerful President Emmanuel Macron.

In Italy, elections in early March could see a revived right wing, with a substantial far-right component come to power - as it has in Austria. Spain's conservative ruling party is stalemated by a vote in Catalonia for separatist parties. In Central

Europe, Poland and Hungary are ruled by authoritarian (and popular) parties; in Poland's case the governing Law and Justice Party is set to be sanctioned by the European Union for departing from agreed liberal-democratic norms.

All of this goes on while in China and Russia, Egypt and Turkey, autocrats not subject to public or institutional accountability enjoy popularity and mock democracies. Less than three decades ago the triumph of liberalism and democratic governance was celebrated as the Berlin Wall fell and the Soviet Union fell apart. Now the dystopian critiques are the best-

the capital of Israel.)

But other factors - the increased pressure on the environment through the effects of higher growth, the increase in inequality as, everywhere in the world, the highly-educated cosmopolitans benefit while the unqualified get left behind and the familiar institutions of the nation state are replaced, shrunk or bought by foreign companies or governments - are felt by millions as a loss to their self respect and their quality of life.

Liberal values were and are themselves part of globalization - indeed, were and still are aggressively promoted globally, since the end of the Cold War seemed to open up the globe to an appreciation of the values of freedom. These included freedom of speech and publication, equality between men and women, an end to racial discrimination and expanded acceptance of all sexual orientations. They were developed by parties mainly on the liberal or left end of the spectrum, but quite quickly adopted by parties of the center right. Since the centrist parties often broadly agreed on economic policies, and were in favor of the market, the differences among them declined, even disappeared, making them less centers of activism, more of policy development by specialists.

Activism instead has shifted to NGOs, parliamentary law-making to global institutions, while wages and working conditions of work deteriorated because of competition from the developing world's lower-paid working millions. Among the lower-income earners of the developed world, globalization's effects are felt as oppression, and governments usually can't help. In many countries, especially in authoritarian states, rulers consider the liberal program of greater freedom as immoral, even obscene.

Most mainstream parties were founded to promote, or oppose, issues that have nothing to do with today's world. They adapt, but with ever-greater difficulty and in most cases ever-declining membership. It may be that the upstart parties, presently filling niches, will expand and take their place. Or it may be that, as Jill Lepore has suggested, the "party of one" which is the internet and social media-empowered citizen, will take over in an unimaginably complex digitalized version of Athenian democracy. Either way, parties - once centers of power, policy and hope - will be hard put to carry on. —Reuters



Larger forces afflicting most storied parties

sellers - as, from the right, Eric Zemmour's indictment of contemporary France in "Le Suicide Francais" (2014), and from the liberal side, Edward Luce's "The Retreat of Liberalism" (2017).

Beyond the local phenomena, there are larger forces afflicting the most storied parties. Globalism is made up of inter-linked factors. Many of them - the spread of medical know-how and techniques, the enforcing of human rights through such organizations as the United Nations' International Court of Justice, the rapid diffusion of communications technology and the containment of some of the world's conflicts through the actions of NGOs, the UN and the richer national governments - seem to be, largely uncontroversially, good. (Not, however, for Trump, whose administration announced cuts of more than \$285 million in its 2018-2019 budget for the UN after member states voted to reject his recognition of Jerusalem as

Probe into fire at US firm's offices focuses on lapses

A government investigator into a blaze that led to the deaths of 37 staff at the southern Philippines offices of an American market research firm says there are indications of fire safety lapses that may have contributed to the tragedy. The Dec 23 blaze in Davao City broke out at a furniture and fabric store on the third level of a mall, the New City Commercial Center (NCCC), and then engulfed the offices of the US firm, Research Now SSI, on the fourth floor of the same building in choking smoke.

The only person among the 38 killed in the fire who didn't work at the firm was a mall security officer. More than 100 SSI employees who were on duty that day managed to escape, of whom six were injured. Initial evidence from an ongoing investigation by Philippine government agencies indicates sprinkler systems on the 3rd and 4th floors of the building weren't working as their valves were closed, said Senior Superintendent Jerry Candido, who is director of logistics at the Philippines' Bureau of Fire Protection and one of the lead investigators into the fire.

Candido said that Research Now SSI employees may have been unaware of the fire beneath them for some time because their office had its own alarm that was not connected to the system used by the mall. "That explains why people inside the SSI were not aware that fire is happening just below their floor," he told Reuters in an interview. His comments are the most extensive yet made publicly on the progress of the investigation.

In a statement issued in the United States on Friday, Research Now SSI said it is working with the authorities involved in the probe into the fire and is "confident that an impartial investigation will reveal that it has complied with all the security and safety requirements required by law". "We are focused on helping our employees and the victims' families, and cooperating with the government agencies, over the coming weeks and months," said the firm's CEO Gary Laben. Privately-held Research Now SSI is the result of a merger between Plano, Texas-based Research Now and Shelton, Connecticut-headquartered Survey Sampling International, which had operated the Davao call centre, only three days before the fire. The merged company's major shareholders

are the private equity firms Court Square Capital Partners and HGGC. Darry Gallego, assistant vice president of corporate services at NCCC, said the mall could not comment on an ongoing investigation, but stressed that safety requirements had been met, including having a sprinkler system. "The mall had passed through all the needed safety examinations and was certified by the authorities as being safe to operate and serve the public," Gallego said in an email.

Inspection Certificates

Candido cautioned that the investigation is still some way from being completed and it has yet to reach firm conclusions, particularly on the issue of liability. SSI, which rented the offices from NCCC, needed to have its own operating sprinkler system to get its annual fire safety inspection certificate, which was in turn required for its yearly business permit renewal, Candido said. Investigators will look into whether there were any questions that came up when NCCC and SSI were granted these certificates this year and in previous years, he said.

NCCC last got the certificate in April 2017 and SSI in September 2017, according to Honee Fritz Alagano, Davao City fire marshal and spokeswoman for the Bureau of Fire Protection in the city. That was after passing the Davao City Bureau of Fire Protection's annual inspections, she said. Candido said it was the responsibility of both building owners and tenants to make sure that alarm and sprinkler systems were installed and operating. Under the nation's fire code, if there were two alarm systems they should be integrated so that the mall's would have triggered SSIs, and vice-versa. Barbara Palmer, SSI's senior vice president for global marketing, said in an email response to a series of Reuters' questions about fire safety at its Davao offices that the firm could not address them specifically while the investigation is ongoing. Gallego from NCCC also declined to comment on specific safety issues.

Structural Questions

Candido said investigators are also looking at whether the ceiling material in the call centre was flammable but haven't drawn any conclusions yet. He also said that the investigation was looking at some major structural questions concerning the SSI offices and how they related to the rest of the mall - issues that may not have put anyone in breach of regulations. For example, while SSI's fire exits would have passed inspection, only one of them had stairs leading directly outside the building. The others,

he said, headed back into the mall. These areas quickly filled up with smoke making them useless as a means to escape, he said.

Indeed, the position of the offices in the mall may have put them at high risk as the smoke from a fire elsewhere in the building would be funneled towards the offices, Candido said. "When fire occurred in any part of the mall, SSI will be fully engulfed. That explains why the exits were not used because they were cut off by the smoke," he said. Candido separately told reporters that initial findings indicated the fire was caused by an electrical problem in the ceiling at the furniture and fabric store, exacerbated by the failure of the sprinkler system on that same floor.

He also said the Research Now SSI records showed that the firm's latest fire drill was poorly attended. He did not say when the exercise took place. "Out of hundreds of personnel, less than 10 participated," he said, adding that three of those died in the blaze. NCCC's Gallego and SSI's Palmer declined to comment on Candido's assertions. Alagano, the fire marshal, said that soundproofing in SSI's offices meant that staff may not have heard the alarm go off in the mall. She also said it is clear that some employees went to their lockers to get their mobile phones before trying to evacuate, wasting precious time. The probe will also be looking at how long it took the mall to call the fire brigade. Alagano said the fire likely started sometime between 9:40 am and 9:48 am, but the fire service database showed it didn't get the call until 10:05 am and firefighters arrived five minutes after that.

Business Processing Boom

SSI says it has operations across the world and more than 3,500 market research, consulting, media, healthcare and corporate clients. It had about 500 employees at the Davao operation. It is part of the Philippines' \$23 billion business process outsourcing (BPO) industry. That is a vital source of jobs and foreign exchange, providing incomes key to driving what is one of Asia's fastest growing economies, though wages for call centre workers are low at around \$3,000-\$5,000 a year, depending on location and experience. The sector employs about 1.15 million people providing services to mostly international firms, with the United States its biggest market. The industry expects that to grow to 1.8 million people by 2025 amid plans to expand beyond its mainstay call center services. Reuters reached out to numerous SSI employees in Davao in person and via their social media accounts but none of them agreed to be interviewed. —Reuters

News

Trump threatens to cut Pakistan...

Continued from Page 1

They have to help," he said in unveiling his national security strategy. And in late December, Vice President Mike Pence told American troops during a visit to Afghanistan: "President Trump has put Pakistan on notice."

Pakistani Foreign Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif responded to Trump's tweet yesterday, telling Geo television in an Urdu-language interview, "The United States should hold its own people accountable for its failures in Afghanistan." He said all funds from the US had been "properly audited" and that "services (were) rendered." Islamabad has repeatedly denied the accusations of turning a blind eye to militancy, lambasting the United States for ignoring the thousands who have been killed on its soil and the billions spent fighting extremists.

Trump also tweeted right to the end of 2017 Sunday, boasting of his accomplishments in his turbulent first year in office and throwing down the gauntlet for the US midterm elections. He highlighted his tax cut and a surging stock market in a series of New Year's Eve tweets that seemed to set the table for next year's fight for control of the US Congress. "Why would smart voters want to put Democrats in Congress in 2018 Election when their policies will totally kill the great wealth created during the months since the Election," he said. "People are much better off now not to mention ISIS, VA, Judges, Strong Border, 2nd A, Tax Cuts & more?" "2nd A" appears to refer to the constitutional right under the Second Amendment to keep and bear arms - though it was unclear what action, if any, Trump has taken in that regard.

Trump was ringing in the New Year at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Florida before returning to Washington. "As our Country rapidly grows stronger and smarter, I want to wish all of my friends, supporters, enemies, haters, and even the very dishonest Fake News Media, a Happy and Healthy New Year," he tweeted, repeating his often-used term for well-established news outlets which have issued investigative reports that cast him in a negative light. 2018 will be a great year for America!" Trump said.

He goes into 2018 with the lowest approval ratings of any modern first-year US president, after a year during which he shattered political expectations, strained long-standing alliances and courted controversy on race and immigration. In a tweet late Thursday, Trump addressed

criticism of his often incendiary use of social media. "I use Social Media not because I like to, but because it is the only way to fight a VERY dishonest and unfair 'press,' now often referred to as Fake News Media. Phony and non-existent 'sources' are being used more often than ever. Many stories & reports a pure fiction!"

Still continuing is a deepening federal probe into whether Trump campaign aides and associates colluded with a covert Russian effort to sway the 2016 US presidential election in the Republican's favor. But Trump, who told The New York Times this week that the investigation makes "the country look very bad," stuck to the good economic news on Sunday. "If the Dems (Crooked Hillary) got elected, your stocks would be down 50% from values on Election Day. Now they have a great future - and just beginning!" he tweeted, referring to his defeated Democratic challenger Hillary Clinton.

Despite passage of a major tax overhaul before Christmas and stock markets ending the year at record highs, Republicans have proved vulnerable in recent elections. Republicans now hold a slender one-seat majority in the US Senate after a Trump-endorsed candidate - accused of preying on teenage girls - lost a special election in traditionally Republican Alabama. A poll average compiled by website RealClearPolitics.com finds that 55.6 percent of Americans disapprove of Trump's performance in office and 40 percent approve.

That represents a notable deterioration on both measures since he took office in January, after a divisive campaign that featured attacks on immigration and free trade deals, and in which he promised to bring back jobs to depressed parts of the country. The US economy is growing at 3.2 percent and unemployment is at a two decade low of 4.1 percent. In his most significant legislative victory to date, Trump succeeded in slashing corporate tax rates from a top rate of 35 to 21 percent, but at an expected cost of soaring federal deficits.

Internationally, nerves have been set on edge and some have questioned Trump's global leadership. Former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Mike Mullen, said Sunday that Trump's unpredictability and the disruptive nature of his presidency have created "an incredibly dangerous climate." "We're actually closer, in my view, to a nuclear war with North Korea and in that region than we have ever been," he said on ABC's "This Week". "I don't see the opportunities to solve this diplomatically at this particular point," he said.

Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, a foreign policy hawk who has grown close to Trump, called 2018 "a year of opportunity and extreme danger." "We've got a chance here to deliver some fatal blows to really bad actors in 2018. But if we blink, God help us all," he said on CBS's "Face the Nation." — AFP

affair". Trump's tough approach to Tehran, which has included the threat of US sanctions, had disrupted the Iranian government's "illusion of economic betterment", he said. On Sunday, an Iranian official blamed "foreign agents" for a clash in which two protesters were killed. Katz dismissed such allegations as standard fare from "a mendacious and propagandistic regime".

After initial silence, state media began showing some footage of the demonstrations on Sunday, focusing on young men attacking banks and vehicles, an attack on a town hall in Tehran, and images of a man burning the Iranian flag. Rouhani came to power in 2013 promising to mend the economy and ease social tensions, but high living costs and a 12 percent unemployment rate have left many feeling that progress is too slow. "We have no problem bigger than unemployment. Our economy needs an operation. We must all stand together," Rouhani acknowledged yesterday.

The authorities have blamed external forces for fomenting violence, saying the majority of social media reports were emanating from regional rival Saudi Arabia or exile groups based in Europe. Authorities ruthlessly put down the 2009 protests, which followed a disputed presidential election that gave hardliner Mahmoud Ahmadinejad a second term. At least 36 people were killed in the 2009 unrest, according to an official toll, while the opposition says 72 died. In the years since, many middle-class Iranians have abandoned hope of securing change from the streets. But low-level strikes and demonstrations have continued, with groups such as bus drivers, teachers and factory workers regularly protesting against unpaid wages and poor conditions. — Agencies



TEL AVIV: A picture taken on Sunday in the Israeli city shows a billboard with Arabic and Hebrew writing promoting the new season for a hit Israeli television series "Fauda". — AFP

Arabic signs for Israeli TV show scare residents

JERUSALEM: Stark billboards in Arabic promoting the new season for a hit Israeli television series have prompted a public outcry from residents intimidated by the signs. The second season of "Fauda", that began on Sunday night, was being promoted in cities throughout Israel with large black billboards carrying short phrases in white-lettered Arabic - "brace yourselves", "on its way to you", "action will start in a bit" - with no Hebrew translation.

The acclaimed fictional series delves into the complexities of an undercover unit. The billboard campaign was nationwide, and residents in the northern city of Neshar, near Haifa, and Kiryat Gat in Israel's south complained about the billboards, according to officials. They have since been removed and replaced across Israel, though it was unclear if the complaints are what prompted any of the removals.

"I'm happy to announce that thanks to our action,

the intimidating signs were replaced," Neshar council member Shlomi Zino said in a Facebook video, gesturing to the new billboard with the word Fauda in Arabic and Hebrew and a picture of an actor. "We'll continue protecting you," Zino said. Kiryat Gat mayor Aviram Dahari said he would have a sign in his city removed on Sunday, explaining that residents perceived it as a "threat", according to a Channel 10 television report.

Israeli television company yes, which is airing Fauda, said in a statement that the series "deals with the complex relations between the Israeli and Palestinian sides, speaks Arabic and Hebrew, and therefore, it is only natural that the series would be promoted in these two languages". Series creator and writer Avi Issacharoff criticized Dahari and Zino, saying on Twitter that "there's no reason to be ashamed or afraid of a language. Maybe of ignorant people."

The 12 episodes of Fauda's first season tell the story of a Hamas militant being pursued by an Israeli undercover unit, with the story portrayed in meticulously constructed scenes reflective of the daily lives of Israelis and Palestinians. It won six Ophir prizes awarded by the Israeli Academy of Film and Television in 2016, including best dramatic series. It has also gained fans globally both due to its availability on Netflix and its appearance at international festivals. The second season of Fauda - chaos in Arabic - is also due to be broadcast on Netflix in the first part of 2018. — AFP

Rouhani defiant as 10 killed in Iran...

Continued from Page 1

Trump, a fierce critic of Tehran, used one of his first tweets of 2018 to again lash out at a favorite target. "Iran is failing at every level despite the terrible deal made with them by the Obama administration," Trump tweeted, referring to the nuclear pact agreed under his predecessor Barack Obama. "The great Iranian people have been repressed for many years. They are hungry for food & for freedom. Along with human rights, the wealth of Iran is being looted. TIME FOR CHANGE!"

Israel's intelligence minister yesterday voiced encouragement for the protests but said Israeli policy was not to get involved in Tehran's internal affairs. "I can only wish success to the Iranian people in the struggle for freedom and democracy," Israel Katz said in an Army Radio interview. "If the people succeed in achieving freedom and democracy, many of the threats on Israel and the entire region today will disappear." Israel has long voiced alarm over the Shiite power's nuclear program and its support for Islamist guerrillas in Lebanon and the Palestinian territories - concerns shared by Sunni Arab states.

Asked why Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was not following Trump's example in offering more open endorsement for the protesters, Katz said: "Israel has undertaken not to get involved in this internal

Saudis, UAE introduce VAT...

Continued from Page 1

The introduction of VAT coupled with the increase in fuel duty is expected to bring an abrupt end to a year of negative inflation in Saudi Arabia. Riyadh-based Jadwa Investment predicted that inflation could reach as much as five percent after the new measures. Saudis reacted sarcastically on social media to the new sales tax. "They are even taking taxes on car parking. I am afraid they will next tax the air," wrote Ahmed bin Fatima.

Saudi Arabia, whose economy contracted by 0.5 percent last year for the first time since 2009, has introduced a raft of measures to raise revenue and cut spending as it bids to balance its books. Last month, it cut the government subsidy on electricity supply for the second time in two years, leading to a sharp rise in bills. Riyadh posted budget deficits totaling \$260 billion over the past four fiscal years and does not expect to balance its books before 2023. To finance its mounting public debt, the kingdom has withdrawn around \$250 billion from its reserves over the past four years, reducing them to \$490

billion. It has also borrowed around \$100 billion from the international and domestic markets.

Meanwhile, Oman adopted yesterday its 2018 budget projecting a deficit of \$7.8 billion due to low oil prices, but said the shortfall is declining. Like other energy-rich Gulf states, Oman was hit hard by the slump in oil prices since mid-2014 and joined an agreement by oil producers to cut production in a bid to shore up prices. Revenues in 2018 are estimated at \$24.7 billion, up just three percent on last year, with spending projected at \$32.5 billion, seven percent higher, according to a statement by the finance ministry.

Despite measures to reduce dependence on oil, income from crude is estimated to account for 70 percent of total revenues, the ministry said. In 2017, the ministry said the country posted a higher-than-expected deficit at \$9.1 billion due to cuts in oil production in line with an agreement by OPEC and non-OPEC members. The ministry said the budget shortfalls have been on the decline due to raising non-oil revenues and higher oil income. To finance the budget deficit, Oman last year raised \$11.2 billion in debt in the form of bonds, Islamic sukuk and loans. It plans to raise \$6.5 billion this year, the ministry said. About one-third of the budget spending this year has been earmarked for social services, education and health, the statement said. — Agencies

Kuwait Times Premier Brands To see your ad here, call: +965 248 35 616 / 617 E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net ad@kuwaittimes.net Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

Better 2 Gether! Jan Best Bundle Saving

SHARP R-20MT(S) Microwave 20% OFF 25% OFF

ORCO KBC-1702 Kettle 17% OFF 25% OFF

ORCO BTH-1306A Quartz Heater 17% OFF

29 46 17

best 1809 809

Safety Engineer
 Sofomation FZ
 Al Kuwait, Kuwait

You are responsible for reviewing plans and specifications for new machinery and equipment to make sure they meet safety requirements, conducting inspection and survey on his site to ensure that required safety standard, evaluating the effectiveness of various industrial control mechanisms etc.

Apply Now [JB3752504](#)

Manager - Cash Management Center
 Commercial Bank of Kuwait
 Al Kuwait, Kuwait

You are responsible for assisting the Sr. Manager - Cash Management Center, CLR & Service Quality in the day-to-day Cash processing & services administration through ongoing performance monitoring, preparing and analyzing reports for Management etc.

Apply Now [JB3753992](#)

Head of Mechanical – HVAC I-Expatriate
 Al Kuwait, Kuwait

You are responsible for leading the company's HVAC Section (Design Department) and all its projects from initiation to closure, ensuring adherence to deadlines, budgets, quality requirements and contract obligations in order to fulfill client requirements etc.

Apply Now [JB3754017](#)

Social Media Officer
 Trafalgar
 Al Kuwait, Kuwait

You are responsible for assisting the Marketing team in capturing our targeted virtual communities and network users, the goal should be to gradually achieve superior customer engagement and intimacy, website traffic and revenue by strategically exploring all aspects of the social media marketing road map etc.

Apply Now [JB3753951](#)

Senior Sales Executive - Projects
 Jotun
 Al Kuwait, Kuwait

You are responsible for promoting and selling Jotun Decorative products to customers through customer visits, responding to enquiries, providing technical service of products and proper painting systems to achieve assigned sales budget etc.

Apply Now [JB3753941](#)

Safety Officer
 Alghanim Engineering
 Kuwait

You are responsible for creating and maintaining safe and healthy environment, reviewing plans and specifications for new projects, machines and equipment to make sure they meet safety requirements etc.

Apply Now [JB3753756](#)

Senior Sales Engineer
 John Crane
 Al Kuwait, Kuwait

You are responsible for managing and maintaining all aspects of customer contracts, pointing of contact for all matters relating to customer contracts, pursuing sales leads, visiting existing and new customers, assessing customer needs and suggesting appropriate products and services, responding to customer enquiries etc.

Apply Now [JB3753749](#)

Operations Coordinator
 Swiss International Financial Brokerage
 Hawali, Kuwait

You are responsible for opening online accounts, scanning all the required documents to open an account, all daily deposits/ withdrawals / internal transfer to be done upon approval from the CEO on daily basis etc.

Apply Now [JB3752372](#)

Group CFO - Multinational
 MENAPOWER
 Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

You are responsible for critical negotiations and setting up / maintaining joint ventures on a global level, taking direct ownership of the assigned business operations and will oversee all of its financial management, integrity and health etc.

Apply Now [JB3754300](#)

Social Media Specialist
 Mughal Restaurant
 Khobar, Saudi Arabia

You are responsible for managing and implementing social media strategies, planning strategies to maintain relationship with current customers and reach out to new customers, preparing, proposing, scheduling, and implementing upcoming cultural and religious events. (Eid, National day, etc).

Apply Now [JB3754241](#)

Accountant
 Sumou Medical Clinic
 Khobar, Saudi Arabia

You are responsible for daily bookkeeping and recording of accounting entries into the general ledger, management of account receivable and account payable, preparation of financial statements (balance sheet, income statement, statement of cash-flow, etc.)

Apply Now [JB3754174](#)

Strategy Consultant
 Ideas Bureau
 Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

You are responsible for carrying out research, data collection and benchmark relevant topics to organization, preparing business plans, proposals and presentations for decision making, identifying new opportunities of growth / develop greater impact recommendations, presenting findings and recommendations to key stakeholders etc.

Apply Now [JB3751773](#)

Financial Controller
 ASG
 Dubai, UAE

You are responsible for undertaking all aspects of financial management, including corporate accounting, regulatory and financial reporting, budget and forecasts preparation, as well as development of internal control policies and procedures.

Apply Now [JB3753737](#)

Associate - Global leadership Hiring
 Positive moves consulting
 Dubai, UAE

You are responsible for designing and implementing Search Strategy, managing and executing a portfolio of mandates across sectors, geographies, functions and levels, conducting intensive research about the Industries, Companies & Clients.

Apply Now [JB3753389](#)

Sales Executive
 Dana Kitchen Manufacturing LLC
 Dubai, UAE

You should have strong communication and interpersonal skills, ability to work in a fast-paced and highly growing business, customer focused approach and ability to learn and adapt to needs and changes quickly.

Apply Now [JB3752949](#)

Conference Producer
 Strategic Marketing & Exhibition
 Dubai, UAE

You are responsible for establishing and implanting branding for the exhibition, researching and visiting relevant exhibitions, attending Business Meetings with sales team, ensuring timeline and pipeline are followed & achievable are met and providing training to team member.

Apply Now [JB3753444](#)

Senior Manager Information Systems Design - Managed Services
 Michael Page International (UAE) Limited
 Qatar

You will be responsible for assessing current practices for compliance with the company information systems requirements, translating technical and business requirements into detailed solution designs and proposals.

Apply Now [JB3753841](#)

Business Development Officer
 The Blue Group - Qatar
 Doha, Qatar

You will be responsible for defining long-term organizational strategic goals, building key customer relationships, identifying business opportunities, negotiating and closing business deals and maintaining extensive knowledge of current market conditions.

Apply Now [JB3753363](#)

Sales Advisor (Kids Apparel)
 Al Mana
 Doha, Qatar

You will be responsible for working with team members in order to maximize sales and customer satisfaction and to ensure smooth operations, identifying and acting on upselling opportunities to enhance average sales in order to meet and optimize sales targets.

Apply Now [JB3753469](#)

Sales Manager
 BPO+
 Doha, Qatar

You will be responsible for identifying, building, and sustaining relationships with prospective buyers of the companies services responsible for revenue targets, planning, preparing for, and facilitating follow-up meetings with clients and prospects.

Apply Now [JB3753544](#)

Sports

Halep, Sharapova begin season with easy wins in Shenzhen

Konta overcomes blip to get past Keys in Brisbane



SHENZHEN: Maria Sharapova of Russia hits a return against Mihaela Buzarnescu of Romania at the Shenzhen Open tennis tournament in Shenzhen, in China's southern Guangdong province yesterday. — AFP

SHENZHEN: World number one Simona Halep swatted aside American Nicole Gibbs while Maria Sharapova was flawless in her straight sets victory over Romania's Mihaela Buzarnescu in the opening round of the Shenzhen Open yesterday.

Halep, who sealed a 6-4 6-1 victory, struck three aces and fired 12 winners and was at her aggressive best to set up a second round clash with China's Duan Yingying who defeated Evgeniya Rodina 6-2 7-5.

"It's always nice to play here in Shenzhen," said Halep, who captured the Shenzhen Open title in 2015. "It's my first victory this year as number one in the world, so I'm happy and enjoying the time." Five-times major winner Sharapova hit 18 winners and needed an hour and 22 minutes to despatch the seasoned Buzarnescu 6-3 6-0 for a winning start to the year.

"Every match gets tougher and as a competitor and someone who tries to be realistic, I like to only look ahead to the next opponent," Sharapova said after the match. The Russian next faces 2017 runner-up Alison Riske, who upset China's fifth seed Wang Qiang on Sunday. "She beat a crowd favourite yesterday, so I know I have a tough match ahead, but I just want to keep playing better, and keep improving no matter who is across the net."

Unseeded Danka Kovinic, ranked 123 in the world,

stunned Greek seventh-seeded Maria Sakkari 4-6 6-2 6-3. Local hope Zhang Shuai powered past Russia's Anna Blinkova 6-3 6-4 and was joined in the next round by Timea Babos who beat China's Wang Xiyu 6-1 6-1. Meanwhile, Johanna Konta made a shaky start to the new season before battling past US Open finalist Madison Keys and into the second round of the Brisbane International yesterday. Konta, who prevailed 4-6 6-4 6-3, needed two hours and eight minutes to quell the challenge of her American opponent as her usually reliable serve sputtered early on before eventually coming to her rescue at the Pat Rafter Arena.

"This was my first match in quite a while, so I'm really happy to have had such a competitive match against such a great player," Konta said. "It was a really tough first round for both of us. Madison is an incredibly good player, so I feel very lucky that I got to play her so early on and really have a good match."

