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# Injured football fans leave hospital, probe launched

## Amir congratulates Sultan Qaboos on Gulf Cup title

**KUWAIT:** The vast majority of Omani football fans who were injured a day earlier while celebrating their country's Arabian Gulf Cup win have been discharged from hospital, Kuwait's Public Authority for Sport (PAS) said yesterday. A number of Kuwaiti officials have consistently checked on the wellbeing of the Omani fans, who plunged to the ground at the packed Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium on Friday after a glass barrier shattered. PAS' Director General Dr Homoud Flaiteh told reporters. He added that a probe has been launched into the circumstances surrounding the unfortunate mishap.

Oman on Friday beat the UAE in a penalty shootout after a 0-0 draw to win their second Arabian Gulf cup, sending legions of Omani supporters into a frenzy. HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Friday sent a cable to Sultan Qaboos bin Said of Oman congratulating him on the Omani team's win. The Amir praised the achievement of the Omani national football team and the high performance of the two teams in the "Gulf 23" final game. HH the Amir also highlighted the "high brotherly spirit" displayed by the teams in the fixture, as well as fair play and competition, embodying the close and strong ties among them.

The Amir prayed for Sultan Qaboos' well-being, and further development and prosperity for Oman under his wise leadership. HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar congratulatory cables to the sultan.



**KUWAIT:** HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah checks on the wellbeing of an injured Omani fan yesterday, accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh and Health Minister Dr Sheikh Basel Al-Sabah. — KUNA

Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan also said in a statement late Friday that the 40 Omanis who were injured were in good condition, affirming that Health Minister Dr Sheikh Basel Al-Sabah was personally supervising medical treatment for them. All of the injured were transferred to hospi-

tal to get the necessary treatment quickly, said Roudhan, who is also Minister of Commerce and Industry. Kuwait will secure tickets and accommodation for fans who missed flights, he added.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber yesterday visited the injured Omani football fans. He said he is

intent on ensuring that the Omani fans are taken care of and safely repatriated once they are fully healed, Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh said in a statement. National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem also visited the wounded Omanis. — KUNA



**MUSCAT:** Omani player Ahmed Mubarak holds the 23th Arabian Gulf Cup trophy during a celebration ceremony for the team yesterday. — AFP

### News in brief

#### Activist on hunger strike

**KUWAIT:** A Kuwaiti activist sentenced to seven years in prison after he stormed parliament has begun a hunger strike in jail to demand a mistrial, according to his family. Sulaiman Binjasseem was one of 67 people handed prison sentences in November over a 2011 protest calling for an investigation into corruption and bribery. A statement from Binjasseem's family said he had launched an indefinite hunger strike on Thursday because the 2017 ruling failed to meet the standards of a fair trial, including allowing witnesses to testify. Mohammed Al-Hamidi, who heads the Kuwait Human Rights Society, told AFP the Kuwaiti appeals court had not yet allowed defense attorneys to appeal the sentencing.

#### KAC passengers, crew safe

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Airways Flight 118 bound from New York had a minor accident on the runway before takeoff from JFK International Airport, with all passengers and crew onboard safe, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said yesterday. The Boeing 777 was preparing for takeoff when another plane belonging to a Chinese airline bumped into it, resulting in the inability to operate the flight in accordance with international aviation safety regulations, said a DGCA statement. All passengers were transferred to a hotel until further arrangements are taken. An extreme winter storm is currently hitting the US' East Coast, which led to the shutting down of airports and the cancellation of about 3,300 flights, mainly at JFK.

#### 11 Saudi princes arrested

**RIYADH:** Saudi authorities have arrested 11 princes who protested against the kingdom's austerity measures and who could face trial, a news website close to the government reported yesterday. Sabq said the princes were protesting at a historical Riyadh royal palace, Qasr al-Hokm, against a government's decision to stop paying the water and electricity bills of royals. They were also demanding "financial compensation" after one of their cousins had been sentenced to death for an unspecified crime. The princes were transferred to the high-security Ha'ir prison in the capital "ahead of their trial", Sabq said. It said the princes "were informed of the error of their demands but they refused to leave Qasr al-Hokm", prompting the royal guards to intervene and arrest them. "Everybody is equal before the law and anyone who does not implement regulations and instructions will be held accountable, no matter who he is," the website added.

## Saudi boosts citizen benefits as taxes bite

**RIYADH:** Saudi Arabia announced yesterday it had boosted stipends and benefits for citizens to cushion the impact of economic reforms including the kingdom's first ever taxes after an oil price slump. Most working Saudi Arabians are employed by the state and, like nationals in other energy-flush Gulf monarchies,

have long benefited from a generous welfare system.

After the 2014 oil market crash, Saudi Arabia as well as the neighboring United Arab Emirates announced a five percent value-added tax on most goods and services which took effect at the start of this year. Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter, also roughly doubled gasoline prices on the same day as part of a broad reform initiative aimed at diversifying its economy.

In a move that aims to "soften the impact of economic reforms on Saudi households," King Salman issued a royal decree late Friday ordering a 1,000 riyal

(\$267) monthly living allowance for military personnel and public servants for a period of one year. Student stipends will be increased by 10 percent, an official statement said. Allowances for retirees and social security recipients were also boosted.

The oil-rich Gulf has long been a tax-free haven for both high-income households and migrant laborers, who frequently rely on remittances to support their families back home. But countries in the region have introduced a series of austerity measures over the past two years to boost revenues and cut spending as the slump in world oil prices led to

ballooning budget deficits. Saudi Arabia has also intensified efforts to boost employment of its own citizens. The jobless rate among Saudis aged 15 to 24 stood at 32.6 percent last year, according to the International Labor Organization. Saudi Arabia posted an economic contraction in 2017 for the first time in eight years due to severe austerity measures. The coming year's budget envisions record spending for the kingdom, a move meant to return the economy to positive growth.

Under Friday's royal decree, troops serving at the border with Yemen, where

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## Trump: I'm a 'very stable genius' and 'like, very smart'



**THURMONT, Maryland:** US President Donald Trump speaks during a retreat with Republican lawmakers and members of his Cabinet at Camp David yesterday. — AFP

**WASHINGTON:** US President Donald Trump yesterday praised himself as "a very stable genius", following the release of a bombshell book that calls into doubt his mental health. But Trump's response to the book's allegations had Washington focusing anew on the question of his stability. Trump, in a series of extraordinary morning posts on Twitter, said his Democratic critics and the US news media were bringing up the "old Ronald Reagan playbook and screaming mental stability and intelligence" since they have not been able to bring him down in other ways. Reagan, a Republican who was the US president from 1981-1989, was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease in 1994 and died in 2004.

Trump said that "throughout my life, my two greatest assets have been mental stability and being, like, really smart". "I went from VERY successful businessman,

to top T.V. Star to President of the United States (on my first try). I think that would qualify as not smart, but genius...and a very stable genius at that!"

The new supposed tell-all book - Michael Wolff's "Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House" - was rushed into stores Friday after the Trump administration failed to suppress it. The book quickly sold out in Washington and has been the talk of the town. Trump has declared the instant best-seller as "phony" and "full of lies" as the White House issued a scorched-earth dismissal of "Fire and Fury" along with its author and his sources.

Trump's stability has been questioned by critics almost since he declared his candidacy for the presidency. In March 2016, former Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney said Trump

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# Drug addict shoots wife dead over disputes related to his addiction

## Two kilos of heroin busted at airport

By Hanan Al-Saadoun and Agencies

**KUWAIT:** A drug addict shot his wife dead and then turned himself in to police yesterday. The woman, Saudi, died from a gunshot wound in the chest after her husband, a 42-year-old Kuwaiti, shot her due to family disputes over his addiction, according to his statements to police. The body was recovered by the coroner, and the suspect was taken to the proper authorities for further action. This crime happened nearly two weeks following a similar case in which a man confessed to killing his pregnant wife in Taima while he was under the influence of drugs, according to police.

### Smuggling foiled

Customs inspectors at Saad Al-Abdullah Airport yesterday foiled a passenger's attempt to smuggle in around two kilograms of heroin hidden in secret places around the side of his bag. In a bid to mislead inspectors, the suspect, Asian, had left his bag behind the day he arrived, and came over the following day to collect it. When the bag was scanned, inspectors detected strange objects confiscated in the bag's sides. The bag was then manually searched, which revealed around two kilograms of heroin hidden. Kuwait Customs Department Director Jamal Al-Jalawi said. A case was filed and the suspect was referred to relevant authorities.

### Two-boat collision

Two people died in a two-boat collision reported recently at the entrance of Fahaheel Sea Club. Firefighters and paramedics rushed to the scene after an accident was reported between two fishing boats: one carrying two Kuwaiti citizens and the other two Egyptian men. One Kuwaiti man was pronounced dead on the scene, while the body of one of the two Egyptians was later found by fishermen in a nearby area. The other two people were sent to hospital for treatment of injuries they sustained as a result of the accident. An investigation was opened.

### Road accidents

Two people died and a third was injured in two separate accidents reported recently. In the first acci-



**KUWAIT:** This photo shows a boat that was involved in an accident at the entrance of Fahaheel Sea Club that left two people dead.

dent, a motorcycle collided with a road sign on Arabian Gulf Road, and the motorcyclist, Kuwaiti, died on the scene. The other accident was reported at King Fahad Road in which a 24-year-old Kuwaiti died and another citizen injured. Separately, fourteen Asian workers sustained injuries when a bus carrying them flipped over on Fourth Ring Road. The injured people were taken to Farwaniya and Sabah hospitals.

### Attempted murder

Three Nepalese men were charged with attempted murder after throwing a compatriot from the fifth floor over a dispute. Police received a call about the fall and arrested the suspects who first claimed the victim threw himself out, but investigations proved otherwise. The victim was taken to hospital in a critical condition.

### KD 20,000 theft

Detectives are investigating the theft of KD 20,000 in cash from a citizen's house. Suspects include a haris

(janitor) who was allowed to deal with a fire inside his apartment. The citizen received a call from the haris regarding smoke coming from the apartment, and gave him permission to enter. The citizen returned home to see a only burnt pillow, and then discovered that KD 20,000 was missing from the cupboard. Separately, 20 gas cylinders and 20 microwaves were stolen from a citizen's store in Mangaf. A complaint was lodged. In another case, a citizen told Abu Hlaifa police that KD 370 in cash were stolen from his car while it was parked in front of a house in Mahboula.

### Counterfeit goods

Shuwaikh Port customs officers recently foiled an attempt to smuggle in two separate large shipments of counterfeit goods carrying some famous brands, said security sources. The first shipment comprised of five containers carrying 2,984 cardboard boxes of fake goods, while the second included 570 boxes of fake ladies shoes, purses, makeup, chargers and video game controllers, the sources noted.

## Iran today



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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The news of protests in Iran topped the attention of the world last week. The protests still fluctuate between opponents and supporters of the revolution and those who see such public protests as destructive and chaotic. The UN Security Council held an emergency meeting at the request of the United States to discuss the situation in Iran following the protests that erupted on Dec 28, which resulted in deaths and injuries as well as the arrest of hundreds of protesters and the outbreak of rioting and looting.

In this article, I am not analyzing the actual reasons for this unrest - what is important for us is to emphasize the protection of our internal security in Kuwait in light of the worrying situation there, especially since we have a large community of Iranians living among us. Will these protests lead to real reforms or more sanctions to thwart any possible protests in the future?

The official Iranian response rejected the international intervention by the US, as the Iranian foreign minister considered the meeting of the Security Council at the request of Washington regarding the protests in Iran as a mistake of the US administration's foreign policy. The Russian delegate agreed with the statement that Washington is exploiting the Security Council, adding the situation in Iran is not the responsibility of the UN. Meanwhile, the United States' ambassador to the United Nations expressed her country's position, saying that the US stands with those who seek freedom for themselves and dignity for their people.

I believe the situation is similar to the common expression: "Is the glass half empty or half full?" It is normal to see those who support or



**Kuwait has a long history with Iran as a neighboring country, with friendly ties**

even applaud chaos in the streets and demands for change by force as an expression of the desire of young people for more freedom. It is also natural to see those who fear that such demands in a system like Iran will often clash with the regime and the way the state and its institutions are run. Therefore, calls for freedom indirectly imply regime change. Naturally, those who support such claims are considered a threat to the security of the country.

I think that the international reactions that came out as a response to the Iranian situation are usual in the event of any public protests, regardless of the country. International attitude is set by interests and not sentiments, especially among big countries such as the United States and Russia, when dealing with Iran. The most prominent proof of this is the issue of Syria. I think this should be an indicator of the Arab role in this matter. We as the international community should not add fuel to the situation between two main international forces and a strong state with an extended history like Iran.

How should we approach this issue in Kuwait? Kuwait has a long history with Iran as a neighboring country, with friendly ties. Therefore, the Kuwaiti role has always been that of calling for peace and dialogue in all crises in the region. A rationalist cannot support a country's ruin because demands for change and reform shouldn't threaten the lives of innocent people or send more people to prison. Both of these can lead to doubling the anger.

I think international mediation should be by a neutral European country. I hope to listen to an official Iranian side seeking to reach an understanding with the protesters and real reforms aimed at calming and resolving the problems that led to these protests in the first place, because the region can no longer tolerate more tension and violence. I wish peace to all and hope we can live together without fighting.

## Military official touts merits of conscription

**KUWAIT:** Compulsory military service would help instill in draftees a sense of patriotism while reinforcing the need for optimism, a Kuwaiti military official said yesterday. Speaking after Kuwait's military service authority took in its first group of 82 enlistees, Major General Ibrahim Al-Omairi, the head of the body, said that serving in the military is a productive experience that builds the physical ability and resoluteness needed to protect the nation. He advocated conscription as excellent discipline that would not interfere with the draftees' career choices, rather it allows them the chance to excel in whatever path they choose to pursue.

Omairi urged the conscripts to remain committed during their period of service, saying that military enrollment was incumbent upon them to have their country's best interests at heart. He promised a fair shake for all draftees during their period of service, which will be divided into two phases ranging from four to eight months, where they will be attending courses in addition to practical military training. Omairi also commended the recruits for having the gumption to enlist in the military.

### Troops' dedication

Separately, First Deputy Premier and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah praised the dedication of Kuwaiti troops stationed in Saudi Arabia as part of Yemen's Restoration of Hope Operation. Both the



Major General Ibrahim Al-Omairi



**KUWAIT:** Draftees from the first group of 82 enlistees for conscription. —KUNA

Kuwaiti and Saudi people are bound by a shared history and common destiny, Sheikh Nasser said during a visit to ground forces in Jazan on Thursday, according to a ministry statement. The role of Kuwaiti forces in the operation supplements their historic duty in supporting their Gulf and Arab brethren, he said, adding that their duty to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait is one and the same.

Upon his arrival, Sheikh Nasser was received by the Kuwaiti Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Deputy head of the Saudi Ground Forces Air Vice Marshal Ahmad Al-Shehri, amongst other Saudi officers.

He went on to relay to the soldiers the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. The visiting minister was then briefed on the role and duties of Kuwaiti troops involved in the coalition.



Later, he paid a visit to King Khaled Air Base in the southwestern Saudi city of Khamis Mushait, where he was received by Commander of the Southern Region Maj Gen Abdallah Al-Qaffari and Commander of King Khaled Air Base Air Vice Marshal Sulaiman Al-Fayez. He also met several senior Kuwaiti air force officers also taking part in the operation. —KUNA



**First Deputy Premier and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah poses with Kuwaiti ground forces in Jazan during his visit to troops participating in the Restoration of Hope Operation.**

Local

# Durra GM defends high costs: Hiring helpers not like buying commodities

## Costs would drop if more countries open recruitment: Wuhaib

By Ben Garcia

**KUWAIT:** The cost of hiring domestic helpers in Kuwait has skyrocketed over the years, leading the government to intervene by establishing the Al-Durra Company for Manpower, its own recruitment agency. As a result, according to Saleh Al-Wuhaib, General Manager of Al-Durra, the cost of recruitment through this company is 20 percent lower compared to the private sector.

"The cost of recruitment at private manpower agencies is higher. At Durra, it is KD 260 cheaper than the cost of recruiting housemaids from other sources," he said. "The problem is that people expect too much - way beyond reality. We have to understand that hiring a domestic helper is not like buying commodities. There are lots of factors to consider - this is why the cost is climbing and we cannot do anything about it, even if we are a government-owned company," he told Kuwait Times.

According to Wuhaib, the number one reason why the cost of hiring housemaids is so steep is because sources are few. "Today, from how many countries are we sourcing domestic workers? Technically, only two. There are some African countries too, but they are subject to legal issues and bilateral agreements, so we only have two countries left - the Philippines and Sri Lanka. If other countries like India and Indonesia open recruitment again, you will see the costs will fall automatically. The cost is tied to supply and demand, plus many other factors such as individual restrictions of countries supplying domestic helpers and bureaucracy in those countries," he explained.

### KD 990

Last month, MP Safa Al-Hashem called on the government to close down Al-Durra. In a press statement, Hashem said the purpose of establishing Al-Durra was to reduce the exorbitant charges demanded by private recruitment agencies, but according to her, this isn't the case. Recently,

Al-Durra announced an agreement was signed between Al-Durra and the Sri Lankan government, where Sri Lankan female workers can be recruited for KD 990.

But Wuhaib noted that Sri Lankan female workers do not want to come to Kuwait to work as domestic helpers anymore. "In this case, how will you be able to recruit housemaids? It's the lump sum amount that you give to the family back in Sri Lanka so they can be allowed to work in Kuwait. Plus, there are restrictions imposed by the Sri Lankan government and we have to abide by, or else they will not allow us to recruit workers. For instance, Sri Lankan women cannot come if they are under 25, or if they have children younger than five," he said.

"Apart from the scarcity of supply, the government has restrictive policies that we need to follow, or else we cannot get the housemaids. There are other sub-recruitment agencies in Sri Lanka who also need to be paid," Wuhaib said. He admitted that people expected too much from the new government-owned company without realizing the cost of recruitment. "Although we are owned by the government, the operation is run by board members, who are all from private companies. So we are controlled by the government, but privately run by the board. We are running the company just like other private companies," he revealed.

"People expected charges to be KD 300 or KD 500 at most. But to tell you frankly, this is only the cost of recruitment, plane tickets and documentation. But there are more payments that the agency has to make, like the cost of training and accommodation. For those who don't know, domestic helpers can be deployed only after training for about two months. During these months of training, they are paid by agencies back in Colombo or Manila, for which they charge us. So the result is a high recruitment cost," he said.

Asked if Al-Durra has signed an agreement with the Philippine government for domestic helpers, Wuhaib said:

"No, we are waiting for their government's approval. Maybe we will learn about it this month. While we are waiting, we are hopeful that the Indian and Indonesian markets will open again soon. The cost will reduce considerably if this happens," he pointed out.

### Bank guarantee

In the case of India, its government mandated in Nov 2014 that every employer who wanted to recruit an Indian female domestic worker had to provide a bank guarantee of \$2,500 (KD 730) at the Indian Embassy, drawing protests from the Kuwaiti authorities. The issue was even raised in the National Assembly and several members of parliament called for stringent measures against India, such as halting the recruitment of manpower from the country. In Sept 2017, Kuwait's residency affairs department lifted the ban on recruitment of Indian female domestic helpers after the Indian government rescinded the bank guarantee clause. The decision will pave the way for hiring female domestic helpers from India.

As for Indonesia, the ban of domestic workers was imposed by its government in 2010, citing alleged abuses of its maids and continuous arrival of runaway housemaids at the Indonesian Embassy. Despite calls for a moratorium or a total ban by Filipino community leaders on deploying domestic helpers to the Middle East for the same reason, the Philippine government is not keen to impose the ban.

Wuhaib said although the company began operations in Sept 2016, only Indian male domestic helpers were recruited, such as gardeners, drivers and cooks. "The first batch of Sri Lankan maids will arrive by the end of February. We believe that recruiting domestic helpers is a process that needs time for training and preparation," he added.

The Al-Durra Company was established in response to calls that privately-run agencies were charging excessive sums for recruiting domestic helpers. The current charges

for recruiting helpers at private agencies stand at approximately KD 1,200-KD 1,600. Al-Durra was established through law no. 69 of 2015 as a closed Kuwaiti shareholding company. Al-Durra is owned by various government agencies such as the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies (60 percent), Public Institution for Social Security (10 percent), Kuwait Airways (10 percent), Public Authority for Minors' Affairs (10 percent) and Kuwait Investment Authority (10 percent).

Al-Durra publicizes that its mission is to recruit and train domestic helpers to offer an alternative to the unreasonable fees and 'monopolistic practices' of privately owned recruitment companies. Another stated objective is to operate with transparency to improve Kuwait's image and reputation internationally with regards to human rights and build strong relations with labor-sending countries, opening new channels.

Meanwhile, final work on accommodations to be used to house incoming domestic helpers is underway. Upon arrival in Kuwait, the domestic helpers are taken to the accommodation for a brief stay as a rest period before commencing work, as requested by some embassies. From there, they will be taken to their embassies for an orientation before being dropped off at their new places of work. Al-Durra will also handle cases of runaways, with transfer of sponsorship a unique privilege of the company. The interior ministry has given the right to relocate a worker only to Al-Durra, while those signed up with other agencies must leave Kuwait should they quit work.



Saleh Al-Wuhaib

## MP Ashour urges govt to cooperate with parliament

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Member of the parliament's financial and economic affairs committee MP Saleh Ashour stressed that the committee's report on reducing the minimum retirement age was fully studied and then passed. Accordingly, Ashour rejected the government's reported plans to refer the decision for further studies, and stressed that this would mean that the

government was not cooperating with the parliament.

"The new government has to cooperate with the parliament, especially since retirement is optional and would benefit minor employees," Ashour

explained, noting that lawmakers are responsible for not delaying the passing of this law due to its great importance for all citizens. He added that the committee had previously refused seeking an international advisor's help in studying the law because it was not consistent with the justifications made to do so.



MP Saleh Ashour

## Kuwait underlines importance of preventative diplomacy

**NEW YORK:** Kuwait stressed the importance of preventative diplomacy and boosting the Security Council's role in the early prevention of conflicts and crises that may later threaten regional and global security. In a speech at a Security Council session on the Middle East and Iran on Friday, Kuwait's permanent UN envoy Mansour Al-Otaibi said he hopes ongoing public demonstrations in Iran do not take this route.

Kuwait urged the need to conform to UN charter principles, which call for respecting the sovereignty of nations and non-intervention in their internal affairs. Otaibi said that in recent years, many nations in the Middle East wit-

nessed protests that began peacefully then turned violent, leaving behind huge human losses and destruction and outside intervention that threatened regional security and stability. Some of these protests led to tragic situations the international community still suffers from. Kuwait hopes this does not happen from Kuwait or any other country, he said.

Iran is a neighboring country to Kuwait, and both are bound by historic relations, said the ambassador. Kuwait is committed to stable and warm relations with Iran based on good neighborliness, mutual respect, shared interests and non-intervention in each other's internal affairs, he said. The security and stability of Iran is linked to the security and stability of the region as a whole, he said.

Kuwait hopes the situation there does not escalate to further violence and calls for self-restraint and rationale in handling protesters and responding to their needs. Otaibi also underlined the importance of freedom of expression and peaceful protest guaranteed by the Iranian constitution and in accordance with international law. He also expressed Kuwait's sorrow over the loss of civilians and security forces due to the protests in Iran. — KUNA



Kuwait's permanent UN envoy Mansour Al-Otaibi

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## Local

## Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: The Central Bank of Kuwait's headquarters building overlooking the historical Sharhlan fishing harbor in the Sharq district of Kuwait City. — KUNA

## Kuwait ranks among the best countries in Middle East for ease of finding a job for women

### Nearly 8 in 10 working women believe labor laws fair to them

**KUWAIT:** With every passing year, workplace equality becomes a higher priority for organizations around the world - and those in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region are no exception. According to the 'Working Women in the Middle East and North Africa' survey by Bayt.com, the Middle East's number one job site, and global online market research company, YouGov, nearly three in four working women (74 percent) in Kuwait, who provided an answer, believe that job offers are based entirely on experience and qualifications, regardless of gender. This figure surpasses the regional average and places Kuwait among the top countries when it comes to the ease of finding a job for women.

The survey sought to explore the status of working women in the MENA region by analyzing their perceptions when it comes to equality at work and looking into their motivations for employment, challenges faced at work, as well as career and life ambitions. When asked about workplace equality, the survey revealed that more than eight in 10 respondents who answered this question believe that women in Kuwait have reached the same level of workplace equality as women do in western countries.

#### Workplace equality

Regionally, three quarters (75 percent) of respondents say that there is a mix of men and women working in the same workplace. In Kuwait, this figure is at the regional average. What's more, the majority (63 percent) of women in Kuwait say they are comfortable working in a mixed gender environment, with 43 percent claiming to be extremely comfortable. 33 percent were neutral in this aspect, while only 4 percent said they are uncomfortable.

While three-quarters (74 percent) of respondents working in a mixed-gender environment report having a male manager at their current organization, nearly the same proportion (73 percent) have no gender-based preference for a manager.

In Kuwait, over two thirds (67 percent) of respondents

report that they work almost an equal number of hours as their male colleagues, 5 percent believe they work less hours than their male counterparts, and 20 percent said they work more hours. 8 percent didn't provide an answer.

As for women-specific benefits in the workplace, the top five benefits MENA respondents receive from their organizations are personal health insurance (47 percent), paid maternity leave (40 percent), company transport/transport allowance (34 percent), job-related training (32 percent), and family health insurance (23 percent). Regionally, more than two thirds (69 percent) of women say their organization gives them at least one month of official maternity leave. 5 percent said their maternity leave is less than one month and only 9 percent said they don't have an official maternity leave policy. 19 percent of respondents did not know what the policy is.