World number 19 Keys missed eight opportunities to



BRISBANE: Johanna Konta of Britain hits a return against Madison Keys of the US during their first round women's singles match at the Brisbane International tennis tournament at the Pat Rafter Arena in Brisbane. — AFP

break Konta's serve before she finally succeeded while up 5-4 to take the first set with a powerful forehand drive. Konta appeared to calm her serve and nerve in the second set, fighting back with an early break to go up 3-2. The world number nine then held on to level the match at one set apiece.

The Briton battled her way to a 2-0 lead in the decider as Keys began to tire and finished the match with another break to set up a clash with Ajla Tomljanovic in the next round.

Mischa Zverev powered past Australian qualifier John-Patrick Smith 6-4 7-5 to enter the second round of the Brisbane International yesterday. Eighth seed Zverev fired four aces in the match and converted five out of six break points to come through in an hour and 28 minutes. The German will meet the winner of Tuesday's match between Argentine Federico Delbonis and American Michael Mmoh.

Earlier, local hope Matthew Ebden dumped out Frances Tiafoe with a 6-3 6-2 victory that set up an all-Australian

second round clash with the big-serving Nick Kyrgios. "Nick has obviously got a great serve," Ebden said, looking ahead to tomorrow's match.

"That's one of his biggest weapons that carried him through well over the past few years, with the upsets and good results that he's had. He's obviously good around the court. He moves well for a big guy. Last year I played (Ivo) Karlovic, I played (John) Isner, these kind of guys. So I wouldn't say Nick's serve is maybe as big or as tall as those guys', but he's obviously very accurate and uses it well." Ryan Harrison downed Leonardo Mayer 6-4 3-6 6-2 while fellow American Jared Donaldson eased past Jordan Thompson 6-2 6-4. Horacio Zeballos needed 72 minutes to beat Ernesto Escobedo 6-3 6-4 and meets Alexandr Dolgoplov next.

Belarusian qualifier Aliaksandra Sasnovich came from behind to upset sixth seed Kristina Mladenovic 1-6 6-3 7-5 while Elna Svitolina beat Spain's Carla Suarez Navarro 6-2 6-4. Ukraine's Lesia Tsurenko then stunned eighth seed Ashleigh Barty 6-3 6-2.

Double Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova withdrew from the event with a viral illness. The 27-year-old Czech was unable to take the court against Estonian Anett Kontaveit and was replaced in the draw by lucky loser Heather Watson. —Agencies

Kerber makes a fresh start in 2018 with Hopman Cup win

PERTH: Former world number one Angelique Kerber put a testing 2017 behind her yesterday, kicking off the new year with a fighting singles win as Germany beat Belgium 2-1 at the mixed teams Hopman Cup in Perth.

The 29-year-old gave her country an early lead in their Group A tie with Belgium, beating the emerging Elise Mertens in a tough two-set match. World number seven David Goffin levelled the tie with an upset straight-sets win over fourth ranked Alexander Zverev, but Zverev and Kerber then claimed the deciding mixed doubles.

Kerber was delighted to start 2018 with a victory, having battled a dramatic slump in form last year. She started 2017 ranked world number one but by the end of the season the dual Grand Slam winner had slipped to 21.

Kerber was fully tested by Mertens, whose ranking went the other way in 2017 as she climbed from 120 to 36. The pair traded service breaks and winners, but it was Kerber who produced when it mattered to win 7-6 (8/6), 7-6 (7/1) in one hour and 56 minutes.

Kerber, who won her maiden Grand Slam title at the Australian Open in 2016, said it was a promising start to her preparation for Melbourne. "I think it was a really good match from both of us," she said.

"We played on a really high level. It was the first match of the year so I am really happy with my performance." Kerber added that she had emerged from last year a wiser player, having struggled with the pressure of expectations. "Last year was a completely dif-



PERTH: Angelique Kerber of Germany hits a return against Elise Mertens of Belgium during their women's singles match on day three of the Hopman Cup tennis tournament in Perth yesterday. — AFP

ferent year, I learnt a lot," she said. "I am trying not to look back, we are in 2018 and I'm really happy about that. "It's a fresh start."

Goffin, coming off a superb finish to last year, capitalised on a misfiring Zverev to secure an impressive 6-3, 6-3 win. Zverev racked up the unforced errors and the 27-year-old Belgian claimed another big scalp, hav-

ing beaten Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal in London in November.

"I cannot start the year better," Goffin said of his triumph over the 20-year-old. However, Zverev's power was a major factor in the mixed doubles, played under the Fast4 format, with the Germans winning 4-2, 4-3 (5/2) to claim the tie. —AFP

Goerges serves up a storm to beat nemesis Puig

AUCKLAND: Second seed Julia Goerges overcame a rusty start to beat her nemesis Monica Puig in a marathon three-setter on a rain-disrupted opening day of the WTA Auckland Classic yesterday.

It was the first time in five attempts that the 29-year-old German has beaten the Puerto Rican Olympic champion and it took her 13 aces to win 6-4, 4-6, 6-2.

"What a beginning to the New Year," Goerges said after more than two hours battling on court.

"I've never beaten Monica before so I knew what was going to come." Goerges was thankful for her powerful serve which constantly rescued her from tight spots. "That's one of my weapons. I'm trying to keep that up on the important points and sometimes you get some free points which is nice and I was happy I could put it in in some very important moments."

Only four singles matches were completed on a rain-affected day, which saw Goerges and Puig take the court after 11pm, more than four hours later than scheduled. They finished two hours and 12 minutes later.

The German was down 2-4 early before recovering to take the first set 6-4. Puig broke Goerges at 5-4 to

take the second set before Goerges pulled off three service breaks to take the deciding third set. Belgian Kirsten Flipkens continued her dominance of Donna Vekic, disposing of the eighth seed 7-6 (7/5), 3-6, 6-4 to have a 5-0 record against the Croat.

In a tense third set Flipkens broke early, dropped her serve at 4-3 and then broke again to be 5-4 up. When serving for the match she was 15-40 down before steadying herself to take the next four points.

Petra Martic from Croatia was two points from victory over Czech Marketa Vondrousova when the first rain break occurred and had to wait 90 minutes before retaking the court. She needed just 41 seconds to finish the match 7-6 (7/2), 6-3. In the only other completed match, Su-Wei Hsieh of Chinese-Taipei cruised past Japan's Nao Hibino 6-0, 6-3. — AFP

Kim says N Korea could participate in South's Winter Olympics

SEOUL: Kim Jong-Un yesterday gave the first indication that North Korea could participate in next month's Winter Olympics in the South, despite tensions over Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programme. "I sincerely hope the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics will be staged successfully," the North Korean leader Kim said in his new year's address to the nation.

"We are willing to take necessary measures including to dispatch our delegation." Seoul and organisers have billed the Winter Games which begin on February 9 as a "peace Olympics" and have been keen for the North to take part. Two North Korean athletes-pairs figure skaters Ryom Tae-Ok and Kim Ju-Sik have qualified for the Games but the North Korean Olympic Committee missed the October 30 deadline to confirm to the International Skating Union that they would participate. The pair could still compete if given an invitation by the International Olympic Committee. The Winter Olympic main venues are just 80 kilometres (50 miles) from the tense border with the North and the build-up to the event has been overshadowed by tensions running high over the Pyeongchang's escalating nuclear and missile tests.

Kim said the Olympics would "serve as a good chance to display our Korean people's grace toward the world." "The year 2018 is a significant year for both the North and the South, with the North marking the 70th anniversary of its birth and the South hosting the Winter Olympics."

Kim did strike one note of caution. "The sharp military tension between the North and the South must be eased and a peaceful atmosphere should be in place," he said. "As long as an unstable state which is neither a war nor peace continues, the North and the South cannot guarantee their scheduled events (including the Olympics) will be successfully staged, sit down for talks or move forward for reunification." Professor Kim Hyun-Wook at the Korea National Diplomatic Academy said the North was trying to use the Olympics to improve ties with the South while tensions with the US show no signs of abating. "The US will find it awkward to put brakes on inter-Korean dialogue focused on Pyeongchang," he said. — AFP

Sports

Pats top AFC, Bills end 17-season playoff drought as Ravens miss out

Browns end perfectly awful season — 0-16

LOS ANGELES: The Atlanta Falcons are heading back to the playoffs thanks to five second-half field goals by Matt Bryant. Bryant, a 16-year veteran, included a 56-yarder among his kicks and the Falcons made life miserable for Carolina Panthers quarterback Cam Newton in a 22-10 victory. The Falcons (10-6) claimed the second wild-card berth in the NFC with the victory, while the Panthers (11-5) had to settle for the first wild-card spot rather than the NFC South title. Carolina finished in a tie with New Orleans, but the Saints beat the Panthers twice during the season to earn the division title and home field in the first round.

BILLS 22, DOLPHINS 16

The Buffalo Bills defeated the Miami Dolphins 22-16 at Hard Rock Stadium in Florida on Sunday and then got the help they needed to reach the playoffs for the first time since 1999. Prior to Sunday, Buffalo had the longest active playoff drought in all four major North American team sports. But the Bills (9-7) suffered a key injury in the third quarter when six-time Pro-Bowl running back LeSean McCoy left the game in the third quarter due to an injury to his right ankle. He did not return.

BENGALS 31, RAVENS 27

Andy Dalton threw three touchdown passes, including a 49-yard strike to Tyler Boyd with 44 seconds left, and the Cincinnati Bengals knocked the Baltimore Ravens out of the playoffs with a 31-27 victory. The Ravens took their first lead, 27-24, on a 6-yard touchdown pass from Joe Flacco to Mike Wallace with 8:48 left in the game. However, Dalton answered with a 90-yard drive to reclaim the lead. The Ravens (9-7) have now missed the playoffs for the third consecutive year. It was an emotional win for the Bengals (6-10) and head coach Marvin Lewis, who might not return after 15 seasons.

CARDINALS 26, SEAHAWKS 24

For the first time in five years, the Seattle Seahawks saw their season end short of the playoffs. Seattle kicker Blair Walsh missed a 48-yard field-goal attempt with 32 seconds remaining, allowing the Arizona Cardinals to slip away with 26-24 win at CenturyLink Field.

BUCCANEERS 31, SAINTS 24

Tampa Bay Buccaneers quarterback Jameis Winston tossed a 39-yard touchdown pass to rookie wide receiver Chris Godwin with nine seconds remaining, capping a desperation 95-yard drive with no timeouts to produce a 31-24 victory over New Orleans at Raymond James Stadium. Despite the loss, the Saints backed into the franchise's first NFC South division title since 2011 because the Carolina Panthers were beaten by the Atlanta Falcons.

PATRIOTS 26, JETS 6

The New England Patriots locked up the No. 1 seed in the AFC and home-field advantage in the playoffs with a 26-6 victory over the New York Jets in arctic conditions at Gillette Stadium in Massachusetts. The AFC East champion Patriots wrapped up their regular season at 13-3 to secure the conference's top spot for a second consecutive season and the seventh time overall. Dion Lewis totaled 133 yards (93 rushing, 40 receiving) and scored two touchdowns while Tom Brady completed 18-of-37 passes for 190 yards and two touchdowns for the Patriots. New York (5-11) finished last in the AFC East for the second straight season and the third time in four years.

VIKINGS 23, BEARS 10

Minnesota had a few flaws in their offense and special teams during a 23-10 win over the Chicago Bears, but the Vikings will have an extra week to work on them before opening the playoffs at home. The Vikings (13-3) clinched a first-round bye with the win over Chicago and may have spelled the end for Bears head coach John Fox, who is widely expected to be dis-

missed after his team finished 5-11. Minnesota's last bye in the first round came in the 2010 playoffs.

STEELERS 28, BROWNS 24

The Pittsburgh Steelers beat Cleveland 28-24 to make the Browns the second 0-16 team in NFL history. The 2008 Detroit Lions also went 0-16. The playoff-bound Steelers started Landry Jones at quarterback in place of Ben Roethlisberger and Jones completed 23-of-27 passes for 239 yards and a touchdown in guiding the Steelers to their 13th win of the season.

COLTS 22, TEXANS 13

Indianapolis running back Frank Gore rushed for 100 yards on 24 carries to help lead the Colts to a 22-13 victory over the Houston Texans at Lucas Oil Stadium. The Colts limited the Texans to 209 total yards and got a safety. Each AFC South team finished with a 4-12 record. Jacoby Brissett completed 15-of-24 passes for 114 yards and one touchdown for Indianapolis.

LIONS 35, PACKERS 11

Matthew Stafford threw three touchdown passes and also caught a two-point conversion as the Detroit Lions closed out their season with a 35-11 romp over the depleted Green Bay Packers at Ford Field. Kenny Golladay had a 54-yard touchdown catch for the Lions (9-7) in what may have been head coach Jim Caldwell's final game with the franchise. There has been heavy speculation that Caldwell will not be retained for a fifth season.

COWBOYS 6, EAGLES 0

Quarterback Dak Prescott threw a 12-yard touchdown pass to Brice Butler early in the fourth quarter and the Dallas Cowboys held on for a 6-0 victory over the Philadelphia Eagles at frigid Lincoln Financial Field. After last week's ineffective performance in a 19-10 win over the Oakland Raiders, Philadelphia coach Doug Pederson opted to bring back starter Nick Foles against the Cowboys. Foles didn't perform well once again, going 4 of 11 for 39 yards, one interception and a miniscule 9.3 quarterback rating. The Eagles had already clinched the NFC number one seed.

GIANTS 18, REDSKINS 10

The New York Giants scored two touchdowns in just over two minutes as they topped the Washington Redskins 18-10 at MetLife Stadium. New York quarterback Eli Manning made his 216th appearance, which ties Hall-of-Fame defensive end Michael Strahan's franchise record for the most games played in a Giants uniform.

CHARGERS 30, RAIDERS 10

Philip Rivers threw for three touchdowns. Keenan Allen had a pair of scores and the Los Angeles Chargers completed their season sweep of the Oakland Raiders with a 30-10 win at the StubHub Center. Despite winning for the sixth time in seven games, the Chargers (9-7) didn't qualify for the postseason as an AFC wild-card team. Saddled by an 0-4 start, Los Angeles missed the playoffs for the seventh season in eight years. The Raiders (6-10) ended a disappointing season with their fourth straight loss as once again they struggled on offense.

49ERS 34, RAMS 13

The San Francisco 49ers concluded the season with their fifth straight win, a 34-13 victory over the Los Angeles Rams at Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. San Francisco quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo threw for 292 yards and two touchdowns along with two interceptions. San Francisco running back Carlos Hyde rushed for 90 yards and two scores. The 49ers finished 6-10.

TITANS 15, JAGUARS 10

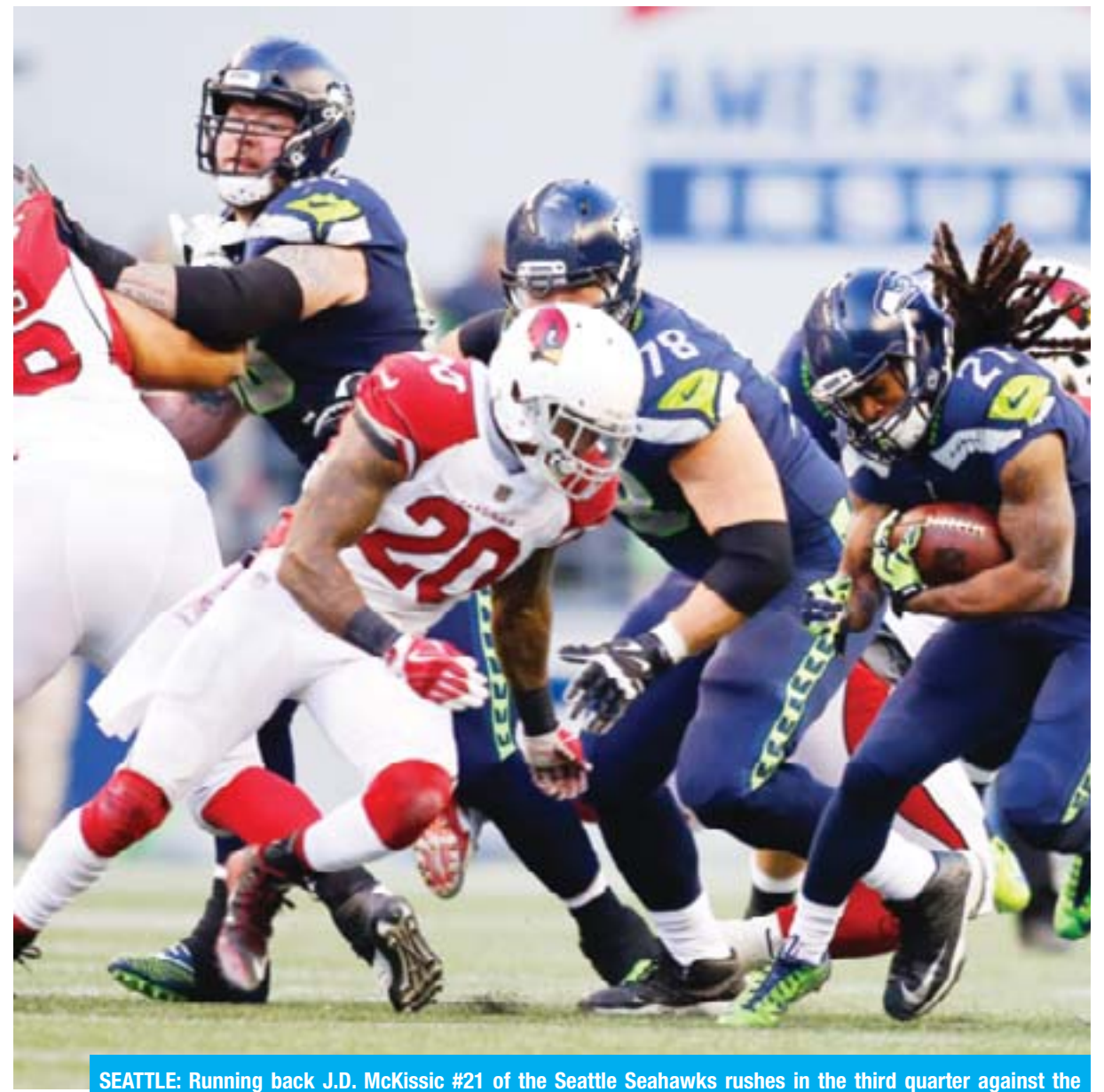
This time, the Tennessee Titans held on to the fourth

"childhood team" but he acknowledged the reality of the business. "It's a results business, I understand," he told a press conference, his voice cracking.

Del Rio went 25-24 in his three seasons with the Raiders. Local media reported that former Raiders coach Jon Gruden was likely to replace Del Rio. Gruden coached the Raiders from 1998-2001, before guiding the Tampa Bay Buccaneers to victory in the 2002 season Super Bowl. He most recently has been working as a television analyst. The Colts, meanwhile, thanked Pagano for his body of work, while at the same time showing him the door. "Chuck's first season was one of the more inspirational stories in NFL history as he courageously battled and overcame leukemia," Colts Owner & CEO Jim Irsay said in a statement.

Pagano, speaking before his firing had been announced, said: "I'm just grateful I'm on this side of the dirt," referring to his recovery from leukemia. Pagano guided the Colts to a 56-46 overall record (including the post-season) after joining the team in 2012. He led them to three consecutive 11-5 seasons and playoff appearances from 2012-14, which included the 2014 AFC Championship game. But the team failed to compile a winning record the past three seasons as they were hampered by multiple injuries to quarterback Andrew Luck.

Del Rio and Pagano are likely to be joined by several other sacked head coaches over the next couple of days. Ben McAdoo of the New York Giants was the only head coach fired during the season. — Reuters



SEATTLE: Running back J.D. McKissic #21 of the Seattle Seahawks rushes in the third quarter against the Arizona Cardinals at CenturyLink Field on Sunday, in Seattle, Washington. — AFP

NFL results/standings

Detroit 35 Green Bay 11; Indianapolis 22 Houston 13; Minnesota 23 Chicago 10; New England 26 New York Jets 6; New York Giants 18 Washington 10; Dallas 6 Philadelphia 0; Pittsburgh 28 Cleveland 24; Atlanta 22 Carolina 10; Kansas City 27 Denver 24; Tennessee 15 Jacksonville 10; San Francisco 34 Los Angeles Rams 13; Buffalo 22 Miami 16; Los Angeles Chargers 30 Oakland 10; Arizona 26 Seattle 24; Tampa Bay 31 New Orleans 24; Cincinnati 31 Baltimore 27.

American Football Conference							National Football Conference						
W	East			PCT	PF	PA	W	East			PCT	PF	PA
	L	T						L	T				
*New England	13	3	0	.812	458	296	*Philadelphia	13	3	0	.812	457	295
Buffalo	9	7	0	.562	302	359	Dallas	9	7	0	.562	354	332
Miami	6	10	0	.375	281	393	Washington	7	9	0	.438	342	388
N.Y. Jets	5	11	0	.312	298	382	N.Y. Giants	3	13	0	.188	246	388
North							North						
z-Pittsburgh	13	3	0	.812	406	308	z-Minnesota	13	3	0	.812	382	252
Baltimore	9	7	0	.562	395	303	Detroit	9	7	0	.562	410	376
Cincinnati	7	9	0	.438	290	349	Green Bay	7	9	0	.438	320	384
Cleveland	0	16	0	.000	234	410	Chicago	5	11	0	.312	264	320
South							South						
y-Jacksonville	10	6	0	.625	417	268	y-New Orleans	11	5	0	.688	448	326
x-Tennessee	9	7	0	.562	334	356	x-Carolina	11	5	0	.688	363	327
Houston	4	12	0	.250	338	436	x-Atlanta	10	6	0	.625	353	315
Indianapolis	4	12	0	.250	263	404	Tampa Bay	5	11	0	.312	335	382
West							West						
y-Kansas City	10	6	0	.625	415	339	y-L.A. Rams	11	5	0	.688	478	329
L.A. Chargers	9	7	0	.562	355	272	Seattle	9	7	0	.562	366	332
Oakland	6	10	0	.375	301	373	Arizona	8	8	0	.500	295	361
Denver	5	11	0	.312	289	382	San Francisco	6	10	0	.375	331	383.

quarter lead and clinched their first playoff spot since 2008. Three Ryan Succop field goals, a 66-yard touchdown reception by Derrick Henry and a relentless effort by the defense carried them to a 15-10 win over the AFC South champion Jacksonville Jaguars at Nissan Stadium. Tennessee (9-7) earned an AFC wild-card spot, while Jacksonville (10-6) lost its second straight game. But the outcome didn't affect its No. 3 seed for

the playoffs.

CHIEFS 27, BRONCOS 24

Rookie quarterback Patrick Mahomes led four scoring drives, the last leading to Harrison Butker's decisive field goal with no time left, and the playoff-bound Kansas City Chiefs rested key starters and pulled out a 27-24 victory over the Denver Broncos. — Reuters

Two head coaches gone as Raiders fire Del Rio, Colts dump Pagano

LOS ANGELES: Jack Del Rio was close to tears as he revealed he had been fired as head coach by the Oakland Raiders on Sunday, shortly after the National Football League (NFL) team completed their final game of the season.

Del Rio's departure came just three hours after the Indianapolis Colts said they also had sacked their head coach Chuck Pagano. The 57-year-old Pagano, who had been in charge of Indianapolis for six seasons, was widely expected to be sacked after the Colts posted a 4-12 record that ended with a 22-13 win over the Houston Texans. But Del Rio's sacking after three seasons was less predictable, coming less than a year after he signed a four-year contract extension following a successful 2016, when the Raiders went 12-4 and finally made the playoffs after a 13-season drought.

But the team regressed in 2017, going 6-10. An emotional Del Rio, 54, said it had been a dream to coach his



CARSON: Head Coach Jack Del Rio of the Oakland Raiders argues a penalty call with the officials during the second quarter of the game against the Los Angeles Chargers at StubHub Center on Sunday in Carson. — AFP

Sports

Mahrez magic steers Leicester to first win in five league games

Wilson grabs point for Bournemouth

LEICESTER CITY: Riyad Mahrez scored one and set up another as Leicester City strolled to a 3-0 win over Huddersfield Town in the Premier League yesterday.

In a tepid first half, Wilfred Ndidi came closest to scoring, but sliced wide from a good position after Islam Slimani had caused problems on his return to the side. After the break, the game came to life, as Mahrez brilliantly volleyed home in the 53rd minute, before Slimani deftly added a second seven minutes later for his first league goal of the season.

Huddersfield had just one shot on target all match as they struggled to get going, while Leicester gave a run out to new signing Adrien Silva after he was given clearance to play. Marc Albrighton netted a late third to seal a victory that sees Leicester stay eighth, while Huddersfield remain 11th despite their first defeat in five.

Meanwhile, Bournemouth twice came from behind to draw a thrilling south coast derby with Brighton & Hove Albion 2-2 at the Amex Stadium in the first Premier League game of the year. Bournemouth began the game in a precarious position five points worse off than last New Year's Day. They got off to the worst possible start in the fifth minute when Brighton's Anthony Knockaert rounded off a flowing move by squeezing the ball in at the far post for his second goal of the season.

The goal was Brighton's fastest ever in the Premier

League. However, it was far from one-way traffic and both keepers were kept busy before Steve Cook equalised against the club where he began his career with a clever back-flick header from a corner on 33 minutes.

Glenn Murray also scored against his former side to restore Brighton's lead at the start of the second half and the home side should have had a third when man of the match Jose Izquierdo shot instead of passed to Davy Propper, who was perfectly placed to score.

Bournemouth took full advantage and, after Jordan Ibe hit a post, equalised for the second time after a protracted scramble in the area from another corner. The ball eventually fell to Callum Wilson who stuck out a boot to divert the ball into the net.

The result left both teams hovering above the relegation zone. Cook said: "Normally when you score twice away from home you expect to win but I think it was a fair result and completed a good Christmas for us." Brighton manager Chris Hughton said he was delighted to see his side score twice for the first time in 11 games but was unhappy at twice conceding from set pieces. "It was a game that on chances we should have won," he said.

Hughton refused to elaborate when asked about speculation the club were keen to sign Celtic striker Moussa Dembele. "I am aware of the speculation but that is all it is," he said. — Reuters



LEICESTER: Huddersfield Town's Danish goalkeeper Jonas Lossli (C) punches the ball clear during the English Premier League football match between Leicester City and Huddersfield Town at King Power Stadium in Leicester, yesterday. — AFP



Brighton's fastest ever goal in the Premier League

Rockets end skid, Mavs silence Thunder

LOS ANGELES: The Houston Rockets take some good news—and perhaps some bad—into 2018 after snapping their five-game NBA losing streak with a 148-142 double-overtime victory over the Los Angeles Lakers yesterday. James Harden scored 40 points but departed in the final minute of regulation with a hamstring injury. Point guard Chris Paul scored 15 of his 28 points in the two overtime periods to carry Houston to a much-needed win on their home floor.

Paul played a part in four straight baskets in the first extra period, but Lakers forward Brandon Ingram made two free throws with eight-tenths of a second remaining to force the second.

In the second extra session, Paul made six free throws in the final minute and Houston took the lead for good on a second-chance basket by reserve forward P.J. Tucker—his only points in the contest.

Moments later Tucker swatted away a three-point attempt by the Lakers Kyle Kuzma. Trevor Ariza scored 26 points for Houston, who trailed by as many as 17 points. The sight of Harden limping off must have tempered the Rockets' pleasure in snapping their skid.

Houston coach Mike D'Antoni said it was too early to speculate about the severity of Harden's injury. "I don't think we'll know until (Monday)," D'Antoni said. "I don't think they'll be able to assess it until (Monday) morning."