With regard to labor laws in their country of residence, almost all (92 percent) respondents in Kuwait stated they have at least some familiarity with the labor laws in their country, with almost half (48 percent) claiming to be very familiar. Of those who are familiar with the labor laws in Kuwait, nearly eight in 10 (79 percent) stated that they are fair to women, at least to some extent. Only 10 percent think they are not fair while 10 percent did not provide an answer.

#### Challenges for working women

The top three challenges cited by MENA women in their workplace are less opportunity for job promotions

(44 percent), a stressful and demanding work environment (37 percent), and a lack of or insufficient job training and coaching (30 percent).

Despite these challenges, a majority of female respondents believe women and men are treated equally in the workplace across a variety of areas, including working hours (68 percent), training and development (68 percent), advice and support (60 percent), recruitment and selection (56 percent) and benefits (55 percent).

"It is a given that women play a vital role in the workplace today, and we are glad to see that in the MENA region, organizations are doing much more to accommodate women and promote workplace equality. The results from the 2017 'Working Women' survey indicate that organizations in the region are making excellent strides towards achieving total gender balance," said Rania Nseir, Director of Business Development, Bayt.com. "At Bayt.com, we take pride in our extensive equal opportunity practices and the presence of female employees in every level of our organization. We also make it a point to provide the tools and information that support other companies to enhance their hiring practices and that give equal access to our female job seekers, in the region and around the globe."

#### Career outlooks

Women's happiness in the region is largely career-oriented, with having a successful career (49 percent) emerging as the top driver of happiness. This was followed by good health (42 percent), traveling and visiting other

countries (36 percent), spending time with their families (34 percent), and making money (29 percent).

Moreover, women in the MENA cite financial independence (59 percent), the ability to support/financially contribute to their households (50 percent), the opportunity to broaden their perspectives on life (46 percent), making use of their education (42 percent), and securing their family and children's futures (40 percent) as their top five reasons for seeking employment.

At the same time, women around the world understand the importance of finding balance between their responsibilities at home and at work. In the MENA, more than half (54 percent) of respondents with children stated that their decision to have children has affected their career, at least to some extent, while 41 percent said it didn't affect it at all.

Further, over half (52 percent) of those surveyed believe their future marriage plans would affect their career choices, at least to some extent, while 29 percent said it wouldn't affect it at all and 19 percent didn't know. However, the majority of female respondents who are married indicated that their career choices had created either a positive effect (36 percent) or no effect (34 percent) on their marital life.

"As the world progresses to bring gender equality to the workplace on a greater scale, perceptions and opinions like those found in this survey provide valuable insight into what is working well and where organizations may need to improve. This survey seeks to better inform organizations in the MENA region and around the world on how they can facilitate workplace equality for their employees - and particularly those that balance their careers with a family and other personal responsibilities," said Anjali Chhabra, YouGov Associate Research Director. Data for the 'Working Women in the Middle East and North Africa' survey was collected online with 4,053 female respondents living in Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, and the UAE.



### According to a Bayt.com and YouGov survey

## CONDOLENCES



**Sri. Ajayakumar B. Nair (66)**

Former Advisory Board Member, NAFO Kuwait

We, NAFO Kuwait, are deeply saddened by the untimely demise of our Life Member and former Advisory Board Member Sri. Ajayakumar B. Nair (66 years) at his home in Aranmula, Kerala on the early morning of Friday 5th January 2018. May God the Almighty comfort the entire family during this time of grief

Dear Ajayakumar, though departed, you are still alive in our hearts and minds and through us you live on.

NAFO Kuwait

contact@nafoglobal.org

## HIG joins Horeca 2018 sponsors

**KUWAIT:** The Hasawi Industrial Group (HIG) announced participating in the Horeca Kuwait 2018 exhibition as a sponsor, joining a growing number of companies who already announced plans to participate in this event.

In this regard, HIG Commercial Manager Sabri Al-Rahawan stressed that changes in the world of trade and services made specialized exhibitions such as Horeca Kuwait indispensable in order to set successful marketing strategies for any sector at national, regional or international scales. He added that Horeca Kuwait has earned a great reputation in terms of the quality of participants, organization and benefit. "The exhibition has proven to be a basic supporter for marketing, and a place for gathering various catering, hotel equipment and cooking arts' companies together under one roof," he underlined, noting that such exhibitions help boost commercial and professional relations amongst those companies.

Further, Rahawan explained that Hasawi products such as water coolers, air conditioners, refrigerators, refrigerating rooms and isolated sandwich panels are all

designed according to the latest technologies and match international quality standards, which earned them the ISO9002 and ISO0001k certificates, in addition to European and American scientific accreditation certificates.

Moreover, Rahawan stressed that HIG has a long history in national industries that started in 1961 with the first refrigerators and water coolers factory. Its business gradually expanded into having more than five factories which currently manufacture water coolers, refrigerators, split and window air-conditioners, water heaters and large refrigerating warehouses in addition to the largest factory to manufacture roof and wall isolated sandwich panels. "HIG also has its installation and 24/7 maintenance department, a large fleet of equipped trucks, spare parts in addition to over 1,000 of staff including citizens," he concluded. The Horeca Kuwait 2018 is set to be organized by Leaders Group in collaboration with Hospitality Services Company Kuwait International Fairground in Mishref from January 15-17, 2018.



Sabri Al-Rahawan

## Commercial Bank participates in KGOC open day

**KUWAIT:** The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) recently took part in an open day activity organized by Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (KGOC) for local banks. Its participation comes as part of its comprehensive marketing plans aiming to introduce the bank's products and various banking services to clients. During the activity, CBK marketing employees reviewed various services and accounts that the bank provides to KGOC employees. In addition, CBK reviewed the privileges of its Al-Najma account, which provides the largest daily draw award in Kuwait in addition to quarterly awards of up to KD 250,000. The employees were also briefed about deposits, accounts, post-paid and pre-paid credit cards and the MasterCard newly issued in collaboration with British Airways.

Local

# The 5th International Green Roof Congress takes place at Al-Shaheed Park next month

Organized in cooperation with NoufEXPO



The Green Roofs of the congress center in Al-Shaheed Park (photo courtesy of Al-Hani construction and trading company).



The Green Wall project in Dubai (photo courtesy of Green Studios).



Turning grey into green infrastructures - Seoullo 7017 in South Korea (photo courtesy of Ossip van Duivenbode).

**KUWAIT:** Wolfgang Ansel, Director, International Green Roof Association IGRA, announced recently that the 5th edition of the prestigious International Green Roof Congress will be held for the first time in the Gulf region. Kuwait City will host the Congress on the 17th and 18th of February 2018. Ansel highly valued the support of Amiri Diwan to the Congress. The challenges and benefits of Green Roofs in dry climates will be the main focus of this event.

More than one-third of the world population already lives in dry climates, without considering the global metropolitan areas which often are grappling with the same problems and referred to as 'city deserts.' The performance of Green Roofs in these special environments is strongly connected with the availability and scarcity of water and the limited types of plants, which are able to tolerate these harsh weather conditions - therefore the water and plantation issue is a common thread of the congress presentations and discussions.

The congress venue Al-Shaheed Park in Kuwait City consists of 310,000 sq m of greenery, featuring a modern congress center, beautiful botanical gardens, museums, a miniature of old Kuwait, walkways, jogging tracks, lakes, river landscapes and an amazing musical fountain. With almost 80,000 sq m of Green Roofs the largest urban park in Kuwait represents at the same time a prime example of how to meet the challenges of hot and dry climate by using appropriate Green Roof systems.

The congress lectures will provide an inspiring mixture of progressive thinkers, new technical developments and innovative Green Roof applications in architecture, landscape architecture and climate protection. Practical Green

Roof technology will be presented, discussed and taught along with the latest achievements for Green Buildings, Green Infrastructure and municipal Green Roof strategies. Speakers will include for example Kai Uwe Bergmann from BIG - Bjarke Ingels Group (Copenhagen, New York, London), Khaled Alfouzan from The Associated Engineering Partnership (Kuwait), Deborah Nevins from Deborah Nevins and Associates (New York), Fida Mohammed Alhammedi from Dubai Municipality, Kyosuk Lee from MVRDV (Rotterdam, Shanghai), Jamil Corbani from GreenStudios (Beirut, Cairo, Dubai, Los Angeles) and Green Roof pioneer Roland Appl, president of the International Green Roof Association IGRA. The bios of the speakers from the Middle East, the US and Europe are available at the congress website [www.greenroof-world.com](http://www.greenroof-world.com). Featured

Green Roof Architecture - A series of groundbreaking and high-profile projects involving Green Roofs and Living Walls will be presented at the congress.

**Urban oasis**

Al-Shaheed Park is the most significant Green Infrastructure project in Kuwait and, at the same time, one

of the largest Green Roof projects in the world. During the first construction phase (2013-2015) almost all buildings were fitted with roof greening. In total this is 35,000 sq m of Green Roofs. In 2017 the second expansion "Phase II" was opened for the public, thus doubling the total Green Roof area of the park.

The design for the new Google Campus at King's Cross in London is taking advantage of the contextually defined building envelope while creating continuously cascading work environments that will connect Googlers across multiple floors. By opening up the ground floor and activating the roofscape, the light and airy workspaces are sandwiched between the terraced gardens on the roof and market halls, auditoria and shops on the ground.

Seoullo 7017, a true plant village, has been created on a former inner city highway in central Seoul. The ever-changing urban area has been transformed into a 983-meter long public park. 50 families of plants, including trees, shrubs and flowers are displayed in 645 tree pots, and a total of approximately 228 species and sub-species have found their home in the park.

The Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center(SNFCC) in Athens, designed by Renzo Piano

Building Workshop, includes the National Library of Greece, the Greek National Opera, as well as the creation of the 210,000 sq m Stavros Niarchos Park. The "metamorphoses of a topos" has been designed with a sustainable approach, respecting the surrounding ecosystems and the landscape dynamics. The SNFCC includes 25,568 sq m Green Roofs.

The congress is for everyone whose profession brings them into contact with Green Roofs and those who wish to learn about the latest technology in this field. This includes architects, installers, landscape architects, planners, representatives of local authorities and environmental agencies, investors and manufacturers. Join us for a top-level program focusing on innovative new technologies, stunning architecture, pioneering urban development projects and many opportunities to network with international leaders in the field of Green Roofs.

Ansel concluded his statement by inviting all interested professionals to attend this first IGRA event in the Gulf region since it represents a perfect platform for the launch of a successful Green Roof campaign in this geographical area. He looks forward to seeing all guests and visitors at Al-Shaheed Park, Kuwait's new urban oasis!



Wolfgang Ansel



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A long simmering Erdogan-Gul feud

## Blocks from White House, a freezing tent is home

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TORONTO: A picture obtained from the Facebook account of Connie Carson shows a Sunwing's airplane (front) colliding with a WestJet plane (left rear) at Toronto's Pearson Airport. —AFP

# Two jets collide at Toronto airport

## Clip shows flames erupting from Sunwing aircraft

**MONTREAL:** Two jets collided on the ground at a Toronto airport on Friday, setting the tail of one aircraft alight and prompting passengers to evacuate the other via an emergency slide. Both WestJet and Sunwing confirmed that their planes were involved in the collision at 18:19 local time (2319 GMT) at Toronto Pearson International, the second such incident at the airport in five months. Several hours after the collision the airport said all WestJet passengers were safely at the terminal, adding that one of the airport's fire and emergency service personnel was undergoing hospital treatment.

"At this time, airport operations have not been significantly affected by the incident but continue to be challenged by the extreme cold weather conditions," the airport's statement said. The panicked shouts and cries of those aboard were audible on one Instagram video shot

by a passenger inside the WestJet plane. The clip showed flames erupting from the Sunwing aircraft, sending black smoke spewing into the frigid night air. "Our plane was crashed into by another plane right after the pilot announced they were 'low on staff,'" wrote the user who posted the video, under the handle [stephen\\_belford](#).

WestJet said on Twitter that the Boeing 737-800 plane had 168 guests and six crew onboard, and had arrived in Toronto via Cancun. Waiting to proceed to the gate, the aircraft "was struck by a Sunwing aircraft pushing back from the gate," WestJet said. "Due to the position of the aircraft on the laneway, WestJet guests required evacuation via emergency slide. Emergency crews were on hand and responded immediately," the airline tweeted. The company did not specify if the incident resulted in injuries but said "all 168 guests and six crew



### The second such incident in 5 months

are accounted for."

"We can confirm guests are safely in the terminal and they are in the process of clearing customs." In a statement posted on its social media pages Sunwing said "there were no Sunwing crew or passengers onboard at the time of the incident," adding that its aircraft had been "under tow by our ground handling service provider" prior to the collision. Toronto's weather was clear but overnight the temperature plunged below -20 degrees Celsius (-4 degrees Fahrenheit). The Transportation Safety Board had arrived at the scene and launched an investigation. The collision is the second such incident at Toronto Pearson in recent months. In early August, a Canadian and a Polish passenger jet clipped wings on the ground at the airport, causing "serious" damage but no casualties. —AFP

## Tillerson backs Trump as book casts mental health doubts

**WASHINGTON:** Washington's chief diplomat Rex Tillerson found himself obliged to defend President Donald Trump's fitness for office Friday after a bombshell new book called into doubt his mental health. In an extraordinary portion of a television interview on foreign policy challenges, Tillerson was asked about claims that Trump has a short attention span, regularly repeats himself and refuses to read briefing notes. "I've never questioned his mental fitness. I've had no reason to question his mental fitness," said Tillerson, whose office was last year forced to deny reports that he had referred to Trump as a "moron" after a national security meeting.

And, even in defending Trump, the former ExxonMobil chief executive admitted he has had to learn how to relay information to a president with a very different decision-making style. "I have to learn how he takes information in, processes it and makes decisions," Tillerson told CNN. "I'm here to serve his presidency. So I've had to spend a lot of time understanding how to best communicate with him." But Tillerson emphasized the right decisions had been made and that the United States is in a stronger place internationally thanks to Trump's policies.

### 'Not a typical president'

"He is not a typical president of the past, I think that's well recognized that's also why the American people chose him," he said, insisting that he does not expect to be asked to resign in the coming year. Tillerson was forced to mount his defense as Washington devoured a new supposed tell-all-Michael Wolff's "Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House"—rushed into bookstores after the White House failed to suppress it. The book quickly sold out in shops in the US capital, with some people even lining up at midnight to get their hands on it and others circulating pirated copies. —AFP

## 'Fire and Fury': Excerpts from tell-all book on Trump

**WASHINGTON:** The following are excerpts from "Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House," an incendiary new book by Michael Wolff which was rushed into bookstores Friday after President Donald Trump failed to suppress it. The book quickly sold out in shops in the US capital, with some lining up at midnight to get their hands on the instant best-seller, dismissed by Trump as "phony" and "full of lies." Without addressing specifics, White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders said there were things in the book that were "completely untrue," while Trump denounced comments attributed to Steve Bannon, saying his former chief strategist had "lost his mind."

### Team Trump: running to lose

"We're all losers," Trump would say. "All our guys are terrible, nobody knows what they're doing." "This thing," he told the Mercers, "is so fucked up". Trump was reportedly addressing the family of Bob Mercer, the ultra-conservative billionaire sponsor who swung behind his campaign in its final months—and who reiterated their support in the wake of Wolff's bombshell book.

### The shock of election night

"When the unexpected trend-Trump might actually win—seemed confirmed, Don Jr. told a friend that his father, or DJT, as he called him, looked as if he had seen a ghost. Melania, to whom Donald Trump had made his solemn guarantee, was in tears—and not of joy." "There was, in the space of little more than an hour, in Steve Bannon's not unamused observation, a befuddled Trump morphing into a disbelieving Trump and then into a horrified Trump. But still to come was the final transformation: Suddenly, Donald Trump became a man who believed that he

deserved to be, and was wholly capable of being, the president of the United States."

### Bannon-Russians meeting

"The three senior guys in the campaign," an incredulous Bannon went on, "thought it was a good idea to meet with a foreign government inside Trump Tower in the conference room on the 25th floor—with no lawyers. They didn't have any lawyers. Even if you thought that this was not treasonous, or unpatriotic, or bad shit, and I happen to think it's all of that, you should have called the FBI immediately." Bannon was referring to Trump's son Donald Jr., son-in-law Jared Kushner and campaign manager Paul Manafort.

### Learning the constitution

"Early in the campaign, in a Producers-worthy scene, (campaign aide) Sam Nunberg was sent to explain the Constitution to the candidate: 'I got as far as the Fourth Amendment before his finger is pulling down on his lip and his eyes are rolling back in his head.'" George W Bush on Trump's inaugural address - "That's some weird shit."

### Trump's Putin obsession

"What has he gotten himself into with the Russians?" pressed (the late Fox News chairman Roger) Ailes. "Mostly," said Bannon, "he went to Russia and he thought he was going to meet Putin. But Putin couldn't give a shit about him. So he's kept trying."

### Trump's Murdoch obsession

"I'll call him," said Ailes. "But Trump would jump through hoops for Rupert. Like for Putin. Sucks up and shits down. I just worry about who's jerking whose chain."

### Murdoch on Trump?

"What a fucking idiot," said Murdoch, shrugging, as he got off the phone" after talking immigration issues with Trump.

### Too much to think about

"I wouldn't give Donald too much to think about," said an amused Ailes. Bannon snorted. "Too much, too little—doesn't necessarily change things."



CALIFORNIA: Copies of the book 'Fire and Fury' by author Michael Wolff are displayed on a shelf at Book Passage in Corte Madera, California. —AFP

### Trump fears being poisoned

"He had a longtime fear of being poisoned, one reason why he liked to eat at McDonald's—nobody knew he was coming and the food was safely pre-made."

### Flattery and Egyptian shoes

"Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, the Egyptian strongman, ably stroked the president and said, 'You are a unique personality that is capable of doing the impossible.'" (To Sisi, Trump replied, "Love your shoes. Boy, those shoes. Man...")

### 'Our man' in Saudi

"Within weeks of (Trump's Saudi) trip, MBS (Mohammed bin Salman), detaining MBN (Mohammed bin Nayef) quite in the dead of night, would force him to relinquish the Crown Prince title, which MBS would then assume for himself. Trump would tell friends that he and Jared had engineered a Saudi coup: 'We've put our man on top!'"

### Ivanka's presidential ambitions

"Balancing risk against reward, both Jared and Ivanka decided to accept roles in

the West Wing over the advice of almost everyone they knew. It was a joint decision by the couple, and, in some sense, a joint job. Between themselves, the two had made an earnest deal: If sometime in the future the opportunity arose, she'd be the one to run for president. The first woman president, Ivanka entertained, would not be Hillary Clinton; it would be Ivanka Trump."

### Presidential nicknames

"His sons, Don Jr and Eric—behind their backs known to Trump insiders as Uday and Qusay, after the sons of Saddam Hussein." And the comb-over: explained by Ivanka - "She often described the mechanics behind it to friends: an absolutely clean pate—a contained island after scalp-reduction surgery—surrounded by a furry circle of hair around the sides and front, from which all ends are drawn up to meet in the center and then swept back and secured by a stiffening spray. The color, she would point out to comical effect, was from a product called Just for Men—the longer it was left on, the darker it got. Impatience resulted in Trump's orange-blond hair color." —AFP

International

# A long simmering Erdogan-Gul feud erupts into acrimonious public row

## Gul 'could emerge as presidential candidate' in 2019 elections

**ISTANBUL:** A long simmering feud between Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his predecessor and one-time comrade Abdullah Gul has erupted into an acrimonious public row, raising questions about the former head of state's future political intentions. Gul and Erdogan co-founded the ruling Islamic-rooted Justice and Development Party (AKP) that dominated Turkish politics since 2002, with Gul serving as premier, foreign minister and then president from 2007-2014.

Since leaving office, Gul kept a guarded silence as Erdogan moved to expand the powers of the presidency as rumors swirled the former president was alarmed over Turkey's course and bitterly resented being excluded from the ruling party. Gul was said to be particularly unhappy over an April referendum Erdogan called and narrowly won to expand the powers of the presidency. But an emergency decree issued last month which says civilians would not face legal action over any behavior in thwarting the 2016 coup sparked fears of mob rule and a rare intervention from Gul.

Gul labeled the decree "worrysome in terms of the understanding of the rule of law" and risked "developments in the future that would upset us all." Erdogan, without naming Gul, spat back those worried about the decree were no different from people who turned down the constitutional changes in the April referendum.

**'Express my opinion'**

Abdulkadir Selvi, pro-Erdogan columnist in the Hurriyet newspaper, added fuel to the flames saying talk was growing that Gul could emerge as a presidential candidate of the

Turkish opposition to challenge Erdogan in 2019 elections. He said that Erdogan had already "seen the plot" and the row over the immunity decree was "only tip of an iceberg". Gul then hit back at criticism from "some MPs and trolls", saying that they "exceeded the limits of morality." "As a person who believes in freedom of thought and expression, one of the founding principles of our party, I will continue to express my opinion on occasions I deem necessary." The nationalist Aydinlik newspaper added that Gul had been engaged in "election traffic" with an intensive travel schedule that included trips to Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Britain as well as keeping in close touch with ex-premier Ahmet Davutoglu who was ousted in 2016.

### Gul kept a guarded silence as Erdogan moved to expand his powers



**'A little bit braver'**

Analysts say that the current row represented a new step by Gul, a hugely prudent figure who has so far kept any criticism of his former ally deeply private. But it would also be premature to assume Gul was throwing down a gauntlet to Erdogan ahead of the 2019 elections that could ultimately result in a ballot box showdown. "Despite the rifts that emerged between the two from time to time, they have never been rivals," pollster Adil Gur, who runs A&G Research said.

"I believe Gul will not run as candidate and even if he does, I don't think he will have any chance," Gur said. The dispute likely first erupted in May-June 2013 when Erdogan refused any compromise faced with unprecedented anti-government protests whereas Gul advocated a more conciliatory approach. The referendum appears to have been a breaking point, with Gul reportedly refusing to back the presidential system plan in a tense hours-long meeting with Erdogan



**ISTANBUL:** File photo shows Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan (right) talking with Turkish President Abdullah Gul during the opening ceremony of the third Bosphorus bridge in Istanbul. —AFP

ahead of the poll. Gareth Jenkins, Istanbul-based non-resident senior research fellow at the Silk Road Studies Program, said Gul's best chance of returning to frontline politics would be within the AKP in the event of an anti-Erdogan rebellion in the party. He said that to mount any serious challenge Gul would have to regain the trust of Erdogan opponents lost due

to his prolonged silence on key issues and reluctance for public confrontation. "He would have to make a lot of sacrifices and prepared to take risks before anybody takes him seriously as an opponent," Jenkins said. But he acknowledged that nonetheless Gul was "a little bit braver" in the last week compared with the past.—AFP

## The factions that will decide Iran's protest response

**TEHRAN:** Recent unrest has highlighted the deep-seated frustration felt by many Iranians over the economy and their demands for reform, and attention now turns to how the political establishment will respond. Often seen in monolithic terms outside the country, Iran's politicians are vetted by a conservative-dominated Guardian Council to ensure they are loyal to the Islamic revolution, and ultimate power rests with supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. But there are still deep divisions over how the country should move forward politically, socially and economically. While all groups opposed the recent unrest and accepted action was needed to address economic problems, five key factions are pulling in different directions on how best to reform the country.

**The moderates**

The moderate faction currently dominates Iranian politics, focusing on better management of the economy, rebuilding trade with the West and gradually improving civil liberties as the best way to preserve the Islamic revolution. Rouhani has been accused of pushing austerity and neoliberal economic policies at the expense of the poor. He has called for more time for the benefits to trickle down and remains popular with many middle class voters for his efforts to challenge unaccountable parts of the establishment. Like his mentor, the arch-pragmatist Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani who died in January 2017, he has shown his capacity to switch direction and has accepted that more needs to be done to protect poorer sections of society. Analysts say the protests could provide him with an opportunity to push for more radical reforms.

**Reformists of ex-president**

Despite being barred from public appearances over his role in 2009 protests, Khatami remains one of the most popular figures in Iranian politics. His endorsement was seen as crucial to Rouhani's election in 2013 and 2017. The reformist faction includes some 20 parties pushing for greater freedoms, gender equality and worker rights. Most of their legislation was blocked by the Guardian Council during Khatami's 1997-2005 tenure, and they were decimated by the crackdown on pro-reformist demonstrations



**QOM, Iran:** Tourists and clerics walk near the Massoumeh shrine in the holy city of Qom, 130 kilometers south of Tehran. — AFP

in 2009. However, their alliance with the moderates has seen reformists return to the corridors of power, and they hold influential positions in Rouhani's cabinet.

**Conservatives and hardliners**

A broad range of conservative parties strongly oppose efforts to liberalize society and remain deeply suspicious of rapprochement with the West. They are pushing hard for a more self-subsistent "resistance economy" as directed by Khamenei. Having been hurt by divisions in recent elections, they succeeded in rallying behind a single candidate in May's election-hardline cleric Ebrahim Raisi, who took almost 16 million votes to Rouhani's 24 million. They have gained considerable traction by criticizing Rouhani's economic reforms and the failure to support the poor, particularly cuts to welfare and subsidies, and the unrest could bolster their position. However, reformists accuse them of threatening the regime as a whole by encouraging the initial protests against Rouhani.

**Moderate conservatives**

Parliament speaker Larijani and his allies control the main parliamentary commissions and will be crucial to the passage of eventual reforms. They have largely supported Rouhani's economic reforms and the nuclear deal with world powers. However, the faction is less favorable to Rouhani's efforts to liberalise society and opposes the president's criticisms of other parts of the establishment. Larijani has also been a strong advocate of the "resistance economy".

**Ex-president Ahmadinejad**

Ahmadinejad remains widely popular, particularly among poorer segments of society who recall his large-scale welfare schemes. However, he has been increasingly ostracized by the political establishment. He was barred from running in last year's election and his protege Hamid Baghaie was last month sentenced to 15 years in prison for corruption. —AFP

## In DR Congo, flood tragedy highlights perils of urban sprawl

**KINSHASA:** The morning light showed a scene of desolation as people in Ngaliema surveyed the wreckage of shanty homes swept away by killer floods and landslides. Among the 44 people who perished overnight Wednesday in Kinshasa, the capital of Democratic Republic of Congo, were a teenager, Brunelle, her sister Gladys, and Gladys' baby. Their home of makeshift yellowish clay bricks, located at the foot of a steep slope literally dissolved after the waters struck, neighbors said.

"The emergency services came, but they arrived late, around 4:00 am," said a young man, Magloire, who said that he was the one who found the bodies. The disaster was one that could have been avoided—the rainfall was indeed torrential but not exceptional, given this city's location in the heart of central tropical Africa. But mass fatalities were sadly predictable, given the triple contribution of poverty, uncontrolled development and over-population. Homes

made of flimsy materials had been built illegally and without foundations in a place vulnerable to floods.

"This is uncontrolled building," said Ruffin Abedi, deputy chief of Ngaliema district. "The regulations have stipulated for years that people shouldn't live there. But people settle there anyway, because they don't have the money to go elsewhere." A Chinese company had been contracted to install drainage on a road at the top of the slope, but the pipes were swept away by the rain, and lay among debris at the bottom, near a sofa—the only visible sign of a home that once stood there.

**Chaotic city**

"The solution is to move people who live in flood-prone areas to places which are habitable," said Roger-Nestor Lubiku, former director-general of the Congo Geographic Institute (IGC). Such things are easier said than done, in a city whose population size is little more than a good guess, and which lacks an accurate land registry. A common estimate is that the DRC capital has 10 million inhabitants, amounting to a rough doubling over less than 20 years, and accounting for possibly a seventh of the national population.

Between 2000 and 2005 alone, the population rose from six million to 7.5 million, according to satellite pictures. A 2009 study in the Belgian Review of



**KINSHASA:** A child walks past and a woman standing among the remains of a landslide in Ngaliema district in Kinshasa. Thirty-seven people died overnight when torrential rain and mudslides swept through shanty homes in Kinshasa. —AFP

Cartography-Belgium, the former colonial power, retains close ties with the DRC—found that 30 percent of urban development had taken place on steep slopes with an incline of 15 percent, or more than one in seven. "These present a significant risk of erosion," it warned presciently. Three-quarters of homes in Kinshasa

are slums which have no access to sanitation or electricity, Corneille Kanene, former head of UN-Habitat, said last year. The opposition blames the problem on poor governance and the flaws of the state. The proximity of these slums to wealthy areas is also a shock, and a reminder of DRC's deep inequalities.—AFP

## In Trump-Bannon feud, Republicans see silver lining

**WASHINGTON:** In the white-hot battle for influence in US politics the Republican establishment has regained the upper hand, after Donald Trump unleashed a scalding repudiation of Steve Bannon, self-proclaimed champion of the anti-Washington populism that swept the president to power. Traditional conservatives and rabble-rousing populists have long competed for the ear of the president, who appeared to revel in casting the rival forces off one another. More often than not Trump has aligned with the Republican leaders in Congress, an arranged marriage of sorts.

But for months the president also let firebrand Bannon, as his top aide in the White House, conduct open war against what he calls the Washington "swamp" including party leaders, incumbent lawmakers and other heavyweights—all of whom, according to Bannon, undermine Trump's populist revolution. Now the man who cast himself as supreme defender of Trumpism stands well outside the ring of power, banished by the president and rejected by his most prominent donors. Bannon emerged from relative obscurity when Trump picked him as campaign chief in August 2016, just three months from the presidential election. At the time, he was running Breitbart.com, a conservative website that provided boisterous coverage of Trump's rise.

Bloomberg had called him "the most dangerous political operative in America." Soon Bannon presided over the brand of economic populism promoted by Trump, and while the president always contested descriptions that he was under Bannon's influence, he nevertheless hired him as chief strategist. After several hectic months, Bannon exited the White House, although the two men had apparently remained on good terms. Bannon returned to Breitbart and control of his media "weapons." His goal: help defeat establishment Republicans in 2018's congressional primaries and eventually bring down Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, an arch-nemesis.

But the first candidate under his wing, Roy Moore of Alabama, did something the conservative state had not seen in 25 years: lose to a Democrat. The defeat was a stinging blow to Bannon's reputation.—AFP

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## International

## Homeless clampdown sparks royal wedding row in Britain

## Authorities bid to sweep the homeless off the streets

**WINDSOR:** In picturesque Windsor, in the shadow of the castle where Queen Elizabeth II spends her weekends, a dozen homeless people shelter from the cold in a jumble of blankets and cardboard boxes. But with less than five months to go until the May 19 wedding of her grandson Prince Harry and US actress Meghan Markle in the mediaeval castle's chapel, the local authority's bid to sweep the homeless off the streets has triggered indignation.

Simon Dudley, the Conservative leader of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead council, has urged the local Thames Valley Police force to take action against their "aggressive begging and intimidation". "A large number of adults that are begging in Windsor are not in fact homeless," he wrote in a letter, while those that were genuinely homeless had rejected secure accommodation in order to keep begging.

"This is creating a concerning and hostile atmosphere for our residents and the seven million tourists who come to Windsor each year." The level of interest in Windsor, some 20 miles west of London, is "set to multiply" ahead of the royal wedding, he added. According to the business valuation consultancy Brand Finance, the event should draw hundreds of thousands of extra tourists to the town, normally home to just 30,000 people, in 2018. The British economy could be set to benefit to the tune of £500 million (\$680 million, 565 million euros), they claimed.

## Homeless by 'choice'

Dudley said the genuinely homeless, having rejected help, were on the streets by "voluntary choice". Sheltering from the wintry wind, Stephanie, who has been in the town centre

for two years after suffering mental illness, insisted: "I don't choose to sit here." "Whatever people give me, they give me. I don't choose to ask for money to get given something to eat, like sandwiches," she told AFP. The council's plans have been condemned by, among others, the Conservative MP for Maidenhead-Prime Minister Theresa May. Murray James, the Windsor Homeless Project manager, was all the more shocked by the proposed clampdown as Harry and his brother Prince William have long been involved in work with the homeless-William having even slept rough by a bridge in London.

"I am pretty sure they're as outraged by the comments that have been made as I am and many of the Windsor residents are," James told AFP in the church where the project offers hot meals, clothes and a shower. Regardless of the royal marriage, the authorities should pursue the reasons why people end up on the streets rather than the homeless themselves, he said. "It's a constant problem," he said. "We've always had between 12 and 15 people sleeping rough. The majority of those people don't beg." He claimed there was a lack of emergency accommodation in the town and deplored the state of the housing provided by the local authority-often "infested with rats," he said.

## 'A lovely day'

Many passers-by in Windsor barely take notice of its homeless population. Peggy Outhwaite said she was uncomfortable waiting for the bus while a homeless man took up residence in the bus shelter. "I don't think that they should be here," she said of the homeless. "This is a royal town and Harry should have his day-and a lovely day at that," the pensioner said. Derek



**WINDSOR:** Photo shows Windsor Castle in the afternoon sunshine, in Windsor, west of London. With less than five months to go until the May 19 wedding of Britain's Prince Harry and US actress Meghan Markle in the mediaeval castle's chapel, the local authority's bid to sweep the homeless off the streets has triggered indignation. —AFP

Prime, who runs a souvenir shop already selling mugs and trinkets with Harry and his fiancée's faces on, doubted the council's claims to have proper accommodation in place.

Dudley "really wants to come out here and spend a night on the street just to see what it's like," he said. Thames Valley Police commissioner Anthony Stansfeld, an elected official, is

preparing a response to Dudley's letter. Last month, Dudley complained on Twitter of the "epidemic of rough sleeping and vagrancy" in the royal town. But the local police hit back on the social media network, saying: "Housing is the responsibility of the council but it is better that agencies work together so people don't become homeless."—

## News in brief

## Minibus, truck collide

**BISSAU:** Eighteen people were killed and another 14 injured in the small west African state of Guinea-Bissau late Friday when a minibus collided with a truck, police and hospital sources said. One witness said the truck appeared to have been speeding when the driver lost control and collided head-on with the minibus near Bissauzinho, around 15 kilometers from the capital Bissau. Sources said the bus had been overloaded and that at least 10 of the injured were in a serious condition. Both drivers were killed and the minibus was totally crushed, an AFP correspondent at the scene said. Authorities issued an appeal for blood donors after the accident, which occurred around 8:00 pm.

## 'Slap video' case

**NABI SALEH:** Israel has released a Palestinian woman on bail after she was charged with assaulting an Israeli soldier in the occupied West Bank following a viral video of the incident. Nour Tamimi, 20, was released early on Friday from a military prison after a court rejected the prosecution's appeal against her release, her father Najj Tamimi said. She was arrested on December 20, a day after her cousin Ahd Tamimi, 16, was detained in the wake of a viral video showing them slapping and kicking two soldiers the previous week. Ahd and her mother Nariman Tamimi remain in custody. Nour was allowed to return to her home in the village of Nabi Saleh, near the West Bank city of Ramallah, after posting a bail of 5,000 shekels (\$1,450, 1,200 euros). A guarantor vouched that she would show up for her court proceedings, set to begin on February 12, her lawyer Gaby Lasky said.

## Ex-ministers in court

**HARARE:** A Zimbabwe court yesterday freed on bail two ex-ministers who served in former President Robert Mugabe's government and face charges of criminal abuse of office and corruption. Former foreign affairs minister, Walter Mzembe, and energy minister, Samuel Undenge, appeared in court after their arrest on Friday. Mzembe was granted \$400 bail while Undenge was given \$300 bail. They were ordered to report to police once a week and surrender their passports. Several ministers from Mugabe's government have been arrested in the past two months since the military took over power and forced the 93-year-old veteran leader to step down. Most of them have been arrested on corruption charges. Former finance minister Ignatius Chombo, ex-mines minister Walter Chidhakwa and ex-sports minister Makhosini Hlongwane are facing corruption and criminal abuse of office charges. When the military took over in November last year they said they were 'targeting criminals' around Mugabe.

## Germany, Turkey ease row

**GOSLAR:** Germany's Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel yesterday hosted his Turkish counterpart Mevlut Cavusoglu for talks as Berlin and Ankara try to end a festering crisis. Relations between the NATO partners have been badly strained, especially since Turkey's 2016 failed coup and subsequent crackdown which saw tens of thousands arrested, including several German or dual citizens. Germany, home to a three-million-strong ethnic Turkish community, last year advised its investors and holiday-makers to avoid Turkey and urged a cut in EU funding linked to its stalled membership talks. However, Ankara has in recent weeks sent a flurry of signals that it wants a return to warmer relations with the EU and Germany, at a time it is on tense terms with the United States, Israel and some Gulf states. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, having declared last month that Turkey "must reduce the number of enemies and increase the number of friends", met French President Emmanuel Macron in Paris Friday.

## Brutal, dangerous cold grips US East

**BOSTON:** Much of the US East Coast will wake up yesterday to brutally cold and dangerous temperatures as the region recovers from a powerful blizzard that unleashed heavy snows and strong winds. From northern Florida up through New York City into New England, tens of millions of people will be under wind chill and freeze warnings throughout the day as temperatures in some parts to the north were expected to be -40 F (-40 C), while in parts of the south highs were forecast to be 20 degrees below average.

"It can be very dangerous," said Dan Pydynowski, a meteorologist with private forecasting service AccuWeather. "Any kind of exposed skin can freeze in a couple of minutes." The cold snap comes as workers clear snow and ice from roadways after a blizzard clobbered the region on Thursday and Friday, forcing hundreds of schools to close, major airports to shut down because of whiteout conditions and several commuter rail services to suspend

or reduce service.

The region's first snow storm of 2018 featured gusts of more than 70 miles per hour (113 km per hour), dumping 22 inches (56 cms) of snow in parts of Maine and 17 inches (43 cm) in parts of Massachusetts, before ending on Friday, the National Weather Service said. The storm was powered by a rapid drop in barometric pressure that some weather forecasters called a bombogenesis, or a "bomb cyclone." The cold and snowy weather have been blamed for at least 18 deaths in the past few days, including four in North Carolina traffic accidents and three in Texas.

Cities from Houston to Boston have stepped up efforts to bring the homeless to shelters. Authorities said three homeless people in Texas died from exposure to the cold. Canada's largest city, Toronto, scrambled to find emergency shelter for the homeless as temperatures dropped to record lows after the sweeping storm knocked out power to tens of thousands in eastern provinces and destroyed coastal roads. Nearly 500 members of the US National Guard were mobilized to assist with the emergency response along the East Coast, including 200 in New York state, authorities said.—Reuters



**BOSTON:** A snowed in vehicle is left parked the day after the region was hit with a 'bomb cyclone' in the Dorchester neighborhood of Boston, Massachusetts. —AFP

## US president gets poll boost after golfing silence

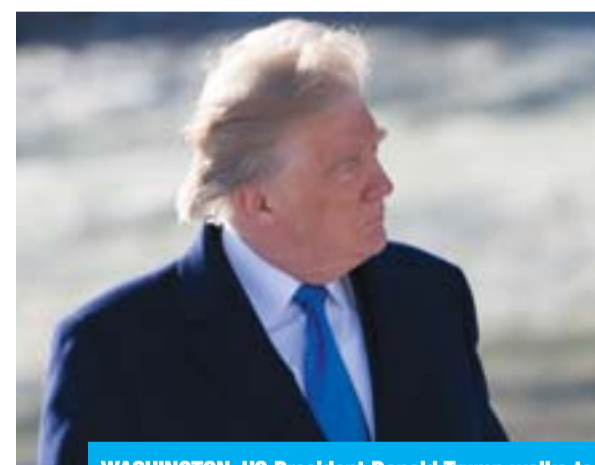
**WASHINGTON:** US President Donald Trump enjoyed a modest bump in popularity over the Christmas break, prompting pollsters to wonder whether he's more popular when he stays out of the news. During several low-key days at his sun-kissed Florida golf course, Trump's approval ratings increased from 36 percent on the eve of his departure to 40 percent on his return, according to the latest Gallup polls.

While he remains historically unpopular, his approval rating is today at a higher level than at any point since June last year-the honeymoon of his presidency. That bump has rekindled a long-suspected theory among poll-watchers: the most attention-hungry president in modern times might actually be better off slightly out of the limelight. "It's hard thing to prove" said Kyle Kondik, of the University of Virginia, who suspects Trump "does a little bit better in approval when he's not dominating the news so much."

Kondik and his colleague Geoffrey Skelley have shown that before the 2016 election, both Trump and Democrat Hillary Clinton saw their poll numbers get better the less news coverage they got. Given FBI investigations and assorted scandals swirling around the two deeply unpopular candidates-it stands to reason that the absence of predominantly bad news might be beneficial. Additionally, pollsters Kristen Soltis Anderson and Patrick Ruffini of Republican research firm Echelon Insights found that "in the 30 days before the election, 'Donald Trump' was Googled more in states that he lost than in those he won."

During Trump's presidency, that apparent trend may have continued. HuffPost polling director Ariel Edwards-Levy pointed out that when a series of hurricanes hit in the United States around September-the first news cycles not totally dominated by Trump - he fared relatively well in the polls. Over Christmas he tweeted relatively little, and to an audience distracted by family meals and vacations.

Any clear link between his silence and improved political fortunes could have profound implications for the way Trump communicates. This year promises to be a difficult one for the 71-year-old, with Congressional



**WASHINGTON:** US President Donald Trump walks to Marine One prior to departing from the South Lawn of the White House, as he travels for a weekend with Republican lawmakers at Camp David in Maryland. —AFP

elections and an FBI investigation looming. This White House may quickly learn that popularity is the most valuable and fungible currency for any administration. Since coming to office Trump has almost relentlessly sought the spotlight, trying to inject himself into esoteric debates ranging from American football to aviation safety.

On Tuesday, his first full day back in Washington, Trump tweeted nine times in the space of three hours, before a second barrage of tweets about Pakistan, Palestinians and a boast about the size of his nuclear button. The White House is defensive about Trump's proclivity to tweets, with few officials willing to publicly criticize something the boss is likely to do regardless.

Press Secretary Sarah Sanders dismissed suggestions that Trump's golfing silence may be productive, pinning recent better approval ratings on tax reform, which passed just before Christmas. "I think Americans like the fact that he got the largest tax cut in history done," she said Wednesday.

"I think they like the fact that they're going to see a lot more of their paycheck." "I think that's what most Americans certainly were very happy about, particularly as they went into the holiday season, and they had a little bit more money to consider spending as they celebrated Christmas with their family." Given Trump's lust for the limelight, it might be a while before pollsters get another period or relative silence to test their theory.—AFP

## Blocks from White House, a freezing tent is home

**WASHINGTON:** Two sleeping bags and "many blankets" are not enough to keep Jin Yang-Hun comfortable in the pup tent in which he lives just blocks from the White House. Yet Jin isn't going anywhere, even as dangerously cold wind chills are forecast to sweep across the eastern United States this weekend. Jin, a US citizen originally from South Korea, is among almost 7,500 homeless people in the United States capital. Many stay in emergency shelters but some like Jin prefer to live outside even in below-freezing temperatures. "My situation is terrible," says Jin, 54. Scattered on sidewalks in the city's business and university district, the tents are an incongruous site which the city's more fortunate pass on their way to offices, bars and restaurants.

In the past five years Washington, DC's homeless numbers have "increased dramatically," says Kate Wiley, marketing and communications manager of the non-profit group So Others Might Eat (SOME). She thinks Washington's numbers are the highest per capita in the country, and cites the lack of affordable housing as a major cause. "It's very hard for people to be able to afford rent if they're not making really high salaries," says Wiley. SOME, among numerous charities helping the poor in one of the world's wealthiest societies, offers a range of services including job training, housing for about 1,000 people, and a dining room that serves daily breakfast and lunch for hundreds.

## 'It's so cold'

With temperatures around 20 F (-7 C) outside, SOME opened its dining room all morning on Friday to give the needy a warm place to gather and watch a movie, its sound blaring in the packed hall. "It's so cold outside, obviously we don't want people to be outside any longer than they have to be," Wiley says. Holding about 100 people at a time, the dining hall has a warm feel. A Christmas tree stands at one end of a faux-brick wall decorated with seasonal bells proclaiming "joy" and "hope."

There is a painting of slain civil rights icon Martin Luther King Jr on another wall, and cool jazz music plays as the diners file back in for lunch. Wearing tuques and winter jackets, some bring suitcases and bags. —AFP



## International

# Trump could freeze \$2 billion of Pakistan aid over militia havens

## 'All options are on the table', US warns

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump's freeze on aid to Pakistan could be worth almost two billion dollars, a senior US administration official said on Friday—substantially more than first thought. The move—designed to force Pakistan's military and intelligence apparatus to cut support for the Taliban and other Islamist groups—will include both US military assistance and Afghanistan coalition funding to Islamabad. It is "approximately two billion worth of equipment and coalition support funding that is in play," the senior official said on condition of anonymity.

The source added that "all options are on the table" when it comes to further moves, including stripping Pakistan of its status as a "major non-NATO ally" or calling in vital IMF loans. After more than a decade of simmering US anger at Islamabad's links with the Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani network—a Taliban affiliate—the Trump administration is trying to draw a line in the sand. "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 tweeted on New Year's Day.

"They give safe haven to the terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan, with little help. No more!" On the hook is almost \$1 billion of US military equipment that has allowed Pakistan access to advanced military technology, but also funding that is meant to pay Pakistan for helping to get US and NATO materiel into Afghanistan. Analysts believe the United States is highly unlikely to freeze all that funding, which, according to the source, totals \$1.9 billion.

US officials have already indicated that there could be "exemptions" for programs deemed vital to US national security—likely including cash for keeping Pakistan's nuclear

weapons safe. But nevertheless, the total figure of \$1.9 billion is much higher than first indicated and is a signal of Washington's seriousness. "We are still working with Pakistan and we would restore the aid if we see decisive movements against the terrorists who are as much of a threat against Pakistan as they are against us," said Defense Secretary Jim Mattis.

### Hackles in Islamabad

Pakistan has fought fierce campaigns against homegrown Islamist groups, and says it has lost thousands of lives and spent billions of dollars in its long war on extremism. But US officials accuse Islamabad of ignoring or even collaborating with groups that attack Afghanistan from safe havens along the border between the two countries. The White House believes that Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency and other military bodies have long

helped fund and arm the Taliban for ideological reasons, but also to counter rising Indian influence in Afghanistan.

It also believes that a Pakistani crackdown could be pivotal in deciding the outcome of the war in Afghanistan—now entering its 17th year—by weakening the Taliban militarily and forcing the organization to the negotiating table. "Unless we deal with the Pakistan sanctuary issue, it will undermine all of our other efforts in Afghanistan," the senior official said. "We can no longer accept Pakistan's dual policies of fighting some terrorists while supporting others."

In September last year, the US suspended \$255 million in funding to help Pakistan buy high-tech weaponry from American manufacturers. Now, the Defense Department has been instructed to stop making payments from "coalition support funds" set aside to refund Pakistani spending on



LAHORE: Pakistani demonstrators take part in a protest against US aid cuts in Lahore. The United States added bite to its increasingly public spat with Pakistan over militant safe havens on December 4, suspending hundreds of millions of dollars in security assistance. —AFP

counter-terrorist operations. The rhetoric has raised hackles in Islamabad and fears the row could undermine Pakistan's support for US operations in Afghanistan.

The announcement ignited some small protests in Pakistan on Friday, including in Chaman, one of the two main crossings on the border with Afghanistan where several hundred people gathered to chant anti-US slogans. "We don't need any type of aid. Almighty Allah is with us and he

is giving us everything," protester Mohammad Saleem said, adding that he had a message for President Donald Trump: "Don't threaten us." But Pakistan's foreign ministry issued a cautious statement in which it said it was "engaged" with US officials and awaiting further details. Without referring to the decision directly, it warned that "arbitrary deadlines, unilateral pronouncements and shifting goalposts are counter-productive in addressing common threats." —AFP

“US trying to draw a line in the sand”

## 'Disillusioned' Poles turning to Germany

BERLIN: Ula Lachowicz, 34, left Poland in 2014 for Germany, attracted by a booming job market. But today, employment is no longer the reason keeping her from returning home, she said. In the last two years, "we have lost the freedom of speech, the freedom of having one's own opinion, or doing what we want with our sexuality or culture" in Poland, said the marketing graduate from outside the northeastern city of Gdansk. Lachowicz is one of a growing number of young Poles who are turning their backs on their home country, which they say has become stiflingly conservative.

Numbering more than 783,000 in 2016, including 55,000 in Berlin, Poles now make up the second biggest foreign community in Germany, after the Turks. The diaspora was long attracted to Europe's biggest economy for the jobs and higher salaries it offers compared to Poland, which became a member of the EU in 2004. But since the nationalist and conservative Law and Justice party (PiS) took power in 2015, some Poles say employment is no longer the only reason pushing them to Germany.

Rather, these young and pro-European Poles say they have left their native land in search of a more liberal climate. No official data is available on how many they number, but there are now regular forums by young Poles on the issue. The Polish embassy in Berlin noted that Polish emigration "has been going on for years and statistics show no dramatic

increase in the number of Polish emigrants since the ruling PiS party won the 2015 parliamentary elections." It added that surveys show that most Poles who leave are motivated by financial reasons. "It is difficult to determine whether their decisions are also politically motivated or not," said the embassy.

### 'With us or against us'

Aleksandra Zebrowska, who arrived in Berlin in early 2017, argued however that Polish society "is less and less open, definitely more nationalist and more centered on Catholicism". The 26-year-old had moved from Warsaw to Berlin partly for work and its proximity to Poland, but she said that above all, she picked Germany because there she feels "simply free". Zebrowska, who works in the music sector, is part of a young generation of Poles who have benefited from the EU project.

The European Erasmus student exchange program took her to Brussels for a year, while she also obtained a master's degree in the Netherlands. When she returned to Poland in 2015, a liberal government was still in charge. But "after the elections, everything changed very quickly," she said of the PiS which returned to power in Oct 2015 after eight years in opposition. "Everyone looks at each other with suspicion... it's exactly the feeling that my grandmother had during the communist era—you're either with us or against us."

### 'Clearly changed'

The PiS's arrival in power has been accompanied by increasingly fraught ties with Germany, including over Warsaw's hardline stance against taking in asylum seekers during a record influx of refugees to the EU in 2015 and 2016. Warsaw is also seeking to claim World War II reparations from Germany, even though Berlin insists



WARSAW: People wearing paper crowns are seen attending the annual Three Wise Men Epiphany Parade yesterday. —AFP

that the issue had been settled decades ago. On the European stage, Poland is posing a challenge to the authority of Brussels in enforcing democratic standards.