WILLIAMS FUELS CLIPPERS

In Los Angeles, Lou Williams came off the bench to score 40 points and propel the Clippers to a 106-98 victory over the Charlotte Hornets. "He was just a nightmare tonight," Charlotte forward Frank Kaminsky said of Williams. "He started hitting (three-pointers) early, so we start getting up on his screen."

"He starts driving to the rim, and then he's getting fouled." Williams scored 16 points in the first quarter as the Clippers seized the lead. But the Hornets held them to just 13 points in the second period while fashioning a 28-7 scoring run that put Charlotte up by as many as 14. Charlotte led by 10 at the interval, but Blake Griffin scored 14 of his 25 points in a third quarter dominated 33-14 by Los Angeles.

While the Hornets remained within striking distance in the fourth, they never got the deficit below four points. The Boston Celtics held off the determined Brooklyn Nets 108-105 to notch their 30th win of the



HOUSTON: Clint Cappella #15 of the Houston Rockets dunks against the Los Angeles Lakers on Sunday at the Toyota Center in Houston, Texas. —AFP

season. Trailing by 14 points with 5:59 remaining, the Nets trimmed the deficit to three and had the ball after a timeout with 14.5 seconds left. Nets guard Spencer Dinwiddie unleashed a long-range effort that was wildly off-target. Boston guard Kyrie Irving seized the rebound and called a timeout.

On the inbounds play, Irving was fouled and made two free throws to seal the win. Irving, who scored 28 points and grabbed eight rebounds for the Celtics, said the Eastern Conference leaders should have clamped down at the end. "We've just got to close out better," he said.

In Oklahoma City, Dallas rookie Dennis Smith Jr. produced 11 points in the final 1:39 to lift the Mavericks to a 116-113 victory over the Thunder. "He was great

tonight," said Mavericks coach Rick Carlisle after Smith contributed 19 points, four rebounds and six assists.

"They were trapping him in the pick-and-rolls. He hasn't seen that. He went through some situations that were very difficult, but he kept his energy up, he kept his head up, he kept attacking."

Thanks in large part to Smith, the Mavs withstood Thunder star Russell Westbrook's latest triple-double of 38 points, 15 rebounds and 11 assists. Bradley Beal was the star in Washington, scoring 17 of his 39 points in the fourth quarter as the Wizards rallied to beat the Chicago Bulls 114-110.

John Wall scored 21 points for Washington, his three-point play with 29.4 seconds left to play putting the hosts ahead for good. — AFP

Batting star friends De Villiers, Kohli face off

CAPE TOWN: Virat Kohli's rivalry with fellow batting star AB de Villiers is likely to provide a compelling side-show in the three-Test series between South Africa and India starting at Newlands on Friday.

"It's not like only two guys are playing in this series," said Kohli, playing things down when asked about De Villiers, his Royal Challengers Bangalore teammate in the Indian Premier League.

"AB is a great friend of mine, I respect the way he plays the game and I've always respected him as a person as well," Kohli said at India's arrival press conference. "But when you're playing against each other it's just about wanting to get AB out and I'm sure the opposition would want the same when I play or (Ajinkya) Rahane plays or (Cheteshwar) Pujara plays as well." While Rahane and Pujara may be high-quality

players - in the same way that Dean Elgar and Hashim Amla are for South Africa - no player on either side can match the aura created by Kohli and De Villiers, whose thrilling stroke play can change the course of a match.

Kohli is India's most glamorous and best-performing batsman since Sachin Tendulkar while De Villiers has the rare distinction for a foreigner of having star appeal in India. When South Africa toured India two seasons ago, crowds put aside their passionate support for the home side and chanted "ABD, ABD" whenever De Villiers walked out to bat.

It could even be argued that De Villiers contributed to South Africa's downfall in the Test matches which followed a one-day series dominated by his dazzling batting. De Villiers slammed three centuries in five matches, leading South Africa to a series victory which had Ravi Shastri, India's team director (now coach), grumbling about conditions which suited the visitors.

It seemed no coincidence that the four Test matches were played on spin-friendly dust bowls and were dominated by Indian spin bowlers Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja. It brought De Villiers down to earth, although he was still South Africa's best batsman, scoring 258 runs at an average of 36.85. Even Kohli struggled in the conditions, restricted to 200 runs at 33.33. Kohli has only played in two other Tests

against South Africa, when India toured in 2013/14, but showed his ability to handle the pace and bounce of South African pitches by making 119 and 96 in the first Test in Johannesburg.

De Villiers has played 17 Tests against India and his average of 40.10 against them is modest compared to his career average of 50.47. But he has enjoyed some big successes - 217 not out in an innings win in Ahmedabad in 2007/08 and South Africa's fastest Test century, off 75 balls, in Centurion in 2010/11.

Kohli is coming off a spectacular 2017, during which he hit three double centuries in compiling 1059 Test runs at an average of 75.64, while because of injury followed by a break from Test cricket De Villiers has only played in one Test - scoring 53 in the two-day rout of Zimbabwe - since January 2016.

De Villiers professed his excitement about being back on the big stage. Kohli, in speaking of the hunger in the Indian team, noted that he couldn't speak for the opposition and that "AB hasn't played much Test cricket since he played against us, and he's coming back after a while."

What seems certain when the world's two top-ranked Test teams square up is that there will be extra excitement and anticipation every time Kohli and De Villiers walk out to bat. — AFP

Perez goal helps Newcastle edge past Stoke

STOKE CITY: Newcastle United recorded back-to-back Premier League wins on the road for the first time since 2014 as an Ayoze Perez goal led them to a 1-0 win over Stoke City yesterday. Stoke's defensive woes continued as Newcastle threatened the hosts' goal multiple times in the first half but failed to convert, with defender Ciaran Clark missing the most clear-cut chance as he fluffed a close range tap-in just before the half hour mark.

Newcastle continued to create chances in the second half with midfielder Jacob Murphy charging past the tiring Stoke defenders in the 73rd minute to feed the ball to the oncoming Perez, with the Spaniard making a cool finish to seal the win.

Stoke piled on the pressure in search of an equaliser but were kept at bay by Newcastle goalkeeper Karl Darlow, who made several impressive saves to condemn the Potters to a second successive defeat.

Stoke have now conceded 47 goals in 22 league games and slip to 16th in the rankings, just two points above the relegation zone having played two more games than 18th-placed West Ham United. Newcastle climb to 13th after a much-needed win. — Reuters

Live		Matches on TV (Local Timings)	
ARABIAN GULF CUP			
Oman v Bahrain			17:15
Saudi Sports HD1 MBC Pro Sports 1 HD OMAN SPORTS HD KTV Sport HD Dubai Sports 1 HD			
Iraq v United Arab Emirates			20:30
Saudi Sports HD1 MBC Pro Sports 1 HD OMAN SPORTS HD KTV Sport HD Dubai Sports 1 HD			
ITALIAN CUP			
Napoli v Atalanta			22:45
beIN SPORTS			
ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE			
Southampton v Crystal Palace			22:45
beIN SPORTS HD 4			
West Ham United v West Bromwich Albion			22:45
beIN SPORTS HD 3			
Swansea City v Tottenham Hotspur			22:45
beIN SPORTS HD 5			
Manchester City v Watford			23:00
beIN SPORTS HD 2			

13 Kerber makes a fresh start in 2018 with Hopman Cup win



14 Two head coaches gone as Raiders fire Del Rio, Colts dump Pagano



15 Mahrez magic steers Leicester to first win in five league games



Martial, Lingard goals lift United

United back into second place in the table, above Chelsea



LIVERPOOL: Everton's English defender Michael Keane (R) and Manchester United's English defender Phil Jones (2R) vie for the ball during the English Premier League football match between Everton and Manchester United at Goodison Park in Liverpool. — AFP

LIVERPOOL: Jose Mourinho's disappointing end to 2017 was quickly forgotten as goals from Anthony Martial and Jesse Lingard earned Manchester United an impressive 2-0 victory against Everton at Goodison Park yesterday.

The New Year's Day win lifted United back into second place in the table, above Chelsea and, for 24 hours at least, to within 12 points of runaway Premier League leaders Manchester City.

Martial capped a spell of United pressure early in the second half by shooting his side in front after Paul Pogba had found him in space 20 yards from goal.

The striker took a controlling touch before producing a brilliant right-foot finish that flew into the top right corner of the Everton goal. It was a much-improved second half showing from United and one

capped by a superb individual goal from Lingard that settled the outcome 10 minutes from time.

After Luke Shaw won possession from an Everton throw-in, Pogba slipped through a pass which Lingard accepted, weaving his way through the midfield to the edge of the area before depositing an unstoppable shot into the bottom corner.

Everton, seeking to bounce back from the first defeat of Sam Allardyce's reign, had made a promising start and, with their captain Wayne Rooney keen to impress against his former club, the hosts enjoyed the stronger start.

Youngster Mason Holgate met an early Rooney corner and headed over as Everton built pressure on a United side that had ended 2017 with a whimper. In the absence of injured pair Romelu Lukaku and Zlatan

Ibrahimovic, Mourinho had started with Martial as his lone striker but there was little early service for the French international.

Pogba ensured the half ended with United in the ascendancy with a counter-attack that ended with him playing in Lingard whose shot was the latest in a long line to miss the target.

But United were a far more dangerous proposition after the restart, creating a string of chances prior to their 56th minute opening goal. Juan Mata's long shot was tipped over by Pickford before the Spaniard unleashed a curling left-foot attempt that clipped the post.

Lingard sent Pogba through for the United midfielder whose shot, from a wide angle, flew across the face of goal. Pogba, playing in a more advanced midfield

position than usual, looked in the mood to add to United's lead following Martial's opener, a skilful run into the Everton area after 63 minutes ending with a shot which was parried by Pickford.

United looked likely to need that second goal after Allardyce made a double substitution, including the removal of Rooney, and Everton enjoyed their best spell of pressure.

But a near-post header from Niasse, from a Holgate cross, was the closest Everton could come to an equaliser during that brief period of control.

It required an excellent diving save from Pickford to keep out an 18-yard effort from Lingard, after more good build-up play from Pogba—although Lingard made no mistake when presented with a similar opportunity moments later. — AFP

Klavan's goal edges Liverpool past Burnley

BURNLEY: Liverpool defender Ragnar Klavan scored a dramatic injury-time winner as the Reds consolidated their place in the Premier League's top four with a 2-1 victory over Burnley yesterday.

Jürgen Klopp's side had taken the lead just after the hour after a fine strike from Senegal forward Sadio Mane—his eighth goal of the season—but Johann Berg Gudmundsson levelled three minutes from time with a diving header.

However, Klavan—the first Estonian to score a goal in Premier League history—ensured Liverpool clinched all three points when he nodded in from close range in the fourth minute of added time.

Liverpool had scored 30 goals in eight away games in all competitions before this clash, but found Burnley more stubborn opposition.

For the majority of the game the Reds were required to show a grittier side to their play compared to the free-flowing football seen this season. Klopp made seven changes from the side which came from behind to clinch a 2-1 win

over Leicester City 48 hours previously. The visitors were without in-form duo Philippe Coutinho and Mohamed Salah, who had thigh and groin injuries respectively.

Liverpool were fortunate not to be punished early on when Trent Alexander-Arnold was caught by Scott Arfield who slipped in Ashley Barnes, but the Clarets striker lifted his shot over the crossbar.

The Reds found their rhythm and an intricate passing move culminated in a shooting opportunity for Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain, who saw his low angled drive beaten away by Burnley goalkeeper Nick Pope.

Liverpool dominated possession as the first half wore on but without Coutinho's quick-thinking creativity in midfield they struggled to break Burnley down.

Burnley threatened sporadically as they looked to soak up the pressure, although Simon Mignolet was called into action to save Arfield's glancing header.

Without Coutinho and Salah this was a game when Liverpool needed Mane to step up and recapture his scintillating form of last season, and despite largely struggling he provided a moment of quality.

When Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain intelligently picked out the run of Alexander-Arnold on the right flank, the full-back's deflected cross found Mane in the centre of the box.

The Senegal forward controlled the ball turned on six-pence and lashed an unstoppable shot past Burnley keeper Nick Pope and high into the roof of the net.

Liverpool looked the more likely to score a second and a



BURNLEY: Burnley's English-born Scottish defender Phil Bardsley (L) heads clear during the English Premier League football match between Burnley and Liverpool at Turf Moor in Burnley, north west England yesterday. — AFP

brilliant save from Pope kept out a thumping shot from Alexander-Arnold which looked destined for the top-right corner. Burnley equalised in the 87th minute when Charlie Taylor's cross from the left was flicked on by substitute Sam Vokes and the stooping Gudmundsson headed past

Mignolet. However, Liverpool scored with the seconds ticking away when Oxlade-Chamberlain's free-kick was headed back across goal by Dejan Lovren to leave centre-back partner Klavan with the simplest of headers from a few yards out. — AFP

Business

TUESDAY, JANUARY 2, 2018

18 China December factory growth eases as pollution measures bite**19** Lexus earns recognition as most reliable luxury brand**21** 2017: A successful year for Ooredoo

FAIRFAX, VA: Residents wait in line to pay taxes at the Fairfax County Government Center in Fairfax, Virginia. — AFP

US budget fight looms over debt

Republicans flip fiscal script amid power struggle in Congress

WASHINGTON: The head of a conservative Republican faction in the US Congress, who voted this month for a huge expansion of the national debt to pay for tax cuts, called himself a "fiscal conservative" on Sunday and urged budget restraint in 2018.

In keeping with a sharp pivot under way among Republicans, US Representative Mark Meadows, speaking on CBS' "Face the Nation," drew a hard line on federal spending, which lawmakers are bracing to do battle over in January.

When they return from the holidays tomorrow, lawmakers will begin trying to pass a federal budget in a fight likely to be linked to other issues, such as immigration policy, even as the November congressional election campaigns approach in which Republicans will seek to keep control of Congress. President Donald Trump and his Republicans want a big budget increase in military spending, while Democrats also want proportional increases for non-defense "discretionary" spending on programs that support education, scientific research, infrastructure, public health and environmental protection.

"(The Trump) administration has already been willing to say: 'We're going to increase non-defense discretionary spending ... by about 7 percent,'" Meadows, chairman of the small but influential House Freedom Caucus, said on the program. "Now, Democrats are saying that's not enough, we need to give the government a pay raise of 10 to 11 percent."

For a fiscal conservative, I don't see where the rationale is. ... Eventually you run out of other people's money," he said. Meadows was among Republicans who voted in late December for their party's debt-financed tax overhaul, which is expected to balloon the federal budget deficit and add about \$1.5 trillion over 10 years to the \$20 trillion national debt.

"It's interesting to hear Mark talk about fiscal responsibility," Democratic US Representative Joseph Crowley said on CBS. Crowley said the Republican tax bill would require the United States to borrow \$1.5 trillion, to be paid off by future generations, to finance tax cuts for corporations and the rich. "This is one of

the least ... fiscally responsible bills we've ever seen passed in the history of the House of Representatives. I think we're going to be paying for this for many, many years to come," Crowley said. Republicans insist the tax package, the



Tax overhaul to add \$1.5 trillion over 10 years to debt

biggest US tax overhaul in more than 30 years, will boost the economy and job growth. House Speaker Paul Ryan, who also supported the tax bill, recently went further than Meadows, making

clear in a radio interview that welfare or "entitlement reform," as the party often calls it, would be a top Republican priority in 2018. In Republican parlance, "entitlement" programs mean food stamps, housing assistance, Medicare and Medicaid health insurance for the elderly, poor and disabled, as well as other programs created by Washington to assist the needy.

Democrats seized on Ryan's early December remarks, saying they showed Republicans would try to pay for their tax overhaul by seeking spending cuts for social programs. But the goals of House Republicans may have to take a back seat to the Senate, where the votes of some Democrats will be needed to approve a budget and prevent a government shutdown.

Democrats will use their leverage in the Senate, which Republicans narrowly control, to defend both discretionary non-defense programs and social spending, while tackling the issue of the "Dreamers," people brought illegally to the

country as children. Trump in September put a March 2018 expiration date on the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, program, which protects the young immigrants from deportation and provides them with work permits. The president has said in recent Twitter messages he wants funding for his proposed Mexican border wall and other immigration law changes in exchange for agreeing to help the Dreamers.

Representative Debbie Dingell told CBS she did not favor linking that issue to other policy objectives, such as wall funding. "We need to do DACA clean," she said.

Tomorrow, Trump aides will meet with congressional leaders to discuss those issues. That will be followed by a weekend of strategy sessions for Trump and Republican leaders on Jan 6 and 7, the White House said.

Trump was also scheduled to meet on Sunday with Florida Republican Governor Rick Scott, who wants more emergency aid. The House has passed an \$81 billion aid package after hurricanes in Florida, Texas and Puerto Rico, and wildfires in California. — Reuters

Is austerity really to blame for Iran protests?

TEHRAN: Despite demonstrators chanting provocative slogans against Iran's Islamic rulers, analysts say the roots of the current protests lie in the same anger at economic austerity that has roiled many countries. Two people have been killed and hundreds arrested in protests that began in second city Mashhad on Thursday.

Though they started over high living costs, they quickly spread across the country and turned against the Islamic system as a whole, with chants of "Death to the dictator" and attacks on symbols of the regime lending them a revolutionary air. But analysts say the protests are still rooted in bread-and-butter issues as patience runs thin with officials for failing to improve livelihoods. "It can be an uncomfortable idea for some people to treat Iran the same as other countries," said Esfandiyar Batmanghelidj, an analyst and founder of the Europe-Iran Business Forum. "But what brings Iranians out on the streets most consistently are normal economic

problems—frustration with the lack of jobs, uncertainty about their children's future," he told AFP.

He blames the unrest on the austerity measures introduced by President Hassan Rouhani since he came to power in 2013, which included another round of welfare cuts and fuel price rises in the latest budget announced a few weeks ago. "Rouhani has run austerity budgets with the idea that it's a tough but necessary pill to swallow to manage inflation and currency problems and try to improve Iran's attractiveness for investment," said Batmanghelidj.

"But choosing years of austerity immediately after a very tough period of sanctions is bound to test people's patience." At a cabinet meeting Sunday, Rouhani said government bodies must provide "space for criticism", but also warned protesters that violence was unacceptable.

As the protests have gathered steam, the government has blamed "hostile elements" based abroad. But others suspect Rouhani's headline rivals of stoking the initial unrest. They point to rare statements of support for the protesters from headline clerics such as Mashhad's Friday prayers leader Ayatollah Ahmad Alamolhoda, who described their demands as "justified". "There is evidence, particularly in Mashhad, that protests were directed for political gain," Tehran-based analyst Amir Mohebbian told the Tasnim news agency. "Naturally they did not

expect such a surge. One cannot play with protests," he added.

Nonetheless, anger over economic issues has been palpable in recent years, and dominated the last election in May. Minor protests have been bubbling away: in the weeks leading up to the current unrest, the union-linked ILNA news agency reported on hundreds of oil workers and truck drivers protesting the late payment of wages; tractor makers in Tabriz against their factory's closure; and Tehran tyre workers at bonuses being delayed.

A major groundswell of anger has also been building over the collapse of unauthorized lending companies that left millions of investors out of pocket. These companies mushroomed in the financial free-for-all under former president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, lending wildly during the construction boom and collapsing when the bubble burst.

Rouhani said in December that such lending companies had captured a quarter of the financial market with three to four million accounts by the time he took power in 2013 and started shutting them down.

"I'm not surprised by these recent protests. For the past two years, we have witnessed street protests against banks and credit institutions," said Tehran-based political analyst Mojtaba Mousavi. — AFP

Make reforms while sun shines on world economy: Lagarde

PARIS: International Monetary Fund chief Christine Lagarde has urged France and other countries to push through reforms "while the sun is shining" on the global economy. In an interview with France's Le Journal du Dimanche published Sunday Lagarde said the strength of the global economic recovery had taken the IMF by surprise.

"In 2017, for the first time in a long time, we revised our growth forecasts upwards whereas previously we used to lower them," she said. Global growth of 3.6 percent was both "stronger and more widely shared" in 2017, she said, noting that developed economies were now growing again under their own steam and no longer merely being pulled along by demand in emerging markets.

Lagarde said the favorable climate lent itself to implementing reforms. "When the sun is shining you should take advantage to fix the roof," she said, using one of her favorite maxims. This year's global growth is on a par with the average of the two decades leading up to

the global financial crisis of 2007-2008. The IMF has forecast a further slight improvement in 2018, to 3.7 percent.

In Lagarde's native France, seen for years as one of Europe's weak links, the recovery kicked in in earnest this year. From 1.1 percent in 2016, growth is expected to rise to 1.9 percent in 2017 — still short of the 2.4 percent forecast for the eurozone as a whole but better than the 1.6 percent initially forecast in the eurozone's second-largest economy.

Centrist President Emmanuel Macron aims to consolidate the momentum and bring down stubbornly high unemployment with an ambitious program of labor, tax and welfare reforms. Lagarde said the changes were key to boosting France's credibility at a time when Macron is pushing for reforms at the European level, including closer integration among eurozone members. The managing director of the IMF was France's finance minister in 2008, when the euro looked to be in serious jeopardy. — AFP

Business

China December factory growth eases as pollution measures bite

Data confirms gradual, but slow economic slowdown

BEIJING: Growth in China's manufacturing sector slowed slightly in December as a punishing crackdown on air pollution and a cooling property market start to weigh on the world's second-largest economy.

The data support the view that the economy is beginning to gradually lose steam after growing by a forecast-beating 6.9 percent in the first nine months of the year, but the findings did not appear to suggest a risk of sharper slowdown at this point. The official Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) released on Sunday dipped to 51.6 in December, down from 51.8 in November and in line with forecasts from economists in a Reuters poll. But the overall reading still appeared relatively solid, and marked the 18th straight month that the sector has expanded. The 50-point level divides growth from contraction on a monthly basis.

The figures showed that China's full-year 2017 economic growth would be at about 6.9 percent and around 6.5 percent for 2018, according to the China Federation of Logistics and Purchasing, which compiles the data. Both predictions would be slightly stronger than those in a Reuters poll.

"Overall, 2017's economic performance continues to be steady and good, establishing a generally good foundation

for 2018," the federation said. "Recent PMI surveys show companies are confident for economic development in the new year, with production and operating activity expectation indices showing significant improvement."

On a roll

Boosted by hefty government infrastructure spending, a resilient property market and unexpected strength in exports, China's manufacturing and industrial firms have been a major driver behind solid economic growth this year, with their strong appetite for raw materials boosting global commodity prices. However, a slowdown has started to take hold in the last few months due to a wide-ranging combination of government measures, from a crackdown on smog in heavily industrialized northern provinces to continued curbs on the housing market which are weighing on property investment.

Sources have told Reuters that Chinese leaders are likely to stick with a growth target of around 6.5 percent for 2018, the same as in 2017, even as they continue efforts to defuse the risks from a rapid build-up of debt. In a further sign of resilience, growth in China's services sector, which was already robust, kicked up another notch in December, a sister survey showed. —Reuters



Service sector growth remains robust



Customers enter an electronics retail store for their New Year's first shopping in Tokyo on January 1, 2018. More than 1,000 people lined up on the New Year's "lucky bag" sales, in which shoppers get products equal or occasionally more than the value paid for the bags.

Bayt.com weekly report

Recreate your CV for a mid-career job

Time waits for no man, and as time passes, we all evolve and adapt. We learn more, take on more responsibilities and have to present ourselves differently. Similarly, the CV that served you well as a fresh job seeker will not do you as much justice now. Just as you have adapted and improved over your career, your CV will need to reflect your achievements, success and experience and show the positive growth you have undergone.

It is understandable if you feel reluctant or believe that a simple sprucing up here and there will make your CV look brand new. A CV overhaul takes a lot of time and effort and can be challenging even for the most seasoned professionals and career veterans. However, there comes a time when rewriting your CV becomes an absolute necessity. If it has been a while since you've thought of yourself as a junior employee, that time has come.

Remember, you are not the same job seeker you were at the starting point of your career. You now have much more experience and accomplishments up your sleeve and will be undertaking the task of writing a CV as a whole new professional. A new and improved, 2.0 version of yourself who has so much more to offer now than you did in the dawn of your career. Your CV's main purpose is to market you successfully to prospective employers, so it should reflect both your past growth and your potential to grow and develop further in the future. To help you rewrite your CV, Bayt.com, the Middle East's leading job site, has prepared this quick, user-friendly guide to rewriting your CV for a mid-career position.

Chop off any dead ends

When you have accumulated over five years of work experience, it becomes necessary to trim any unnecessary weight on your CV that could prove to be more distracting than complementary. The work experience racked up over your college years as well as part-time work that is irrelevant to your desired position or industry are probably taking up valuable real estate on your CV. This space could instead be used to list more accomplishments from your most relevant and recent jobs as well as to focus on the skills you have developed and the responsibilities you have held that make you more qualified for your chosen career.

Remember, even when applying for mid-career positions, which usually accommodate CVs that are longer than a page, your CV should still be relevant, concise and straight to the point. Even taking your years of experience in to account, the employer will not want to waste too much time scanning your CV for the information they need.

Lead with your trump card

At this point in your career, your CV should have more focus on

accomplishments instead of a mile-long list of skills. With this much work experience, you should be able to prove your skills with achievements and quantify them wherever possible. The accomplishments listed should also reflect a progression that demonstrates you took on more responsibilities and achieved more over time.

You should still have a list of skills in your CV to ensure it passes automatic application systems, but make sure that your job details your responsibilities so that employers can ascertain a fair idea of what you have actually done and are capable of achieving. This will speak volumes more than a multitude of buzzwords without evidence. Listing some of your responsibilities is okay, but an employer is going to be more impressed with how you met these responsibilities, what targets you achieved and what growth you have contributed to.

Put your work first

This is an area that allows for some discretion in the format of your CV. When you were still in the spring of your career and have recently graduated, your education would have been the main selling point in your CV. Once you have accumulated years of experience and achievements, you can choose to move your education experience after your work experience. The way your CV is organized signifies which sections of your CV are most important.

Polish and shine

When you were fresh meat in the job market, there were a lot of things you could get away with. For instance, sharing certain personal details such as hobbies and interests or embellishing your CV with personal touches. For someone in the beginning of their career, this can be chalked off as creative. But, once you are moving up the career ladder, you will need to polish everything and ensure your CV is more professional than quirky. Make sure your email address is professional and clear. It is best to opt for an email address that solely features your name. If you can't bag that email, then you can add a relevant number, hyphen or underscore.

The second-most important thing to make sure you don't look inexperienced is having a professional-looking CV photograph. Your CV photograph should be a simple headshot with either a smile or straight-faced expression. It should also have a plain background and feature you dressed in professional attire. You will want to provide a neutral, professional first impression. Selfies, mirror shots or otherwise unprofessional pictures are better left for social media.

With the assistance of some polishing up and a change of perspective, you can take your CV to the next level with ease. The main thing you need to guarantee is that your CV is focused, accomplishment-oriented and polished. Then, your experience can do the talking for you. If you're still struggling with the idea of writing a golden mid-career CV, you can always opt for a professionally written CV that is sure to knock the employer's socks off.

Venezuela raises minimum wage 40%, stoking fastest inflation

CARACAS: Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro announced a 40 percent increase to the minimum wage as of January, a move that will foment what many economists already consider hyperinflation in the oil-rich but crisis-stricken nation. In his televised year-end address, leftist Maduro said the new wage level would protect workers against what he calls Washington's "economic war" to sabotage socialism.

"Good news!" said the former bus driver and union leader, speaking next to a Venezuelan flag in a midday address. Most economists say the government is in fact fomenting a vicious cycle in a country already wrestling with the world's fastest inflation.

To counter those price increases, Maduro has been raising the minimum wage, but quickening inflation coupled with a depreciating bolivar currency has plunged millions into poverty.

Venezuelans will now earn some 797,510 bolivars a month, factoring in food tickets, or just over \$7 on the widely used black market index. Millions will still be unable to afford three meals a day, while the increase is likely to stoke inflation further.

Prices went up 1,369 percent between January and November, according to figures released earlier this month by the opposition-led Congress, which estimated the 2017 rate would top 2,000 percent. The Venezuelan government no longer publishes inflation data on a regular basis.

Opposition politicians say Maduro's refusal to overhaul Venezuela's state-led economic model and stop excessive money printing will only create more misery in 2018.

Maduro, however, spent much of his half-hour address blaming others for the country's woes. He said foreign and local media were spreading "negative propaganda," while Venezuela was facing "attacks" on its currency and attempts to "sabotage" its oil industry. —Reuters

Chinese leasing firm orders 50 Airbus jets in \$5.42bn deal

HONG KONG: A Chinese aircraft leasing company said it will buy 50 Airbus A320neo jets for \$5.42 billion as part of a drive to capitalize on ever-growing demand for air travel in China.

Hong Kong-listed China Aircraft Leasing Group (CALC) will take delivery of the airliners in stages through to 2023, it said in a statement. The move comes as

airlines in China benefit from a boom in domestic and international air trips as the country's middle class spends more on travel and leisure.

It will also come as a boost to European giant Airbus, which is competing heavily with US rival Boeing in China, the world's second aircraft market.

The US company has forecast China needs more than 7,200 commercial aircraft in the next 20 years, while the International Air Transport Association predicts the country will overtake the US as the world's largest air-travel market by 2024.

The country's three biggest carriers—Air China, China Eastern and China Southern intend to increase their fleets by more than 600 aircraft in total within the next three years. —AFP

EXCHANGE RATES

Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.	
ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.673
Indian Rupees	4.726
Pakistani Rupees	2.759
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.977
Nepali Rupees	2.962
Singapore Dollar	227.030
Hongkong Dollar	38.727
Bangladesh Taka	3.635
Philippine Peso	6.054
Thai Baht	9.267
GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	80.787
Qatari Riyal	83.207
Omani Riyal	786.772
Bahraini Dinar	804.440
UAE Dirham	82.482
ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	20.050
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	16.943
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.216
Tunisian Dinar	123.570
Jordanian Dinar	426.950
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.018
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.836
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	302.750

Euro	362.540
Sterling Pound	408.050
Canadian dollar	239.900
Turkish lira	80.200
Swiss Franc	309.240
Australian Dollar	236.750
US Dollar Buying	301.550
GOLD	
20 Gram	260.520
10 Gram	133.180
5 Gram	67.430
Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd	
Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	302.400
Canadian Dollar	238.495
Sterling Pound	405.860
Euro	360.445
Swiss Frank	300.810
Bahrain Dinar	802.595
UAE Dirhams	82.725
Qatari Riyals	83.545
Saudi Riyals	81.500
Jordanian Dinar	427.795
Egyptian Pound	17.077
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.979
Indian Rupees	4.724
Pakistani Rupees	2.740
Bangladesh Taka	3.668
Philippines Peso	6.060
Cyprus pound	17.995

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL		
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.398962	0.406462
Czech Korune	0.005938	0.015238
Danish Krone	0.044189	0.049189
Euro	0.353533	0.361033
Georgian Lari	0.01331	0.134844
Hungarian 0.00141	0.001331	
Norwegian Krone	0.032350	0.037550
Romanian Leu	0.064785	0.081635
Russian ruble	0.005199	0.005199
Slovakia	0.009023	0.019023
Swedish Krona	0.032259	0.037259
Swiss Franc	0.299286	0.310286
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.225183	0.237183
New Zealand Dollar	0.206462	0.215962
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.232554	0.241554
US Dollars	0.298650	0.303070
US Dollars Mint	0.299150	0.303070

Asia	
Bangladesh Taka	0.003298 0.003882
Chinese Yuan	0.044615 0.048115
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036824 0.039574
Indian Rupee	0.004130 0.004771
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018 0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002587 0.002767
Korean Won	0.000271 0.000286
Malaysian Ringgit	0.070488 0.076488
Nepalese Rupee	0.003021 0.003191
Pakistan Rupee	0.002579 0.002869
Philippine Peso	0.005917 0.006217
Singapore Dollar	0.219957 0.229957
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001697 0.002277
Taiwan	0.010036 0.010216
Thai Baht	0.008918 0.009468
Arab	
Bahraini Dinar	0.796269 0.804769
Egyptian Pound	0.014736 0.020454
Iranian Riyal	0.000084 0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000186 0.000246
Jordanian Dinar	0.422401 0.431401
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000 1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000155 0.000255
Moroccan Dirhams	0.022130 0.046130
Omani Riyal	0.0780045 0.785725
Qatar Riyal	0.078863 0.083603
Saudi Riyal	0.079647 0.080947
Syrian Pound	0.001283 0.001503
Tunisian Dinar	0.117287 0.125287
Turkish Lira	0.074426 0.084726
UAE Dirhams	0.081002 0.082702
Yemeni Riyal	0.000984 0.001064

Business

Lexus earns recognition as most reliable luxury brand

Experience power of Lexus: Performance, precision, innovation ranking



KUWAIT: Lexus was ranked among the more reliable brands and ES was named the most reliable Lexus model according to the latest Consumer Report research reports. As per the ranking Lexus earned an average reliability score of 77 with eight of its models at above-average ratings.

As the best-selling model among the impressive Lexus sedans, the ES has come to define the very essence of what a luxury

sedan should be. The Lexus ES established a unique and important position in the luxury sedan segment with its elegant styling, extraordinary quality, and Lexus' best-in-class service when it was introduced in 1989. More than 1.7 million units have been sold globally over the past 25 years.

Consumer Reports Annual Auto Reliability Survey predicts the reliability of 2017 model-year brands and individual

vehicles based on survey responses from its subscribers based on responses from their 500,000 subscribers who have purchased or leased more than 640,000 new vehicles since the year 2000.

Since inception Lexus has dared to be different, dedicated to craftsmanship, and consistently looked forward, focusing on advanced sustainable-technology. Mohamed Naser Al Sayer continues to

focus on strategies for trusted customer service and better satisfaction putting zero complaints as their mission. To accomplish this mission they have put in place several facilities like - increase "Musada Service" for roadside assistance, increase number of replacement cars, maintain the best facility standards and improving customer service.

Since its debut in 1989, Lexus has earned a worldwide reputation for high-

quality products and exemplary customer service. Lexus is the hybrid leader among luxury brands, offering hybrids that provide the best in innovative technology and premier luxury. The evolution of Lexus is reflected in the progressive designs of its new vehicles. The signature spindle grille, dynamic light treatments, and sculptured lines create a distinctive look of luxury for Lexus.

VIVA Bahrain to acquire Menatelecom from KFH Bahrain

MANAMA: VIVA Bahrain, the Kingdom's leading telecommunications service provider, and Kuwait Finance House - Bahrain (KFH-Bahrain) have entered into a definitive agreement whereby VIVA Bahrain will acquire the 100 percent share in Menatelecom, the internet service provider, which is a wholly owned subsidiary of KFH-Bahrain.

Commenting on the transaction, VIVA Bahrain's CEO Ulaiyan Al-Wetaid said, "We are excited to announce the acquisition of Menatelecom, a strategic milestone for us in Bahrain's highly dynamic and competitive telecommunications market. The acquisition will significantly enhance VIVA's position in both the consumer broadband and enterprise markets; it will help us complement our offering by leveraging the strong capabilities of Menatelecom in the broadband segment. The acquisition reiterates VIVA's commitment in investing in Bahrain's economy and contributing to the country's social progress. The acquisition is in line with VIVA's growth strategy focusing on delivering innovative services, seamless connectivity and value-for-money. The acquisition will allow VIVA to enhance key technical capabilities and foster further product and service innovation.

While we have achieved strong and sus-



tainable growth in the Kingdom of Bahrain over the past seven years, Menatelecom's successful position in the home broadband segment will be a key growth driver for VIVA," he added further.

Managing Director and CEO of KFH-Bahrain Abdulhakeem Al-Khayyat said: "We would like to congratulate VIVA Bahrain for its acquisition of Menatelecom, which was established as a start-up by KFH-Bahrain and, by the Grace of Allah the Almighty, has developed into one of the leading telecom service provider in the Kingdom of Bahrain. As the case may be from one investment to another for a financial investor, KFH-Bahrain believed that it is time to exit to an industry player like VIVA which is a very capable telecom player not only in Bahrain but

across the region."

He further added, "Not only Menatelecom has a valuable asset, but also, more importantly a capable human resource team which competed well in a highly competitive market and, therefore, I would like to thank them for their efforts during KFH's investment tenure. It gives us great pleasure in selling this company to a capable player VIVA who believes in the potential contribution of Menatelecom for further growth and we truly wish VIVA the very best with this acquisition."

KFH-Bahrain and VIVA jointly would like to thank the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of the Kingdom of Bahrain for their continued support in achieving this transaction. The parties intend to complete the transaction in early January 2018.

German union steps up fight for 'modern' 28-hour week

FRANKFURT: Germany's largest union is bracing for a combative start to the new year as it presses demands for a 28-hour working week, warning employers to expect mass strikes in the battle for a better work-life balance. The mighty IG Metall union, which represents some 3.9 million workers in the metal and electrical industries, says it is ready to flex its muscles after initial negotiations with employers made little headway.

An agreed no-strike period ends on December 31, and IG Metall chief Joerg Hofmann has told employers to expect brief "warning strikes" from January 8, and he said more widespread action could follow. "If by the end of January the employers have not changed their stance, we will consider resorting to 24-hour strikes or calling a vote for a general strike," Hofmann told DPA news agency this week.

Seeing its bargaining power strengthened at a time of bulging order books and record-low employment in Europe's top economy, the union is pushing for a six-percent wage

increase. The Gesamtmetall employers' federation has so far offered two percent, setting the stage for both sides to meet somewhere in the middle.

Far more controversial is IG Metall's call for employees to be allowed to switch to a 28-hour week for a two-year period-with limited impact on wages.

That demand has been met with fierce resistance from company bosses, and stirred wider debate about quality of life and the future of work in booming Germany. In certain circumstances, IG Metall says reduced working hours must not go hand-in-hand with a drastic salary cut-for instance when staff are caring for young children or ailing relatives. In those cases, the union wants employers to top up workers' salaries to help make up for the shortfall that comes with clocking up fewer hours. It also wants employees to be guaranteed a return to a 35-hour week after two years.

Radical rethink

"I think IG Metall's proposal is very modern," professor Gustav Horn of the Hans-Boeckler Foundation think tank told the Nordwest Zeitung daily.

He said it would inevitably lead to higher costs that would hurt the bottom line, but could also be a way for firms to hold onto their best workers. "In future, well-qualified employees will select those companies that offer flexible hours that suit their lives at that time," he predicted. —AFP

Canada's G7 presidency: A 'progressive agenda' at risk

MONTREAL: Prime Minister Justin Trudeau promises a "progressive agenda" for Canada's G7 presidency in 2018, but talks may once again hit a snag over climate change after the US withdrawal from the Paris agreement. For Justin Trudeau, this presidency comes at a time when his government has been struggling with a difficult renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with the United States and Mexico, which was demanded by US President Donald Trump amid rising American protectionism.

Gender equality, climate change and economic growth "that works for everyone" are among Ottawa's top priorities for the meeting of the world's largest advanced economies-Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States.

Trudeau said in a statement that he wants the talks to focus on "finding real, concrete solutions" to these issues. The leaders of the Group of Seven industrialized nations will meet June 8 and 9 at Le Manoir Richelieu in the Charlevoix region of Quebec, a popular tourist destination 150 kilometers (93 miles) northeast of Quebec City.

In this idyllic setting between the sea and the mountains, at the mouth of the Saint Lawrence River, global warming once again promises to be a bone of contention, as it was at the last summit in Italy, according to John Kirton, director of the G7 Research Group at the University of Toronto.

Trump was a climate pariah at the talks in Taormina,



announcing days later Washington's withdrawal from the Paris Agreement on climate change.

In an attempt to avoid fresh tensions, Canada has proposed lumping climate change in to a broader discussion that would also include "oceans and clean energy," according to the prime minister's office.

Canada "quite properly" framed this segment of the talks around oceans, Kirton told AFP, noting the rise in sea levels and major recent storm damage in the United States and the Caribbean.

"Every big city in the United States, except for Chicago, is on a coast," making them "vulnerable" to climate impacts, he said. "The mood (in regards to climate) in the United States is changing at the state level and that will quickly move up into Congress as the (2018) midterm elections approach," Kirton predicted. "So, (that battle) is not over yet."

'Trump really likes Trudeau'

"Trump really likes Trudeau," added Kirton, suggest-

ing Trudeau has an opening to "find a way to change Trump's mind" on the Paris Agreement. Most hope a deal on a new North American Free Trade Agreement will be reached before the G7 summit, which would allow Trudeau to focus the discussion on gender and environmental issues while also seeking to sway Trump on climate. "The only globalization that Trump has been able to stop is by not doing anything more for the United States," Kirton said, noting the Canada-EU free trade agreement came into force this year.

"The rest of the world is just going on and doing a lot." North Korea, which he called the "second-greatest global extinction threat after climate change," will also be a hot topic for the leaders. Canada and the United States will co-host North Korea crisis talks in Vancouver with foreign ministers from 16 countries in January. Kirton is also "optimistic" that Canada's push to include gender parity clauses in trade pacts and security arrangements will bear fruit. "Ivanka Trump sold her dad on that," he said. —AFP

For Rent

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

Duplex & Triplex Villas

3/4 Bedrooms + 3/4 Bathrooms
+Big Salon + Separate pool
All Master Bathrooms is Marble

Volleyball Court / Basketball Court / Hotel Lobby
Pools + Jacuzzi / Billiard / 213 Car Parking Areas

6 9 9 9 6 9 9 2
6 6 8 0 4 2 2 2

Business

NBK Economic Report

Kuwait's credit growth weak in October; remains at 4.6% y-o-y

October saw total credit contract by KD 220 million

KUWAIT: Credit was weaker than expected in October, though growth rose to 4.6 percent y/y on base effects. The month saw total credit contract by KD 220 million. While some of that was from the usual start-of-quarter drop in securities lending, there was additional weakness in some business sectors. Nonetheless, year-on-year (y/y) growth improved as the impact of last year's Americana-related repayments faded. Private deposits saw a decline on the heels of two strong months.

Household lending was the exception, seeing healthy gains in October. Growth improved slightly to 7.5 percent y/y. Personal facilities excluding securities lending added a net KD 102 million during the month, a figure comparable to levels seen in the months before 2016 and well above the KD 72 million average recorded thus far in 2017.

Business credit (excluding nonbanks) dropped by KD 322 million on the regular start-of-quarter drop in lending for the purchase of securities as well as weakness in some business sectors. Securities lending fell by KD 213 million. Outside that, there were relatively large declines in "other sectors" (-KD 88 million) and construction (-KD 59 million). These were partly offset by gains in industry (+KD 24 million) and trade (+KD 15 million).

Lending to "productive" business sectors was weak, though growth remained relatively robust at 5.7 percent y/y. Productive credit, which excludes real estate and financial sector lending, dropped by KD 112 million during the month. The fading of the large Americana-related settlements made in October 2016 helped boost growth. Still, growth has been weaker in the last few months following a stronger first half of the year.

Private deposits were off in October following two months of relatively strong gains. Deposits fell by KD 263 million largely on declines in KD time (-KD 142 million) and foreign currency deposits (-KD 151 million). Money supply (M2) growth slipped slightly to 1.9 percent y/y. Government deposits also declined, losing KD 167 million, as growth slowed to

2.4 percent y/y. The banking system's liquid reserves, or "excess liquidity", edged higher in October to 7.0 percent of bank assets. Bank reserves (cash, deposits with the CBK, and CBK bonds) increased by KD 200 million to KD 4.4 billion. This coincided with the absence of public debt issuance in October. As such, the amount of outstanding domestic public debt instruments (PDI) dropped to KD 4.77 billion, or an estimated 12 percent of GDP. Domestic interest rates in October were little

Table 1: Monetary indicators

	Oct-17		1-month change		3-month change		12-month change	
	KD mn	%	KD mn	%	KD mn	%	KD mn	%
Total system liquidity (M2)	36,320		-244	-0.7	348	1.0	687	1.9
Currency in circulation	1,638		19	1.2	13	0.8	37	2.3
Private sector deposits	34,682		-263	-0.8	334	1.0	650	1.9
KD deposits	32,309		-112	-0.3	249	0.8	4	3.6
Sight deposits	8,313		-12	-0.1	-30	-0.4	474	6.0
Savings deposits	4,829		42	0.9	-18	-0.4	179	3.8
Time deposits & CDs	19,168		-142	-0.7	297	1.6	481	2.6
Foreign currency deposits	2,373		-151	-6.0	85	3.7	-484	-16.9

Source: Central Bank of Kuwait

changed from September. The 3-month interbank rate edged up 3 basis points to settle at 1.79 percent, though rates have moved higher since. Customer deposit rates were unchanged on the month.

More recently, the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) kept the discount rate unchanged following the US Fed's much-anticipated rate hike on 13 December. This was the second time the CBK holds off hiking its key rate during the current Fed cycle of rising rates; it did so also

in June 2017. However, the CBK again indicated it might continue to take steps to push bank deposit rates higher while keeping bank lending rates unchanged. The CBK explained that, in keeping the discount rate at 2.75 percent, it sought to avoid stifling non-oil growth while continuing to take further action to maintain the dinar's attractiveness. In this vein, the CBK increased its coupon rate on 3-month bills issued on 19 December by 25 bps to 2 percent.



Household lending only exception

Bayan Weekly Market Report

Boursa Kuwait closes year on lackluster note; indices mixed

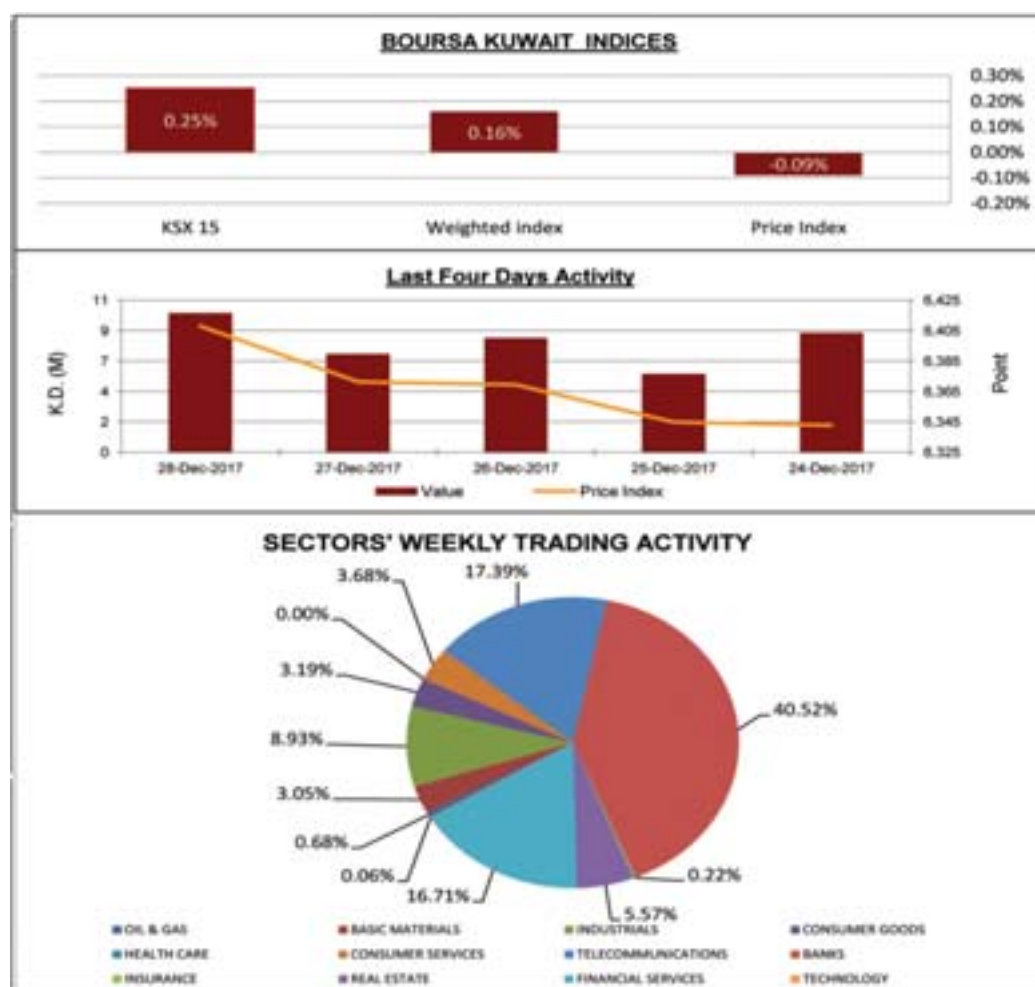
KUWAIT: Boursa Kuwait ended last week with mixed performance. The Price Index closed at 6,408.01 points, down by 0.09 percent from the week before closing, the Weighted Index increased by 0.16 percent after closing at 401.42 points, whereas the KSX-15 Index closed at 914.87 points up by 0.25 percent. Furthermore, the week's average daily turnover decreased by 19.45 percent, compared to the preceding week, reaching KD 7.94 million, whereas trading volume average was 59.91 million shares, recording a decrease of 7.14 percent.

The Weighted and KSX-15 indices were able to record limited weekly growth due to the random purchasing operations executed on the leading and heavy stocks, while the Price Index went against the current and ended the week's trading with limited loss affected by the profit collection operations that were present during most of the daily sessions of the week, and concentrated on the small-cap stocks, especially the ones that recorded different increases during the previous weeks. The Boursa witnessed such performance amid a drop in the trading indicators compared to the previous week, whereas the total trading value decreased by 19.45 percent reaching KD 39.72 million, and the total traded volume reached by the end of the week around 299.55 million share, down by 7.14 percent compared to the previous week.

In addition, the three market indices initiated the first session of the week with mixed decreases, especially the Price Index which dropped by more than 1 percent due to the selling pressures and speculations that concentrated on the small-cap stocks, while the leading stocks witnessed selling for profit operations, which pushed the Weighted and KSX-15 indices to record some losses. On the next session, the three Boursa indices witnessed mixed closings, as the Price Index was able to realize some increase supported by the last minutes trading activity which witnessed random purchasing operations on a limited number of stocks, while the Weighted and KSX-15 indices continued recording losses for the second consecutive session, affected by the continued profit collection operations that included some heavy stocks.

On the mid-week session, the market indices continued its fluctuation, whereas the Price and Weighted indices were able to realize increases as a result to the limited purchasing operations on some small and mid-cap stocks, while KSX-15 dropped slightly due to the continued profit collection operations on some operational stocks. Such performance came amid a noticeable growth in trading activity on both levels the cash liquidity or the traded volume, whereas the trading value increased by 46 percent and the volume grew by 46.68 percent.

Moreover, the Boursa indices were able to return to light in the green zone on Wednesday's session, in light of the purchasing operations on both the leading and small-cap stocks, amid a decreased cash liquidity levels to reach around KD 8 million, after it recorded a drop of 14 percent approximately. On the end of week session, the Boursa continued recording grouped gains



for its three indices for the second consecutive session, amid a noticeable growth in the trading levels, as the value broke the K.D. 10 million level, after recording an increase of 41.73 percent, while the volume grew by 80.33 percent after it reached 90.19 million share.

By the end of the week, the Boursa recorded market losses of about KD 20 million, as the market cap for the total listed stocks in the Regular Market by the end of last week reached KD 26.94 billion down by 0.07 percent from its value at the previous week, where it was then KD 26.96 billion. (Note: The market cap for the listed companies in the Regular Market is calculated based on the average number of outstanding shares as per the latest available official financial statements).

For the annual performance, the Price Index ended last week recording 11.48 percent annual gain compared to its closing in 2016, while the Weighted Index increased by 5.61 percent, and the KSX-15 recorded 3.37 percent growth.

Sectors' indices

Six of Boursa Kuwait's sectors ended last week in the green zone, five recorded declines, whereas the Health Care sector's index closed with no change from the week before. Last week's highest gainer was the Insurance sector, achieving 7.01 percent growth rate as its index closed at 1,106.03 points. Whereas, in the second place, the Real Estate sector's index closed at

933.11 points recording 3.87 percent increase. The Telecommunications sector came in third as its index achieved 2.77 percent growth, ending the week at 558.38 points.

On the other hand, the Technology sector headed the losers list as its index declined by 4.93 percent to end the week's activity at 478.55 points. The Industrial sector was second on the losers' list, which index declined by 4.16 percent, closing at 1,839.39 points, followed by the Consumer Services sector, as its index closed at 901.13 points at a loss 3.12 percent.

Sectors' activity

The Financial Services sector dominated a total trade volume of around 90.64 million shares changing hands during last week, representing 30.26 percent of the total market trading volume. The Banks sector was second in terms of trading volume as the sector's traded shares were 29.27 percent of last week's total trading volume, with a total of around 87.67 million shares.

On the other hand, the Banks sector's stocks were the highest traded in terms of value; with a turnover of around KD 16.10 million or 40.52 percent of last week's total market trading value. The Telecommunications sector took the second place as the sector's last week turnover was approx. KD 6.91 million representing 17.39 percent of the total market trading value. — Prepared by Studies & Research Department - Bayan Investment Co.

Can US stocks in 2018 repeat the huge gains of 2017?

NEW YORK: After a banner year for US stocks, that saw the Dow hitting repeated records, Wall Street strategists predicted 2018 would see more moderate gains and increased volatility as markets retreated in the final session of 2017 on Friday. A late sell-off pushed the market into the red amid declines in Apple, Amazon and some other high-flyers, but the decline didn't put much of a dent in a year of records and soaring valuations.

Analysts expect many of the positive conditions that boosted equities in 2017 to persist in 2018, including robust earnings growth thanks in part to US tax cut signed into law by President Donald Trump and solid conditions in many overseas economies.

However, on the downside, they see little chance of a repeat of the extraordinarily low volatility seen in 2017, which led to exceptionally few pullbacks in US stocks.

"2018 should be a good year, but not a great year and it might require a little intestinal fortitude," said Sam Stovall, chief investment strategist at CFRA Research. "We will get more volatility for less return."

And Matthew Miskin, market strategist at John Hancock Investments, said, "We see more modest returns in 2018 because it's already priced in."

"Investors will want to prepare for greater volatility." The Dow Jones Industrial Average jumped 25 percent in the year, ending Friday's session at 24,719.22 after scoring 71 new records, the most since the index' creation in 1896. The S&P 500 rose 19.4 percent to close 2017 at 2,673.61, while the tech-rich Nasdaq Composite Index surged 28.2 percent to 6,903.39, after briefly crossing 7,000 for the first time earlier in December.

Other leading bourses also enjoyed rich gains, including in Europe and especially Asia, where Hong Kong jumped more than a third and Tokyo pushed nearly 20 percent higher, propelled by strengthening economic conditions in Asia and positive momentum from US markets.

Like a 'vintage wine'
Wall Street's performance

marks the latest sign of gathering strength in the world's biggest economy after the 2008 financial crisis pushed the country into the "Great Recession." US unemployment hit a 17-year low in November and other key data points on retail sales and gross domestic product have also improved. The "bull market"-defined as the period in which stocks have avoided a 20 percent drop-has now lasted 106 months. That's the second longest in history, said Howard Silverblatt, senior index analyst at S&P Dow Jones Indices.

The bull market "now appears to be a vintage wine, with the question being should we pop the cork or will income tax recork the bottle for a new life?" Silverblatt said in a note earlier this month.

Trump's tax cut has indeed lifted optimism about corporate earnings, prompting many analysts to boost their forecasts for business profits and US growth.

Wells Fargo Advisors this week predicted the tax bill could extend the US economic growth cycle "by a couple of years more," propelling some sectors, such as industrials.

Concerns include a possible hastening of Federal Reserve interest rate increases if inflation, which has been modest, accelerates amid higher growth in the wake of the tax cuts.