The European Commission launched unprecedented disciplinary proceedings against Poland late last month over its highly controversial judicial reforms which Brussels says threaten the rule of law. "The situation...clearly changed" in the last two years, said Maria Skora, 33, who arrived in Berlin in 2015 from her native Wrocław. The project manager at a center-left German think-tank said she found in Berlin the diversity that was lacking in Poland that she found to be "in an impasse."

In a country which preaches a heterosexual and Catholic family structure, Filip Rutkowski, a 25-year-old gay artist, said he did not feel at ease. "I didn't fit the mould," said Rutkowski,

who has been living in Berlin since May last year. In his new home city "we can express ourselves as we want, without being judged, without having to explain ourselves," he said.

Journalist Ewa Wanat, 55, claimed that Poland is now ruled by a "soft dictatorship" as freedom of the press is greatly curtailed. A former editor-in-chief at the public radio station RDC, Wanat said she was let go shortly before the PiS came to power for refusing to fire an employee who was seen as a feminist and left-leaning. For the laureate of the "Tolerantia" European prize against homophobia, a hardline push was already in the making and was a harbinger of the conservatives' victory. In 2016, she bought a one way ticket to Berlin. She can't imagine returning to Poland now, saying that in Berlin, "the atmosphere is free." —AFP

## Four Venezuela generals placed on US blacklist

WASHINGTON: The US Treasury placed four serving or retired Venezuelan generals on its sanctions blacklist Friday, raising pressure on the embattled government of President Nicolas Maduro. The Treasury Department alleged that the four were either involved in repressing protesters or tied up in major corruption schemes.

Washington has already targeted Maduro himself for sanctions, and is a long-standing opponent of what it sees as his increasingly authoritarian regime. In a televised address late Friday Maduro said the Trump administration had "exhausted his patience." "My patience is at the limit with the imperialist government of Donald Trump. I am not going to accept any more from this aggressive government." The leader authorized Venezuela's military to respond in writing "with forcefulness" to what he characterized as "blackmail" from the White House.

Falling oil prices, political unrest, and corruption have decimated the country's economy and led to deadly protests under Maduro. The new sanctions "highlight that corruption and repression continue to flourish under the Maduro regime, both by those in current government positions and former officials who continue to benefit from a corrupt system," the Treasury said. Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza said in a Twitter post following the US announcement that Caracas' military would never kowtow to Washington. The army "will never bow to any foreign power, much less to the imperialist and warlike forces of Donald Trump's supremacist government. We demand respect," Arreaza wrote. Delcy Rodriguez, president of Maduro's Constituent Assembly which effectively runs the country, said Trump "and his eccentric government should understand that



CARACAS: Todd D Robinson (left) Charge d'Affaires of the US Embassy in Venezuela leaves the National Assembly after a session in Caracas on January 5, 2018. —AFP

Venezuela will never give in to blackmail or threats," Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said in a statement that "President Maduro and his inner circle continue to put their own interests above those of the Venezuelan people."

"This action underscores the United States' resolve to hold Maduro and others engaged in corruption in Venezuela accountable," he added. "We call on concerned parties and international partners around the world to join us as we stand with the Venezuelan people to further isolate this oppressive regime." Under the US Treasury order, Aragua state governor, retired general and state oil firm board member Rodolfo Clemente Marco Torres is designated for his alleged role in food smuggling. Francisco Jose Rangel Gomez, another retired general and a former governor of Bolivar state, is accused of pressuring Venezuelan courts to release suspected members of armed pro-government gangs. —AFP

## Few takers as French Socialists seek a savior

PARIS: Wanted: A dynamic leader for France's historic Socialist Party, able to rebuild the brand after a year of watching the political ground crumble beneath its feet. Candidates: Not many. The fact that few Socialists can agree on who might be placed to unite a scattered left just eight months after the party held the presidency under Francois Hollande, has many wondering if the task is even possible.

The leadership doubts come hot on the heels of the forced sale of the party's opulent Paris headquarters for 46 million euros (\$55 million) and layoffs for more than half its 100 staff members. This week Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, education minister in ex-president Hollande's abysmally unpopular government, announced she wouldn't run for party chief, saying "there are other ways to make yourself useful".

Her decision turned all eyes toward Olivier Faure, 49, head of the 31 lawmakers-down from 277 - who remain in parliament after Emmanuel Macron's centrist upstarts smashed their way to power last year. The Socialists have been rudderless since Hollande's decision not to risk standing for a second term in the face of historically low approval ratings. That opened a rift in the once powerful party of such leftist titans as Francois Mitterrand, which newcomer Macron capitalized on in his sprint to the presidency.

Faure has so far kept his cards close as party apparatchiks around him have splintered into different groups. His associates indicate a decision to seek the party leadership could come Tuesday, now that the path appears clear. "He has kept his balance perfectly at the centre of the party," a party source said. —AFP

## News in brief

### Clashes in Cairo

CAIRO: Clashes erupted between Egyptian protesters and policemen yesterday outside a Cairo police station over the death of a young man in custody, security sources said. The protesters torched 10 cars including three police vehicles, they said. Nine people were injured and 40 people arrested in the overnight clashes in Cairo's Moqattam district which saw some protesters throw petrol bombs as police responded with tear gas and birdshot, they said. The security sources said a young man nicknamed Afroto, who was arrested on Friday for alleged drug trafficking, died after a violent brawl with other detainees. But protesters accused the police of being responsible for his death. They set fire to tyres and cars near the police station, leading the fire brigade to intervene. Calm returned to Moqattam later in the morning after Cairo's security chief pledged a probe into the detainee's death, promising not to obscure any police involvement. The prosecutor examined the body and ordered an autopsy. Egypt has tried and sentenced several policemen for violent deaths in detention in recent years.

### Baby's life in danger

TOULOUSE: A father has kidnapped his two-month-old boy from hospital in southern France where he was undergoing emergency treatment, prosecutors said yesterday, warning that the baby's life was in danger. The baby, who was being fed with gastric and intravenous tubes, was snatched on Friday evening from a hospital in the city of Toulouse. "His life is at risk if he does not receive medical care immediately," prosecutors said in a statement. The 33-year-old father was separated from the boy's mother but they appeared to have been on cordial terms and he visited the baby in hospital every day. "We don't really have much information," an informed source told AFP, adding that the kidnapping was "incomprehensible." A hospital official said: "The only thing that matters for us is to find the baby really fast."

### Sudan-Eritrea closed

KHARTOUM: Sudan has shut its eastern border with Eritrea, state media reported yesterday, days after Khartoum declared an emergency in the neighboring state of Kasala. "The governor of Kasala issued a decree to close all border crossings with Eritrea from the night of January 5," the official SUNA news agency reported. It did not explain why the border was closed but said the decision comes after President Omar Al-Bashir declared on December 30 a state of emergency in Kasala and in North Kordofan state for six months. Officials have said that decision was part of a government campaign to collect illegal arms in those two states. A resident of Kasala said that hundreds of Sudanese soldiers, several military vehicles and tanks had crossed through the town towards the border with Eritrea over the past two days. Thousands of Eritreans, fleeing a repressive regime at home, cross into Sudan illegally through the border with Kasala every year and later make perilous voyages across the Mediterranean to Europe.

### Bushfires destroy buildings

SYDNEY: Bushfires in Australia destroyed buildings and threatened lives yesterday as a heatwave in three states brought temperatures strong enough to melt the bitumen on a highway. A fire raging out of control set several structures ablaze on the outskirts of Melbourne, the country's second largest city, and the capital of the southeastern state of Victoria. The state's emergency management commissioner, Craig Lapsley, said hot temperatures had combined with dry weather, strong winds and a wind change to create dangerous conditions. "It's exactly what the forecast indicated and when we have fires running that's obviously a problem for us," he told a news conference. About 400 homes lost power and 50 fires were reported across Victoria on Saturday, although many were small and were extinguished. Emergency warnings were issued both in Victoria and in the nearby state of South Australia, where authorities advised residents of a rural area to seek shelter in buildings from an out-of-control fire.

## Analysis

Kuwait Times  
Established 1961THE LEADING INDEPENDENT  
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## Washington Watch

Why I accused  
Israel of cultural  
genocide

By Dr James J Zogby

Between Christmas and New Year's Day, I became embroiled in what The Jerusalem Post termed a "Twitter war" which they claimed "raised eyebrows on both sides of the Atlantic". What started the heated exchange was my response to a tweet by celebrity chef Rachael Ray in which she called "Israeli" - "meze, stuffed grape leaves, hummus, beet dip, eggplant and sun-dried tomato dip, walnut and red pepper dip, and tabouli". I hadn't intended a war, but my blood boiled when I saw Ray's tweet and so I tweeted a response - "Damn it! This is cultural genocide. It's not Israeli food. It's Arab (Lebanese, Palestinian, Syrian, Jordanian, etc). First, the Israelis take the land and ethnically cleanse it of Arabs. Now they take their food and culture and claim it's theirs too! Shame."

(I should note that this wasn't the first time that Ray became embroiled in a situation that involved a negation of Palestinian/Arab culture. Back in 2008, she appeared in a TV ad for Dunkin' Donuts sporting what appeared to be a keffiyeh. After a barrage of attacks by rightwing Islamophobes who said the scarf was a symbol of "murderous Palestinian jihad", Dunkin' Donuts cancelled the ad. Because that entire affair evolved so rapidly and the company reacted so quickly, we were unable to offer a rejoinder. The recent flap, however, "cut to the quick". I had to reply. And so I did. The responses to my tweet were immediate involving attacks by prominent American and Israeli columnists and the head of an American Jewish organization. Most criticisms were downright silly, some were threatening (demanding that I be expelled from the Democratic Party), while others were just crude insults ("ludicrous", "anti-Semitic bigot"). All of them missed the point.

The silly ones either wanted to reduce the entire brouhaha to "who invented hummus" or confused cultural exchange and sharing with outright appropriation. No, I noted, making pizza or spaghetti in the US is not cultural genocide, unless the US were to occupy Italy and then claim these foods as "American". And, I responded to the foolish tweet by New York Times columnist, Bret Stephens, that if I used Instant Messaging or Waze (both of which were invented in Israel) I would not be engaging in cultural appropriation, unless I used them, then claimed these tools as my own, and started referring to them as Lebanese inventions.

Of course, I recognize that a significant number of Israelis come from Arab countries and I realize that they brought their cuisine with them from Yemen, Iraq, Morocco, Egypt, etc. But that doesn't make Yemeni, Iraqi, Moroccan, or Egyptian dishes "Israeli", any more than pizza, tacos, sushi and fried rice can be called "American" simply because Italians, Mexicans, Japanese, and Chinese brought them to the US.

## Appropriation

And no, my argument is not anti-Semitic, nor does it imply a rejection of the existence of Israel. In fact, what prompted my reaction was Israel's denial of a Palestinian people, appropriation of their land and now of their culture. With the creation of the state of Israel, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were expelled and denied the right to return to their homes and properties. The new state then confiscated their businesses and lands and demolished 385 Palestinian villages. As Yusef Munayyer noted, it was Israel that sought to systematically erase Palestinian history - "Place names, street names, historical markers were changed. Forests have literally been planted above the ruins of our villages, obfuscating the very remnants of our history and the grave of our ancestors".

So this "Twitter war" was never about the denial of Israel's existence. It was about Israel's denial of Palestinian existence - a process that continues today within Israel and, in an increasingly aggressive way, in the occupied West Bank. For example, Bethlehem's Jabal Abul Ghneim, a once green hill to the north of the town, has been confiscated by Israel and walled off from Bethlehem's residents. It is now the site of the illegally built Jewish-only colony of Har Homa (that houses almost 20,000 Israeli settlers), and has been incorporated into what Israel refers to as "Greater Jerusalem".

It was, therefore, not "who invented hummus" that caused me to react. Rather, it was Israel's appropriation of Palestinian land, eradication of their presence, and now the effort to be the sole claimants of their culture that prompted my response to Ray's "Israeli food" tweet. This was cultural appropriation by conquest.

I have long connected this Palestinian reality to my experience growing up in Central New York State. Once the home of the tribes of the Iroquois Nation, traces of their history and culture were always with us. Some towns bore Indian names. Families would vacation at the fashionable Mohawk resort. As children, we would dress up as "Indians" at Halloween. And as Boy Scouts we learned "Indian dances" and competed to achieve the status of the "Order of the Arrow". All the while, the remnants of that once powerful people were locked in poverty on a nearby reservation. Their children were taught to deny their heritage and customs and learned the lesson that when they asserted their rights, they were reviled with epithets like "damn Redskins".

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



## 40 years since Iranian Revolution began

As a child 40 years ago, Mohammad Hassan Sharifzadeh saw the opening salvos of the Islamic revolution in Iran, starting with a particularly strange scene in a mosque in the holy city of Qom. Mohammad was eight years old on January 8, 1978 and visiting the mosque with his father in front of the Fatima Masumeh shrine - one of the holiest sites in Iran.

Then something shocking happened: A senior cleric took off his turban and threw it on the ground in disgust. The reason behind this symbolic gesture - one reserved for displaying only the most grievous offence - was the publication of an article the day before against Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who would soon lead the country into an Islamic revolution. "He was angry that they had insulted our source of emulation," says Mohammad, now a sweet seller.

Each Shiite Muslim must choose an ayatollah as his "source of emulation" - and many in Iran had chosen the politically radical Khomeini, who by then had spent 13 years in exile for his scathing attacks on Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi and the United States. The article in government newspaper Ettelaat had accused Khomeini of being a British agent, in league with communists, and insinuated that he was not really Iranian and that his religious credentials were questionable. It is often seen as the moment that sparked the revolution 40 years ago. Iran's Islamic rulers have many commemorations planned for the anniversary as they flaunt the unlikely survival of a regime that has often been written off by analysts and opponents, but which once again saw off a major bout of unrest in recent days.

## 'Provocation'

Ayatollah Seyyed Hossein Mousavi Tabrizi, a former chief prosecutor and two-time parliamentarian, was a teacher in one of Qom's many seminaries - "hawzats" - when he first heard about the article. "It was around 7:00 pm when two or three of my students came to me, very angry, with a copy of Ettelaat and told me to read the article," he told AFP in Qom, where he has gone back to teaching. "It was the last straw. Insulting Khomeini like that, saying he was a pawn of the British and other offences - it was an insult to the whole clergy. It was a provocation."

Although Iran's Islamic rulers focus most of their ire on the United States these days, many Iranians still reserve a particular suspicion for the British in memory of their colonial machinations in the early 20th century. Qom's clerics quickly organized a response. That same night, a dozen senior clerics gathered at the home of Tabrizi's father-in-law,

## Jan 1978: First sparks of the Iranian revolution

Forty years ago protests in Iran's holy city of Qom were the first sparks of an Islamic revolution that toppled the monarchy a year later. Here is a summary of what happened:

## It all starts in Qom

On January 7, 1978 the government's daily newspaper Ettelaat publishes a defamatory article on Iran's spiritual leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. The opponent of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi has been in exile for nearly 13 years in Iraq's holy city of Najaf. On Jan 8 and 9 theology students in Qom come out in support of Khomeini. Sixty people are killed by security forces, according to the opposition. The official count is six.

## Riots in Tabriz

On Feb 18 a ceremony in memory of the victims of Qom degenerates into riots in the northwestern city of Tabriz. The army intervenes and some 100 people are killed, the opposition says. The official count is nine dead and nearly 200 injured. On May 9 and 10 riots erupt in Qom and elsewhere after a call from religious leaders for a national day of mourning.

## 'Overthrow the shah'

In early June 800 students at the University of Tehran



This file photo taken on Feb 01, 1979 at Tehran airport shows Iran's Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini leaving the Air France Boeing 747 jumbo that flew him back from exile in France to Tehran. — AFP

Grand Ayatollah Hossein Nouri Hamedani. "It was decided to stop classes the next day as a sign of protest," he said - a rare move in a place that prized education so highly.

The strike by students on Jan 8 saw minor clashes with police. It grew the following day and gathered support from merchants in the bazaar who joined the shutdown. Soon the protests were widespread, with people chanting slogans against the monarchy and the government. The spark had been thrown into the tinder box of grievances that had been building for years over growing social inequality, hatred of the British security services and an increasing Westernisation that had scandalised the country's religious conservatives.

## 'Several dead'

Abolfazl Soleimani, a white-turbaned cleric in Qom, was 24 at the time and remembers the scene at Eram Square, now called Shohada (Martyrs) Square. "The police opened fire, first in the air I think, and then into the crowd, at the religious, the non-religious, the bazaaris (merchants). There were several dead and injured," he told AFP. Historians have

since questioned the original death toll of 20-30, with British historian Michael Axworthy saying "there were no more than five" in his book "Revolutionary Iran".

Either way, news of the shootings in Qom swept across the country and set in train a cycle of unrest that would ultimately lead to the downfall of the shah little more than a year later. Conforming with Shiite tradition, mourning ceremonies were held for the dead 40 days later - on Feb 18 - providing a pretext for fresh protests against the shah in several cities.

In Tabriz in northwestern Iran, those protests quickly degenerated, with police firing on the crowd and killing some 30 people. And so 40 days later came further ceremonies that turned angry, in turn sparking more protests 40 days after that. The authorities managed to calm things down by June, but the ball was already rolling, and the second half of 1978 saw escalating unrest. "All repressive regimes dig their own graves," said Ayatollah Tabrizi. On Jan 16, 1979, the shah left Iran, never to return. Ayatollah Khomeini made a triumphant return to Iran the following month and the last government of imperial Iran was soon at an end. — AFP



Mohammed Reza Pahlavi

the regime makes its first concessions to the clerics, closing casinos and banning gambling. This fails to stop the movement.

## 'Black Friday'

On Sept 4 between 200,000 and 500,000 people take part in marches organized by the Shiite hierarchy in Tehran to demand the return of Khomeini. On September 8, "Black Friday in Tehran", the government declares martial law in 12 cities including the capital and describes a "plot financed and led by foreign powers". Several thousands of protesters gather in Tehran, clashing with the army. More than 1,000 die, according to an AFP estimate.

## Khomeini near Paris

On Oct 6, Khomeini, expelled from Iraq, moves into a Paris suburb. From here he carries out the last phase of his battle against the shah, calling on Iranians to over-

throw the monarchy.

## Students hit out

On Nov 5, tens of thousands of young people take to the streets of Tehran, attacking symbols of the regime. More than 100 banks are destroyed, cinemas and the headquarters of the secret police are set on fire, shops are burned to the ground and airline companies are vandalized.

## Massive demonstrations

On Dec 10 and 11 the army leaves the center of Tehran because of religious festivities, making way for daily crowds of protesters of more than 1.5 million. Processions build across the city. Women in black veils gather in large number alongside children with fists raised. "Death to the shah," protesters chant; "Khomeini is our leader," "US Go Home".

## Economy paralyzed

On Dec 24 a strike paralyzes the holy city of Mashhad. Days later oil exports are interrupted and more than 4,000 workers from the industry resign in protest against government threats of trials for striking. On Dec 28 the key sectors of oil, customs, banking and civil aviation also grind to a halt.

## 'The shah has gone'

On Jan 16, 1979, under pressure from the protests and US demands, the shah goes into exile. This signals the end of the imperial regime and sets the stage for the coming of an Islamic Republic. "The shah has gone", headline Iran's daily newspapers. Hundreds of thousands of people pour into the streets. For the first time for several months, the army's vehicles disappear from the capital. — AFP



NEW YORK: Iranian ambassador to the United Nations Gholamali Khoshroo (left) speaks as US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley (right) looks on during a UN Security Council meeting on Friday. — AFP

## Iran FM ridicules Trump 'blunder' at Security Council

TEHRAN: Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif ridiculed US President Donald Trump yesterday over what he called the foreign policy "blunder" of trying to raise its recent protests at the UN Security Council. The Security Council "rebuffed the US' naked attempt to hijack its mandate", wrote Zarif on Twitter. "Majority emphasised the need to fully implement the JCPOA (nuclear deal) and to refrain from interfering in internal affairs of others. Another FP (foreign policy) blunder for the Trump administration."

The United States had pushed for the UN meeting on Friday to discuss the five days of protests that hit Iran last week, leading to the deaths of 21 people and hundreds of arrests. US Ambassador Nikki Haley argued the unrest could escalate into full-blown conflict and drew a comparison with Syria. "The Iranian regime is now on notice: The world will be watching what you do," Haley warned.

But Russia's envoy shot back that if the US view holds, the council should have also discussed the 2014

unrest in the US suburb of Ferguson, Missouri over the police shooting of a black teenager or the US crackdown on the Occupy Wall Street movement. Britain and France reiterated that Iran must respect the rights of protesters, but French Ambassador Francois Delattre said the "events of the past days do not constitute a threat to peace and international security". China also described the meeting as meddling in Iran's affairs, while Ethiopia, Kuwait and Sweden expressed reservations about the discussion.

Iran's Ambassador Gholamali Khoshroo slammed the meeting as a "farce" and a "waste of time" and said the council should instead focus on addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or the war in Yemen. Iranian authorities have declared the unrest over, and held three days of large pro-government rallies across the country between Wednesday and Friday.

Iran signed a nuclear deal with the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China in 2015, easing sanctions in exchange for curbs to the country's nuclear program. US President Donald Trump has fiercely opposed the deal, but the other signatories remain firmly behind it. Trump must decide every few months whether to continue waiving nuclear sanctions, with the next deadline due on Friday. Analysts say there is a chance he may use the latest unrest as a pretext to reimpose sanctions. — AFP

## Air strikes kill 17 in Syrian rebel enclave

BEIRUT: Regime and Russian air strikes on a rebel-held enclave near the Syrian capital killed at least 17 civilians yesterday, a war monitor said. Eastern Ghouta, one of the last remaining opposition strongholds in the country, is the target of near-daily air raids. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said yesterday's deadliest strikes had hit the Hammuriyeh district, killing 12 civilians including four children. An AFP reporter in Hammuriyeh saw residential buildings with their facades blown open, collapsing into streets strewn with rubble.

Residents including members of the White Helmets rescue group rushed to rescue the wounded. Running past a burning car, one man held a crying boy in his arms, while another carried the apparently lifeless body of a child through the streets. "I was with other people when a projectile fell nearby," said 33-year-old Mustafa Abu Badr, who was slightly wounded in the head. "The

blast threw me five metres. There were seven wounded and one dead," he said.

Observatory head Rami Abdel Rahman said Syrian and Russian aircraft had "continued their intense bombardment of Eastern Ghouta, targeting several residential areas". He said those killed also included two people in the district of Madira and three in Erbin, and that 35 people were wounded in the three areas. The Britain-based monitor relies on a network of sources inside Syria and says it determines whose planes carry out raids according to type, location, flight patterns and munitions used.

At the start of the week, a coalition of rebels and jihadists including a former Al-Qaeda affiliate surrounded the only regime base in Eastern Ghouta, which lies east of Damascus and has been under a crippling regime siege since 2013. The blockade has caused serious food and medicine shortages for the enclave's estimated 400,000 inhabitants. Rebels in Eastern Ghouta respond to air strikes by firing shells and rockets at Damascus. Yesterday, shellfire killed a civilian, Syrian state television reported. More than 340,000 people have been killed in Syria and millions displaced since the conflict began in March 2011 with anti-government protests. — AFP



HAMMURIYEH, Syria: A Syrian paramedic carries an injured child following bombardment by Syrian and Russian forces in this rebel-held town in Eastern Ghouta yesterday. — AFP

## Saudi boosts citizen benefits...

Continued from Page 1

Saudi Arabia is allied with the government in a war against Shiite rebels, will receive a bonus of 5,000 riyals (\$1,333). The state will also cover the tax on any citizen's first home purchase valued up to 850,000 riyals (\$227,000). The statement said the measures were based on "information provided by" Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the king's powerful son who has steadily consolidated his grip on power since his shock appointment as heir to the throne in June. Income remains tax exempt.

The decree did not reveal the total cost of the new

allowances, but it appeared to be considerably smaller than some past handouts by Saudi kings, and therefore unlikely to have much impact on economic growth or the state budget deficit. About 1.18 million Saudis are employed in the government sector and there are more than 1.23 million pensioners and beneficiaries of pension payments, the central bank says. That suggests a total package cost of about 23 billion riyals, according to Reuters calculations.

That compares to a projected 2018 deficit of 195 billion riyals, according to a budget plan released last month. A package of handouts marking King Salman's accession to the throne in early 2015 was estimated to cost more than 100 billion riyals. Saudi Arabia will slow plans to eliminate subsidies for a wide range of energy products, according to a new long-term fiscal plan in the 2018 state budget. — Agencies

## Trump: I'm a 'very stable genius'...

Continued from Page 1

lacked the "temperament of a stable, thoughtful leader." And Trump's Democratic rival Hillary Clinton regularly declared him "temperamentally unfit" for a job requiring "knowledge, stability and immense responsibility." Trump's tweets came ahead of his meetings yesterday with top Republican lawmakers and Cabinet members at the Camp David presidential retreat to discuss party priorities ahead of the crucial 2018 mid-term elections. Yet the sensational details in the new book and Trump's continued defense of his mental health have wrenched attention away from policy and news of US financial markets hitting all-time highs, bringing even more scrutiny over whether the US leader is fit for office.

On Friday, Washington's chief diplomat Rex Tillerson was obliged to defend Trump after being asked during an interview about claims that the president has a short attention span, regularly repeats himself and refuses to read briefing notes. "I've never questioned his mental fitness. I've had no reason to question his mental fitness," said Tillerson, whose office was last year forced to deny reports that he had referred to Trump as a "moron" after a national security meeting. Even in defending Trump, the former ExxonMobil chief executive told CNN he has had to learn how to effectively relay information to the president.