"Inflation is kind of the one lingering doubt out there," said Shawn Cruz, senior specialist in trading at TD Ameritrade, who expects comment from new Fed chief Jerome Powell and other new additions to the policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee to be scrutinized closely by markets.

Other worries cited by analysts include a worsening of economic conditions in China and North Korean nuclear aggression. Concerns about a trade war have moderated somewhat compared with Trump's initial emergence and harsh talk of "America first" policy. But analysts said negotiations to recraft the North American Free Trade Agreement and ongoing frictions between Beijing and Washington must be monitored.

The gains of the last year mean many investors will adjust their portfolios. Cruz expects most investors to stay in stocks, but to reallocate some funds from market leaders like technology to underperforming sectors, such as energy. US oil prices closed the year above \$60 a barrel for the first time in two and a half years, the latest increase that could attract more cash to petroleum-linked stocks. — AFP

Business

2017: A successful year for Ooredoo

Ongoing plans to launch IoT bundles and services



Ooredoo and Al-Zayani managements



A group photo with Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem

KUWAIT: Ooredoo concluded a year full of successful initiatives, focusing on embracing digitalization and supporting youth in Kuwait. The highlights of Ooredoo's achievements in 2017 include two successful device launch campaigns to signing, hosting Kuwait's first Internet of Things (IoT) conference, and continuing to strengthen youth through the company's award-winning volunteer program.

Commenting on the conclusion of a successful year, Ooredoo Kuwait's Corporate Communications Senior Director Mijbil Alayoub said, "We owe this success to the loyalty and commitment of our customer base, whose belief in what Ooredoo stands for is the main drive behind our ongoing commitment to achieving excellence."

He added: "Ooredoo Kuwait is fortunate to have a passionate and dedicated team of employees with an array of expertise, and who are guided by the vision and support of a young CEO, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Thani, who is a forward-thinking and visionary leader believing in the vital role of embracing the newest and most advanced trends in technology, to enrich the experience of Ooredoo customers."

enriching people's lives through technology and embracing digitalization. The year also saw the launch of a fully equipped state-of-the-art data center by FASTtelco, an internet service provider owned by Ooredoo Kuwait. The launch of the center comes to further reiterate Ooredoo's commitment to being one of the leading companies in information technology solutions, and the company of choice for prospective clients searching for ICT solutions, catering especially for the needs of corporates and businesses. The center provides a suite of managed hosting services tailor-made to fit corporate and business needs. These services are ideal for corporates and businesses looking to better manage their data, platforms and applications. The new data center provides end-to-end IT solutions to customers in various sectors including financial, healthcare, media, e-commerce, educational and governmental.

The center is fully equipped to deliver an exceptional experience in services and solutions like managed CPE, cloud services, NOC and operations, data center consultancy, and much more. This is especially important today, where businesses are faced with growing challenges to respond efficiently to new digital trends in IT, security and control.

Shamel Home

Today, Ooredoo's customers can already get a close experience of how IoT bundled services are designed: the company launched Shamel Home, Kuwait's first all-inclusive comprehensive plan that offers customers with fixed and mobile internet in addition to online digital entertainment content from STARZPLAY, WAVO and BeIN Sports. As part of this plan, customers can benefit from high-speed 10 Mbps fixed internet with unlimited capacity courtesy of FASTtelco, a company owned by Ooredoo Kuwait. Additionally, customers can enjoy 100 GB of mobile internet on their mobile line that can be shared with 4 additional SIM card, a family-centric approach to telecommunication. Additionally, customers can get two years of digital content subscription with STARZPLAY and WAVO for series, movies and entertainment programs, and 1 year of digital content from BeIN Sports to watch live streaming of the biggest sports events. The content can be streamed through the service providers' websites and their apps for smart devices, including smart TVs, phones and tablets.

Redefining support

In tandem with the company's promise to support SMEs and entrepreneurs, Ooredoo Kuwait partnered with the Association for Small and Medium Enterprises of Kuwait

(ASMEK) to hold the B2B 4 SME Symposium. The event featured key speakers and open discussions about the obstacles and challenges facing small and medium enterprise owners, and the way they can overcome these obstacles.

With a wide range of services and solutions specifically catering to the needs of entrepreneurs, Ooredoo took its support to another level by partnering to launch this event, to provide an active platform for youth to express the challenges they face. Ooredoo and FASTtelco, the Internet service provider that the company owns, also participated in launching the Kuwait Business Center earlier this year, which is a government entity established by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry that is dedicated to streamlining the process of business licensing for microenterprises in Kuwait. Ooredoo's packages and bundles provide comprehensive solutions at competitive prices, aimed at propelling entrepreneurs towards success, especially in an age where the internet and communication play a major role in all businesses.

Unparalleled plans and services

Continuing its annual Apple launch events streak, Ooredoo held two iPhone event launches this year, with exclusive offers powered by Shamel. The company launched the iPhone 8 & 8 Plus, and the iPhone X launch. Both events saw significant participation from customers and members of the community and social media influencers, to whom this became an annual event. Technology enthusiasts flocked to Ooredoo's head office on both occasions to get their hands on the latest and most touted smartphones, with Ooredoo's exclusive Shamel plans with unique features. Ooredoo also launched its newly revamped Nojoom rewards program which offers its customers the best exclusive discounts. Accessible to all Ooredoo customers, the program offers members free upgrades, vouchers and discounts from a large variety of partners, ranging from service providers, retailers and hotels, and airline companies. In addition, customers use their Nojoom points to buy products from the Nojoom Online Rewards Store.

The revamped Nojoom rewards program has many new benefits which include transferring Nojoom points to friends and family, donate Nojoom points for charitable causes, and redemption for partners' voucher which are readily accessible through nojoom.ooredoo.com.kw or the My Ooredoo app.

Social responsibility

Ooredoo further invested in its award-winning annual volunteer program, solidifying its position as a leader and supporter of youth across Kuwait. The company's program continued to attract hundreds of participants, preparing them with the right set of skills and tools before matching them with volunteering opportunities. As with its annual habit, the program's volunteers spearheaded all Ooredoo's charity work throughout the month of Ramadan, distributing thousands of iftar meals to the labourers and workers in Kuwait city who are braving the scorching heat of the summer, proving



Ooredoo CEO and General Manager Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Thani

Ooredoo's commitment to one of its main pillars of social responsibility, which is to serve the underserved communities.

Ooredoo also sponsored for the second consecutive year the Arab Youth Volunteer Award, an event that attracts hundreds of young people from around the Arab World to submit their youth initiatives and volunteer achievements and ideas. This year's award ceremony was attended by Her Excellency Sheikha Hessa bint Khalifa Al Thani, the Special Envoy of the Arab League Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and other dignitaries from around the Arab World.

Ooredoo also continued its support to youth through its partnership with The Proteges Youth Development Program for the second consecutive year, and a series of youth development workshops and internship opportunities in collaboration with the Kuwait International Law School.

Believing in helping youth follow their passions and take their dreams to the next level, Ooredoo renewed its sponsorship to triathlete Abdulaziz Al-Rashed and equestrian Rakan Al-Hasawi for a new season, an initiative that encapsulates Ooredoo's main promise to enrich people's experiences and propel them towards success.

Investing internally

Aligning with the company's core values, Ooredoo held several key events around the year to connect with its staff. Events included the annual Ghabqa, a traditional Ramadan banquet where staff can meet to socialize and enjoy the Ramadan spirit, and the annual town hall meeting where executive management discuss the key achievements, challenges and goals ahead with all members of the staff to align all efforts, working towards unanimous success and efforts.

Ooredoo also held other awareness campaigns for staff, including an awareness week about breast cancer and health issues, in addition to festive Happy Thursdays at the company's head office, where staff can enjoy their lunch in the outdoors area in a picnic setup.



Unparalleled services and plans for Ooredoo customers

Pioneering digitalization

Reiterating its leading position as a supporter of telecommunication technology, announced that its plans to gearing up in supporting the government's plans for launching Smart City initiatives across Kuwait. Ooredoo made this announcement in during Kuwait's Internet of Things (IoT) Conference and Expo 2017, in collaboration with the Ministerial Council's Central Agency of Information Technology and IoT Asia.

Through its B2B department, and in partnership with leading telecommunication technology providers such as Ericsson, Ooredoo worked extensively to launch products and services that are aimed to support the launch of digital and cloud-computing services utilized by IoT technologies. IoT is expected to play an integral part in a variety of sectors, such as healthcare, transportation, and services sector. During the conference, Ooredoo Kuwait announced its intent to launch smart home solutions by the beginning of 2018. The company demonstrated several solutions at its 'Smart Home' exhibition which showcased a number of products including lights, camera monitoring, TV control, Nests Weather control, Door locks, Amazon's Alexa, Magic Mirror - supported by Android, curtain control, and others. These were all controlled by one tablet, giving customers comfort and ease. These solutions will include full installations, guides, recommendations, bundles and after sales support. Ooredoo Kuwait is committed to bringing users the best and most advanced services, to fulfil its mission of enrich-



Kuwait national flag flutters over the seafront



Sales continued till dawn



Sales and customer service employees with CEO Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Thani



A group photo

Technology

Apple sorry for slowing iPhones, offers new batteries at discount

Rumors had persisted for years at tech news websites

SAN FRANCISCO: Apple on Thursday apologized to its customers for slowing down performance of older iPhone models and said it would discount replacement batteries for some of its handsets. The move by Apple responded to an uproar from iPhone users and a series of lawsuits after news of the battery problems stoked concerns the company was unfairly nudging consumers to upgrade.

"We know that some of you feel Apple has let you down. We apologize," Apple said in a message to customers on its website. "We've always wanted our customers to be able to use their iPhones as long as possible. We're proud that Apple products are known for their durability, and for holding their value longer than our competitors' devices." Apple said it was reducing the price of an out-of-warranty iPhone battery replacement from \$79 to \$29 for anyone with an iPhone 6 or later whose battery needs to be replaced, starting in late January through December 2018.

“Avoid unexpected shutdowns as batteries age”

But it noted that "batteries are consumable components that become less effective as they chemically age" and that factors such as heat can affect performance. Apple said a software update last year "manages the maximum performance of some system components when needed to prevent a shutdown" and that "in some cases users may experience longer launch times for apps and other reductions in performance."

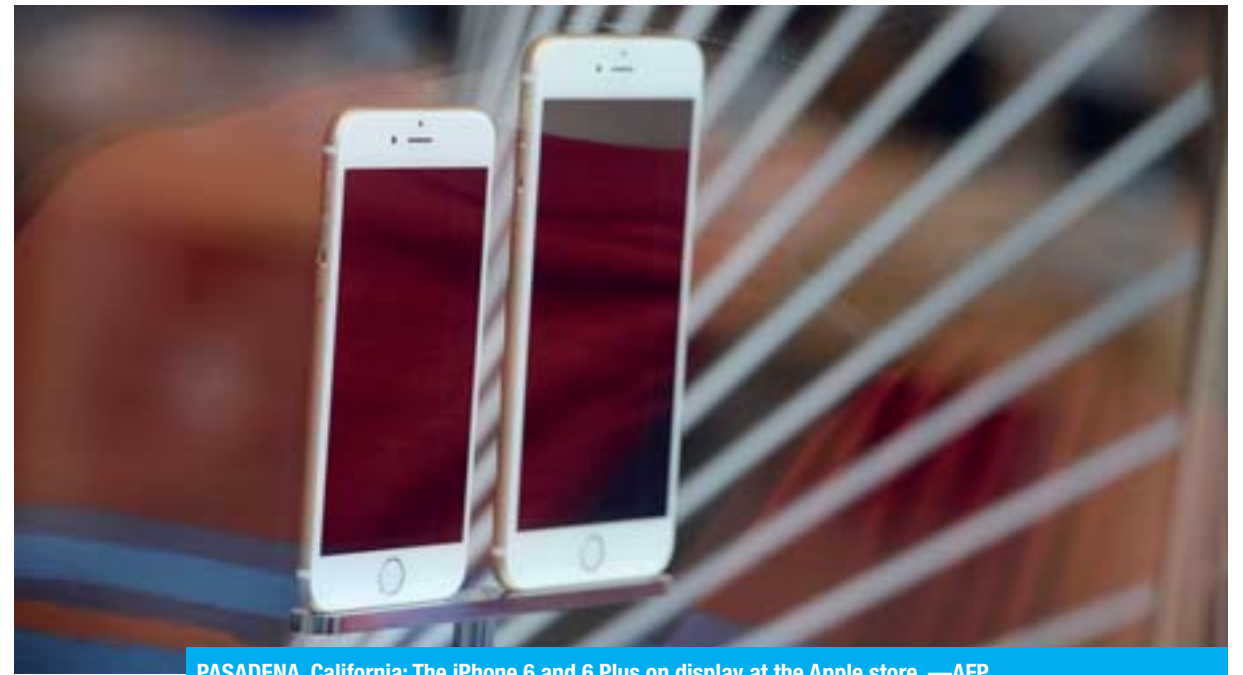
'Security, efficiency'

In related news, Apple's board has instructed chief executive Tim Cook to use only private aircraft "in the interests of security and efficiency" at the world's most valuable company, regulatory documents show. A filing with securities regulators this week said the board determined that its CEO must use private aircraft for "all business and personal travel."

The policy was implemented in 2017 "in the interests of security and efficiency based on our global profile and the highly visible nature of Mr Cook's role

Software update

The company said it also would issue a software update to make it easier for customers to see if an aging battery is affecting performance. "As always, our team is working on ways to make the user experience even better, including improving how we manage performance and avoid unexpected shutdowns as batteries age," the statement said. The controversy erupted last week after Apple acknowledged a feature to "smooth out" spikes in demand for power to prevent iPhone 6 models from shutting down due to



PASADENA, California: The iPhone 6 and 6 Plus on display at the Apple store. —AFP

as CEO." The filing noted that the value of the private flights is calculated as "imputed taxable income" which is not reimbursed by Apple. The filing showed Cook received some \$12.8 million in compensation for 2017, including a salary of \$3 million and incentive awards.

Cook took home far less than other top Apple executives including chief financial officer Luca

Maestri and senior vice president Angela Ahrendts, who received some \$24 million for the year. Yet Cook's previous stock awards vested in 2017 were worth an additional \$89 million for the CEO, according to the filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The market capitalization for the iPhone maker has been hovering around \$900 billion and is up nearly 50 percent for the year. —AFP

Indian regulators face legal challenge in probe over prescient messages

MUMBAI: A series of raids by India's market regulator, investigating whether corporate announcements were prematurely leaked by market participants in social media chatrooms, were the largest it has conducted. But despite the scale of the action, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) will likely face several tough legal challenges in any prosecutions, according to four lawyers, including two former officials of the regulator.

Dozens of SEBI officials raided offices and homes of brokers on Dec 22, seizing mobile phones and laptops, one regulatory source told Reuters. As many as 30 brokers were targeted in the action, according to local media. SEBI has broad search-and-seizure powers that enable it to seize "books, registers, other documents" and records of anyone associated with securities markets, according to the regulations laid out in the official act that governs the regulator's activity.

Those powers would likely allow the regulator to withstand in court any challenge to the seizure of electronic gadgets, the lawyers interviewed by Reuters said. But whether SEBI has legal rights to get into individual social media accounts does not appear to have been established, the lawyers said. They said they were not aware of any explicit law that gives SEBI power to access social media accounts or compel users to provide passwords.

That would mean that the regulator would have to make a case that such accounts should be considered "books, registers, other documents" and records, they said. SEBI did not respond to emailed requests for comment. A senior official at SEBI expressed confidence that the regulator would be able to successfully prosecute any cases that came out of the investigation.

"We have enough powers to proceed," the official, who requested anonymity because he was not allowed to speak with media, told Reuters. SEBI was "testing if the powers given to us can stand the scrutiny of law. If not, we will again ask for amendment to the regulations and laws. We will strengthen it." —Reuters

Epson face French legal pressure over planned obsolescence

PARIS: French prosecutors have launched a probe into Japanese printer maker Epson for alleged planned obsolescence in its products, using landmark consumer legislation that campaigners hope to turn against Apple as well. The investigation, confirmed to AFP by a legal source on Thursday, was opened in November and is being led by anti-trust and consumer protection specialists in the French economy ministry under the instruction of prosecutors in the Nanterre suburb of Paris.

It comes after a complaint by the association Stop Planned Obsolescence (HOP or Halte à l'Obsolescence Programmée) which filed a case against printer makers Epson, HP, Brother and Canon in September alleging they were tricking consumers into replacing ink cartridges before they were empty. The group filed a separate complaint on Wednesday against Apple after the US tech giant admitted earlier this month that it intentionally slowed down older models of its iPhones over time. Reacting to news of the Epson probe, the pro-recycling association called it "very good news."

"For the first time in France and to our knowledge in the world, judicial authorities of a country have taken up a case of planned obsolescence," HOP lawyer Emile Meunier told AFP. Planned obsolescence is a widely criticized commercial practice in which manufacturers build in the expiry of their products so that consumers will be forced to replace them. It is decried by consumer groups as being unethical and is suspected of being particularly prevalent in the electronics industry, which produces mountains of unrecyclable waste each year.

'Hamon's law'

To tackle the problem, France passed landmark legislation in 2015 known as "Hamon's law" which made the practice illegal and in theory obliged retailers to say whether replacement parts were available. The law, named after former Socialist minister Benoit Hamon, stipulates that a company found to be deliberately shortening the life of its products can be fined up to five percent of its annual sales while executives can face up to two years in jail.

The Epson case—if the initial legal inquiry finds enough evidence for a trial—could lead to the first prosecution for the crime, which some lawyers have warned will be difficult to prove in court. The company did not comment on the



SINGAPORE: File photo shows a shop assistant arranging boxes of Epson printers and scanners at a computer mall. —AFP

legal probe when contacted by AFP on Thursday. HOP filed its complaint against the printer manufacturers because of techniques allegedly used by them to force users to change their ink cartridges before they were empty.

Printer companies earn far higher margins on replacement cartridges than on printers, which are often sold cheaply. Pointing to thousands of complaints online, HOP said that many printers stopped working when ink levels were shown as too low and also said other components were wrongly flagged as needing replacement.

Earlier this month, Apple confirmed what critics had suspected for years: that it intentionally slows performance of older iPhones as their batteries weaken with age. The company said this was to extend the performance of the phone, which uses less power when running at slower speeds, and was to prevent unexpected shutdowns due to a low battery charge.

It denied incorporating planned obsolescence-but Thursday issued an apology for slowing down performance

of older models and said it would discount replacement batteries for some handsets. "We know that some of you feel Apple has let you down. We apologize," Apple said in a message to customers on its website. "We've always wanted our customers to be able to use their iPhones as long as possible. We're proud that Apple products are known for their durability, and for holding their value longer than our competitors' devices."

Critics accused Apple of nudging iPhone users to upgrade to newer models by letting them think it was the handsets that needed replacing, rather than just the battery. "Apple has put in place a global program of planned obsolescence with a view to increasing its sales," the HOP association said in a statement issued on Wednesday. It believes Apple could be liable for a fine in line with the value of all of its iPhone sales in France since Hamon's law came into force on August 17, 2015. The California-based group also faces a class-action suit in the United States. —AFP

What's next for Cybersecurity in 2018?

We live in a world that is networked together, where companies rely on networked systems and their data is stored in the cloud. The year 2018 will bring more connectivity, digital transformation initiatives, and data to companies, along with a number of new cybersecurity threats and landscape changes making cybersecurity one of the most crucial issues that need to be addressed in the present scenario.

Let's just take a quick look to what we witnessed in 2017. This year incidents like WannaCry and Netya illustrate, our adversaries are becoming more and more creative in how they architect their attacks. But in the end, it's more about who has not been breached vs who is the latest. The world of cybersecurity witnessed changes frequently with security experts trying to gain know-how about what is happening and how they can mitigate it. The universal fact is that we have to accept that we can't protect everything, but we can find a way to control what matters the most. 2018 will be a year where security will become part of the fabric in how we work. Below are my cybersecurity predictions that I believe will continue to impact the technology industry in 2018.

1. Shift in focus from protection to prevention

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, so the saying goes. Historically IT organizations focused heavily on perimeter network security to protect their networks from cyberattacks. Protection at the perimeter edge works well for data moving toward the protected assets. However, recent breaches have shown that perimeter security alone isn't sufficient to combat advanced persistent threats. By focusing on more proactive and offensive approaches, rather than strictly defensive, that help detect and respond to possible threats rather than react, it is possible to stop threats before they expose the

organization to risk. Your security setup will need to focus on detection, response, and remediation. That's where the cybersecurity fight is today. In the future it will most likely move to prediction of what's coming before anything happens.

2. More IoT attacks will be motivated by financial gain

It's only a matter of time before every house and company is connected through the Internet of Things (IoT). We predict that as many as 1 million new connections per hour will be added to the internet by 2020 expanding the attack surface and making IoT vulnerabilities more critical and more dangerous. IoT will move from being seen as a massive security risk in the enterprise, to a critical part of an Enterprise's security posture. To meet the security challenges of the IoT—an attack surface that is both growing rapidly and becoming increasingly difficult to monitor and manage, a proactive and dynamic approach to security, and a layered defense strategy, are the keys to protecting IoT devices from infection and attack—or at least, mitigating the impact when some are inevitably compromised by adversaries.

3. Continued growth in the use of cyber-extortion tools

Unfortunately, ransomware attacks will almost certainly become more pervasive and varied during 2018. Some attacks will adhere to the brute-force model of infect, lock and extort, while others will be more sophisticated. Evolutions in ransomware, such as the growth of Ransomware-as-a-Service, will make it easier for criminals, regardless of skill set, to carry out these attacks. It turns out that ransomware generated a lot of cash for criminals, an estimated \$1 billion in 2016. In the future, ransomware will not merely target individual users, but also

target entire networks. Given that ransomware can penetrate organizations in multiple ways, reducing the risk of ransomware infections requires a portfolio-based approach, rather than a single product. Often, victims of ransomware choose to pay the ransom, because they have no other means by which to restore their systems and data. Don't pay the ransom. Create strong plans for system and data recovery as soon as possible, including backing up all systems daily.

4. Many enterprises will give priority to cloud security

More applications and servers are moving to the cloud to take advantage of cost savings, scalability, and accessibility. As a result of this, cloud environments will be a potential target of security breaches. Cloud is a journey and cloud security must be a driver, not an afterthought. According to the Cisco 2017 Midyear Cybersecurity Report hackers recognise that they can infiltrate connected systems faster by breaching cloud systems and we expect more problems related to cloud security arise in 2018. Cloud computing security is best executed in a phased approach matching the value of the cloud workload to the bad guys' motivation. When it comes to cloud, security experts will need to decide who they can trust and who they can't and enterprises will need to develop security guidelines for private and public cloud use and utilize a cloud decision model to apply limitations to cloud risks.

5. Increased automation in cybersecurity response

Humans are incapable of keeping up with the sheer volume of incoming threats, but their ability to make quick and highly-impactful

decisions to manually address such an attack is equally inefficient. As our industry faces a talent crisis, automation, machine learning and AI will be critical in ensuring protection, becoming a powerful and effective component of cyber security incident response. Attaining full visibility into networks is key to stopping hackers, or machines, in their tracks and machine learning can help here by understanding the behaviour of devices, including IoT devices, on the network and identifying 'soft spots' on the network that are just waiting to be breached. In 2018 machine learning and artificial intelligence will undoubtedly be integral to the future the cybersecurity landscape.

The bottom line is that there is no silver bullet. We are facing a new frontier of innovation and can only seize the opportunity if security capabilities are built to support new ventures. We need more trained professionals, as well as smarter tools that make cybersecurity more effective - for both businesses and their consumers. Cybersecurity is our shared responsibility. Because we all have a say in our business and technology, we must also view security as an inherently essential part of our organization's purpose and strategy. - Scott Manson, Cybersecurity Lead - Middle East and Africa, Cisco



Scott Manson

Health

Anxiety, evasion and addiction: How Mexicans deal with violence

'We cannot separate the violence from the mental health problems'

MEXICO CITY: Between anxiety, addiction and evasion, Mexicans have found coping mechanisms to deal with the violence plaguing their country and which peaked in 2017 to the highest level in two decades. The year is not yet over, but the number of murders committed in November reached 23,101, according to a government registry of violent deaths, the highest count since the tally was launched in 1997, and topping the 22,409 killed in 2011 when the big drugs cartels started to fracture. The statistics do not show how many of the deaths were linked to narco-trafficking, but experts believe the majority were attributable to the wave of drugs-related violence that has risen incessantly since 2006, when the government launched all-out war on Mexico's powerful cartels.

Collective violence

"Since the start of this absurd war on drugs, Mexico has entered into what the World Health Organization technically defines as 'collective violence,'" said Juan Ramon de la Fuente, a psychiatrist and former dean of the Autonomous National University of Mexico, or UNAM. "It is a kind of epidemic when there are more than 10 homicides for every 100,000 people," he said. WHO figures show that in 2015 Mexico was suffering 19 murders per 100,000 people, but De la Fuente, who participated in a multidisciplinary study of the

impact of violence on society, puts that figure at at least 22 per 100,000.

The lack of security that has reigned over large tracts of Mexico for years has had a tangible emotional impact on the population, said De La Fuente, while life expectancy has dropped yearly among young people because of the number of youths being killed. "We cannot separate the violence from the mental health problems which are on the rise across the country," said De La Fuente. "There is a feeling of helplessness which creates reactions that people express symptomatically, in terms of anxiety, a disturbance to sleep patterns, or the increased use of alcohol and other drugs." According to government data, drug consumption has in fact increased by more than 40 percent since 2010. "In Mexico there are no fewer than a million people who probably have suffered from some emotional or psychological impact derived from the drugs war since the army was sent on to the streets," said Rogelio Flores, a researcher into the societal effects of violence at UNAM's psychology department.

De la Fuente estimates that with the 200,000 people murdered, and tens of thousands missing since 2006, around 250,000 homes in Mexico have been affected by "a process of pain, depression, helplessness, frustration and fear, a gamut of very powerful and complicated emotions which is over-

looked by the state from a medical and psychological point of view."

Scenes from Dante

In other cases, people display the phenomenon of "normalization" or "habituation" to the endless violence that is incorporated into daily life, from school children learning how to protect themselves during shootings to drugs lords being lionized in television shows or in the folk ballads known as "narco-corridas." "It is worrying that we come to see death as an element of everyday life," said Flores. "There is a process of desensitization in large parts of society which is promoting and legitimizing violence, without considering its consequences."

The spectacular cruelty of the drug cartels has produced scenes of Dantesque horror, with people being beheaded, dismembered, skinned alive, tortured and hung from bridges—their bodies dumped, often by the dozen, in the streets for all to see. Martin Barron, a criminologist at the National Institute for Criminal Science, said that in the past the cartels had "codes of respect" that included not killing a victim's wife or children. But in 2009, with the rise of the Zetas—the armed wing of the Gulf Cartel, which was made up originally from government special police who defected to the drugs lords—all the rules started to disappear.



MEXICO CITY: This file photo taken on June 15, 2017 shows a woman performing during a protest to mark one month since the murder of their colleague Javier Valdez, a noted expert on the country's drug cartels and AFP contributor whose death appears far from being brought to justice. — AFP

"The criminals now have no limitations preventing them inflicting whatever degrading acts they wish upon another human being," he said. He underlined the lack of importance given to the origin of the Zetas, former elite commandos around whom swirl macabre legends, such as the story that one their late leaders used to eat the human flesh of his vic-

tims. "We have to analyze these figures that come from a military background, they start out there and then the cartels look for someone who would do be prepared to do something like this. This violence is not in the normal make-up of Mexicans, you have to go out looking for someone with psychotic tendencies," he said. — AFP

Dog poisoning sparks outcry in Lebanon

BEIRUT: Video footage of stray dogs apparently being poisoned by municipal staff has sparked a public outcry in Lebanon, with politicians rushing to post pictures of them-

selves with their pets. The video, shot in the south Beirut suburb of Ghobeiry, shows the dogs lying on their sides near a bowl of food shaking uncontrollably and frothing at the mouth. A municipal employee is then seen picking up their bodies and throwing them on the back of a pickup.

Welfare organization Animals Lebanon, which posted the video, said it was seeking action from the government. "This sickening level of abuse, torture, suffering and complete disregard for life and law is absolutely shock-

ing," it said. "We are communicating now with the minister of interior (Nohad Machnouk) to condemn such action and officially notify all municipalities that this is illegal and unacceptable." Ghobeiry municipality said that it had suspended several staff members and opened a disciplinary investigation but denied any responsibility. "This is an isolated villainous and reprehensible act carried out on the personal initiative of a number of health department staff," it said. But the interior minister, who is responsible for overseeing local gov-

ernment, said that he had ordered an inquiry into the actions of the municipality.

President Michel Aoun posted a photograph of himself with his pet dog and a reminder that, under new legislation he signed into law in August, any action that causes suffering to animals is punishable by a fine of up to \$13,000 (11,000 euros). "Stray dogs may pose danger to people in several ways but the methods to resolve these cases are also numerous," he said. "These methods are definitely not what we have witnessed on televi-

sion and social media channels especially after the new animal protection law was signed earlier this year." The leader of Lebanon's Druze community, Walid Jumblatt, posted a photograph of himself with his dog Oscar, describing the killing of strays as a "crime".

"If there is one creature to remind us of our humanity and to teach us faithfulness, love, loyalty and tenderness, it's the dog," the veteran lawmaker tweeted. It is not the first time this year that there has been an outcry over the treatment of animals in Lebanon. — AFP

CLINIC
PAGE








Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
فهد علي المخيزيم

استشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM



Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St. 1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B - Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368



Global Medical Center Welcomes

Dr. Marzouq Al-Bader

Consultant vascular and general surgery

All general and specialized surgeries such as:

- All critical and non-critical arteries and veins surgeries
- Carrying out delicate procedures such as removing the extra rib
- All methods of treating varicose
- Treating excess perspiration
- Special department for care of injured diabetic foot
- AV connection for dialysis





Telephone: 187111

Global Medical Center, Bneid Al-Qar
Bour Saeed Street, Block-1, Building-128.

 @globalmedcenter
www.globalmed-center.com

What's On

Annual celebration of Kuwait Continental Hotels Group



The management of Kuwait Continental Hotels Co held the usual annual celebration of the hotels' staff and their families to strengthen the loyalty of them and to highlight their role in advancing & success the work during 2017. The ceremony was held in charming DARBAR restaurant, the reception was opened by the hotels group's general manager, Kamal El-Din Hussein, who explained how the development and expansion witnessed by new latest joined of al Salmeya Hotel's Branch which has been added to the group on May 2016, and so on Kamal Hussein thanked and honored the employees of the Hotels' group for their always cooperation and hard work.

Kamal Hussein thanks and commends the staff for their efforts during 2017 which was impact on the sales last year with 40% and average occupancy rate of over 78%, despite stiff competition and the

emergence of many new Hotels in the area. Kamal Hussein has honored group of staff from all departments as being ideal employees during all year of 2017, before leaving them to enjoy the ceremony, which included some of children's competitions, Staff competition, and the great & exciting game of the intelligence and general questions.

Kamal Hussein also honored the companies who shared to present gifts to the staff that also contributed to the success of the concert such as Al Hazeem Co, Seven Seas Co, Safat Co, First Trading Co, Al Najm Print Co, Beirut Est, Al Herz Co., Coca Cola Co, Kuwait Dairy Co. & Crown Cartridge Co, Noor Asia Co, Kuwait Bahrain Co & Ajmal Co. At the end of the ceremony, the General Manager, Kamal Hussein delivered the annual bonus: a month's salary for all staff of the Hotels Group which was ordered by Mr. Fouad Al-Ghanim the CEO.



GUST students chosen for internships at KFH, Global Investment House

Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) has worked closely with Kuwait Finance House (KFH), Global Investment House, and Ernst & Young (EY) to provide specialized programs with a well-defined scope of work to enhance students' knowledge and experience. Starting this year, interns were selected for each company based on their qualifications and majors to match the requirements of the position. The internships provide an opportunity for students to receive practical hands-on experience in their field of study, and a chance to explore the industry first-hand.

In line with GUST's corporate strategy, the University has built and maintained effective collaborations with many major companies and organizations in Kuwait across various sectors. The success of the internship program is evident in the continuous development of new training programs that add great value to our students, as well as the well as the number of students offered full-time positions following their internships at these companies.

GUST Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Professor Salem Marzouq Al-Tuhaih said, "We are continuously working on strategic plans to enhance our services and provide the best opportunities for our students. It is

by collaborating with leading companies in the country that we are successfully able to provide a multi-faceted internship program of high quality and value."

Kuwait Finance House, GUST's corporate career partner and one of the most prominent Islamic banks in the country, provides exceptional opportunities for students to immerse themselves into a structured corporate environment to develop their knowledge and skills according to their major. KFH specifically uses the internships as a gateway to future hires, which has helped push the Memorandum of Understanding with the university to a more solid level including scholarships. This year, a new agreement was signed to strengthen the relationship between the two entities and provide a framework of cooperation for training, internships, full-time and part-time jobs, sponsorships for campus activities. The agreement also gives qualified GUST graduates the priority when it comes to employment.

Kuwait Finance House Group Chief Human Resources Officer, Frederick Carstens, said: "KFH and GUST recognize each other as important organizations in the learning and development field. The bank encourages students and new recruits to be certified and highly qualified by providing them with all the tools they need to enable them to enjoy productive and satisfying careers."

The second company, Global Investment House, is a world-renowned institution recognized for providing investment solutions, which provides students with a charged working environment and the opportunity to learn valuable skills on the industry and the impact it has locally and regionally. They will also enjoy working in a professional, corporate environment with renowned advisors, for a well-structured program. The program includes experience in learning about the



Mohammad Al-Wuhaib



Frederick Carstens

details of the stock market, trading techniques, how to investigate and select portfolios, and other relevant topics. Global Investment House has a long-standing relationship with GUST dating back to 2006, which consists of participating in career fairs, providing workshops, offering internships to its students, and permanent hiring.

Global Investment House Acting Head of HR & Administration, Mohammad Abdullah Al-Wuhaib, said: "We offer an Internship program as part of our interest in future talent and our Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives. Through hands-on work exposure and on the job training, students will enjoy a supportive environment aimed at developing their knowledge of the business they can look forward to joining. Over the years, GUST students have demonstrated excellent skills backed-up by a high quality education and training." And finally, Ernst & Young (EY), world leader in financial auditing and advisory services, has maintained a strong working relationship since their first participation in the university's career fair. EY, one of the largest accounting firms in the world, provides in-depth experience for our students studying that field through job opportunities and training.

ICSK Amman celebrates Christmas

Christmas is a festival of joy and happiness and was celebrated by ICSK Amman with great fun, through their assemblies. The venue was decorated with balloons, Christmas tree, snowman, Santa Claus, lightings, cribs and multi colored decor. Children narrated the significance of Christmas celebration as an occasion of peace, love,

joy and sharing. The little tots of LKG performed dance for the theme songs, whereas the third graders entertained with a joyful Christmas medley. The crib and nativity in the form of narration and performance was done by the kids dressed as the relevant characters. The tiny ones were then entertained by their beloved teachers with their favorite carol 'Jingle Bells'. To mention the icing on the cake, which was the continuous melody of Christmas carols which lent a festive atmosphere and end to the celebrations. Principal Mr Rajesh Nair C and Vice Principal Dr Mary Isaac blessed and wished one and all with their messaged and were in turn gifted by Santa Claus.



AUK announces President's Honor Roll and Dean's Honor list



The American University of Kuwait held its semi-annual President's Honor Roll and Dean's Honor List ceremony to celebrate the accomplishments of top student achievers. The ceremony was held in the AUK Auditorium, where AUK President and college deans presented students with awards for their achievements in different categories. The event was attended by parents, faculty members, university staff and students.

The ceremony commenced with opening remarks from President Sullivan, in which he expressed his pride in celebrating the academic achievements of AUK's top students. "The University is proud of ALL of our students, for what they have achieved and for what they will do in the future. Tonight, however, we are honoring students for particularly high academic accomplishments. Tonight, we applaud 121 students for their academic excellence, and it gives us a great sense of pride to

recognize every one of them. In a few years, or maybe months, this group of students will start their careers or pursue graduate studies. I am sure they will continue to be the top in any walks of life because they genuinely want to make a difference. Congratulations to all." Top achieving students from the different categories were called to accept their awards from President Sullivan and the college deans.

26 students were awarded a place on the President's Honor Roll by the President, a high distinction exclusively awarded to those who maintained a 4.0 GPA for the term, while 121 students were recognized for achieving the Dean's Honor List; a distinction awarded by the College Deans to students who maintained a minimum GPA of 3.7. Dr Ali Charara, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences (CAS), and Dr Ralph Palliam, Dean of the College of Business & Economics (CBE) presented the recipients with their awards.



TV

AM MOVIES ACTION

01:40 American Ninja
03:20 Thor
05:20 Batman: Return Of The Caped Crusaders
06:45 Misfire
08:20 Larceny
09:55 Avengers Grimm
11:25 The Veil
12:55 Thor
14:55 The Call Up
16:30 In Time
18:25 Bloodsport
20:00 The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part II
22:20 Never Back Down: No Surrender

ANIMAL PLANET HD

00:50 Untamed & Uncut
01:45 Treehouse Masters
02:40 Bad Dog
03:35 Swamp Brothers
04:00 Swamp Brothers
04:25 Shark Attack File
05:15 Alaska Monsters
06:02 Wildest Islands
06:49 Untamed & Uncut
07:36 Meet The Sloths
08:00 Meet The Sloths
08:25 Swamp Brothers
08:50 Swamp Brothers
09:15 Treehouse Masters
10:10 Bad Dog
11:05 Wildest Islands
12:00 Swamp Brothers
12:28 Swamp Brothers
12:55 Shark Attack File
13:50 Alaska Monsters
14:45 Bad Dog
15:40 Wildest Islands
16:35 Untamed & Uncut
17:30 Treehouse Masters
18:25 North Woods Law
19:20 Too Cute! Pint-Sized
20:15 Bad Dog
21:10 Swamp Brothers
21:38 Swamp Brothers
22:05 North Woods Law
23:00 Too Cute! Pint-Sized
23:55 Wildest Islands

BBC FIRST

00:30 Agatha Raisin
02:05 Maigret
03:40 New Tricks
04:35 Father Brown
05:30 The Detectivists: Christmas Special 2015
06:00 Father Brown
06:55 Dickensian
07:40 Doctor Who: The Husbands Of River Song
08:45 Father Brown
09:35 Father Brown
10:30 New Tricks
11:25 Dickensian
12:15 Doctor Who: The Husbands Of River Song
13:15 Father Brown
14:10 Father Brown
15:05 New Tricks
16:05 Dickensian
16:55 Doctor Who: The Husbands Of River Song
18:00 Holly City
19:00 New Tricks
20:00 Five By Five
20:05 Unforgotten
21:05 Unforgotten
22:00 New Tricks
23:00 Class
23:50 Holly City

CRIME & INVESTIGATION NETWORK

00:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
01:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
02:00 It Takes A Killer
02:30 It Takes A Killer
03:00 The Eleven
04:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
05:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
06:00 It Takes A Killer
06:30 It Takes A Killer
07:00 Homicide Hunter
08:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
09:00 It Takes A Killer
09:30 It Takes A Killer
10:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
11:00 Cold Case Files
12:00 The First 48
13:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
14:00 It Takes A Killer
14:30 It Takes A Killer
15:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
16:00 Cold Case Files
17:00 Homicide Hunter
18:00 It Takes A Killer
18:30 It Takes A Killer
19:00 The First 48
20:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
21:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
22:00 Cold Case Files
23:00 The First 48

COMEDY CENTRAL

00:05 Graves
00:35 Nightcap
00:55 Dave Attell: Road Work
01:45 Tosh.O
02:10 Chappelle's Show
02:35 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
03:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
03:25 Tosh.O
03:50 Chappelle's Show
04:15 Kroll Show
04:40 Key And Peele
05:05 Important Things With Demetri Martin
05:30 Impractical Jokers
05:55 Disaster Date
06:20 Ridiculousness Arabia
06:50 Framework
07:40 Brotherhood
08:05 Impractical Jokers
08:30 Disaster Date
08:55 Workaholics
09:20 Kroll Show
09:45 Key And Peele
10:10 Important Things With Demetri Martin
10:35 Brotherhood
11:00 Impractical Jokers
11:25 Disaster Date
11:50 Ridiculousness Arabia
12:15 Impractical Jokers
12:40 Framework
13:30 Important Things With Demetri Martin
13:55 Friends
14:20 Friends
14:45 Workaholics
15:10 Key And Peele
15:35 Kroll Show
16:00 Comedy Central Presents Comedy Salvafel
16:30 Impractical Jokers
16:55 Friends
17:20 Friends
17:45 Disaster Date
18:10 Ridiculousness Arabia

18:35 Framework
19:25 Impractical Jokers
19:50 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
20:12 Friends
20:35 Friends
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
21:30 Idiotsitter
22:00 Broad City
22:25 Another Period
23:15 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
23:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah

Discovery Family

00:30 Kids Do The Craziest Things
00:55 Kids Do The Craziest Things
01:20 Finding Bigfoot
02:10 Somebody's Gotta Do It
03:00 Zoltan The Wolfman
03:50 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
04:40 Tanked
05:30 How It's Made
05:55 How It's Made
06:20 Kids Do The Craziest Things
06:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things
07:00 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
07:50 How It's Made
08:15 How It's Made
08:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things
09:30 Kids Do The Craziest Things
09:50 Tanked
10:20 Zoltan The Wolfman
11:10 Incredible Food Race
12:00 Kids Do The Craziest Things
12:25 Kids Do The Craziest Things
12:50 How It's Made
13:15 How It's Made
13:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things
14:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things
14:30 Tanked
15:20 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
16:10 Zoltan The Wolfman
17:00 Incredible Food Race
17:50 Kids Do The Craziest Things
18:15 Kids Do The Craziest Things
18:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things
19:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things
19:30 How It's Made
19:55 How It's Made
20:20 Tanked
21:10 Incredible Food Race
22:00 Kids Do The Craziest Things
22:25 Kids Do The Craziest Things
22:50 Zoltan The Wolfman
23:40 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor

ID

00:50 Murder By Numbers
01:45 Swamp Murders
02:40 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
03:35 I Speak For The Dead
04:30 Murder By Numbers
05:25 California Investigator
06:20 I Almost Got Away With It
07:10 Nightmare Next Door
08:00 The Locator
08:25 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
09:15 California Investigator
10:10 Six Degrees Of Murder
11:05 Murder Comes To Town
12:00 Murder Calls
12:55 On The Case With Paula Zahn
13:50 I Almost Got Away With It
14:45 Nightmare Next Door
15:40 Betrayed
16:35 American Monster
17:30 On The Case With Paula Zahn
18:25 California Investigator
18:50 California Investigator
19:20 I Almost Got Away With It
20:15 Nightmare Next Door
21:10 Betrayed
22:05 Murder Chose Me
23:00 Scott Peterson: Pregnant Wife Missing

Disney HD

00:10 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
00:35 Binny And The Ghost
01:00 Hank Zipzer
01:25 Alex & Co.
01:45 Disney Mickey Mouse
01:50 Evermoor Chronicles
02:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
03:05 Binny And The Ghost
03:55 Hank Zipzer
04:15 Disney Mickey Mouse
04:20 Hank Zipzer
04:45 Alex & Co.
05:35 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
06:25 Binny And The Ghost
06:45 Disney Mickey Mouse
06:50 Rolling With The Ronks
07:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
07:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
07:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
07:55 Elena Of Avalor
08:20 K.C. Undercover
08:45 Bunk'd
09:10 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
09:35 Tangled: The Series
10:00 Cow Belles
11:25 The Zhuzhus
11:40 Austin & Ally
12:05 That's So Raven
12:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
13:00 Bunk'd
13:25 Tangled: The Series
13:50 Jessie
14:15 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
14:40 K.C. Undercover
15:05 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
15:30 Bizaardvark
15:55 Elena Of Avalor
16:20 Stuck In The Middle
16:45 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
17:00 Tangled: The Series
17:25 K.C. Undercover
18:15 Descendants Wicked World
18:20 Bunk'd
18:45 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
19:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
19:15 Liv And Maddie
19:40 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
20:05 Descendants Wicked World
20:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
20:35 Disney The Lodge
21:00 Alex & Co.
21:50 Lofirock
22:15 Lofirock
22:40 Evermoor Chronicles
23:05 Rolling With The Ronks
23:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
23:45 Lofirock

Disney Junior

00:15 PJ Masks
01:30 Art Attack
01:55 Henry Hugglemonster

02:05 Loopdidoo
02:20 Henry Hugglemonster
02:35 Calimero
02:50 Henry Hugglemonster
03:05 Art Attack
03:30 The Hive
03:40 Loopdidoo
03:55 Henry Hugglemonster
04:10 Art Attack
04:35 Loopdidoo
04:50 Calimero
05:05 Art Attack
05:30 Henry Hugglemonster
05:45 Henry Hugglemonster
06:00 Art Attack
06:30 Henry Hugglemonster
06:45 Loopdidoo
07:00 Henry Hugglemonster
07:15 Calimero
07:30 PJ Masks
08:00 P-King Duckling
08:25 Puppy Dog Pals
08:50 Doc McStuffins
09:10 Mickey And The Roadster Racers

09:35 Sofia The First
10:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
10:45 PJ Masks
11:00 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
11:25 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
11:50 The Lion Guard
12:15 The Lion Guard
12:45 Sofia The First
13:10 Sofia The First
13:35 PJ Masks
14:00 PJ Masks
14:30 Doc McStuffins
14:55 P-King Duckling
15:20 Vampirina
15:45 Sofia The First
16:10 Puppy Dog Pals
16:35 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
17:00 Doc McStuffins
17:30 Vampirina
18:00 PJ Masks
18:25 Puppy Dog Pals
18:50 Sofia The First
19:20 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
19:45 Doc McStuffins
20:10 The Lion Guard
20:35 P-King Duckling
21:00 Vampirina
21:30 PJ Masks
22:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
22:45 Minnie's Bow-Toons
22:55 P-King Duckling
23:20 Puppy Dog Pals
23:45 Mickey And The Roadster Racers

Discovery Channel HD

00:15 Yukon Men
01:05 Finding Escobar's Millions
01:50 Treasure Quest: Snake Island
02:35 The Wheel: Survival Games
03:20 Diesel Brothers
04:05 Misfit Garage
04:50 Deadliest Catch
05:35 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Extreme Collectors
06:23 Container Wars
06:45 How Do They Do It?
07:10 How Do They Do It?
07:35 Misfit Garage
08:20 Extreme Collectors
08:45 Container Wars
09:10 Deadliest Catch
09:55 Finding Escobar's Millions
10:45 Treasure Quest: Snake Island
11:30 The Wheel: Survival Games
12:20 Extreme Collectors
12:43 Container Wars
13:05 How Do They Do It?
13:30 How Do They Do It?
13:55 Deadliest Catch
14:40 Yukon Men
15:30 Finding Escobar's Millions
16:15 Treasure Quest: Snake Island
17:05 The Wheel: Survival Games
17:50 Misfit Garage
18:45 Deadliest Catch
19:25 Yukon Men
19:45 Diesel Brothers
21:00 Madiba
21:50 Bushcraft Build-Off
22:40 Ed Stafford: Left For Dead
23:30 Misfit Garage

X HD

00:00 Disney II
00:25 Supa Strikas
00:50 Marvel's Spider-Man
07:15 Right Now Kapow
07:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
07:45 Walk The Prank
08:10 Phineas And Ferb
08:35 Mech-X4
09:00 Marvel's Spider-Man
09:25 Lab Rats
09:50 Star Wars Freemaker Adventures
10:20 Gravity Falls
10:45 Kid vs Kat
11:10 Milo Murphy's Law
11:15 Right Now Kapow
12:00 Lab Rats: Rise Of The Secret Soldiers
12:55 Pair Of Kings
13:20 Pair Of Kings
13:45 Phineas And Ferb
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
14:15 Phineas And Ferb
14:40 The Suite Life Of Zack & Cody
15:05 The Suite Life Of Zack & Cody
15:30 Gravity Falls
15:55 Gravity Falls
16:20 Two More Eggs
16:25 Lab Rats
16:50 Lab Rats
17:15 Kirby Buckets
17:40 Kirby Buckets
18:05 Supa Strikas
18:30 Marvel's Ant-Man
18:35 Disney II
19:00 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
19:25 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
19:50 Marvel's Rocket And Groot
19:55 Walk The Prank
20:20 Walk The Prank
20:45 Supa Strikas
21:10 Supa Strikas
21:35 Marvel's Rocket And Groot
21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
21:45 Lab Rats
22:10 Lab Rats
22:35 Phineas And Ferb
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA

EHD

00:00 My Fabulous Me
00:30 Botched
01:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
01:50 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
02:50 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
03:40 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
04:35 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
05:30 Celebrity Style Story
06:00 Mariah's World
07:00 Mariah's World
08:00 My Fabulous Me

08:30 My Fabulous Me
09:00 My Fabulous Me
09:30 Celebrity Style Story
10:00 WAGS LA
11:00 WAGS LA
12:00 The Platinum Life
13:00 The Platinum Life
14:00 The Platinum Life
15:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
16:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
17:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
18:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
19:00 My Fabulous Me
19:30 My Fabulous Me
20:00 My Fabulous Me
20:30 Celebrity Style Story
21:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
22:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
23:00 WAGS LA

food

00:00 Restaurant Impossible
01:00 Mystery Diners
01:30 Mystery Diners
02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
02:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
03:00 Man Fire Food
03:30 Man Fire Food
04:00 Chopped Junior
04:50 Guy's Grocery Games
06:00 Barefoot Contessa
06:25 Barefoot Contessa
06:50 Bake With Anna Olson
07:15 The Kitchen
08:05 The Pioneer Woman
08:30 The Pioneer Woman
08:55 Siba's Table
09:25 Siba's Table
09:55 Bake With Anna Olson
10:25 Bake With Anna Olson
10:55 The Kitchen
11:45 Cooking For Real
12:10 The Pioneer Woman
12:35 The Pioneer Woman
13:00 Siba's Table
13:30 Siba's Table
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
15:00 Chopped
16:00 The Kitchen
17:00 Bake With Anna Olson
17:30 Cooking For Real
18:00 Chopped Junior
19:00 Chopped
20:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
20:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
21:00 Man Fire Food
21:30 Man Fire Food
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
22:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
23:00 Chopped

itv

00:10 Chopping Block
01:00 Emmerrdale
01:30 Royal Stories
02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 Cash Trapped
03:25 The Royal Variety Performance 2016
04:40 Royal Stories
06:10 Chopping Block
07:05 Cash Trapped
08:00 The Royal Variety Performance 2016
10:10 The Family Chase
11:00 Chopping Block
11:50 Cash Trapped
12:45 Emmerrdale
13:15 Coronation Street
13:45 Coronation Street
14:15 Chopping Block
15:10 Cash Trapped
16:00 Victoria Christmas Special
17:50 Surprise Surprise
18:45 Emmerrdale
19:15 Coronation Street
19:45 Coronation Street
20:10 Cash Trapped
21:00 Victoria Christmas Special
22:50 Emmerrdale
23:15 Coronation Street
23:40 Coronation Street

itv2 HD

00:00 Stan Lee's Superhumans
01:00 Ancient Impossible
02:00 Clash Of Warriors
03:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
03:50 Ancient Aliens
04:40 10 Things You Don't Know About...
05:30 Stan Lee's Superhumans
06:20 Ancient Impossible
07:10 The Universe
08:00 Clash Of Warriors
09:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
10:00 Ancient Aliens
11:00 10 Things You Don't Know About...
12:00 America's Book Of Secrets
13:00 Ancient Impossible
14:00 Clash Of Warriors
15:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
16:00 Ancient Aliens
17:00 10 Things You Don't Know About...
18:00 The Universe
19:00 Ancient Impossible
20:00 Clash Of Warriors
21:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
22:00 Ancient Aliens
23:00 How 2 Win

HISTORY HD

00:20 Swamp People
01:10 Swamp People
02:00 Secret War On Drugs
03:40 The Warfighters
04:30 Swamp People
06:00 Alone: Lost And Found
06:50 Forged In Fire
07:40 Secret War On Drugs
09:20 American Pickers
10:10 Ax Men
11:50 Secret War On Drugs
13:30 Swamp People
15:10 Alone: Lost And Found
16:00 Forged In Fire
16:50 Secret War On Drugs
18:30 Alone: Lost And Found
19:20 Forged In Fire
20:10 Pawn Stars
17:20 Ice Road Truckers
18:10 Hunter Street
18:40 Hunter Street
18:12 Hunter Street
18:36 Nicky, Dicky And Dawn
19:00 School Of Rock
19:24 Game Shakers
19:48 The Thundermans
20:12 Ride
20:36 SpongeBob SquarePants
21:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
21:24 Sanjay And Craig
21:48 Rabbids Invasion
22:12 Rabbids Invasion
00:02 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
00:36 Rabbids Invasion
01:00 Rabbids Invasion
01:24 Sanjay And Craig
01:48 Sanjay And Craig
02:12 Winx Club
02:36 Winx Club
03:00 Harvey Beaks
03:24 Harvey Beaks
03:48 The Loud House
04:12 The Loud House
04:36 Breadwinners
05:00 Breadwinners
05:24 Get Blake
05:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Rabbids Invasion
07:24 Get Blake
07:48 Harvey Beaks
08:12 Sanjay And Craig
08:36 Sanjay And Craig
09:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
09:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
09:48 Henry Danger
10:12 Game Shakers
10:36 Regal Academy
11:00 Winx Club
11:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
11:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
12:12 The Loud House
12:36 Rabbids Invasion
13:00 Breadwinners
13:24 Harvey Beaks
13:48 Hunter Street
14:12 I Am Frankie
14:36 The Thundermans
15:00 Spitting Adam
16:36 The Loud House
17:00 Sanjay And Craig
17:24 I Am Frankie
17:48 Hunter Street
18:12 Hunter Street
18:36 Nicky, Dicky And Dawn
19:00 School Of Rock
19:24 Game Shakers
19:48 The Thundermans
20:12 Ride
20:36 SpongeBob SquarePants
21:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
21:24 Sanjay And Craig
21:48 Rabbids Invasion
22:12 Breadwinners

NAT GEO people HD

00:45 Eat Street
01:10 What's For Sale?
01:40 Fish Of The Day
02:05 Fish Of The Day