Journalist Wolff, no stranger to controversy, quotes several key Trump aides expressing doubt about Trump's ability to lead the world's largest economy and military hegemon. "Let me put a marker in the sand here. One hundred percent of the people around him" question Trump's fitness for office, Wolff told NBC's "Today" show. "They all say he is like a child. And what they mean by that is he has a need for immediate gratification. It's all about him."

The book includes extensive quotes from Steve Bannon, Trump's former chief strategist, who accuses Trump's eldest son Don Jr. of "treasonous" contacts with a Kremlin-connected lawyer, and saying the president's daughter Ivanka, who imagines herself running for president one day, is "dumb as a brick". But it is Trump himself who is cast in the most unfavorable light. The book claims that for Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin and former White House chief of staff Reince Priebus, the president was an "idiot". For chief economic adviser Gary Cohn, he was "dumb as sh\*t." And for National Security Adviser H R McMaster, he was a "dope".

Wolff also says he detected signs that some believe could point to incipient dementia, or at least mental deterioration - his repetition of the same stories and anecdotes, sometimes within minutes. The book's publication came as news emerged that at least a dozen members of the US Congress were briefed last month by Yale University professor of psychiatry Bandy Lee on Trump's mental health.

Assessments questioning Trump's stability have grown throughout his first year in office, fueled by what critics said were his often petulant, and even childish, reactions to criticism. Last November, Lee wrote to The New York Times that she and several other "concerned mental health professionals" were detecting "more than his usual state of instability," with "characteristics (that) place our country and the world at extreme risk of danger". The White House has regularly dismissed such criticism, saying it is no secret that the president has a strong personality, but that it makes him a more - not less - effective leader.

Fox News correspondent Geraldo Rivera told "Fox and Friends" yesterday that he had spoken to Trump on Friday and that he was "very, very frustrated" that the issue of his mental fitness was getting traction. Trump is to undergo the first physical examination of his presidency on Jan 12. The exam was announced on Dec 7 after questions arose about Trump's health when he slurred part of a speech announcing that the United States recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. — Agencies

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## Sports

# Shiffrin holds off Worley, Hirscher edges rivals on prestige first run

## Hirscher moved level with Tomba with 50th career World Cup win

**KRANKSKA GORA:** American Mikaela Shiffrin made a rare error early in her second run but held on to edge key rival Tessa Worley and win the giant slalom World Cup event at Kranjska Gora in Slovenia yesterday.

With the Winter Olympics just over a month away Shiffrin looked relieved with her narrow lead of 0.31sec over French skier Worley, who will travel to South Korea as defending giant slalom Olympic champion.

Shiffrin had been flawless on the first run of 55.08sec while Worley ran 55.94sec, but she set off slowly for the second descent on packed ice, taking an early gate wide with one leg way off the ground. But the 22-year-old from Colorado who is set to be a key attraction at the Pyeongchang Games next month showed depth of character to hold her nerve through the remaining gates.

"It was quite nice to ski on, a bit bumpy and wild but okay," Shiffrin said, who has been nursing a heavy cold. "I've been sick the last few days, but that was no excuse not to race." It was her third straight win in 2018, her sixth ever in giant slalom and her 39th World Cup victory.

It extends her huge overall lead in the overall World Cup standings where she is a massive 1,181 points ahead of the midway stage of the season and it lifts her clear in the giant slalom standings with 385 to Worley's

330 points.

Today the American prodigy will be red-hot favourite to win the slalom, her preferred discipline, at Podkoren in Slovenia. Sofia Goggia of Italy was third on the day whilst Switzerland's Wendy Holdener, who will be among the favourites for a podium spot at the Olympics, was fourth.

Another potential giant slalom medallist Germany's Viktoria Rebensburg, champion at Vancouver and bronze winner at Sochi, had been sixth after the first run but ended a disappointing 11th on the day.

In Adelboden, Switzerland, on-form Marcel Hirscher was fastest on the first run on the Swiss slopes for the giant slalom event at Adelboden yesterday but his key World Cup rival Henrik Kristoffersen was breathing down his neck.

Hirscher, who won a 50th World Cup event two days ago in Zagreb, registered 1min 10.53sec whilst Kristoffersen was 0.11sec adrift and another Norwegian Leif Kristian Nestvold was third at 0.65sec.

Another contender for a medal at the Winter Olympics next month, France's Alexis Pinturault, took a gate too wide and finished fifth at 1min 11.40sec. Adelboden is seen as a key marker on the World Cup circuit and racers see it as the most prestigious giant

“ It was quite nice to ski on, a bit bumpy and wild but okay ”



**KRANKSKA GORA:** (From L) Second-placed France's Tessa Worley, winner US skier Mikaela Shiffrin and third-placed Italy's Sofia Goggia celebrate on the podium of the FIS World Cup Ladies Giant Slalom race in Kranjska Gora, Slovenia, yesterday. — AFP

slalom event on the circuit.

The 28-year-old Hirscher moved level with Alberto Tomba with his 50th career World Cup win. Hirscher is

now closing in on Austrian Hermann Maier's total of 54 World Cup wins, but the record of 86 is held by Sweden's Ingemar Stenmark. — AFP

## Lillehammer legacy looms large in Norwegian winter sports

**STOCKHOLM:** A golden generation of Norwegian athletes born in the wake of the hugely successful Lillehammer Games in 1994 head to Pyeongchang hoping to maintain their position as the most successful nation in Winter Olympic history.

Despite being the smallest country by population ever to host a Winter Games, the Norwegians have won 329 Olympic medals and 20 years after Lillehammer they topped the medals table in Sochi with 11 golds and 26 in total.

Such was the effect of those 1994 Games that in 2017 an Olympic Legacy Sports Centre was opened in Lillehammer with support from the International Olympic Committee. An international centre for winter sports, it will also welcome athletes from countries that lack the 'conditions, resources and expertise' Norway enjoys.

Four-times Olympic champion skier Kjetil Andre Aamodt, who picked up two silver medals in the downhill and combined events at Lillehammer, is well aware of the effect the Games had on the nation's youth. "On the first day of the downhill, Axel Lund Svindal was one of the 60,000 people who came to watch, and I believe that is what the Olympics is all about - inspiring kids, youth or even older people to follow their dream," Aamodt told Reuters.

Now 35, Svindal went on to win three medals, including gold in the Super G, in Vancouver in 2010 and heads to Pyeongchang as one of Norway's hottest medal prospects. For Espen Bredesen, who won one gold and one silver medal for ski jumping at Lillehammer, it is no surprise that the 1994 Games made winter sports more popular than ever in Norway.

"We won a lot, we had heroes captured in fantastic TV pictures, skiing, cross-country, jumping - our heroes appeared in these wonderful pictures and young people copied them," Bredesen told Reuters.

"In that way, it was a tremendous advertisement for winter sports that has gone on for years and years." Norway set a record in 1994 by winning 10 gold medals on home soil, and even if it was subsequently broken by Canada in Vancouver, Bredesen and the Norwegians remain proud of their dominant performances and the Games they hosted.

"It was a wonderful Olympics in terms of the weather and the public. It was fantastic arena, the tracks were perfect, the winter was perfect, the weather was perfect," Bredesen explained. "There was an enormous interest from the general public, from the media - everyone I knew was incredibly interested."

For Bredesen, nothing could beat competing on home soil. "That was the time before mobile phones had arrived, and people took pictures with ordinary cameras, so everything you saw from Lillehammer, you were either there or you saw it on TV," he recalled.

"There wasn't a hundred channels to choose from either, there wasn't huge amount of sports to choose from - it was the Winter Olympics, and that was it. Everyone got to see it." One of those subsequently inspired by Espen Bredesen was ski jumper Daniel Andre Tande, who was born in Narvik in northern Norway just a couple of weeks before the Lillehammer games began.

"Of course Lillehammer is something people still talk about. The Olympics is an extremely special competition, since it's only every fourth year," Tande told Reuters. The 23-year-old said that he and his team mates are often stopped in the street in Norway during the season, and after a strong start to the season he is hoping to represent Norway in Pyeongchang. — Reuters

## KSSC opens Asian Youth Training Camp

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Shooting Sports Club opened the fifth Asian Youth Training Camp in Skeet on Friday at Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex in cooperation with the Asian Shooting Confederation.

President of the Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations, Executive Director of ASC Eng Duaij Khalaf Al-Otaibi said in his opening statement during the ceremony that this gathering comes as part of camps held by the club in past years that included several disciplines including pistol, rifle, Olympic skeet and trap.

Al-Otaibi said the six-day camp will have class and practical aspects of the skeet shooting under the supervision of Kuwait National Team coach Peter Malik, adding that Asian shooters are looking forward to gain from the experience of this coach, who is known worldwide.

Al-Otaibi said that the availability of all facilities at Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad complex, will contribute to the success of the camp and pointed to the large number of Arab and Asian Shooting Federations in it.

Al-Otaibi also said that as HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Seventh International Shooting Grand Prix approaches two advanced refreshing courses for rifle, pistol and shotgun referees will be

## Japan seek to recreate Sapporo jump joy

**TOKYO:** With a total of 11 medals, including three golds, ski jumping has provided rich pickings at the Winter Olympics for Japan, and the Games in Pyeongchang will provide another chance for them to excel in front of a prime-time Asian audience.

The combination of strength, timing and technique makes it a sport that has long appealed to the Japanese, with the epicentre of ski jumping excellence located on the north island of Hokkaido.

It was there that the gold-silver-bronze triumph, led by Yukio Kasaya, at the 1972 Olympics on home turf in Sapporo took place, cementing the status of the sport there. "I was starter at the top of the jump, next to all the jumpers. I was hoping Kasaya would win, but I never expected we'd take 1-2-3," Kunitugu Chiba, the coach of that 1972 ski jumping team, told Reuters.

The event was held at the Miyamori ski jumping stadium on the eastern slope of Mount Okura, where the sport is said to have been first practised in Japan. Students at the local university, who had seen it in Europe in the early 1900s and brought it back to Japan with them, built jumps around Sapporo to practise on.

The jump used for the Olympics was originally built in the early 1930s with support from Prince Chichibu, a brother of Emperor Hirohito. By the time Sapporo hosted the 1972 Games, Japan had only won one medal (a silver at the 1956 Games in Turin) at a Winter Olympics, and the country was hungry for success.

"Kasaya had the entire nation's hopes on his shoulders, and he'd been winning recent competitions, so expectations were high," Chiba said. Kasaya took gold in front of a packed crowd at the Miyamori site, Akitsugu Konno took silver and



Asian shooters seen during the opening of the training camp.

held by accredited international lecturers by the international shooting federations.

Eng Al-Otaibi said preparations for HH the Amir are going on according to plan, and appreciated the support of the political leadership for the shooting sport.

He also lauded the support of Honorary President of the ASC Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah. He also thanked Minister of Commerce and Industry, State Minister for Youth Affairs Khalid Al-Roudhan who will represent HH the Amir in the Grand Prix opening.

He finally congratulated Dr Humoud Fulaiteh on his appointment Director General for Sports Public Authority.



Duaij Khalaf Al-Otaibi



**BISCHOFSHOFEN:** Noriaki Kasai of Japan lands during the trial jump at the fourth and final stage of the Four-Hills Ski Jumping tournament (Vierschanzentournee) in Bischofshofen, Austria, yesterday. — AFP

Seiji Aochi took bronze in a clean sweep.

The 1-2-3 finish ended up being the only medals the host nation won in Sapporo and the trio became the toast of the nation, creating a yardstick that generations of ski jumpers that followed have had a hard time measuring up to, despite a team silver in 1994 and gold at the 1998 event in Nagano.

The 77-year-old Chiba said it's hard to specify why Japan has enjoyed such relative success in ski jumping compared to other winter sports. "I've been asked that a lot, and it's hard to answer. I think it might be because Japanese are detail-oriented," he explained.

"Running needs sheer physical strength. The cross-country coaches say that, that no matter how hard our athletes try, it's hard to compete (against physically bigger foreigners).

"Jumping is more technical, and not so much physical strength." Despite its population of around

3,500, the small town of Shimokawa, some 220km from Sapporo, has provided more than its fair share of Olympic ski jumpers to the national team.

Noriaki Kasai is set to compete in his eighth Olympic Games at the age of 45, while 23-year-old Yuki Ito is at the other end of the scale, expected to make her Olympic debut in Pyeongchang. "To nurture athletes in this sport, it's very important that they be near ski jumps. You have to have snow, you have to have people living near snow, and you have to have the facilities to jump," Katsuhiko Ito, father of Yuki and a member of the board of education in Shimokawa, told Reuters.

"We have four jumps in our town. Some of them are just a 15-20 minute walk for elementary school students. It's a sport that requires a major facility, so you need to have that nearby." With the Winter Games taking place in Asia for the first time in 20 years, the stage is set for the Japanese to shine once again in the sport of ski jumping. — Reuters

Sports

# Usman Khawaja leads the way as Australia pull away from England

## Marsh brothers making merry in an unbroken 104-run partnership

**SYDNEY:** Usman Khawaja plundered a big century as Australia roasted England's bowlers yesterday to open up a 133-run lead with two days to play in the final Ashes Test in Sydney. Khawaja topscored with 171 while Shaun Marsh finished unbeaten on 98 after Steve Smith fell for 83 as Australia built a substantial lead with more runs to come and intense 40 Celsius (104 F) heat forecast for Sunday's fourth day. Australia have already regained the Ashes with an unassailable 3-0 lead and are looking to close out the series 4-0 after last week's fourth Test in Melbourne was drawn.

At the close of play on a dispiriting third day for the tourists, who took just two wickets, brothers Shaun and Mitchell Marsh were making merry in an unbroken 104-run partnership as Australia cruised to 479 for four. Mitchell Marsh clubbed Moeen Ali for two sixes in three balls to be 63 not out off 87 balls at stumps after surviving a leg before wicket review in the final overs. Khawaja batted for 315 minutes off 381 balls with 18 fours and a six for his maiden Ashes Test hundred. "You don't get to celebrate Test centuries too much unless you're Steve Smith. You've got to enjoy them when they come," Khawaja said. It was the Pakistan-born Khawaja's sixth Test hundred and first in Sydney and came at a time when some former players were calling for his sacking despite scoring two half-centuries earlier in the series. "It's disappointing," Khawaja said of the criticism. "When I am scoring runs, I'm elegant and when I'm not scoring runs I'm lazy. Can't seem to win, when things aren't going well. "I've had that throughout my career. It's disappointing to hear but it's something I have dealt with throughout my career." He fell three runs short of his highest Test score of 174 scored against New Zealand in Brisbane in 2015.

Debutant Mason Crane ended Khawaja's epic innings to capture his first Test wicket when he had him stumped by Jonny Bairstow with a sharp turner that left the Australian No.3 stranded out of



**SYDNEY:** Australia's batsman Usman Khawaja (L) steers a ball away as England's Mark Stoneman (C) and Jonny Bairstow (R) look on, on the third day of the fifth Ashes cricket Test match at the SCG in Sydney. —AFP

his ground. It was due reward for the Hampshire leg spinner, who endured the heartbreak of having a leg before wicket review rubbed out for a borderline no-ball when Khawaja was on 132 earlier in the day.

Crane, who at 20 is the youngest specialist spinner to play for England in 90 years, showed plenty of heart to keep plugging away without much luck until dismissing Khawaja. Crane finished a challenging day with one wicket for 135 off 39 overs. "It was a pretty tough day," Bairstow said. "We're 150 overs into the innings so there's going to be a few tired bodies out there. "I thought the way the guys toiled out there and really worked hard was impressive and that's really good to see for us as a side going forward." Shaun Marsh reached his fourth half-century of the series and survived a review on 22 for a catch behind off Joe Root after the "Snicko" and "Hot Spot" technology

could not find supporting evidence.

England earlier claimed Smith's prized wicket before lunch when Ali caught and bowled the Australian skipper when he seemed set to make his fourth century of the series. Smith, who looked untroubled batting patiently through the morning session, left the field shaking his head after batting for 253 minutes and facing 158 balls. Smith and Khawaja seized the momentum for Australia with a 188-run stand as England chase a face-saving win after surrendering the Ashes after just three matches. The skipper has been one of the key differences between the two sides in the series, amassing 687 runs at an average of 137.40 with a top score of 239, his Test best. There was drama in the final over before lunch when Khawaja survived a review for leg before wicket but only after Crane had been found to have just overstepped for a no-ball. —AFP



### SCOREBOARD

**SYDNEY:** Scoreboard at the close on day three in the fifth Ashes Test between Australia and England in Sydney yesterday:

<b>England first innings 346</b> (J. Root 83, D. Malan 62; P. Cummins 4-80)	Total (4 wickets; 157 overs) 479
<b>Australia first innings</b> (overnight 193-2)	Fall of wickets: 1-1 (Bancroft), 2-86 (Warner), 3-274 (Smith), 4-375 (Khawaja)
C. Bancroft b Broad 0	To bat: T. Paine, M. Starc, P. Cummins, J. Hazlewood, N. Lyon
D. Warner c Bairstow b Anderson 56	Bowling: Anderson 30-11-52-1, Broad 23-2-70-1, Ali 37-9-125-1, Curran 20-2-71-0 (1w), Crane 39-3-135-1 (2nb), Root 8-3-21-0.
U. Khawaja st Bairstow b Crane 171	
S. Smith c and b Ali 83	
S. Marsh not out 98	
M. Marsh not out 63	
Extras (b2, lb3, w1, nb2) 8	



**CAPE TOWN:** South Africa batsman Dean Elgar plays a shot during day two of the First Test between South Africa and India in Cape Town, yesterday. —AFP

## South Africa on top despite Pandya swashbuckling 93

**CAPE TOWN:** Hardik Pandya went on a thrilling counter-attack but could not prevent South Africa from finishing on top on the second day of the first Test at Newlands yesterday. Pandya scored a swashbuckling 93, then took two wickets, but South Africa built on a first innings lead of 77 and were 65 for two at the close, an overall lead of 142 on a pitch which has helped fast bowlers.

India had slumped to 92 for seven in reply to South Africa's first innings total of 286 when Pandya found a determined ally in Bhuvneshwar Kumar. While 24-year-old Pandya went for his shots, Kumar took 34 balls to score his first run but then played some fine strokes of his own, scoring 25 in an eighth wicket partnership of 99 which more than doubled their team's total.

The partnership frustrated the South African bowlers and kept them in the field long enough for Dale Steyn to give South Africa another injury scare. Steyn, in his first Test match since suffering a fractured shoulder in Australia in November 2014, had taken two for 51 when he pulled up with a bruised heel and left the field three balls into his 18th over. After treatment in the dressing room he was sent for a scan. Steyn would have hoped to end Pandya's innings-and hasten the demise of the Indian batting effort-long before he was called upon to bowl a fourth spell in what was his longest and most intensive bowling effort since his shoulder injury.

Pandya struggled against Steyn early in his innings. He survived on a review after being given out caught behind off the fast bowler on five and was dropped by Dean Elgar at gully off Steyn when he had 15.

Pandya, 24, confirmed the reputation he earned as a dashing stroke player, first in limited overs cricket and more recently when he scored 178 runs off 168 balls in three Test innings in Sri Lanka last year, including 108 off 96 deliveries in the third Test in Kandy.

He hit 14 fours on Saturday as well as a six off left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj's second ball of the match. He charged out to the next ball and should have been stumped with his score on 71. Kumar was caught behind off Mome Morkel when Pandya was on 85.

If anything, Pandya stepped up his aggressive attitude after the dismissal of Kumar, swinging at a succession of short-pitched deliveries from Morkel and Kagiso Rabada.

His luck ran out when he flashed at a lifting ball from Rabada and was caught behind.

Rabada finished with three for 34, while Vernon Philander took three for 33. Morkel and Steyn shared the other four wickets. Pandya's innings was in contrast to the struggles of most of the other Indian batsmen who were kept under pressure by South Africa's barrage of four fast bowlers. Chetashwar Pujara laboured to 26 off 92 balls, while Rohit Sharma took 59 balls to score 11. South Africa made a good start to their second innings, with Aiden Markram and Dean Elgar putting on 52 for the first wicket before Pandya dismissed both openers in successive overs. —AFP

### SCOREBOARD

**CAPE TOWN:** Scores at stumps on the second day of the first Test between South Africa and India at Newlands yesterday:

<b>South Africa, first innings, 286</b>	
<b>India, first innings (overnight 28-3)</b>	
M. Vijay c Elgar b Philander 1	
S. Dhawan c and b Steyn 16	
C. Pujara c Du Plessis b Philander 26	
V. Kohli c De Kock b Morkel 5	
R. Sharma lbw b Rabada 11	
R. Ashwin c De Kock b Philander 12	
H. Pandya c De Kock b Rabada 93	
W. Saha lbw b Steyn 0	
B. Kumar c De Kock b Morkel 25	
Mohammed Shami not out 4	
J. Bumrah c Elgar b Rabada 2	
Extras (b1, lb13) 14	
Total (73.4 overs) 209	
Fall of wickets: 1-16 (Vijay), 2-18 (Dhawan), 3-27 (Kohli), 4-57 (Sharma), 5-76 (Pujara), 6-81 (Ashwin), 7-92 (Saha), 8-191 (Kumar), 9-199 (Pandya), 10-209 (Bumrah)	
Bowling: Philander 14.3-8-33-3, Steyn 17.3-6-51-2, Morkel 19-6-57-2, Rabada 16.4-4-34-3, Maharaj 6-0-20-0.	

<b>South Africa, second innings</b>	
A. Markram c Kumar b Pandya 34	
D. Elgar c Saha b Pandya 25	
K. Rabada not out 2	
H. Amba not out 4	
Extras 0	
Total (2 wds, 20 overs) 65	
Fall of wickets: 1-52 (Markram), 2-59 (Elgar)	
Bowling: Kumar 6-3-16-0, Bumrah 4-0-14-0, Mohammed Shami 5-1-15-0, Pandya 4-0-17-2, Ashwin 1-0-3-0.	

Match situation: South Africa lead by 142 runs with eight wickets remaining in the second innings

## New Zealand beat Pakistan by 61 runs in rain-hit ODI

**WELLINGTON:** Kane Williamson may have been New Zealand's hero in their dominant win over Pakistan in the opening one-day international in Wellington yesterday, but he said it was not a game for heroics.

"You're always thinking about the role you need to play and the situation of the game, and it certainly didn't require something silly," Williamson said after New Zealand beat the Champions Trophy holders by 61 runs under the Duckworth-Lewis system.

New Zealand made 315 for seven in their 50 overs and had the tourists at 166 for six when rain stopped play in the 31st over. Pakistan had arrived on a nine-match winning streak but fresh from playing in more accommodating conditions than the 120 kilometre an hour (75 mph) winds and rain that greeted them in Wellington.

After being sent in to bat, Colin Munro (58) and Martin Gupthill (48) gave New Zealand a flying start with 83 for the first wicket before Williamson went to the middle with the dismissal of Munro in the 13th over. While the openers plundered the boundaries, Williamson's 115 off 117 deliveries came from a diet of ones and twos with only eight fours and one six.

"It was holding in the wicket a little bit, and you come to a point in your innings where you either address it sensibly and accept that's what it is, or you do something silly," Williamson said. "Today I was a little bit more sensible and accepting of the fact that they did bowl well for a long time there, and I felt we were perhaps fortunate to get that above 300 score."

"They did execute their plans well, the wind was tough to deal with, and maybe that's where we gained an upper hand, but you do ebb and flow through an innings," Williamson, who was dropped on 26 by Pakistan wicketkeeper and captain Sarfraz Ahmed, also featured in a 90-run partnership off 80 balls with Henry Nicholls before he was caught by Hasan Ali off Rumman Raees in the 48th over.

Ali was central in most of the key New Zealand wickets with the dismissals of Munro, Nicholls (50) and Ross Taylor (12) to finish with three for 61. Pakistan were in trouble in the very first over of their reply when Tim Southee took the wickets of Azhar Ali and Babar Azam, both lbw.



**WELLINGTON:** New Zealand's Lockie Ferguson bowls during the first one day international cricket match between New Zealand and Pakistan at Basin Reserve in Wellington yesterday. —AFP

Fakhar Zaman battled bravely to try to restore the Pakistan innings and was unbeaten on 82, the only innings of note, when rain stopped play and Southee had the figures of three for 22.

"It's a setback for us, especially after losing two wickets in the first over," said Sarfraz who also shouldered part of the blame for his own fielding lapse.