02:35 What's For Sale?
03:00 What's For Sale?
03:30 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
03:55 Andy And Ben Eat The World
04:25 Straight To The Source: Korean Food
05:20 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
06:15 Carnival Eats
07:10 Fish Of The Day
08:05 What's For Sale?
08:30 What's For Sale?
09:00 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
09:25 Andy And Ben Eat The World
09:55 Straight To The Source: Korean Food
10:20 Straight To The Source: Korean Food
10:50 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
11:45 Carnival Eats
12:40 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
13:35 What's For Sale?
14:30 Croatia's Finest
15:25 Andy And Ben Eat The World
16:20 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
17:15 Carnival Eats
18:10 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
19:05 What's For Sale?
20:00 Croatia's Finest
21:00 Andy And Ben Eat The World
22:00 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
22:55 Carnival Eats
23:20 Carnival Eats
23:50 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces

nick Jr

00:15 Shimmer And Shine
01:01 Max & Ruby
01:25 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
01:47 The Day Henry Met
01:57 Blaze And The Monster Machines
02:41 Zack & Quack
02:52 Kid-E-Cats
03:04 Shimmer And Shine
03:26 Nella The Princess Knight
03:38 Paw Patrol
04:01 Little Charmers
04:13 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
04:24 Dora The Explorer
04:46 Max & Ruby
05:06 The Day Henry Met
05:11 Nella The Princess Knight
05:35 Shimmer And Shine
05:59 Wallykazam!
06:21 Zack & Quack
06:32 The Day Henry Met
06:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
07:00 Rusty Rivets
07:13 Paw Patrol
07:37 Dora The Explorer
08:00 Nella The Princess Knight
08:10 Kid-E-Cats
08:21 Bubble Guppies
08:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines
09:07 Paw Patrol
09:30 Shimmer And Shine
09:53 Nella The Princess Knight
10:15 The Day Henry Met
10:22 Paw Patrol
10:45 Rusty Rivets
11:05 Wallykazam!
11:28 Bubble Guppies
11:52 Team Umizoomi
12:15 Shimmer And Shine
12:39 Shimmer And Shine
13:01 Max & Ruby
13:25 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
13:36 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
13:47 The Day Henry Met
13:52 The Day Henry Met
13:57 Blaze And The Monster Machines
14:41 Zack & Quack
14:52 Kid-E-Cats
14:58 Kid-E-Cats
15:04 Shimmer And Shine
15:26 Nella The Princess Knight
15:38 Paw Patrol
16:01 Little Charmers
16:13 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
16:24 Dora The Explorer
16:46 Max & Ruby
17:06 The Day Henry Met
17:11 Nella The Princess Knight
17:35 Shimmer And Shine
17:59 Wallykazam!
18:21 Zack & Quack
18:32 The Day Henry Met
18:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
19:00 Rusty Rivets
19:13 Paw Patrol
19:37 Dora The Explorer
20:00 Nella The Princess Knight
20:10 Kid-E-Cats
20:21 Bubble Guppies
20:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines
21:07 Paw Patrol
21:30 Shimmer And Shine
21:53 Nella The Princess Knight
22:15 The Day Henry Met
22:22 Paw Patrol
22:45 Rusty Rivets
23:05 Wallykazam!
23:28 Bubble Guppies
23:52 Team Umizoomi

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD

00:10 Dian Fossey: Secrets In The Mist
01:00 Live Free Or Die
02:00 Supercar Megabuild
03:00 Locked Up Abroad
04:00 Dian Fossey: Secrets In The Mist
05:00 Building Wild
06:00 Fish Tank Kings
07:00 Bad Trip
08:00 Science Of Stupid
08:30 Science Of Stupid
09:00 Shark Men
10:00 Cold Water Gold
11:00 The Story Of God With Morgan Freeman
12:00 Air Crash Investigation
13:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:00 Science Of Stupid Engineering
14:30 Science Of Stupid Engineering
15:00 Fish Tank Kings
16:00 Cold Water Gold
17:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
18:00 Air Crash Investigation
19:00 Seconds From Disaster
20:00 Cold Water Gold
20:50 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
21:40 Air Crash Investigation
22:30 Seconds From Disaster
23:20 Science Of Stupid Engineering
23:45 Science Of Stupid Engineering

NAT GEO WILD HD

00:20 The Lakeshore Killers
01:10 World's Deadliest
02:00 World's Deadliest GPU
02:50 Monster Fish
03:45 The Croc Catchers
04:40 Animal Fight Club
05:35 World's Deadliest GPU
06:30 Monster Fish
07:25 The Croc Catchers
08:20 Animal Fight Club
09:15 Wild Islands
10:10 Sahara
11:05 Secret Life Of Predators
12:00 Hunting The Hammerhead
12:55 Man V Lion
13:50 Monster Fish
14:45 Extreme Animals
15:40 Animal Fight Club
16:35 Wild Islands
17:30 Zoo Confidential
18:25 Secret Life Of Predators - 2016
19:20 Extreme Animals
20:10 Animal Fight Club
21:00 Wild Islands
21:50 Zoo Confidential
22:40 Secret Life Of Predators - 2016
23:30 Hunting The Hammerhead

nick HD

00:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
00:36 Rabbids Invasion
01:00 Rabbids Invasion
01:24 Sanjay And Craig
01:48 Sanjay And Craig
02:12 Winx Club
02:36 Winx Club
03:00 Harvey Beaks
03:24 Harvey Beaks
03:48 The Loud House
04:12 The Loud House
04:36 Breadwinners
05:00 Breadwinners
05:24 Get Blake
05:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Rabbids Invasion
07:24 Get Blake
07:48 Harvey Beaks
08:12 Sanjay And Craig
08:36 Sanjay And Craig
09:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
09:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
09:48 Henry Danger
10:12 Game Shakers
10:36 Regal Academy
11:00 Winx Club
11:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
11:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
12:12 The Loud House
12:36 Rabbids Invasion
13:00 Breadwinners
13:24 Harvey Beaks
13:48 Hunter Street
14:12 I Am Frankie
14:36 The Thundermans
15:00 Spitting Adam
16:36 The Loud House
17:00 Sanjay And Craig
17:24 I Am Frankie
17:48 Hunter Street
18:12 Hunter Street
18:36 Nicky, Dicky And Dawn
19:00 School Of Rock
19:24 Game Shakers
19:48 The Thundermans
20:12 Ride
20:36 SpongeBob SquarePants
21:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
21:24 Sanjay And Craig
21:48 Rabbids Invasion
22:12 Breadwinners

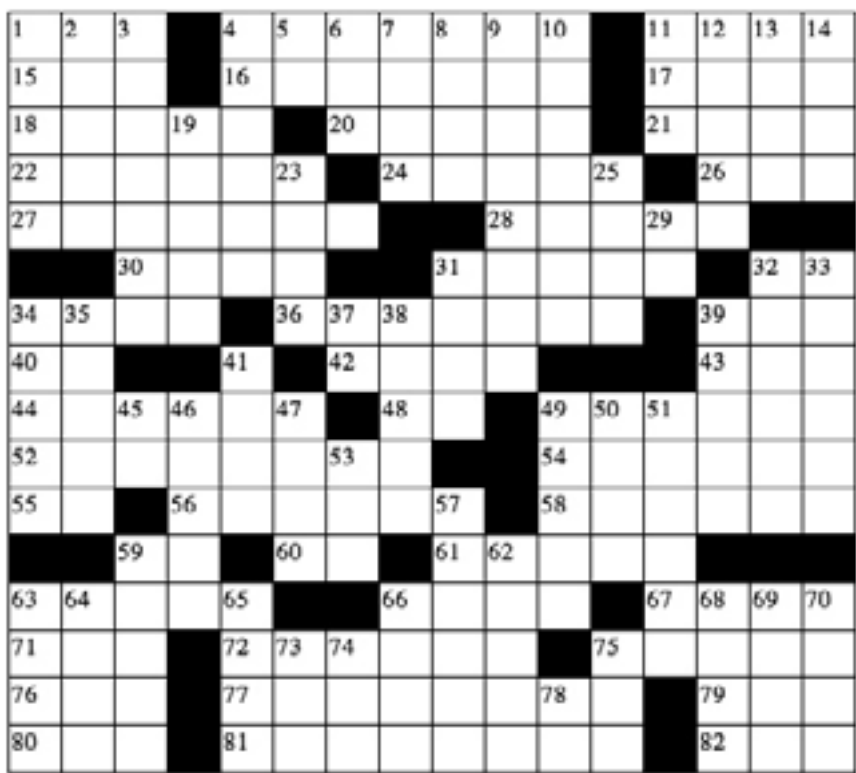
22:36 Harvey Beaks
23:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
23:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
23:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles

nick Jr

00:15 Shimmer And Shine
01:01 Max & Ruby
01:25 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
01:47 The Day Henry Met
01:57 Blaze And The Monster Machines
02:41 Zack & Quack
02:52 Kid-E-Cats
03:04 Shimmer And Shine
03:26 Nella The Princess Knight
03:38 Paw Patrol
04:01 Little Charmers
04:13 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
04:24 Dora The Explorer
04:46 Max & Ruby
05:06 The Day Henry Met
05:11 Nella The Princess Knight
05:35 Shimmer And Shine
05:59 Wallykazam!
06:21 Zack & Quack
06:32 The Day Henry Met
06:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
07:00 Rusty Rivets
07:13 Paw Patrol
07:37 Dora The Explorer
08:00 Nella The Princess Knight
08:10 Kid-E-Cats
08:21 Bubble Guppies
08:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines
09:07 Paw Patrol
09:30 Shimmer And Shine
09:53 Nella The Princess Knight
10:15 The Day Henry Met
10:22 Paw Patrol
10:45 Rusty Rivets
11:05 Wallykazam!
11:28 Bubble Guppies
11:52 Team Umizoomi
12:15 Shimmer And Shine
12:39 Shimmer And Shine
13:01 Max & Ruby
13:25 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
13:36 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
13:47 The Day Henry Met
13:52 The Day Henry Met
13:57 Blaze And The Monster Machines
14:41 Zack & Quack
14:52 Kid-E-Cats
14:58 Kid-E-Cats
15:04 Shimmer And Shine
15:26 Nella The Princess Knight
15:38 Paw Patrol
16:01 Little Charmers
16:13 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
16:24 Dora The Explorer
16:46 Max & Ruby
17:06 The Day Henry Met
17:11 Nella The Princess Knight
17:35 Shimmer And Shine
17:59 Wallykazam!
18:21 Zack & Quack
18:32 The Day Henry Met
18:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
19:00 Rusty Rivets
19:13 Paw Patrol
19:37 Dora The Explorer
20:00 Nella The Princess Knight
20:10 Kid-E-Cats
20:21 Bubble Guppies
20:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines
21:07 Paw Patrol
21:30 Shimmer And Shine
21:53 Nella The Princess Knight
22:15 The Day Henry Met
22:22 Paw Patrol
22:45 Rusty Rivets
23:05 Wallykazam

Stars

CROSSWORD 1798



ACROSS

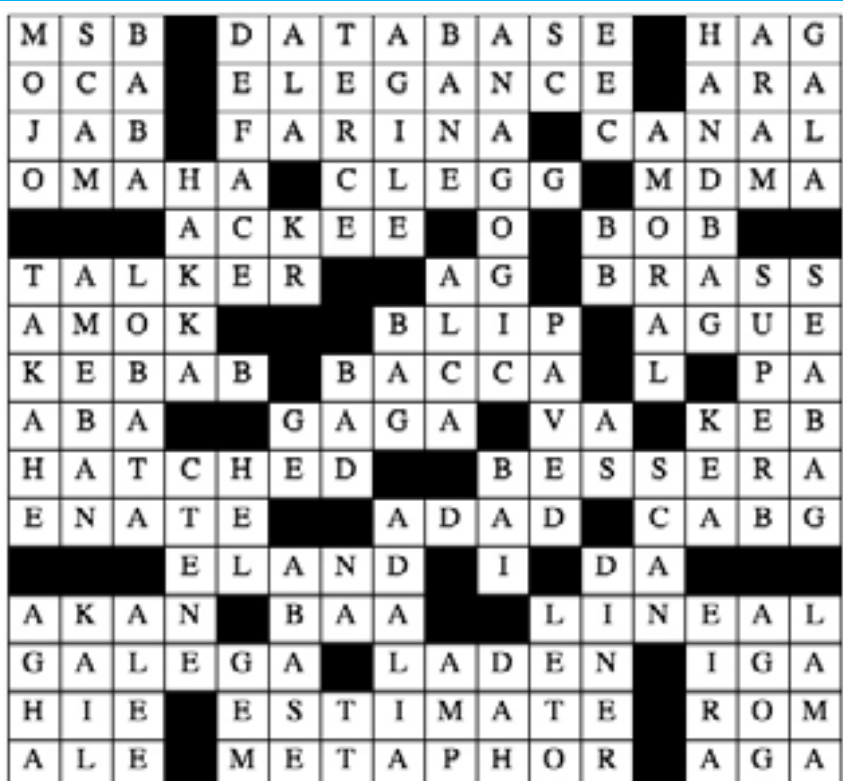
1. Any of various long-tailed rodents similar to but larger than a mouse.
4. Covered with paving material.
11. A Loloish language.
15. An inflated feeling of pride in your superiority to others.
16. An ancient jar with two handles and a narrow neck.
17. (Greek mythology) Goddess of the earth and mother of Cronus and the Titans in ancient mythology.
18. Any of numerous trees of the family Cupressaceae that resemble cedars.
20. Done or occurring in a brief period of time.
21. The sixth month of the civil year.
22. Of the appetites and passions of the body.
24. A city in northwestern Switzerland.
26. A sweetened beverage of diluted fruit juice.
27. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
28. Garlic mayonnaise.
30. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
34. American novelist (1909-1955).
36. United States inventor of a dry-plate process of developing photographic film and of flexible film (his firm introduced roll film) and of the box camera and of a process for color photography (1854-1932).
40. A state in the eastern United States.
42. (Irish) Mother of the Tuatha De Danann.
43. Used of a single unit or thing.
44. Evergreen Indian shrub with vivid yellow flowers whose bark is used in tanning.
48. A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.
52. A major school of Buddhism teaching personal salvation through one's own efforts.
54. Having a claw or claws.
55. A state in midwestern United States.
56. Of or relating to or near the sacrum.
58. In a tame manner.
60. An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.
61. An anti-TNF compound (trade name Arava) that is given orally.
63. Deciduous South African tree having large odd-pinnate leaves and profuse fragrant orange-yellow flowers.
67. A sudden short attack.
71. An implement used to propel or steer a boat.
72. A Christian Bishop who translated the Bible from Greek into Gothic (311-382).
76. The corporate executive responsible for the operations of the firm.
77. A member of a people of India living in Maharashtra.
79. A master's degree in education.
80. Imperial dynasty that ruled China (most of the time) from 206 BC to 221 and expanded its boundaries and developed its bureaucracy.
81. Having abnormal sagging of the spine (especially in horses).
82. The capital and largest city of Japan.

DOWN

1. A summary that repeats the substance of a longer discussion.
2. A yellow pungent volatile oil (trade name Agene) formerly used for bleaching and aging flour.
3. A family of birds of the order Coraciiformes.
4. A percussion instrument consisting of a pair of hollow pieces of wood or bone

- (usually held between the thumb and fingers) that are made to click together (as by Spanish dancers) in rhythm with the dance.
5. Before noon.
6. An emergency procedure consisting of external cardiac massage and artificial respiration.
7. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
8. Amino acid that is formed in the liver and converted into dopamine in the brain.
9. Tuberosus or rhizomatous herbaceous perennials.
10. A Brazilian river.
11. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
12. A family of Sino-Tibetan languages spoken in southeastern Asia.
13. (of persons) Highest in rank or authority or office.
14. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
19. Any organic compound containing the group -CONH2.
23. Remove with or as if with a ladle.
25. A cut of meat taken from the side and back of an animal between the ribs and the rump.
29. A chronic inflammatory collagen disease affecting connective tissue (skin or joints).
31. An inactive volcano in Sicily.
32. Shelf that projects from wall above fireplace.
33. Characterized by speed.
35. Type genus of the Gaviidae.
37. A public promotion of some product or service.
38. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
39. United States composer (born in Austria) who collaborated with Lerner on several musicals (1901-1987).
41. A member of an American Indian people of Yucatan and Belize and Guatemala who once had a culture characterized by outstanding architecture and pottery and astronomy.
45. An associate degree in nursing.
46. Follower of Rastafarianism.
47. (trademark) A liquid that temporarily disables a person.
49. The cardinal number that is the sum of seven and one.
50. Speaking a Slavic language.
51. A winged often one-seed indehiscent fruit as of the ash or elm or maple.
53. Government agency created in 1974 to license and regulate nuclear power plants.
57. 1 species.
59. American professional baseball player who hit more home runs than Babe Ruth (born in 1934).
62. A long noosed rope used to catch animals.
64. The United Nations agency concerned with atomic energy.
65. (trademark) An antacid.
66. Open to or abounding in fresh air.
68. The highest level or degree attainable.
69. Made agreeably cold (especially by ice).
70. Panel forming the lower part of an interior wall when it is finished differently from the rest.
73. Legal document setting forth rules governing a particular kind of activity.
74. The federal agency that insures residential mortgages.
75. East Indian tree bearing a profusion of intense vermilion velvet-textured blooms and yielding a yellow dye.
78. A crystalline metallic element not found in nature.

Friday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Aries, welcome to the new year! Take note that some issues will carry over from last year. While you may feel annoyed beyond belief know that it is a setback of limited duration. You surround yourself with beauty every chance you get: relax and admire the lovely life you have built. One of your favorite people becomes even more special today; you will be joyful. Your senses are on target regarding the purchase of furniture, art or anything of large value. You could find your mind weltered in distrust and concern having to do with a certain person. Let your love of lovely, fine things sustain your attention; curiosity about a new piece of technology will make time fly today. Enjoy a meaningful discussion tonight with family or friends, aries.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Taurus, welcome to a bright new year, full of opportunity and growth! Decisions pertaining to professional endeavors may be less than successful; it is possible that you will go against the wishes of the boss. You may be placed in a precarious position where you see that you are going to have to tone down your liberal thinking where work is concerned. You may feel trapped and angry when someone disses your strategies. Calm your thoughts and let them go to pleasant places away from issues; answers will not be forthcoming at this time. You may discover that the things you think you need will not serve you well. You will be at odds with customary ways of doing things. An elderly person will ruffle your feathers this evening, taurus.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Gemini, happy, happy new year; you are able to evaluate and reach correct conclusions during the new phase you have entered. You could be uncomfortable or unhappy with your environment enough to make plans to change it. Your attitude does not jive with people you are close to or work closely with; a younger person may get on your last nerve. You desire to clear away the old and make room for the new, mentally and physically. It would be best to wait until you are better able to communicate with people regarding something sensitive. You may go to a gathering where you will need to keep your lips sealed; this is for the best. Someone will listen and agree with your thoughts and feelings regarding your scrambled sense of self, gemini.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Cancer, happy, new year! Objectives, strategies and execution of said strategies will be highlighted this month and into the new year; the end results will be rewarding. A forceful will and determined efforts will be your focus. Things will flow smoothly today toward finishing an important project. You could be dismayed regarding someone the higher-ups want to add to the team; you are not a fan of their tactics or reputation. You could look deeply at yourself and those you surround yourself with. You will grow to love more intensely and put loved ones at the center of your world. A sense of peace and well-being as you go through your day. Being held in high esteem is important to you; this need will be fulfilled by most of those you know, cancer.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Leo, you could feel thwarted in your efforts to get things done today. You could lose your temper with very little prompting; take a deep breath and count to ten. You long for a secure relationship, for the safety of home and hearth you can depend on. You could feel the need to speak to someone about your deepest feelings, fears and hopes. Your wisdom is highly respected by someone who needs your help on a group issue; this could mean a very touchy situation. Your gift for resolving problems by getting to the bottom of things is prevalent today. You enjoy being the star of the show and you shine bright when you are. Continue to create in positive ways, leo.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Virgo, happy new year! The stars have aligned to bring vibrant and self-confident energy into your life this new year. You may feel disconnected emotionally from someone, perhaps those you work with or live with. You may want to consider changing your living arrangements or maybe change jobs. You are highly respected as a person who makes good choices and goes the extra mile to help others. If you feel physically run down figure out what the problem could be and change it; mind over matter is an important thing to remember. You could have to rethink a purchase you had planned on making; perhaps considering a less expensive model would help. Find it within yourself to lessen the effect a negative person has on you, virgo.

Wordsearch Puzzle

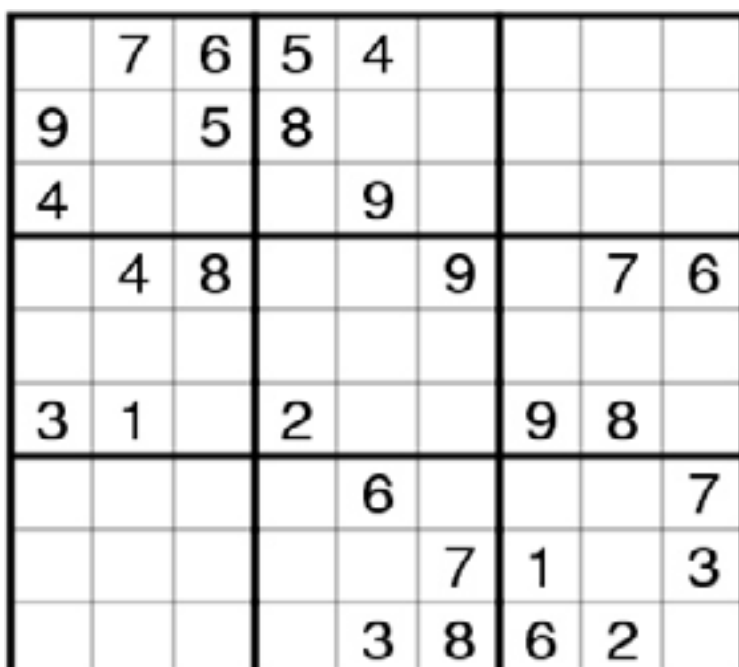
Flowers

Find and circle all of the flowers that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message - a quotation from Romeo and Juliet.

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

- | | | | |
|------------------|---------------|------------|------------|
| ALSTROEMERIA | CORNFLOWER | GOLDEN ROD | PANSY |
| AMARYLLIS | DAFFODIL | HEATHER | PEONY |
| ANTHURIUM | DAISY | HOLLYHOOKS | PETUNIA |
| ASTER | DELPHINIUM | HYACINTH | ROSE |
| BABY'S BREATH | FORGET-ME-NOT | HYDRANGEA | SNAPDRAGON |
| BELL FLOWER | FOXGLOVE | IRIS | STATICE |
| BIRD OF PARADISE | FREESIA | LAVENDER | STOCK |
| BOUARDBA | FUCHSIA | LIAC | SUNFLOWER |
| CALLA | GERANIUM | LILY | TULIP |
| CARNATION | GERBERA | LISSANTHUS | VIOLET |
| CHRYSANTHEMUM | GINGER | MARGOLD | YARROW |
| CLEMATIS | GLADIOLUS | ORCHID | |

Daily SuDoku



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Libra, happy new year! In this new year you should find your goals are firmly in mind and you will commit to savoring every moment of your life possible. The energy of your chart is that of growing with love, even if you're growing plants; whatever you cultivate you will do it with a certain gentle care radiating its own power. You want to be recognized for this ability; perhaps a garden show or some type of beauty pageant for babies, animals or a bake off! You will enjoy yourself with a group of people who will be drawn to your humor or compelling personality. There could be roadblocks today but you will figure out how to get around them; you will want to go one way but events will force in another direction: focus on enjoying your day off, libra.



Scorpio (October 23-November 18)

Scorpio, welcome to the new year! Hold on for an interesting ride through your desire to create a legacy; you could earnestly consider marriage or another serious partnership. Your days of being a loner have grown cold and you may become involved with a volunteer activity close to your heart; might indicate children, animals or beautification of your community. The prominent energies working now could allow for passionate discussions or disagreements with your sweetheart or someone you are considering for romance. There may be a focus in gathering people together to discuss political or religious matters. Your image will be one of taste and charm. Your evening could clear the way to finding and creating abundance tomorrow, scorpio.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Sagittarius, welcome to the new year and new additions to your journey. You will feel energetic mentally and spiritually today when you gather with loved ones. You could make many changes in the way you eat, dress and exercise; yoga or cross fit could be in your future. Someone you haven't seen in a long time could show up on your doorstep bearing gifts. Perhaps big choices should be made at another time when you feel less overwhelmed. The situation will eventually lead to your analyzing a subject and opening a path for your self-expression and bright outcomes. Your humor and jovial personality will create a fun time with friends later. You could become restless when you could find it difficult to wait on someone you expect to see, sagittarius.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Capricorn, happy new year! Your individuality shines today in your thinking and general way of going through life. Your sense of style and obvious intelligence attract the sort of attention you appreciate. You are compelled to nurture and help others creates a sense of belonging for you and others you are connected with. Your mental state is sharp; problem solving comes easily. A special person supports your thoughts and ideas. You may become fully aware of the place in life you've created for yourself; you've worked hard to realize your goals, relish it and let it show you that you can do even more if you wish! Enjoy the outdoors, let your body and mind breathe as you gather with those who are like-minded. Above all, capricorn, recognize your value.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

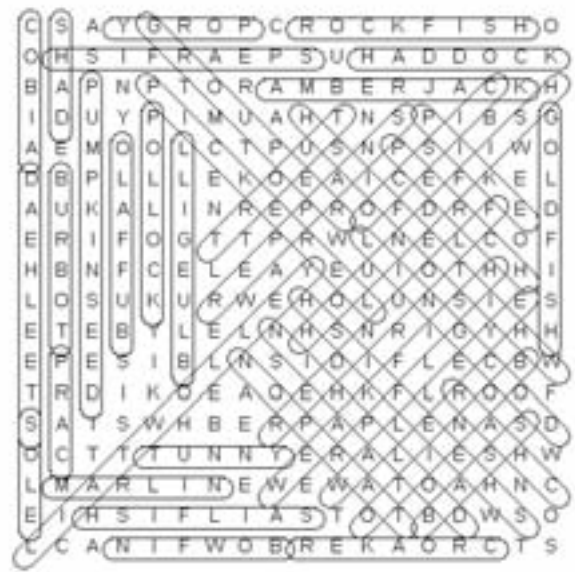
Aquarius, happy new year! Home, hearth, workplace, family and friends are the corner stones of your life. These important parts of your life are never far from your thoughts lately and this is very timely just now. You have a distinct wish to be highly regarded by a particular person; this is a definite bone of contention. You could feel the inability to get your point across later today. A desire to broaden your goals and shoot for the stars comes to the fore you just happen to be at your most effective when negotiating and collaborating with others. You are very clear on which path to take and will feel no need to rush blindly into anything. Your inherent intelligence and rational judgment are called on for a special purpose. Here s to a great new year, aquarius.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Pisces, happy new year! You should find it a rather fortunate day for making plans or decisions and finding your way through just about any problem that you may discover. You should be feeling successful and have no problem in solving any difficulties that should come up at this time. Good advice from a guide or older person may be forthcoming. Expect a good day. Anything of a domestic nature or having to do with things from the past helps you recognize your need for security and a feeling of having attachments. The family, home, relatives and real property all could be playing a larger part in your life. It is essential to your wellbeing to know that you belong on a private, intimate, personal level, to be needed and to feel that it is okay to have needs.

Fish 2



- | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| AMBERSACK | CROAKER | PICKEREL | SOLE |
| BASS | DOLPHIN | PIKE | SPEARFISH |
| BLUEGILL | FLOUNDER | POLLOCK | STEELHEAD |
| BONITO | GOLDFISH | PORGY | TARPON |
| BOWFIN | GROOPER | PUMPKINSEED | TROUT |
| BUFFALO | HADDOCK | ROCKFISH | TUNNY |
| BURBOT | HOUNDFISH | SALFISH | WALLEYE |
| CARP | LINGCOD | SHAD | WEAFTISH |
| CHAR | MARLIN | SHEEPFISH | WHITEFISH |
| CISCO | PERCH | SNAPPER | YELLOWTAIL |
| COBIA | | | |

Hidden sentence: A COUNTRYMAN BETWEEN TWO LAWYERS IS LIKE A FISH BETWEEN TWO CATS

Friday's Solution



Classifieds

Tuesday, January 2, 2018

Kuwait Times
 Now you can browse
www.kuwaittimes.net
 e-mail: info@kuwaittimes.net

STATE OF KUWAIT
 DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
 METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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



Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY NIGHT: Partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times south easterly wind changing to north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 45 km/h causing rising dust over open areas with a chance for scattered rain.