"The New Zealand's batsmen batted well, especially Kane Williamson. If you drop catches, it becomes tough. Hopefully we will sit together and come up with a better performance next time." The second match in the five-match series is in Nelson on Tuesday. —AFP

### SCOREBOARD

**WELLINGTON:** Completed scoreboard in the rain-shortened first one-day international between New Zealand and Pakistan in Wellington yesterday:

<b>New Zealand</b>		<b>Pakistan</b>	
M. Gupthill c Shoaib Malik b Fakhar Zaman 48		Azhar Ali lbw b Southee 6	
C. Munro c Sarfraz Ahmed b Hasan Ali 58		Fakhar Zaman not out 82	
K. Williamson c Hasan Ali b Rumman Raees 115		Babar Azam lbw b Southee 0	
R. Taylor b Hasan Ali 12		Mohammad Hafeez c Southee b Boult 1	
T. Latham c Babar Azam b Faheem Ashraf 3		Shoaib Malik c Latham b Southee 13	
H. Nicholls c Ahmed b Hasan Ali 50		Sarfraz Ahmed lbw b Astle 8	
M. Santner c Rumman Raees b Mohammad Amir 7		Shadab Khan c Latham b Boult 28	
T. Southee not out 12		Faheem Ashraf not out 17	
T. Astle not out 4		Extras (b1, w10) 11	
Extras (b3, w7) 10		Total: (for six wickets; 30.1 overs) 166	
Total: (for 7 wickets; 50 overs) 315		Did not bat: Mohammad Amir, Hasan Ali, Rumman Raees	
Fall of wickets: 1-83 (Munro), 2-156 (Gupthill), 3-192 (Taylor), 4-198 (Latham), 5-288 (Williamson), 6-297 (Nicholls), 7-311 (Santner)		Fall of wickets: 1-6 (Azhar Ali), 2-7 (Babar Azam), 3-13 (Mohammad Hafeez), 4-37 (Shoaib Malik), 5-54 (Sarfraz Ahmed), 6-132 (Shadab Khan)	
Bowling: Sarfraz Ahmed 9-2-57-1 (1w), Rumman Raees 10-0-68-1 (2w), Hasan Ali 10-0-61-3, Shadab Khan 9-0-49-0 (1w), Faheem Ashraf 9-0-58-1 (2w), Fakhar Zaman 3-0-19-1.		Bowling: Southee 6.1-0-22-3 (2w), Boult 6-1-35-2 (2w), Ferguson 7-0-40-0 (3w), Santner 6-1-39-0 (3w), Astle 5-0-29-1.	
		Result: New Zealand won by 61 runs under Duckworth-Lewis system	

## Sports

# Roger Federer lauds Hingis influence after Hopman win

## Federer thrilled to add second Hopman Cup to his glittering resume

**PERTH:** Roger Federer paid tribute to the influence of countrywoman and former Hopman Cup team-mate Martina Hingis on his career after guiding Switzerland to their third success in the mixed teams tournament in Perth yesterday.

Federer looked primed for his Australian Open title defence when he came from a set down to beat world number four Alexander Zverev in the men's singles, before Angelique Kerber accounted for Belinda Bencic in straight sets to level the tie against Germany.

The Swiss duo then claimed the tournament with a straight-sets win in the deciding mixed doubles. For the 36-year-old Federer, it was a second title in Perth, having also been part of Switzerland's previous victory back in 2001, when he teamed with Hingis. At that time, Federer was just 19 and was yet to win an ATP event. He said the time spent with Hingis in Perth had a profound effect on his career, which now includes 19 Grand Slam singles titles. Hingis was the youngest ever Grand Slam champion and world number one, spending 209 weeks at the top of women's tennis and winning five Grand Slam singles titles. Federer visited Perth with Hingis twice, once as a hitting partner and then in 2001 as her team-mate, and said it shaped his career.

"I could look up to her and think, wow, how is she being so mentally strong and so consistent at such a young age," the Swiss star recalled. "It made me also believe with hard work and dedication you get really far, because I didn't believe it that much at that point when I was younger, I thought it was more all talent,"

he added. "Definitely she helped me to become the player I am today." Federer was thrilled to add a second Hopman Cup to his glittering resume and said it was a very different feeling to the first. "It is totally different to when I won it with Martina because I was the apprentice and she was the master," he said.

Unbeaten in his three singles matches in the tournament prior to the final, Federer dropped the first set against the 20-year-old Zverev, but recovered to win in three sets, 6-7 (4/7), 6-0, 6-2. Zverev beat Federer at the Hopman Cup last year and came out all guns blazing yesterday in a high-intensity first set where both players produced moments of brilliance and each holding multiple break points.

Federer's frustration was obvious as the set slipped away, dropping his racquet after missing an easy volley and then launching a ball towards the roof. However, he turned the match around by approaching the net more often and using drop shots to catch Zverev napping.

The frustration changed sides of the net as the German copped a code violation for an audible obscenity after disputing the chair umpire's decision to replay one of his serves during the second set.

Zverev's serve, and resolve, was broken in the third game of the third set and fittingly it was a Federer drop shot which sealed the win. Kerber, who is ranked 21st after starting last year at number one, then maintained her perfect singles record during the event to beat Bencic 6-4, 6-1 to level the tie.

Bencic, who was ranked seventh in the world before



**PERTH:** Roger Federer (L) and Belinda Bencic (2L) of Switzerland pose with the Hopman Cup after defeating runners-up Alexander Zverev (2R) and Angelique Kerber of Germany in the mixed doubles final on day eight of the Hopman Cup tennis tournament in Perth. — AFP

injuries stalled her progress, started brightly but Kerber soon took control and raced through the second set with breaks in the fourth and sixth games.

That set the scene for the mixed doubles, where

Bencic produced some stunning returns on the Zverev serve and teamed superbly with Federer to claim the title with an emphatic 4-3 (5/3), 4-2 win under the Fast4 format. — AFP



### Kerber beat Bencic to level the tie

## Reilly's breakaway goal give Knights a 5-4 win over Blackhawks

**CHICAGO:** Reilly Smith scored a breakaway goal with 6:05 remaining to give the Vegas Golden Knights a 5-4 victory over the Chicago Blackhawks on Friday in Chicago. Jonathan Marchessault, William Karlsson, Alex Tuch and Cody Eakin also scored goals for the Pacific Division-leading Golden Knights. Smith added two assists as Vegas rebounded from its first loss in 35 days in St. Louis on Thursday night, a setback that stopped an eight-game winning streak. Vegas' Malcolm Subban stopped 28 shots for his seventh consecutive win. Vinnie Hinostroza, Patrick Sharp, Nick Schmaltz and Jonathan Toews scored for Chicago, which rallied from 2-0 and 3-1 deficits to take a 4-3 lead early in the third period on Toews' goal before the Golden Knights rallied to pull it out.

#### Jets 4, Sabres 3

Jacob Trouba and Blake Wheeler both finished with a goal and an assist as Winnipeg scored a victory over Buffalo in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Dustin Byfuglien and Bryan Little each added a goal for the Jets, who improved to 4-0-1 in the past five games. Buffalo's Marco Scandella got his first goal of the season, and Johan Larsson and Scott Wilson each posted a goal. The Sabres' Jason Pominville and Evan Rodrigues had two assists apiece.

#### Senators 6, Sharks 5 (OT)

Matt Duchene scored seven seconds into overtime, giving Ottawa a come-from-behind, 6-5 victory over visiting San Jose. Duchene won the overtime's opening faceoff, then scored at the end of a two-on-one with Mike Hoffman. Duchene finished with two goals and one assist. Hoffman added one goal and three assists, while Mark Stone had a goal plus two helpers for Ottawa. Tomas Hertl scored two goals for the Sharks, who led 4-1 and then seemed to be in control with a 5-2 edge heading into the third period.

#### Red Wings 4, Panthers 2

Anthony Mantha scored a tiebreaking goal on the power play with 11:57 remaining in the third period, leading Detroit past visiting Florida. The Red Wings extended their season-best winning streak to four games. The Panthers lost their second in a row after a five-game winning streak ended against the Minnesota Wild on Tuesday. Detroit also got goals from Andreas Athanaiou, Tomas Tatar and Gustav Nyqvist. Michael Matheson and Aleksander Barkov scored for Florida.

#### Penguins 4, Islanders 0

Visiting Pittsburgh scored three goals in the second period and went on to beat reeling New York. Daniel Sprong opened the scoring in the second and added an insurance goal in the third. Evgeni Malkin and Sidney Crosby scored later in the second for the Penguins, who earned their fifth win in the past 13 games. Crosby had assists on the Penguins' other three goals, and goalie Tristan Jarry stopped all 31 shots he faced in recording his second career shutout. — Reuters

## Halep warms up for Australian Open with Shenzhen title

**SHENZHEN:** World number one Simona Halep continued her preparations for the Australian Open by lifting the Shenzhen Open title after a 6-1 2-6 6-0 victory over holder Katerina Siniakova yesterday.

In a rain-delayed match that was moved to the indoor courts, Romanian Halep got off to a flying start and did not face a single break point as she easily won the first set. Czech Siniakova, 21, fought back to take the second set as Halep appeared to lose focus but the top seed regained her composure to break the Czech's serve three times in the third

set and seal a comfortable win.

"We had a great match today. I tried everything to win... I just try to enjoy the moment even if it's a little bit different indoors. It's not easy but we did our job and I'm happy that I could win the first title of the year," Halep said. The success will be a boost for Halep, whose last triumph was at the Madrid Open last May, with the 26-year-old among the favourites to win her maiden grand slam title at this month's Australian Open.

"It's a great beginning of course to start the year with a title but thinking about the grand slam title is too far," Halep added. "I'm just taking it tournament by tournament and of course I will give my best in every match I will play and my dream is to win a grand slam."

With holder Serena Williams having withdrawn from the first grand slam of the year, Halep and Ukraine's Elina Svitolina, who won the Brisbane International title yesterday, have made strong statements ahead of the event, which begins on Jan. 15. — Reuters

## Svitolina crushes Sasnovich in Brisbane final

**BRISBANE:** Ukraine's Elina Svitolina laid down her marker as a serious contender for the Australian Open when she demolished Belarusian qualifier Aliaksandra Sasnovich 6-2, 6-1 in the Brisbane International final yesterday.

Svitolina won five titles on the WTA tour last year, more than any other woman. She ended the year ranked sixth in the world, but will climb two places when the new rankings are released on Monday and will go into the year's first Grand Slam as the fourth seed.

The 23-year-old had a tough path to the decider,

having to overcome two top-10 players, Johanna Konta and Karolina Pliskova, along the way. She was far too strong for Sasnovich, who struggled to cope both with the Ukrainian's serve and her relentless barrage of groundstrokes from the back of the court.

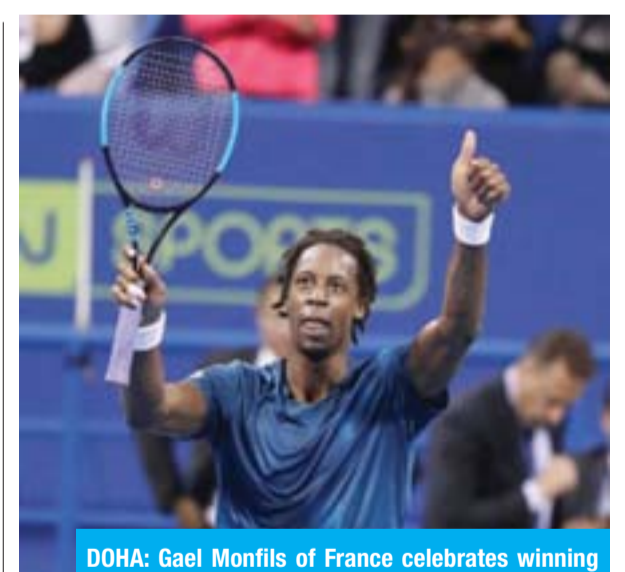
Sasnovich was playing in her first final on the WTA tour and her nerves showed in the early stages as Svitolina broke her early and raced away to a 3-1 lead. The Belarusian steadied the ship but she was always under pressure and serving at 2-5, she cracked.

Svitolina pounced, breaking her again and wrapping up the set in 31 minutes. Sasnovich was also playing her eighth match in nine days and her movement around the court appeared slightly slower than in her previous outings.

Svitolina was even more dominant in the second set, racing to a 5-0 lead before Sasnovich even got on the board. However, it was a minor reprieve as Svitolina held serve to love to claim her 10th title in just 65 minutes. — AFP



**SHENZHEN:** Simona Halep of Romania celebrates with the trophy after her victory against Katerina Siniakova of the Czech Republic in the women's singles final match at the WTA Shenzhen Open tennis tournament in Shenzhen in China's southern Guangdong province. — AFP



**DOHA:** Gael Monfils of France celebrates winning against Russia's Andrey Rublev during the ATP Qatar Open tennis competition in Doha yesterday. — AFP

## Fourth-time lucky Monfils storms to Qatar title

**DOHA:** France's Gael Monfils won the Qatar Open final in straight sets yesterday, brushing aside Russia's Andrey Rublev in a one-sided final, 6-2, 6-3. It was the Frenchman's first Qatar title despite having played in three previous finals and he is the first wildcard to win in Doha since compatriot Nicolas Escude triumphed back in 2004.

The 31-year-old, who arrived in Qatar after a four-month break due to a knee injury, dominated throughout. He broke Rublev's serve in the fourth game of each set and barely look troubled by the Russian, who has been so impressive all week but could not cope with the power of Monfils. The world number 46 took the first set in just 23 minutes and in the second was able to save two break points in the fifth game after establishing a 3-1 lead—the only time the Frenchman's serve was put under pressure. Monfils needed only one championship point to secure the match after just an hour on court. — AFP



**BRISBANE:** Elina Svitolina of Ukraine holds up the winner's trophy after beating Aliaksandra Sasnovich of Belarus in the women's singles final match of the Brisbane International tennis tournament. — AFP

Sports

# Oman shut down UAE to win 23rd Arabian Gulf Cup

## Fans hurt as railing collapses

By Ahmad Jabr

**KUWAIT:** Oman were crowned the 23rd Arabian Gulf Cup champions after beating the UAE 5-4 in penalty shootouts in the final, played in front of a capacity crowd at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium on Friday. But the award ceremony was marred when a glass barricade shattered after Omani fans rushed to greet their national team players, who had approached the stands. Between 20 and 30 fans were reportedly injured after falling to the ground, but no serious injuries were reported. They were rushed to Farwaniya Hospital. Earlier, Oman's goalkeeper Fayez Al-Rusheidi blocked UAE midfielder Omar Al-Amoodi's penalty shot in regulation time and again in the penalty shootouts to help his team win their second Gulf Cup after their victory in the 19th edition that the sultanate hosted in 2009. Both teams failed to score in regular time, sending the match into extra time, which also ended goalless. Oman dominated most parts of the match, having more possession and being more dangerous to the UAE net.

But the most dangerous opportunity in the match came for the UAE when the referee called for a penalty kick in injury time. But Amoodi, considered one of the tournament's best players and among the region's most promising talents, failed to convert as Rusheidi was able to block his shot.

Play had started slowly, and the first real scoring opportunity came in the 15th minute when Oman's Jameel Al-Yahmadi's header went above the post. Play went back and forth in the next 15 minutes, with Oman taking slight advantage in possession, before the UAE started attacking more and taking some control to close the first half.

The second half started with a rise in tempo pace



**KUWAIT:** Oman's players celebrate after winning the Gulf Cup of Nations 2017 final football match between Oman and the UAE at the Sheikh Jaber al-Ahmad Stadium in Kuwait City on Friday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

from both teams. Oman's Ahmed Al-Jneibi fired a shot that missed the target five minutes after play resumed, and the UAE went immediately for a counterattack that ended with Amoodi's shot going off target. The pace

slowed down significantly after 20 minutes of back-and-forth action, and no serious threats were seen until the penalty shot in injury time. The extra period ended with no real chances at both ends.

Both teams managed to convert their first four penalty kicks, before Rusheidi blocked Amoodi's shot. Mohsin Al-Khaldi then scored for Oman, giving his time the victory and sending fans into a frenzy.

## Coutinho set to join Barcelona

**BARCELONA:** Barcelona and Liverpool have agreed a deal in principle for Philippe Coutinho to move to the Spanish giants for 120 million euros (\$144 million) with add-ons worth another 40 million euros, a report said yesterday.

Barcelona-based Sport newspaper said Coutinho would join Barca this month on a deal for five seasons, although it said the details of the deal were still to be finalised.

"The club reached a deal in principle yesterday evening with Liverpool on the final amount of the deal," Sport reported. Another newspaper, Mundo Deportivo, said Liverpool were demanding 160 million euros for 25-year-old Coutinho, but that the sum would be made up of the transfer fee and other "variables".

Coutinho's departure would be a blow to Liverpool as he is just rounding into top form, scoring six goals in the last seven games of 2017. Crucially though, acquiring the playmaker would allow Barcelona to move on from the bitter experience of losing his Brazil teammate Neymar last summer to Qatar-backed Paris Saint-Germain for a world record 222 million euros.

Coutinho's age is also highly attractive to Barca, whose three main stars, Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Andres Iniesta are all in their thirties. Iniesta, at 33, has shown signs of fatigue this season. Another report said Coutinho could arrive in Barcelona and could be a spectator at Barcelona's game against Levante at the Camp Nou today.



**LIVERPOOL:** This file photo shows Liverpool's Brazilian midfielder Philippe Coutinho attempting a shot at goal during the English Premier League football match. — AFP

French sport daily L'Equipe reported yesterday that Liverpool were lining up Leicester's Riyad Mahrez to replace Coutinho, although other reports have indicated that the Merseyside club would prefer to sign Thomas Lemar from Monaco.

Coutinho played no role in Liverpool's 2-1 victory over city rivals Everton in the FA Cup on Friday. Liverpool's winner was scored by Virgil Van Dijk, the Dutch defender signed last week from Southampton for £75 million (\$101.7 million, 84.5 million euros). — AFP

## Leicester escape with FA Cup draw against lower-league Fleetwood

**LONDON:** Former Premier League champions Leicester City came within a whisker of suffering an FA Cup shock yesterday but clung on to draw 0-0 at lower-league Fleetwood Town while Middlesbrough eliminated Sunderland.

The big news before kick-off was that Leicester's star striker Jamie Vardy was denied an emotional return to his former club due to a groin injury while Riyad Mahrez was also missing from the teamsheet. In a first half of little incident a much-changed Leicester side almost fell behind in the opening minutes when defender Aleksandar Dragovic played a loose back pass, sending goalkeeper Eldin Jakupovic scrambling to keep the ball out. The visitors, revitalised since Claude Puel took the helm earlier this season, enjoyed the lion's share of possession on a crisp January day on England's northwest coast but offered little consistent threat going forward. Fleetwood, who play in League One, English football's third tier, upped the ante in the second period, putting pressure on the Leicester defence and going close to taking the lead.

Puel threw on midfielder Marc Albrighton and forward Shinji Okazaki but Fleetwood continued to threaten, earning a succession of corners. The League One side came within inches of winning in the dying seconds when Ashley Hunter struck the ball from distance and it deflected off Leicester's Yohan Benalouane onto a post. Jakupovic fumbled it back onto the post before gathering the ball, ensuring a replay.

"I would prefer to get it done in 90 minutes," said Fleetwood manager Uwe Rosler when asked about the



**FLEETWOOD:** Leicester City's English midfielder Matty James (L) vies with Fleetwood Town's English striker Conor McAleeny during the English FA Cup third round football match between Fleetwood Town and Leicester City at Highbury Stadium in Fleetwood. — AFP

money-spinning replay at the King Power Stadium. "Leicester has a strong team but we could have won it and we certainly deserved the draw. "Our young players showed ability, we took them right to the wire but unfortunately we didn't win."

In the other lunchtime kick-off yesterday,

Middlesbrough beat northeast rivals Sunderland 2-0 in an all-Championship clash. The third round sees teams from the Premier League and Championship enter the fray in the famous cup competition, throwing up the potential for shocks as the minnows seek to unseat famous opponents.—AFP

## Lingard stunner propels Man Utd to FA Cup win

**MANCHESTER:** Jesse Lingard's latest wonder strike and substitute Romelu Lukaku's late effort secured Manchester United a 2-0 victory over Championship high-flyers Derby in the third round of the FA Cup on Friday. Both attempts, which came in the final six minutes, were worthy of a highlights package in the first FA Cup tie involving Premier League giants United in 13 years not to be televised live.

United had lost just one of their previous 35 FA Cup games against lower-league sides but were heading for a replay until one-time Rams loanee Lingard, with his eighth goal in 10 games, smashed home a swerving volley, with Lukaku then adding a second having broken from the halfway line.

"I was feeling that we were close to scoring and we never stopped trying," said United boss Jose Mourinho, who said the Championship was approaching Premier League quality. "But when you get past 80 minutes and the goal hasn't come, you fear the second match. But the team kept trying so I knew the goal could arrive."

"It was a great shot by Jesse Lingard in the top corner, he's in a moment of confidence where things go well for him. He's a good professional and a fantastic kid in the dressing room." Last month's League Cup exit and a 15-point deficit to Manchester City in the Premier League had placed extra importance on this competition, and that was evident with the strong line-up Mourinho deployed.

Lingard, Paul Pogba and Marcus Rashford could all have scored inside an entertaining 19 minutes that suggested the television executives might have been wrong to snub the match. Derby were encouraged by a couple of runs from former United youngster Tom Lawrence, while Marcus Olsson forced Sergio Romero to tip his header over the crossbar, with Alex Pearce heading the resulting corner into the Stretford End.

That was a good opening but nothing like the one Rashford spurned 10 minutes before the break. For once Henrikh Mkhitaryan's delivery was perfect and an unmarked Rashford glanced a header onto a post from six yards out. It was the type of miss that epitomised why Mourinho is reluctant to consider him as a central-striking alternative to Lukaku, whose arrival for the disappointing Mkhitaryan would soon come.

Before the interval there was still time for Rams stopper Scott Carson to make two saves, one a routine stop from another Rashford header and the other a palm over the top from a Pogba free-kick destined for the top corner.—AFP



### Matches on TV (Local Timings)

SPANISH LEAGUE	
Leganes v Real Sociedad	14:00
beIN SPORTS HD 3	
Barcelona v Levante	18:15
beIN SPORTS HD 3	
Athletic de Bilbao v Deportivo Alaves	20:30
beIN SPORTS HD 1	
Villarreal v Deportivo La Coruna	20:30
beIN SPORTS HD 3	
Celta de Vigo v Real Madrid	22:45
beIN SPORTS HD 3	

**12** Shiffrin holds off Worley, Hirscher edges rivals on prestige first run



**14** Roger Federer lauds Hingis influence after Hopman win



**15** Oman shut down UAE to win 23rd Arabian Gulf Cup



MANCHESTER: Manchester City's Argentinian striker Sergio Aguero (C) has a shot blocked during the English FA Cup third round football match between Manchester City and Burnley at Etihad Stadium in Manchester. — AFP

## Aguero fires City's FA Cup bid

### Hughes under pressure as Stoke crash

LONDON: Sergio Aguero fired Manchester City to a 4-1 win over Burnley in the FA Cup third round, while Stoke boss Mark Hughes is fighting to save his job after the Premier League strugglers suffered an embarrassing 2-1 defeat at minnows Coventry yesterday.

City boss Pep Guardiola named a strong team including Aguero, Leroy Sane and Raheem Sterling at Eastlands, but the runaway Premier League leaders fell behind in the 25th minute. Ashley Barnes blasted into the top corner after City defender John Stones sliced his attempted clearance.

However, Burnley hadn't won at City since 1973 and Argentina striker Aguero ensured that run continued. City, who last tasted defeat in domestic competition in their FA Cup semi-final against Arsenal in April, were level in the 56th minute when Aguero fired home from Ilkay Gundogan's pass. Aguero then finished off a superb back-heeled pass from Gundogan in the 58th minute. Sane prodded home to put the result beyond doubt in the 71st minute and Bernardo Silva made it four in the 82nd minute. At the Ricoh Arena, Hughes could face the sack after fourth tier Coventry rolled back the years with a memorable cup result. With Stoke in the relegation zone, it was

reported this week that the club's hierarchy had considered dismissing Hughes and whether he can survive any longer must now be in doubt. Coventry have fallen on hard times since winning the FA Cup in a classic 1987 final against Tottenham and now reside in League Two—their first time at that level since the 1950s—after a spell having to play their home matches in Northampton due to a stadium row. Jordan Willis put the underdogs ahead in the 24th minute with his first goal in a year.

#### BOURNEMOUTH ESCAPE

Willis conceded a 52nd minute penalty with a foul on Ramadan Sobhi and Charlie Adam stepped up to equalise. But Coventry right-back Jack Grimmer weaved

his way through Stoke's defence and side-footed past Jack Butland in the 67th minute. At Dean Court, Bournemouth manager Eddie Howe made eight changes as he prioritised Premier League survival and it needed a second half revival from his under-studies to rescue a 2-2 draw against Wigan.

#### Grigg gave Wigan a fourth minute lead

Northern Ireland forward Will Grigg gave Wigan a fourth minute lead from close-range and there was worse to come for Howe in the 29th minute when Emerson Hyndman's own goal doubled the visitors' lead. Yet Lys Mousset reduced the deficit for Bournemouth in the 55th minute and League One leaders Wigan, who won the FA Cup in 2013, were denied a surprise win by Steve Cook's goal two minutes into stop-

page-time. Newcastle had been tipped as potential upset victims, but they swept away fourth tier leaders Luton with a 3-1 win at St James' Park. Rafael Benitez's side ran riot in the first half as Ayoze Perez netted in the 30th and 36th minutes before Jonjo Shelvey struck after 39 minutes. West Bromwich Albion won for the first time in 21 games in all competitions, a 2-0 win at fourth tier Exeter giving boss Alan Pardew his first victory since replacing the sacked Tony Pulis. Salomon Rondon's long-range drive put Albion ahead in the second minute and Jay Rodriguez added the second goal in the 25th minute. Watford avoided more cup misery against giant-killers Bristol City with a 3-0 win at Vicarage Road.

Second tier Bristol face Manchester City in the League Cup semi-finals next week after stunning Manchester United in the last eight. City had also won at Vicarage Road in the League Cup this season, but Watford avoided another embarrassing loss thanks to goals from Andre Carrillo, Troy Deeney and Etienne Capoue. Southampton won 1-0 at Fulham, Huddersfield beat Bolton 2-1, Swansea drew 0-0 at Wolves and Leicester were held to a 0-0 draw at third tier Fleetwood. — AFP

### Costa sent off after scoring Atletico winner

MADRID: Atletico Madrid's Diego Costa scored on his home debut in a 2-0 win over Getafe and was immediately sent off for an over-zealous celebration as the former Chelsea striker marked a typically eventful return to La Liga yesterday.