BY DAY: A significant decrease in temperature and Clouds will decrease gradually with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 35 km/h.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings		
STATION	MAX. REC.	MIN. EXP.	SFC. CHART 01/01/2018 1200 UTC		
KUWAIT CITY	26 °C	15 °C			
KUWAIT AIRPORT	26 °C	13 °C			
ABDALY	25 °C	09 °C			
BUBYAN	24 °C	10 °C			
JAHRA	27 °C	11 °C			
FAILAKA ISLAND	22 °C	13 °C			
SALMIYAH	20 °C	16 °C			
AHMADI	22 °C	14 °C			
NUWAISIB	26 °C	12 °C			
WAFRA	26 °C	11 °C			
SALMY	26 °C	10 °C			

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Tuesday	01/02	A significant decrease in temperature and Clouds will decrease gradually	21 °C	13 °C	NW	15 - 35 km/h
Wednesday	01/03	Fair	20 °C	09 °C	NW	12 - 32 km/h
Thursday	01/04	Fair	21 °C	10 °C	VRB	08 - 18 km/h
Friday	01/05	Warm and some high clouds will appear	23 °C	12 °C	SE	12 - 38 km/h

TOMORROW PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	05:18
Sunrise	06:43
Zuhr	11:52
Asr	14:43
Sunset	17:01
Isha	18:23

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	26 °C
MIN. Temp.	06 °C
MAX. RH	71 %
MIN. RH	18 %
MAX. Wind	S 21 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

All times are local time unless otherwise stated. UP.0 2018/01/01 14:37 UTC V1.00 T2.4 ق.ت.ع.ع-1/8

Airline

American Airlines	22087425
Kuwait Airways	22087426
Jazeera Airways	171
Jet Airways	22924455
FlyDubai	22414400
Qatar Airways	22423888
KLM	22425747
Air Slovakia	22434940
Olympic Airways	22420002/9
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6
Reservation	22433388
British Airways	22425635
Air France	22430224
Emirates	22921555
Air India	22438184
Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Egypt Air	22421578
Swiss Air	22421516
Saudia	22426306
Middle East Airlines	22423073
Lufthansa	22422493
PIA	22421044
Alitalia	22414427
Balkan Airlines	22416474
Bangladesh Airlines	22452977/8
Czech Airlines	22417901/2433141
Indian Airlines	22456700
Oman Air	22958787
Turkish Airlines	22453820/1
Aeroflot	22404838/9

REQUIRED

Indian well-experienced personnel manager who speaks both English and Arabic.

For Arabic call: **55575906**

For English call: **55640060**

REQUIRED

Part or fulltime employees ageing 18 - 35 max. Visa transfer not conditioned

For Arabic call: **55575906**

For English call: **55640060**

FOR SALE

CHANGE OF NAME

Household items like laptop, single bed, baby cot, cupboard, small tables, window curtains, baby car seat, Hyundai room heater, floor lamp, wall mirrors, etc. for sale in Salmiya. All items are in very good condition. Please contact 25736319 after 10 am. (C 5372) 29-12-2017

I, Obanapu Shankaraiah, holder of Indian Passport No. K2098394 issued at Kuwait on 27/01/2012 S/o Lakshminarasa Reddy shall henceforth be known as OBULAPU SANKAR REDDY S/o LAKHMINARASA REDDY OBU-LAPU, for the purpose of correction of wrong entries mentioned in my passport. 2-1-2018

EMERGENCY



112

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is

1889988



Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

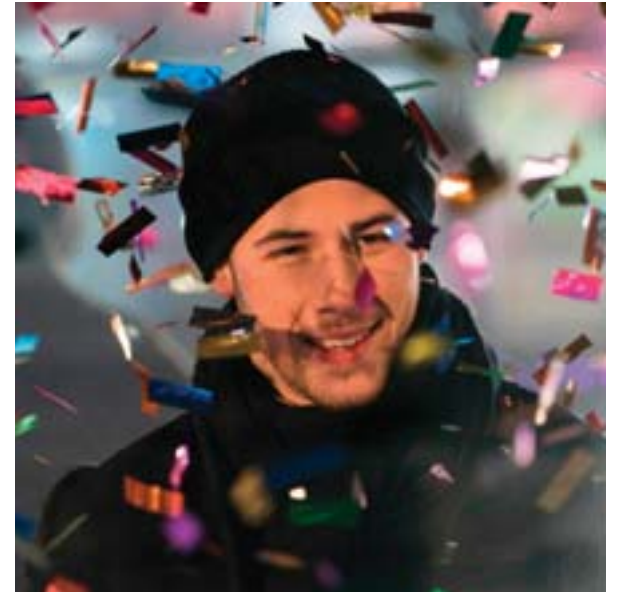
Arrival Flights on Tuesday 2/1/2018				Departure Flights on Tuesday 2/1/2018			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
JAI	572	Mumbai	00:05	AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	JZR	528	Asyut	00:15
JZR	539	Cairo	00:50	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:30
PGT	858	Istanbul	00:55	MSC	406	Sohag	00:30
THY	772	Istanbul	00:55	FDB	072	Dubai	00:35
WAN	416	Beirut	01:05	MSC	412	Asyut	01:00
KAC	102	London	01:20	JAI	571	Mumbai	01:05
DLH	625	Bahrain	01:45	JZR	142	Doha	01:45
UAE	853	Dubai	01:45	KAC	677	Dubai	01:50
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50	KAC	285	Dhaka	01:55
AXB	395	Kozhikode	02:00	KAC	363	Colombo	02:00
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	KAC	417	Manila	02:00
QTR	1086	Doha	02:20	THY	773	Istanbul	02:30
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:30
KLM	446	Bahrain	02:30	DLH	625	Frankfurt	02:45
WAN	548	KTM	02:40	AXB	396	Kozhikode	02:55
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	UAE	621	Addis Ababa	03:05
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:55	UAE	854	Dubai	03:40
RJA	644	Amman	03:05	QTR	1087	Doha	03:40
MSR	606	Luxor	03:05	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:55
KAC	414	Bangkok	03:05	KKK	1269	Istanbul	03:55
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10	OMA	644	Muscat	03:55
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	THY	765	Istanbul	04:00
OMA	2641	Muscat	03:30	MSR	607	Luxor	04:05
QTR	1076	Doha	03:50	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:05
LMU	5510	Cairo	04:00	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
QTR	1090	Doha	04:05	OMA	2642	Muscat	04:30
KAC	382	Delhi	04:15	LMU	5511	Cairo	05:00
KAC	418	Manila	04:25	QTR	1091	Doha	05:05
KAC	1544	Cairo	04:25	KAC	205	Islamabad	05:20
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:35	QTR	1077	Doha	05:30
KAC	284	Dhaka	04:50	FDB	070	Dubai	05:45
FDB	069	Dubai	04:55	KAC	303	Mumbai	06:05
THY	6376	Istanbul	05:10	JZR	563	JZR	06:25
JZR	609	Hyderabad	05:10	JZR	786	Riyadh	06:25
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:20	THY	771	Istanbul	06:50
JZR	143	Doha	05:25	JZR	164	Dubai	06:55
THY	770	Istanbul	05:25	RJA	645	Amman	07:05
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	05:30	GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	KAC	167	Paris	07:35
KAC	358	Kochi	05:40	KAC	171	Frankfurt	08:00
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:10	KAC	501	Beirut	08:00
KAC	678	Dubai	06:30	THY	6376	Dubai/Istanbul	08:10
WAN	338	Alexandria	06:40	KAC	165	Rome	08:15
JZR	529	Asyut	06:50	FDB	054	Dubai	08:35
BAW	157	London	07:15	KAC	787	Jeddah	08:40
FDB	053	Dubai	07:35	KAC	613	Bahrain	08:55
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:35	BAW	156	London	08:55
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00	KAC	117	New York	09:00
UAE	855	Dubai	08:35	KAC	691	Muscat	09:10
OMA	2647	Muscat	09:00	JZR	534	Cairo	09:10
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	KAC	561	Amman	09:40
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	KAC	671	Dubai	09:45
QTR	1070	Doha	09:10	KAC	101	London	09:45
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45
JZR	787	Riyadh	09:50	KAC	515	Tehran	10:00
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	KAC	541	Cairo	10:00
WAN	342	Sohag	10:15	OMA	2648	Muscat	10:00
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:20	UAE	856	Dubai	10:00
IRA	675	Lar	10:40	KAC	773	Riyadh	10:10
WAN	114	Bahrain	11:00	ETD	302	Dhaka	10:10
MSC	403	Asyut	11:15	KAC	617	Doha	10:15
QTR	1074	Doha	11:20	QTR	1071	Doha	10:20
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	KAC	155	Istanbul	10:25
WAN	134	Doha	11:55	FDB	056	Dubai	10:35
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	JZR	778	Jeddah	10:40
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:10	ZAV	4101	IAQ	11:00
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	SVA	513	Riyadh	11:00
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:05
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	IRA	674	Lar	11:40
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	WAN	953	Baku	12:00
AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:15	JZR	776	Jeddah	12:00
KAC	774	Riyadh	13:40	MSC	404	Asyut	12:15
QTR	8511	Doha	13:55	QTR	1075	Doha	12:30
PAL	668	Manila	14:00	MEA	405	Beirut	12:55
OMA	2645	Muscat	14:00	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
ETD	8013	Bahrain	14:05	JZR	176	Dubai	13:40



American singer, songwriter, Mariah Carey performs during New Year's Eve celebrations in Times Square in New York. — AFP photos



American singer, songwriter, Nick Jonas performs during New Year's Eve celebrations in Times Square.



American singer, songwriter, Nick Jonas performs during New Year's Eve celebrations.

Freezing New York welcomes 2018 with tightest security



The ball drops to enter in the new year during New Year's Eve celebrations in Times Square in New York.

Some two million people braved New York's coldest New Year weather for a century to welcome 2018 in Times Square, with police enforcing intensely strict security. Residents and tourists faced the worst New Year freeze since 1917, with temperatures of nine degrees Fahrenheit (minus 12.7 Celsius).

After two attacks in the city inspired by the Islamic State group, in December and October, security was tightened with more than 20 roads closed. Barricades and sand-filled trucks were in place, along with bomb-sniffing dogs and more officers on the ground. Police also carried out two rounds of security screening on everyone who entered the Times Square security perimeter, the largest in history.

On entering the secured area, revelers emptied and discarded their purses and other small bags, which were not allowed. After a mass shooter in October killed 58 people in Las Vegas by firing into a crowd from his hotel room, police also deployed personnel to hotels and restaurants for the first time. "This is like the most exciting day in my life. I am very committed (to facing the cold)," said Hader Ghulam, 27, a Pakistani student based in Oklahoma visiting the city for the first time.

He told AFP he was impressed by the security measures and felt "pretty safe." Amber Gerrits, a student from Michigan, said she was not worried. "I think it'll be all right," she said, adding that "a lot of layers" of clothing helped prepare for temperatures which the National Weather Service warned were "dangerously cold." "And we plan on not drinking too much water," the 21-year-old said, referring to the difficulties of finding a public bathroom among the huge crowds.

The celebrations in Times Square featured music performances, fireworks, 3,000 pounds (1,360 kilograms) of confetti and 25,000 balloons. Mayor Bill de Blasio and this year's special guest, activist Tarana Burke-leader of the #MeToo movement against sexual harassment-pressed a button at midnight to start the traditional dropping of a large luminous ball down a pole. Among the celebrities joining the party were Mariah Carey-whose performance last year was plagued with technical problems-Neil Diamond, Nick Jonas and Camila Cabello. — AFP



Cuban-American singer and songwriter Camila Cabello Estrabao performs during New Year's Eve celebration.



Cuban-American singer and songwriter Camila Cabello Estrabao performs on stage.



USO entertainers take part in New Year's Eve celebrations in Times Square.

Jay-Z, Beyonce imagine daughter as US leader in new video

President Blue Ivy Carter? Music power couple Jay-Z and Beyonce have imagined their daughter as a transformative US leader in a new video. Blue Ivy, who turns six on January 7, is depicted as leading an all-female constitutional convention in 2050 in a video released Friday for her father's song "Family Feud." The video-shot by "Selma" director Ava DuVernay, one of the most prominent African-American women in Hollywood-tells a story with echoes of "Game of Thrones" and Shakespearean tragedy as it depicts a futuristic conflict.

The plot cuts back to 2050 as "America's founding mothers"-a cheeky take on the "founding fathers" who established the US political system-passionately debate whether to preserve the constitution's Second Amendment, which protects the right to bear arms. The women needed to revise the constitution at a time "when some thought that making America great meant making us afraid of each other," a descendant is heard saying-in an unmistakable critique of President Donald Trump and his campaign slogan.

The convention ends with a forceful appeal from the meeting's leader: "America is a family, and the whole family should be free." The descendant mentions wisdom she learned from her father-and her identity becomes clear as the story shifts to the year 2018 and the real-life Blue Ivy is seen with Jay-Z in church. Jay-Z then opens his song, appearing as if he is giving confession as Beyonce-sporting robes and a cap resembling the miter worn by Catholic cardinals-dances about.

"Family Feud" does not explicitly depict Blue Ivy as president, but the video quickly sparked chatter online. "President Blue Ivy 2050. #FamilyFeud. I'll be 79 when I cast this vote," hip-hop drummer and producer Questlove wrote on Twitter. The song appeared on Jay-Z's Grammy-nominated album "4:44," in which the rapper acknowledged infidelity to Beyonce, although "Family Feud" lyrically looks largely at his place in hip-hop.

Jay-Z and Beyonce, who together are worth an estimated \$1 billion, have been increasingly outspoken about their left-leaning political views and are friendly with former president Barack Obama. The "Family Feud" video, which appears only on Jay-Z's Tidal streaming platform, features cameos by multiple film and television stars including Jessica Chastain, America Ferrera, Rashida Jones, Mindy Kaling and Brie Larson. — AFP



Beyonce and Jay-Z

Indian Tamil cinema superstar Rajinikanth to enter politics

Rajinikanth, the wildly popular Indian cinema star who inspires almost godlike adulation in some parts of the country, announced his entry into politics Sunday. The 67-year-old actor's announcement ended a wait of almost two decades for many of his fans, especially in the southern state of Tamil Nadu where he is revered and referred to simply as "The Superstar". "I will form my own political party and contest from all 234 seats in the next (state) assembly election," he told a hall packed with supporters in the state capital Chennai.

The state, home to 72 million people, has been hit by political instability since the death in December 2016 of its charismatic chief minister Jayalalitha Jayaram, also a former movie star. Rajinikanth worked as a bus conductor in the southern city of Bangalore before heading to Chennai in 1973 to pursue his passion for acting. He rose to become the biggest star in the history of Tamil-language cinema. Rajinikanth is widely credited for almost single-handedly defeating a state government in 1996 by asking his fans to vote it out days before the election.

"I am not doing it for any post or money or fame as I have enough," he said Sunday of his political plans. Many fans let off firecrackers, danced to drums and shouted slogans in support of Rajinikanth after the announcement. India's junior finance minister Pon Radhakrishnan, who is also a parliamentarian from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Tamil Nadu, congratulated Rajinikanth on Twitter.

One of Bollywood's biggest stars, Amitabh Bachchan also had warm words. "My dear friend, my colleague and a humble considerate human, Rajinikanth, announces his decision to enter politics... my best wishes to him for his success," Bachchan told more than 32 million Twitter followers. But most political parties-especially the two regional parties DMK and AIADMK, which have dominated Tamil politics and have the most to lose from Rajinikanth's foray-were guarded in welcoming his announcement.



Indian film actor Rajinikanth gestures as he announces his entry in politics during an interaction session with fans in Chennai. — AFP

The BJP, despite its preeminent position across most of India, remains a fringe player in Tamil Nadu. Modi however has a good rapport with the Tamil star, who has often publicly praised the prime minister. The entire state of Tamil Nadu goes into a frenzy every time a new Rajinikanth movie is released. Many companies give their employees a day off, expecting low attendance. Fans cut their hair to resemble Rajinikanth's characters, and some even get his face tattooed on their bodies to mark the release of a film. In Chennai, many fans hand out sweets and even pour milk over giant posters advertising his movies-a tradition that derives from the ritual bathing of Hindu idols in milk. In his movies Rajinikanth specializes in playing ruffians with a golden heart. He also often portrays underdogs fighting for the good of society against corruption. — AFP

REVELERS WELCOME 2018 WORLDWIDE



Fireworks light the sky over the Opera House and Harbor Bridge during New Year's Eve celebrations in Sydney early yesterday. — AFP photos

Countless revelers switched into party mode Sunday across Europe to ring in 2018 after Sydney and Hong Kong earlier welcomed New Year on the other side of the globe with dazzling firework displays. In London more than 100,000 ticket-holders gazed up at a spectacular pyrotechnics display from the banks of the river Thames, before dancing to Auld Lang Syne. Keeping with tradition, the Big Ben bell in the Houses of Parliament rang in Britain's new year—the chimes having been turned back on especially for the celebrations as the famous clock tower is undergoing renovation and encased in scaffolding. Other European cities were similarly awash with people despite the winter cold.

In Paris hundreds of thousands of partygoers braved a storm warning and drizzle to line the Champs-Élysées avenue before a dazzling light show and a fireworks display lit up the Arc de Triomphe. Nearly 2,000 security forces were deployed to protect the crowd-out of some 140,000 mobilized nationwide to guard against the jihadist threat which the authorities describe as "still high". One reveler, who gave his name only as Stephane, insisted that a spate of recent attacks on France were "in the past."

"Life goes on and they (jihadists) are on the retreat," he said. In Hong Kong, the city staged a stunning fireworks display over its famous Victoria Harbor and thousands watched as "shooting stars" were fired from the rooftops of skyscrapers during a 10-minute musical spectacular.

Street parties

Three hours earlier Australia had rung in the New Year with a magnificent show of rainbow-coloured fireworks cascading from Sydney Harbor Bridge, as partygoers marked the nation's legalization of gay marriage amid tight security. Thousands thronged the harbor side to see the show illuminate the famous skyline as revelers danced to Auld Lang Syne. "Shooting stars"

were also fired from the rooftops of skyscrapers in a 10-minute musical fireworks display. In the Indonesian capital Jakarta, hundreds of couples attended a free mass wedding provided free by the authorities. "I am very happy," Aminah, who only goes by one name, told AFP. "I'm happy because it's for free and now I have all the legal documents which I have never had before, thank God."

Three hours earlier Australia rang in the New Year with a spectacular display of rainbow-coloured fireworks cascading from Sydney Harbor Bridge, as partygoers marked the nation's legalization of gay marriage amid tight security. About 1.5 million people packed the city's seafront to watch the pyrotechnics light up the sky above the historic bridge and the iconic opera house, the first major celebrations worldwide after New Zealand.

"This is a fabulous way to see out 2017 — the year that four out of five Sydney siders said a resounding 'Yes' to marriage equality," said Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore of the nationwide postal vote in support of change. Thousands turned out earlier in New Zealand's largest city Auckland for the annual New Year's Eve street party, marked by a major fireworks display from the Sky Tower.



Fireworks explode over Victoria Harbor in Hong Kong.



Fireworks explode around the London Eye during New Year's celebrations in central London.



Fireworks light the sky over the Harbor Bridge during New Year's Eve celebrations in Sydney.

Lifestyle | Feature



Fireworks explode over Victoria harbor during New Year celebrations in Hong Kong.



New Year revelers gather on the Champs-Élysées avenue in Paris.



Images are projected on the Arc de Triomphe monument during a laser and 3D video mapping show as part of the New Year celebration in Paris.

In Britain, despite the capital being hit by four terror attacks in 2017, Scotland Yard said it had fewer police officers on the streets than during last year's event. And revelers on the banks of the Thames were in a party mood as they danced to a soundtrack dominated by women to mark the centenary of women being granted the vote. "We will have the right response of officers at the right locations," said superintendent Nick Aldworth. "There is no specific threat to this event," he added. Tens of thousands of people had been expected in Edinburgh for its Hogmanay celebrations—one of the world's biggest street parties.



A woman sells "Happy New Year 2018" headgear at Martin Place in Sydney.



People take a bath during the traditional New Year swim in the Orankee lake in Berlin.

Year Sunday with a spectacular midnight laser show at Burj Khalifa, the tallest tower in the world. As the clock ticked to midnight the 828-metre (2,716-foot) tower was lit up with the green, white, black and red colors of the United Arab Emirates, a portrait of UAE founder Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan and "2018".

Hundreds of thousands of people watched the display amid tight security, with roads to the city center sealed off. There were first aid stations in the area, but the festivities passed off without incident. In previous years Dubai had organized spectacular fireworks displays to ring in the new year, but this time the authorities opted instead for a massive laser show, aiming to break a Guinness World Record.

Moscow likewise entered the new year with major boulevards and 36 key sites decked out. In Africa, Cameroon President Paul Biya used the occasion to remind his citizens of their "duty" to "maintain republican order" as well as "social peace and national unity" amid unrest in the country's Anglophone regions.

Gabon's President Ali Bongo vowed "radical change in governance" in 2018 in his end-of-year speech, with around a third of the country living below the poverty line. "I am determined to do everything possible to strengthen our unity, regain our cohesion," he said. In the Americas the countdown continued. In Brazil's party capital Rio millions were to gather on Copacabana beach to watch the fireworks, with many wearing white, the traditional color to usher in the new year.



Fireworks explode behind the quadriga of Berlin's landmark the Brandenburg Gate to usher in the New Year.



A picture shows people posing for a selfie during a laser show at Burj Khalifa, the tallest tower in the world, to mark the New Year's eve celebrations in Dubai.

Around the world

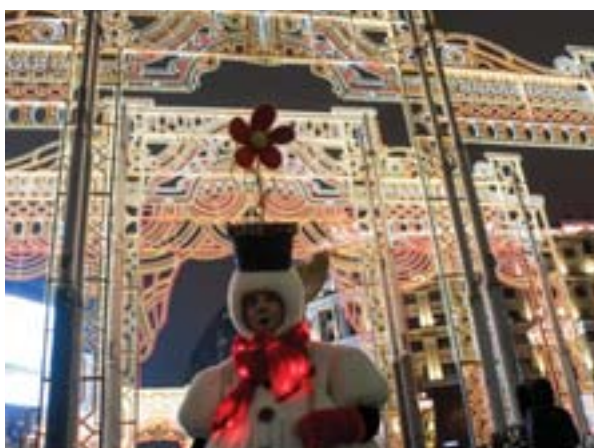
In Berlin, special tents were set up at the Brandenburg Gate to assist female victims of sexual harassment, following mass assaults on women in Cologne two years ago. In Cologne itself, 1,400 police were being mobilized, street lighting improved and more video cameras installed. As the midnight chimes neared in western Europe, Dubai celebrated the New



A woman applies coloured powder to a "rangoli", a Hindu ritual design, to usher in the New Year in front of a home in Hyderabad.



A man poses after taking part in the traditional New Year swim in the Orankee lake in Berlin.



Performers dressed as snowmen march in downtown Moscow.



Fireworks is seen over the city skyline with the landmark TV tower Æ as the German capital celebrates the arrival of a new year in Berlin.



People watch fireworks during New Year's celebrations at Copacabana beach in Rio de Janeiro.



People watch fireworks during New Year's celebrations at Copacabana beach in Rio de Janeiro.

Lifestyle | Feature



Fireworks explode over the Kremlin during New Year celebrations in central Moscow.



Thousands of Buddhist nuns gather at a park near Shwedagon Pagoda for a ceremony marking the New Year in Yangon.



This picture from North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) shows fireworks ushering in the New Year in Pyongyang.



Residents prepare their fireballs prior to celebrating the New Year by swinging fireballs above their heads as they walk through the town of Stonehaven, on the north east coast of Scotland.



Customers purchase "lucky bags" outside an electronics retail store in Tokyo.



People visit Meiji shrine to offer New Year prayers in Tokyo.



Masks of politicians, artists or social figures or characters that generated news in the last year are being sold as a tradition before New Year in Ecuador.



People wearing bear skins parade as part of a new year and winter festival during which groups from northern Romanian villages are invited to sing winter carols and dance.



Masked men take part in a new year and winter festival during which groups from northern Romanian villages are invited to sing winter carols and dance.



A man wears a bear skin during a new year and winter festival.



An Iraqi boy looks at decoration items sold in the Shiite holy city of Najaf.

Toughest security in years
Despite the joyous mood among those celebrating, stricter security has been a key focus amid fears that crowds could be targets for vehicle and other terror attacks. In Australia, the stronger police presence included some officers carrying semi-automatic rifles in Sydney and bollards used as barriers against vehicles. Earlier in December one man was killed and more than a dozen hurt when a man ploughed a car into a crowd of pedestrians in Melbourne.
Other cities are also on alert following deadly vehicle assaults over the past two years in Barcelona, Nice and London

Looking ahead to 2018
IS's defeat in Iraq and Syria was one of the key stories this year, but the jihadists remain a threat and numerous attacks around the world were claimed by them or Al-Qaeda-linked groups. Donald Trump stole the news spotlight after making his debut as US President in January 2017, with his "America first" policies and a bombastic personal style that has shaken up international diplomacy.
Political and diplomatic earthquakes set to rumble into 2018 include the crisis in the Middle East between Saudi Arabia and its allies against Qatar, and the humanitarian disaster in Yemen. In Europe, further talks on Brexit will help shape the region's future trade relationship while Russia is set to host the football World Cup amid frictions with the West. — AFP



A picture shows fireworks lighting the sky during celebrations to mark the New Year's eve celebrations in Abu Dhabi.



Dressed up men take part in a new year and winter festival during which groups from northern Romanian villages are invited to sing winter carols and dance.



This illustration taken with a long time exposure and with zoom effect in Budapest, Hungary, shows the year 2018, painted with a flashlight in front of a Christmas tree.



A Palestinian man walks past a 2018 sand writing at a beach in Gaza City.



People take part in a new year and winter festival during which groups from northern Romanian villages are invited to sing winter carols and dance.



A worshipper takes a handmade boat into the sea as end-of-year offerings to Iemanja, the Goddess of the Sea of the Afro-Brazilian religion Umbanda, at Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Lifestyle

TUESDAY, JANUARY 2, 2018



Thousands of biodegradable balloons are released by members of the Chamber of Commerce to celebrate the New Year in Sao Paulo, Brazil. — AFP

INDONESIANS CELEBRATE NEW YEAR WITH MASS WEDDING



Jakarta local government personnel conduct a mass wedding to welcome and celebrate the New Year 2018 in Jakarta.—AFP photos



A Jakarta local government personnel conducts a mass wedding to welcome and celebrate the New Year 2018.



Muhammad Nasir (right), 64, and his wife Aminah (left), 65, join 436 other couples in a free mass wedding in Jakarta.

Hundreds of Indonesian couples celebrated getting married in Jakarta on New Year's Eve in a free mass wedding. The communal event, attended by 437 couples, was staged by authorities to ease residents' struggles with bureaucracy. Many Jakartans cannot access public services because they have never legally been married, according to governor Anies Baswedan, "If they want to celebrate their wedding anniversaries, they

will not only celebrate it with their families but the whole world (who) will celebrate with them because it coincides with New Year's," the governor said.

Muhammad Nasir, 64, and his 65-year-old wife Aminah, who only goes by one name, have been married since 1968 — but only according to Islamic law due to financial reasons. They have five children and nine grandchildren, but as they have never been legally married

some of their children do not have birth certificates and cannot gain access to public services such as healthcare. They immediately signed up to the mass wedding when they heard about it. "I am happy. I am happy, I am very happy," Aminah told AFP. "I'm happy because it's for free and now I have all the legal documents which I have never had before, thank God," she added. As well as older couples who have been married according to Islamic law,

young newlyweds received a gram of gold, Korans and a set of prayer outfits. Music festivals, cultural parades, foods stalls and bazaars were also held at around the capital to celebrate New Year's Eve.—AFP



Balinese people perform culture parade during Denpasar festival the end the year in Denpasar on Bali island.



Balinese take part in a cultural parade during a festival to mark the New Year in Denpasar on Bali island. — AFP photos



Balinese children take part in a cultural parade during a festival to mark the New Year in Denpasar.

New Year in Denpasar