The Spain striker hit the second goal in the 67th minute, after Angel Correa put Atletico ahead in the 18th, and rushed to the home fans behind the goal at the Wanda Metropolitano, creating a mini-surge as supporters ran down to embrace their returning hero who also played for the club from 2010-2014.

Leaving the pitch to celebrate with the fans automatically incurs a booking and, as Costa had already been shown a yellow card for elbowing Djene Dakonam

seven minutes earlier, referee Jose Luis Munuera Montero had no choice but to send him off.

Atletico are second in the standings on 39 points, six behind leaders Barcelona who host Levante today.

Costa, who returned to Atletico from Chelsea for 57 million pounds (\$77.34 million) in September but could not play until January due to a ban on the club registering new players, will be suspended for Atletico's next Liga game at Eibar on Jan. 13.

The 29-year-old had scored his first goal in his second spell at Atletico in a 4-0 win at Lleida Esportiu in the King's Cup on Wednesday less than six minutes after coming on.

#### HEROIC FIGURE

Costa was a heroic figure at Atletico's old home the Vicente Calderon for firing them to their first league title in 18 years in 2014, although their new 68,000-capacity stadium was far from full for his homecoming.

The early kick off on epiphany, one of the most important days of the Christmas period in Spain, and persistent rain could explain the low turnout, though Costa lifted the mood with an early shot from outside

the area that whistled over the bar.

Atletico had failed to score in their last league outing at Espanyol where they lost 1-0 but Costa brought extra aggression to their front line yesterday, even though it was his strike partner Antoine Griezmann who played in Correa for the opener.

Costa was involved in an altercation with visiting defender Juan Cala at halftime in response to Getafe landing some meaty challenges on their opponents, setting the tone for a tension-filled second period which eventually saw the striker dismissed.

Atletico coach Diego Simeone said he had no complaints about Costa's sending off but also praised the striker for the galvanising impact he had on his side. "I'd like to focus on all the good things Costa did, his presence made us more direct, he strikes fear into opponents, everyone can see that and that makes us all so happy," Simeone told reporters.

"The referee is here to follow the rules and not make emotional decisions." Third-placed Valencia host Girona later before Sevilla play Real Betis in a local derby, while champions Real Madrid visit Celta Vigo today. —Reuters

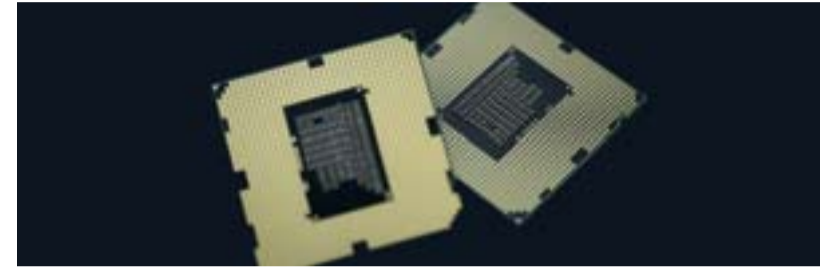


MADRID: Atletico Madrid's Spanish forward Diego Costa receives a red card after celebrating a goal with supporters during the Spanish league football match Club Atletico de Madrid vs Getafe CF at the Wanda Metropolitano stadium in Madrid. —AFP



## Business

SUNDAY, JANUARY 7, 2018

**19** Fund managers expect value stocks to jump**20** Global markets extend 2018 rally**22** Major tech firms battle to resolve major security flaw

FLORIDA, Uruguay: Sheep are corralled before shearing starts on a ranch in Florida, 90km north of Montevideo, Uruguay. — AFP

## Uruguayan wool coveted by Europe

## The last bastion of washed and combed wool

**FLORIDA:** With one hand, breeder Sebastian Saura holds the head of a sheep and with the other, in a matter of minutes, he shears the animal down to its tender pink skin. It is the first phase of a trip that will take wool from Uruguay—one of the world's top exporters of the textile fiber—to Germany for use in the seats of luxury cars. At this farm in central Uruguay, 17 workers spend three days shearing 2,600 sheep. They do it in the southern hemisphere's springtime, before the summer heat sets in.

Some of the workers are tasked with going into a pen to grab the animals, which can weigh up to 50 kilos, and then lugging them into a hangar where they are held down to give up their fleece. "There is a real team spirit. We are very well organized because that is the only way to work," said Saura, 22, working alongside his father Roberto, who has been shearing sheep for 36 years. Nestled between Brazil and Argentina, Uruguay boasts a population of 3.5 million and nearly twice as many sheep — 6.6 million.

To sell all that wool, it has to look abroad. Of its

annual production of nearly 30 million kilos, only one percent is absorbed by the local market. Low maritime freight costs are a big help. "It is more expensive to bring wool from Salto in northern Uruguay than it is to send it to China," said Facundo Ruvira, commercial director of Tops Fray Marcos, the country's biggest plant for washing and combing wool—a practice abandoned decades ago in western Europe.

**World's third biggest exporter**

Indeed, Uruguay is one of the last countries in the world that exports large amounts of wool that has been washed and combed, unlike Australia and New Zealand, which ship it dirty in its roughest form. In this particular added-value segment, Uruguay is the world's third-largest exporter with a market share of 12 percent, surpassed only by China and the Czech Republic.

While the country's thinnest wool, such as merino, goes to the luxury fashion industry, thicker

wool from a breed of sheep called corriedale—the most common kind in Uruguay—is used in the seats of high-end German cars and in aircraft. Ruvira said his top client for the past 20 or 30 years has

**The process adds value but also creates jobs**

been the Austrian group Schoeller, which supplies the auto industry and is very demanding about the wool it buys. At his plant, Ruvira shows how wool is separated into long- and short-strand varieties,

washed in cold and then hot water, with soap and then without, before finally being combed and packaged for shipping. The process adds value but also creates jobs for 150 people at the Tops Fray Marcos plant in Libertad, west of the capital Montevideo. The wool then travels by freighter for 25 days before it reaches Germany, where the wool is transformed into carpets or fabric for BMW and Mercedes-Benz cars, said Ruvira.

**Sheep treated well**

In the town of Hard in western Austria, the owner of Schoeller, Kurt Haselwander, praises what he calls the subtlety of Uruguayan wool—he buys 800 tons of it a year—and its elasticity and softness. Another thing that makes it stand out in comparison to Australian or New Zealand wool is that sheep are treated better in Uruguay, he says. To wit: sheep in Uruguay, unlike in those other two competitors, are not subjected to a technique called mulesing, in which a piece of skin is

sliced from around the anus of a sheep without anesthetic. This is done to produce a scar free of wool, fecal and urine stains and thus prevent what is known as flystrike, when flies lay their eggs on the skin of sheep and these hatch into larvae that feed on the sheep's tissue. Schoeller uses the wool to make sweaters, socks and other garments, as well as upholstery for luxury car seats and the seats in business class on planes because it does not wear down as easily as other kinds of wool, Haselwander said.

In cars, wool is used because it is safer—it does not burn like synthetic materials, said Carlos Piovani, who oversees shearing at the Uruguayan Wool Secretariat. Synthetic materials derived from oil are the big competitors of wool, and the sector has suffered dearly because of it, both here and around the world. "Thirty years ago, we had 20 million sheep," said Piovani. But Uruguay is counting on a recent rise in wool prices and is proud of its higher quality. Uruguay exports wool to the tune of \$250-300 million a year, the same as 30 years ago, but with a lot less of the stuff, said Piovani. — AFP

## US job gains still disappoint as unemployment holds at 4.1%

**WASHINGTON:** The US economy's job creation ability disappointed in December, despite solid hiring in manufacturing and construction, according to government data reported Friday. But with the country believed to be near full employment, the jobless rate still held steady at its 17-year low of 4.1 percent. Employers added just 148,000 new hires in the final month of the year, all but 2,000 of them in the private sector—far below economists' expectations of 200,000 jobs or more.

Those upbeat forecasts had been boosted by data from payroll services firms ADP Thursday that reported private hiring to have surged by 250,000 in the month, although the ADP report is known to be volatile. Revisions to the October and November data also subtracted 9,000 jobs from the economy, making the picture for the fourth quarter even more disappointing.

Job creation in the final three months of the year averaged 204,000, the Labor Department

said. The slowing could point to an economy nearly at full employment that is finding it hard to find workers to fill open positions, a sentiment seen in many business surveys. Many firms have reported the need to raise wages to attract new workers, and that was reflected in the increase in average hourly earnings to \$26.63 from \$26.54 in the prior month, and from \$25.98 at the end of 2016. That marks a 2.5 percent increase in wages over last year, slightly ahead of consumer inflation.

**Manufacturing still strong**

The manufacturing sector added 25,000 new jobs in December, while the construction sector added 30,000, and health care added 29,000. But retail employment fell by 20,000, and professional and business services slowed sharply to a gain of just 19,000 after two months, with increases of close to 50,000. For all of 2017, construction employment increased by 210,000, compared to 155,000 in 2016, while manufactur-

ing saw a gain of 196,000, about the same as the prior year. Business and professional services jobs rose 527,000 for the year, about the same as 2016, while retail jobs declined 67,000 after adding 203,000 a year earlier.

**Volatile number**

Analysts whose forecasts were proven wrong downplayed the low hiring numbers, and attributed them to the volatility inherent in the measurements. Stock markets also seemed to ignore the disappointing data—released at the same time as the trade figures which showed November had the biggest deficit in more than five years—pushing to new records.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average jumped 0.9 percent to close at 25,295.87, just a day after closing above 25,000 points for the first time. The broad-based S&P 500 gained 0.7 percent to 2,743.15, while the tech-rich Nasdaq Composite Index advanced 0.8 percent to 7,136.55. Jim O'Sullivan of High Frequency Economics, who forecast a payrolls gain of 210,000, said of the December result, "the miss was not especially large given normal volatility and there is no sign in other data of the trend weakening." — AFP

## Libya's oil revenues surge

**TRIPOLI:** Libya's oil revenues have more than tripled in 2017 despite violence and political instability, according to figures released Friday by the central bank. The backbone of the North African country's economy, Libya's oil sector collapsed in the wake of the 2011 NATO-backed uprising that toppled longtime dictator Moamer Kadhafi. Oil output fell from 1.6 million barrels per day to less than 500,000 bpd between 2014 and 2016 due to violence around production facilities and export terminals as rival militias fought for control.

Despite revenues surging to \$14 billion (12 billion euros) in 2017, up from \$4.8 billion the previous year, Friday's figures fall far short of the \$50 billion Libyan crude sales earned

before Kadhafi's ouster. In 2017, production surged again to over one million barrels per day, slashing a record 2016 budget deficit by half to \$7.7 billion in 2017, the central bank said. Crude sales make up 90 percent of Libyan state revenues, including most of what the country spends on public salaries and subsidies.

An internationally-backed unity government in Tripoli controls the country's oil income, but a rival administration based in the east has also established its own central bank. Since 2014, fighting and protests have regularly shut down oil facilities, a key focus of power struggles in a country with the largest oil reserves in Africa. Analysts see restarting oil production and exports as key to kickstarting Libya's moribund economy and returning security to the country. Despite rising revenues, the country continues to face persistent cash shortages and is struggling to tackle an unprecedented drop in the value of its currency. — AFP

NBK Economic Report

# Qatar: Non-oil growth to slip further as GCC row persists

**KUWAIT:** Our forecast for GDP growth in 2018 has been revised down to 3.5% from 4.0% before, driven by the continued fallout from the GCC diplomatic rift which shows few signs of resolution. This will still be a pickup from the 1.2% expected for 2017, with the rebound driven by the startup of the long-delayed Barzan gas project, which could boost real hydrocarbon sector GDP by 4%. Given the scope for further delay at Barzan and the potential for an intensification of the diplomatic dispute, the risks to our growth forecast are on the downside.

Non-oil growth in 2018 has been downgraded to 3.0% from 4.0% before, and is weaker than the 3.5% now expected for 2017. The initial shock to the economy from the dispute which started in June has passed, with imports returning close to pre-crisis levels, new trade routes established and capital flows more stable. But the economy remains under pressure. Corporate earnings have been hit, equity and real estate prices have slumped and the more difficult funding climate has put strain on banks and the currency peg.

Although trends are obscured by data issues, our view is that the flow of people and tourists into Qatar has also been significantly affected. The resident population was up 3% year-to-date in November, compared to 7-11% in the equivalent period in the previous five years. Population growth slipped to just 1.7% y/y, the slowest since 2011, though has been trending down for the past few years. (Chart 4) Visitor arrivals were down 32% y/y in October, and down 74% y/y from the GCC. This weakness is likely to persist unless a resolution to the crisis is found.

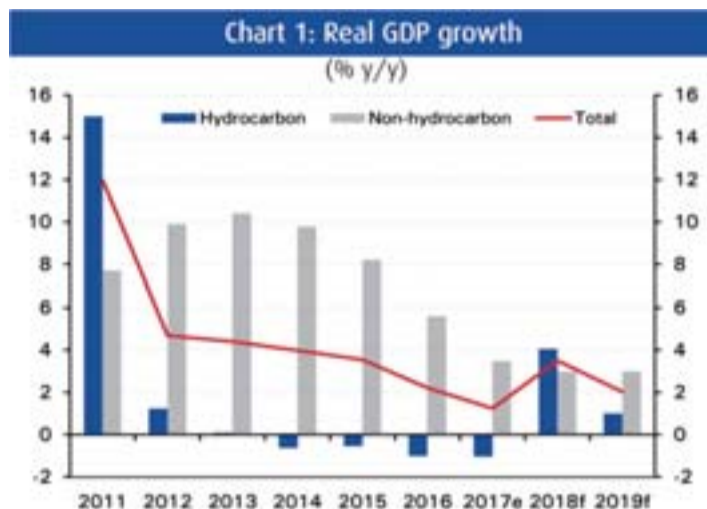
More positively, the government's main

source of revenues - oil and gas receipts - has been largely unaffected by the dispute (including the gas delivered via the Dolphin pipeline to the UAE), and it has recently bolstered its finances by the sale of stakes in various overseas firms. Activity is also cushioned by the long pipeline of infrastructure projects to which the authorities are committed both for the World Cup in 2022 and Vision 2030, including the metro (due 2019), Lusail Light Rail system (2020) and World Cup stadia. Meanwhile, there are plans to restart development of North Field gas deposits following the lifting of the 12-year moratorium, though the impact will likely fall beyond our forecast range. The latest 5-year development plan (2017-22) is being finalized.

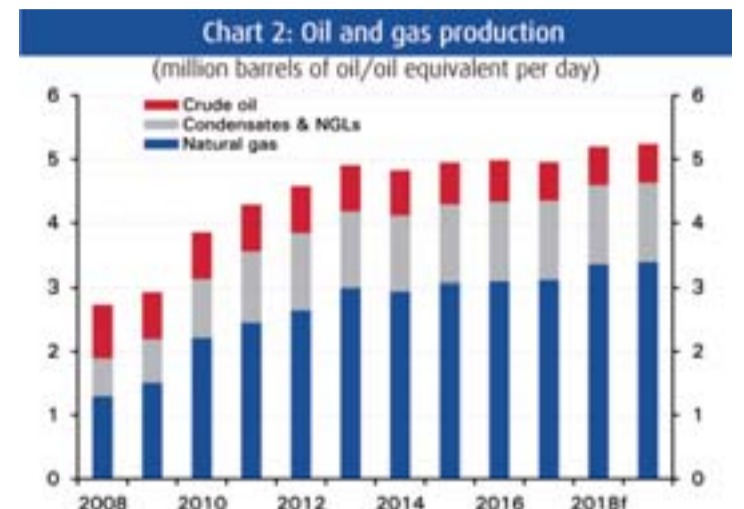
**Inflation very low, outlook clouded by possible VAT**

Inflation - already low in III 2017 - fell to negative territory in August and September for the first time since 2011 and is estimated at 0.4% for 2017 as a whole. (Chart 5) Key to weak price pressures has been the slump in the housing component, at -5.4% y/y in October, driven by the broader correction in house prices which has arguably intensified since the summer. But 'core' inflation is also low, estimated at 0.8% for 2017 due to the still-strong currency (linked to the dollar peg) and weaker growth climate. Although food prices have risen due to the diplomatic dispute, the rise has not been as severe as feared.

A VAT was intended to be implemented (likely late) in 2018, which would add around 2% to the annual rate of inflation for one year. This is factored in to our forecast, but given the absence of preparations so far, the current need to support the economy and the manageable fiscal deficit, there is a good chance that imple-



Source: Thomson Reuters Eikon / NBK



Source: JODI, BP, OPEC, NBK



## Growth to pickup in 2018, but risks skewed to the downside

mentation will be postponed. With base effects likely to push food inflation higher, the fading of downward price pressures from the exchange rate and possibly VAT in 2H, we forecast inflation to pick up to 2.5% in 2018.

**Budget outlines modest spending rise in 2018**

The fiscal deficit has been at manageable levels - and much lower than in some other GCC countries. The deficit is estimated to have narrowed to 5% of GDP in 2017 from 9% a year earlier, with higher revenues due to a y/y rise in oil and gas prices more than offsetting a modest increase in government spending. Hydrocarbon exports were unaffected by the diplomatic row, and accounted for around 85% of budget revenues. We estimate that spending had been cut by around 17% in 2016 which helped limit the deficit but also contributed to the slowing economy.

The government's budget for 2018 signals a 2% rise in spending, including a focus on food security projects in light of the trade embargo and a rising wage bill that reflects the launch of new schools and hospitals. But we think spending will overshoot, as it did in the previous two years. As has been typical, capital spending will account for nearly half of all outlays, with some QARI1 billion allocated to sports projects primarily stadia for the 2022 World Cup.

**Government debt levels continue to rise but bond yields still low**

Despite talk of a sovereign bond issue in late 2017, the government has avoided tapping international markets since the giant \$9 billion bond issue of May 2016. It has, however, increased its borrowing direct from local banks, which reached \$87 billion in October from \$71 billion at end-2016. Total government debt will stand at around \$120 billion by end-2017, or 74% of GDP (see chart 7), which is high compared to many of its Gulf peers.

The government's credit rating has been downgraded once by each of the main rating agencies through 2017, one of which occurred before the crisis began. But the overall rating still stands at high investment grade - of AA- or equivalent - reflecting the relatively manageable fiscal deficit and strong asset position. The yield on the government's 2026 bond - previously one of the lowest among comparable maturity bonds in the region - stood at around 3.6% in early December, a 10-30bps premium against Kuwait, Saudi and Abu Dhabi and up from around 3.2% pre-crisis.

**Market interest rates also edging higher as liquidity tightens**

Government and central bank (QCB) deposit

injections have helped to ease liquidity pressures in the banking system resulting from the exodus of foreign funds. Admittedly, 3-month interbank rates have risen more than 50bps to 2.5% since III17. But much of this was related to the rise in policy interest rates in June, following the hike by the US Federal Reserve - though the rise since May was around 20-50 bps more than in other GCC countries.

The QCB hiked its repo rate by 25bps to 2.5% in December following the latest Fed hike, but left its other policy rates on hold. We expect 2 further US interest rate rises in both 2018 and 2019. In the current climate, the QCB is likely to follow suit, in order to avoid inviting pressure on the riyal currency peg. But rate hikes risk tightening credit conditions at a time when the economy requires additional support.

The currency market continues to see some pressure. Some investors were said to be having difficulty obtaining US dollars at the official pegged rate of QAR3.64/\$1 in the onshore market, with the QCB subsequently guaranteeing that investors in the stock market would be able to exchange riyals at the official rate. Liquidity in the market has since improved, with the gap between the onshore and offshore riyal rates narrowing and the 1-year forward rate back trading very close to the official rate, having been as much as 3.6% weaker in June.

## EasyJet carries record number of passengers

**LONDON:** British no-frills airline EasyJet announced Friday that it carried a record 81.6 million passengers in 2017, despite uncertainty surrounding Brexit. The number of passengers increased by 9.6 percent last year compared with 2016, EasyJet said in a trading update. Low-cost Irish rival Ryanair had revealed on Wednesday that it carried a record-high 129 million passengers last year.

And on Thursday, British Airways owner IAG stated that it had transported a total of 105 million people. EasyJet has meanwhile activated its Brexit contingency plans. Back in July 2017, EasyJet applied for a new air operator's certificate in Austria to continue flying across Europe regardless of the final Brexit deal between Brussels and London. In November however, the carrier revealed that its annual net profit slumped by almost one third on strong competition and a Brexit-fueled slump in the pound. Over the last two decades, Britain's airline industry has soared under the Single European Sky system, which lifted trade restrictions on EU airlines. Unless British negotiators manage to secure preferential conditions, British airlines could lose this status once the country leaves the European Union in 2019. —AFP

## US-Korea trade talks pit pickup trucks against nuke threat

**WASHINGTON/SEOUL:** The United States and South Korea on Friday completed the first round of review talks on a bilateral trade deal with Washington saying there was "much work to do" to reach a new pact. Since taking office in 2017, President Donald Trump has pulled the United States out of talks on a 14-nation Asia-Pacific trade pact, started negotiations on a new deal for the North American Free Trade Agreement between the US, Mexico and Canada and initiated a review of the 2012 Korea deal.

Washington has taken a hard line in the NAFTA talks, which appear stalled with just two rounds of negotiations left, saying that concessions are the only way for Canada and Mexico to keep the deal. The Korea trade talks will have to strike a balance between Trump's domestic agenda and the need to contain a nuclear-armed North Korea. A swift agreement would have aided that, officials from both sides told Reuters ahead of the talks on Friday.

The US goods trade deficit with South Korea has doubled since the 2012 signing of the US-Korea Free Trade Agreement (KORUS). Almost 90 percent of the 2016 shortfall of \$27.6 billion came from the auto sector, an issue the United States is expected to press hard in the Washington talks. A quick Korea deal could give Trump his first trade

victory at a time when NAFTA negotiations are dragging on and pressure on China to change trade practices has yielded little progress.

The talks, led by Assistant US Trade Representative Michael Beeman and Yoo Myung-hee, director general for FTA negotiations at South Korea's trade ministry, begin at a time of heightened tension with Pyongyang. The United States had primarily raised the issue of the automobile sector. Yoo told reporters in Washington after the first round of talks, Yonhap News Agency said, but gave no details.

A top priority for the Americans is maintaining a tariff of 25 percent on imports of Korean pickup trucks, which the existing deal envisaged to be phased out from 2019, according to a U.S. official and a South Korean car industry source. South Korea has two major automakers, Hyundai Motor and Kia Motors, that rely heavily on exports because of the small size of the domestic market. Critics say South Korea discriminates against imports with a range of non-tariff barriers. South Korea auto companies believe Washington will also seek to increase the 25,000-vehicle per US automaker threshold for US car shipments to South Korea that can enter the country without meeting Seoul's domestic industry regulations.

The official at a South Korea auto company, who was not authorized to speak to the media, also said the United States was interested in easing Seoul's vehicle emissions targets. These are viewed as discriminating against US autos.

Since Kim Jong Un took power in North Korea in 2011, Pyongyang has run a series of increasingly powerful nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches, drawing ever tighter sanctions and a freeze on contacts between the two Koreas. This week, however, Seoul agreed to high-level talks with the North in response to a New Year's



SEOUL: People walk past T-shirts reading 'I heart Korea' displayed for sale at a market. —AFP

speech in which the North Korean leader offered an opening to diplomacy. Pyongyang has a long history of seeking to play off Seoul and Washington as well as Beijing and Moscow in its diplomacy. Washington is wary of separate approaches and there are concerns that disagreements over KORUS could fuel a rift between South Korea and the United States.

The election of a left of center government in South Korea has raised concerns in Washington that Seoul may now be more willing to engage in talks. Under two previous right of center South Korean administrations, economic and other links between the countries were severed. "I have a feeling that we will not take any precipitous action on KORUS for the time being," a senior US official said while acknowledging that Trump and trade hawks within his administration had concerns over the deal. —Reuters

## EXCHANGE RATES

**Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.**

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.683
Indian Rupees	4.726
Pakistani Rupees	2.737
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.968
Nepali Rupees	2.970
Singapore Dollar	227.860
Hongkong Dollar	38.683
Bangladesh Taka	3.638
Philippine Peso	6.056
Thai Baht	9.323

GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	80.654
Qatari Riyal	83.070
Omani Riyal	785.473
Bahraini Dinar	803.110
UAE Dirham	82.366

ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	20.000
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	16.992
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.214
Tunisian Dinar	123.700
Jordanian Dinar	426.420
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.015
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.500

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	302.250

Euro	365.120
Sterling Pound	410.610
Canadian dollar	242.280
Turkish lira	80.710
Swiss Franc	312.400
Australian Dollar	238.630
US Dollar Buying	301.500

GOLD	
20 Gram	249.070
10 Gram	127.450
5 Gram	64.570

**Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd**

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	301.900
Canadian Dollar	241.565
Sterling Pound	409.475
Euro	364.345
Swiss Frank	295.590
Bahrain Dinar	801.265
UAE Dirhams	82.585
Qatari Riyals	83.410
Saudi Riyals	81.365
Jordanian Dinar	427.090
Egyptian Pound	17.059
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.969
Indian Rupees	4.742
Pakistani Rupees	2.734
Bangladesh Taka	3.662
Philippines Peso	6.078
Cyprus pound	17.965

Japanese Yen	3.675
Syrian Pound	1.585
Nepalese Rupees	2.967
Malaysian Ringgit	75.265
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.885
Thai Bhat	10.280
Turkish Lira	80.265

**BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL**

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
British Pound	0.405259	0.412759
Czech Korune	0.006285	0.015585
Danish Krone	0.044942	0.049942
Euro	0.358669	0.366169
Georgian Lari	0.134621	0.134621
Hungarian 0.00139	0.001329	
Norwegian Krone	0.033560	0.038760
Romanian Leu	0.064650	0.081500
Russian ruble	0.005300	0.005300
Slovakia	0.009000	0.019000
Swedish Krona	0.032118	0.038118
Swiss Franc	0.303918	0.314918

Australasia	BUY	SELL
Australian Dollar	0.229772	0.241772
New Zealand Dollar	0.210814	0.220314

America	BUY	SELL
Canadian Dollar	0.238480	0.247480
US Dollars	0.298150	0.302570
US Dollars Mint	0.298650	0.302570

Asia	
Bangladesh Taka	0.003284 0.0038368
Chinese Yuan	0.044864 0.048464
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036760 0.039510
Indian Rupee	0.004138 0.004779
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018 0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002596 0.002776
Korean Won	0.000274 0.000289
Malaysian Ringgit	0.071671 0.077671
Nepalese Rupee	0.003016 0.003186
Pakistan Rupee	0.002559 0.002849
Philippine Peso	0.005952 0.006252
Singapore Dollar	0.222585 0.232585
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001734 0.002314
Taiwan	0.010370 0.010550
Thai Baht	0.009046 0.009596

Arab	
Bahraini Dinar	0.794943 0.803443
Egyptian Pound	0.014704 0.020422
Iranian Riyal	0.000084 0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000185 0.000245
Jordanian Dinar	0.421693 0.430693
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000 1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000155 0.000255
Moroccan Dirhams	0.022073 0.046073
Omani Riyal	0.778747 0.784427
Qatar Riyal	0.078731 0.083671
Saudi Riyal	0.079513 0.080813
Syrian Pound	0.001281 0.001501
Tunisian Dinar	0.117831 0.125831
Turkish Lira	0.075810 0.086110
UAE Dirhams	0.080866 0.082566
Yemeni Riyal	0.000982 0.001062

## Business

## WALL ST WEEK AHEAD

## Fund managers expect value stocks to jump

## Greatest exuberance for stocks since November 2014

**NEW YORK:** Value stocks are getting a once-over from some US growth fund managers in early 2018 as they prowl for overlooked shares they think have more upside in a market that gained nearly 20 percent last year. Value stocks, so labeled because they typically sport lower price-to-earnings valuations, tend to be in more staid or out-of-favor industries and often lag during outsized stock rallies, which is exactly what happened in 2017.

The S&P 500 Value index - a measure of companies such as Berkshire Hathaway Inc and JP Morgan Chase & Co - gained just 12.6 percent last year. That is a tortoise's pace measured against the far more hare-like S&P 500 Growth index, which doubled that performance. It clocked a 25.4-percent rise courtesy of its heavy contingent of tech giants like Apple Inc and Microsoft Corp.

**High-flying technology**

As a result, even some growth funds are moving out of high-flying technology stocks and increasing their positions in stocks they see as more reasonably valued at a time when the American Association of Individual Investors survey shows the greatest exuberance for stocks since November 2014. "There is some risk to the technology sector after the big run we've had. Where we see opportunities now are sectors that have attractive valuations and higher visibility into their revenue streams," said Matthew Litfin, a co-portfolio manager of the \$4.7-billion Columbia Acorn fund.

Litfin is now underweight technology and has been adding to its holdings of financial stocks, such as asset management Lazard Ltd, which trades at a trailing price to earnings ratio of 15.1 versus 23.7 for the S&P 500 as a whole. Lazard shares are up 5.8 percent so far in 2018.

Thyra Zerhusen, a co-portfolio manager of the \$4.2 billion Fairpoint Capital Mid Cap fund, said she has been moving into the likes of toymaker Mattel Inc and General Electric Co, whose corporate upheavals overshadow the value of their underlying assets.

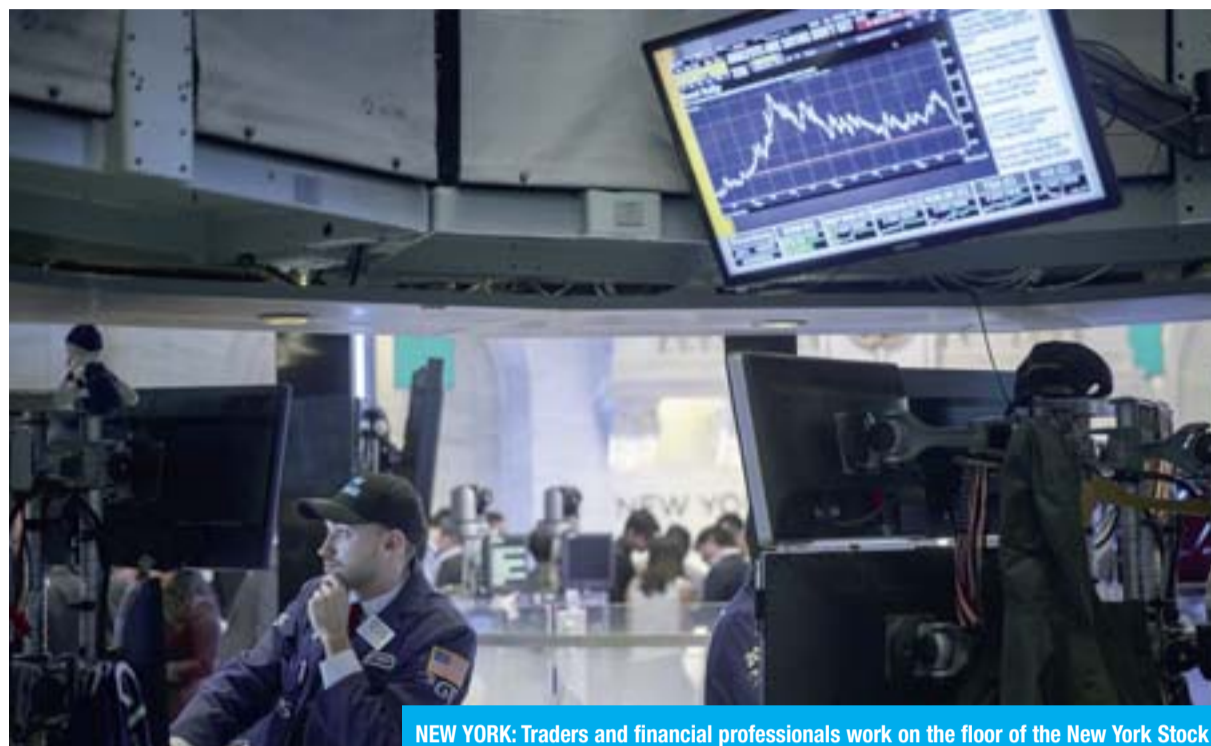
GE, for instance, trades at a trailing P/E of 21.2, and its shares are down 41.7 percent over the last year as new chief executive John Flannery has announced plans to shrink the company and exit some of its sprawling business lines. Shares of Mattel, meanwhile, slid 46 percent over the last 12 months as it suspended its dividend and cited the bankruptcy of Toys "R" Us, the biggest U.S. toy retailer, as a factor in its weak sales. "Last year was not a

good environment for value, but now is a time when you can find investments that will go up substantially over the next two years," she said. So far so good: Mattel is up 4.3 percent since the New Year rang in, and GE is up 6.1 percent. The S&P is up about 2.3 percent.

**No guarantees**

A good year for growth stocks does not necessarily mean that value stocks will bounce back the following year, of course. In the 20 previous occasions that the S&P 500 jumped by more than 18 percent in one year since 1951, the index rose by an additional 10 percent or more the following year 10 times, according to Credit Suisse, with growth stocks leading the way. The other 10 times the S&P on average declined 1.7 percent the next year.

Over the first three trading days of 2018, the iShares S&P 500 Growth index ETF is up 2.9 percent, while the iShares S&P 500 Value index ETF is up 1.6 percent. Yet Matthew Watson, a portfolio manager at James Advantage funds, said that his firm has been bracing for a significant



**NEW YORK:** Traders and financial professionals work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) ahead of the closing bell. — AFP

correction in the so-called FAANG group of large tech stocks, such as Amazon.com Inc and Google-parent Alphabet Inc that jumped by 30 percent or more in 2017 and pulled the broad index higher.

Instead, the firm has been adding to positions in out-of-favor energy stocks such as Diamond Offshore Drilling Inc and retailers such as Macy's Inc that have under-appreciated assets, he said. Macy's, for instance, is trading barely above the value of its underlying real estate portfolio,

Watson said, while Diamond Offshore trades at 70 percent of its book value, a measure of the value of the assets on a company's balance sheet. Macy's is down 3.3 percent in the first week of 2018, while Diamond Offshore is up 2.1 percent. "There may be positive momentum in the stock market right now, but that is only going to make it more expensive," Watson said. "We think that the only choice you have now to find opportunities that will pay off in the long-run is to look for value." — Reuters

“Some risk to the technology sector”

## BOURSA WEEKLY REPORT

## Boursa Kuwait ends week in green zone

The Price Index closed at 6,454.16 points, up by 0.72% from the week before closing, the Weighted Index increased by 1.91% after closing at 409.07 points, whereas the KSX-15 Index closed at 936.86 points up by 2.40%. Furthermore, the week's average daily turnover increased by 91.09%, compared to the preceding week, reaching K.D. 15.18 million, whereas trading volume average was 108.25 million shares, recording an increase of 80.69%.

The Market was able to end the first trading week of the new year with mixed gains for its three indices, to continue its positive performance that it has been witnessing during the last few weeks, supported by the

noticeable purchasing activity on many listed stocks of both leading or small-cap ones, in light of the noticed increase in the cash liquidity levels as the trading value reached its highest level since last November, which came as a result to the increased purchasing operations on the leading stocks in particular, especially in the Banks sector which acquired the highest portion of the cash liquidity during the last week.

Also, the Boursa recorded market gains over K.D. 500 million during three sessions only, as the market capitalization for the total listed stocks in the Regular Market reached by the end of last week K.D. 27.44 billion, up by 1.87% of its value recorded at the last week of the previous year, where it was K.D. 26.94 billion. (Note: The market capitalization 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). As far as the daily trading activity: the first session of the week witnessed a steep decrease in the three market indices, especially the Price Index which dropped sharply and recorded losses reached around 1.5%, affected by the heavy selling operations witnessed by the Market and concentrated on the small-cap stocks.

In addition, the Market was able during the next two sessions of the week to compensate its losses and its three indices were able to transfer to the green zone, supported by the return of the purchasing operations where the leading and the operational stocks acquired a great portion of, thus was reflected on all the Market indices' performance, headed by the KSX-15 Index, which was able to add about 22 point to its value in three sessions only, to end the week with gains of 2.40%. On the other hand, the last week witnessed a price increase of 83 stock out of 157 listed stock in the Regular Market, compared to the previous week, while the prices of 41 stock dropped, and 33 stock remained with no change.

**Sectors' Indices**

Eight of Boursa Kuwait's sectors ended last week in the green zone, three recorded declines, whereas the Health Care sector's index closed with no change from the week before. Last week's highest gainer was the Consumer Goods sector, achieving 3.52% growth rate as its index closed at 851.31 points. Whereas, in the second place, the Banks sector's index closed at 937.18 points recording 2.69% increase. The Telecommunications sector came in

third as its index achieved 2.25% growth, ending the week at 570.97 points. On the other hand, the Technology sector headed the losers list as its index declined by 1.57% to end the week's activity at 471.04 points. The Consumer Services sector was second on the losers' list, which index declined by 1.56%, closing at 887.04 points, followed by the Insurance sector, as its index closed at 1,093.61 points at a loss of 1.12%.

**Sectors' activity**

The Banks sector dominated a total trade volume of around 123.89 million shares changing hands during last week, representing 38.15% of the total market trading volume. The Financial Services sector was second in terms of trading volume as the sector's traded shares were 28.69% of last week's total trading volume, with a total of around 93.16 million shares. On the other hand, the Banks sector's stocks were the highest traded in terms of value: with a turnover of around K.D. 21.56 million or 47.34% of last week's total market trading value. The Financial Services sector took the second place as the sector's last week turnover was approx. KD 6.78 million representing 14.89% of the total market trading value.

## Legal cannabis to generate \$40bln, 400,000 jobs: Study

**LOS ANGELES:** The legal cannabis sector is expected to generate \$40 billion and more than 400,000 jobs by 2021 in the United States, according to a study. The estimate by consulting firm Arcview includes direct purchases by consumers of \$20.8 billion and indirect revenue for growers and various subcontractors as well as money spent with businesses not affiliated with the sector, such as supermarkets.

The projection would represent a rise of 150 percent on the \$16 billion revenue recorded in 2017, according to the study, released the day after recreational use of marijuana became legal in California. Arcview and its partner in the research, BDS Analytics, expect \$4 billion in taxes to be generated within three years. The new regime will lead to the creation of nearly 100,000 cannabis industry jobs in California by 2021, about a third of the nationwide figure and 146,000 jobs overall when indirect effects are considered.

Customers and operators in California have complained however about the punitive sales taxes to be applied to cannabis and its derivative products, which can hit 35

percent when state, county and municipal levies are taken into account. California, the most populous US state, became the largest legal market for marijuana in the world on Monday, and public reaction to the law change has been enthusiastic, with long lines and stock shortages reported at clinics already licensed and open.

Berkeley mayor Jesse Arreguin hailed the reforms at a ceremony on Monday at Berkeley Patients Group, one of the oldest dispensaries in the United States. "I'm stoked about this historic moment, not just for Berkeley, but for the state of California," Arreguin said, praising the state for "embracing this new economy." Cannabis possession remains illegal under federal law, and Arcview's Tom Adams said fewer than 100 out of the 3,000 outlets and delivery services operating in California were ready to go with the required local and state permits. "Those that were generally report doing multiples of their typical day's business with a far more diverse and less experienced customer base that need a lot of hand-holding and educating from their bud-tenders," he added. — AFP

## Japan companies buckle as PM Abe pressures them to raise wages

**TOKYO:** Japan Inc is running out of excuses in the face of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's calls for wage rises of 3 percent or more. The nation is having its best run of economic growth in a decade, stocks prices are the highest in 26 years, and corporate profits are near an all-time high. At the same time, the labour market, which is already the tightest among major economies, is only set to get tighter as the nation's population both shrivels and ages rapidly.

And as annual negotiations with labor unions start to ramp up, there are signs that some big companies may be bending as Abe pushes for increases of 3 percent or more, though others are still expected to drag their feet. Last year, the average increase among 312 major companies was 2.11 percent before bonuses, according to labor ministry figures. Successive years of tiny, or even zero, wage increases may be coming to an end at some companies at least - which in turn could provide consumer spending and inflation with a welcome boost this year. For example, Asahi Group Holdings plans to raise wages by 3 percent at its beer-making operation and by 3.4 percent at its unit that produces soft drinks. Last year Asahi raised wages at its beer-making unit by 2.9 percent. Data on wage gains at its soft drink unit was not immediately available.

"This is a result of management's thoughts about how we should treat our employees," President Akiyoshi Koji told reporters at a reception for corporate executives to mark the start of the new year. He denied that the move was influenced by the government's request to raise wages, saying: "An increase in disposable income helps improve the economy." Some other companies are discussing whether to abide by Abe's call. "I want to debate this and do as much as possible to make sure disposable incomes rise," Hitachi Ltd Chief Executive Toshiaki Higashihara told reporters at a new year's reception on Friday. "I approve of raising disposable incomes, because in the end this will improve the economy by raising consumption."



**TOKYO:** President of sushi restaurant chain Sushi-Zanmai, Kiyoshi Kimura, displays a 190-kilogram bluefin tuna at his main restaurant near Tokyo's Tsukiji fish market. — AFP

**Tax incentives**

Japan's Economy Minister Toshimitsu Motegi said on Friday he is confident that the conditions are ripe for increases. "Our policies have created the environment necessary for companies to use their record-high corporate earnings to raise wages and increase investment," he told reporters on Friday after a cabinet meeting. "I strongly believe our changes to the tax code will encourage companies to take bold steps to raise wages and capital expenditure."

Abe's government plans to introduce legislation to the regular session of parliament later this month that will lower the corporate tax rate to 25 percent from around 30 percent for companies that raise wages by 3 percent or more. The incentive will appeal to some large companies, but it is unlikely to work with some others who already pay an effective rate below 25 percent. There are also many small companies that have effective tax rates well below 25 percent.

The legislation, which is almost certain to pass into law, will also cut taxes for companies that invest in cutting-edge technology. The tax breaks are the latest carrot Abe's government has dangled in front of Japanese companies to convince them to help with his agenda aimed at reflation the economy. Since taking office in late 2012, Abe has appealed directly to the largest business lobbies to raise wages at annual negotiations with unions that take place in the spring.

Abe's overriding goal is to make sure consumers have enough money in their pockets to

keep spending - vanquishing the threat of deflation and making it easier to meet the Bank of Japan's 2 percent inflation target. In November, the core consumer price index, which includes oil products but excludes fresh food, rose only 0.9 percent from the same period a year earlier. Economists say there are many reasons why companies like Hitachi can afford to raise wages. As well as strong corporate profits, cash and reserves held by Japanese companies stood at an eye-popping record of 1,207 trillion yen (\$10.7 trillion) in the third quarter, according to central bank data.

Meanwhile, Japan's jobless rate is 2.7 percent, the lowest since November 1993 and by far the lowest among Group of Seven countries. The shrinking of the working-age population will eventually force companies to raise wages to compete for workers, economists say. But not all companies share the optimism about wages and many firms will come in below the 3 percent increase the government is looking for, economists say. This should still be enough to keep consumer spending on track to rise this year, which will make it easier to achieve faster inflation. "Abe is taking these steps because so far wages have lagged the improvement in the real economy," said Kentaro Arita, senior economist at Mizuho Research Institute. "The elements needed to raise wages are falling into place, but one thing that is lacking for some companies is confidence about the future. Wage gains will be gradual." — Reuters



**LOS ANGELES:** A customer buys cannabis products at MedMen, one of the two Los Angeles area pot shops that began selling marijuana for recreational use under the new California marijuana law. — AFP

Business

# Global markets extend 2018 rally

NEW YORK: The 2018 global equity rally continued apace Friday, with Asian and European markets posting healthy gains and Wall Street powering to fresh records once again. One day after the Dow finished above 25,000 for the first time, the blue-chip index moved higher still, picking up momentum throughout the day before finishing at 25,295.87, up nearly one percent.

The rise came despite a disappointing US jobs report. The US added just 148,000 jobs in December, the Labor Department reported, far below expectations, although unemployment held steady at its 17-year low of 4.1 percent. But investors, who opened 2018 in a fever pitch to buy equities, were unfazed by the lackluster data, much as they have also overlooked any concerns about US-North Korea tensions or domestic political controversies.

"Whatever the news, the reaction thus far continues to be more of what we have been seeing," said Adam Sarhan, founder of 50 Park Investments. "Investors are buying, dismissing all negative news, whether economic or geopolitical and they are just buying stocks." All

main European markets were higher at the close, with standout Frankfurt clocking up a gain of just under 1.2 percent despite a share price plunge for heavyweight Deutsche Bank after a profit-warning.

**'Economic strength'**

Paris followed not far behind with a 1.1 percent rise. London hit a new intra-day record peak at 7,727.73 points, and also set a new closing high, buoyed by the weak pound, which lifts the share prices of multi-national companies. In Asia on Friday, Tokyo stocks ended up 0.9 percent at a 26-year high following its more than three percent jump Thursday, while Sydney added 0.7 percent. Seoul rose 1.3 percent, with dealers buoyed by news that North

Korea had accepted the South's offer of talks next week, further easing geopolitical tensions in the region. Hong Kong gained 0.3 percent to chalk up a ninth-straight gain.

## European markets higher at the close



Equity optimism has been fueled by US tax cuts, healthy corporate profits and strong manufacturing figures worldwide. Greg McKenna, chief market strategist at AxiTrader, said in a note that data from the manufacturing and services sectors "suggests economic strength across the globe remains robust." He noted that an index of world factory activity was at its

highest level in seven years. While oil prices inched down, they remain elevated after recent rises to around three-year highs thanks to Middle East tensions. Crude



NEW YORK: This file photo taken on December 29, 2017 shows a trader working on the floor at the closing bell of the Dow Industrial Average at the New York Stock Exchange. — AFP

futures have also been boosted this week on keen US demand as the nation's stockpiles fall on the back of a severe cold snap. — Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report				Global			
Thursday January 4, 2018							
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	Volume	Value (KWD)	Number of Trades	
Price Index	▲ 53.08	6,454.16	6,401.08	148,874,068			
Weighted Index	▲ 2.10	408.07	406.97	20,344,091			
KSX 15	▲ 4.78	936.86	932.08	4,716			
Trades							
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KWD)	Trades	Last	Change
IPG	390	390	22,500	8,775	1	390	▲ 7.0
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	813	▲ 0.8
ENERGYH	29.8	27.5	10,200	304	3	29.8	▲ 0.9
GPI	31.5	30.5	6,763,251	209,883	197	31.1	▲ 0.4
ABAR	80	80	1,000	80	1	80	▼ -4.0
<b>Oil &amp; Gas</b>			<b>8,796,951</b>	<b>219,042</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>972.36</b>	<b>▲ 3.20</b>
KFDC	235	225	7,003	1,646	5	230	▼ -4.0
BPCC	710	684	765,284	539,342	80	710	▲ 20.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	630	▲ 0.0
ALQURAN	332	321	383,253	129,409	42	328	▲ 7.8
<b>Basic Materials</b>			<b>1,165,528</b>	<b>678,387</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>1268.04</b>	<b>▲ 14.70</b>
KCEM	472	445	3,300	1,548	4	472	▲ 2.0
CABLE	435	425	112,447	48,399	15	431	▲ 6.0
SNP	208	205	20,020	4,104	3	208	▲ 0.0
PCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	961	▲ 0.0
PAPER	275	260	185,700	43,198	14	260	▼ -4.0
MRC	71	71	500	36	1	71	▼ -4.0
ACICO	260	260	1,000	260	1	260	▼ -4.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	186	▲ 0.0
NCBM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	309	▲ 0.0
EQUIPMENT	39.0	33.5	1,283,850	47,604	65	37.8	▲ 3.5
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	▲ 0.0
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	▲ 0.0
SALBOOKH	55	45.2	1,125	107	4	55	▲ 7.7
ADLY	824	814	561,810	460,038	82	818	▲ 8.0
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	309	▲ 0.0
CLEANING	52	49.0	30,030	1,472	3	52	▲ 3.0
KOL	83	83	300	19	1	83	▼ -0.5
KOCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	140	▲ 0.0
HUMANISOFT	3,740	3,728	223,497	835,470	61	3,740	▲ 3.0
NAFAS	880	676	29	23	8	880	▲ 36.0
GFC	71	80	20,010	1,209	2	71	▲ 0.0
SHOOTING	22.0	21.0	50,124	1,096	5	22.0	▲ 0.0
CGC	475	460	5,100	2,354	3	475	▲ 1.0
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	96	▲ 0.0
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	585	▲ 0.0
ALAFCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	377	▲ 0.0
MUBARRAD	65	65	50,000	3,250	4	65	▲ 0.2
LOGISTICS	49.0	45.2	1,148,510	53,004	53	47.8	▲ 2.0
SCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	▲ 0.0
GCEM	84	81	296,820	21,690	10	84	▲ 3.8
QIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	71	▲ 0.0
FCEM	77	76	1,202,607	92,087	32	77	▲ 1.6
RKWC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	82	▲ 0.0
SPEC	72	65	50,867	3,579	10	72	▼ -0.3
<b>Industrials</b>			<b>5,196,488</b>	<b>1,420,546</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>1851.16</b>	<b>▲ 21.70</b>
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	84	▲ 0.0
CATL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	245	▲ 0.0
DANAH	70	58	979,520	63,017	30	70	▲ 0.0
FOOD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,112	▲ 0.0
<b>Consumer Goods</b>			<b>979,520</b>	<b>63,017</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>851.31</b>	<b>▲ 1.00</b>
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,100	▲ 0
YIACO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	175	▲ 0.0
<b>Health Care</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1510.81</b>	<b>▲ 6.00</b>
KCRH	1,100	1,020	245,701	258,956	83	1,080	▼ -130
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	248	▲ 0
SIXTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	87	▲ 0
CABLETV	18.0	18.0	8,000	144	1	18.0	▼ -1
OUFAH	185	160	1,010	162	2	185	▲ 16
OLAFUEL	113	111	227,737	25,391	24	112	▲ 1
MUNTAZAHAT	72	72	21,000	1,502	2	72	▼ -1
JAZIERA	670	660	52,050	34,420	18	670	▲ 5
SOOR	113	111	95,283	10,742	19	113	▲ 2
FUTUREKID	102	101	9,946	1,007	2	101	▲ 1
ALRAJ	119	119	30,473	3,626	3	119	▲ 1
Jyari	87	84	1,690,050	143,809	123	87	▲ 2
Mezzan	799	797	652,757	520,775	119	797	▼ -1
<b>Consumer Services</b>			<b>3,034,067</b>	<b>1,800,634</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>887.54</b>	<b>▼ -7.00</b>
ZAIN	483	468	5,754,304	2,746,148	322	476	▲ 14
COREDOO	1,085	1,050	21,638	22,974	8	1,075	▲ 29
AAN	29.6	27.5	2,113,514	60,738	81	28.9	▲ 1
VVA	800	781	132,263	105,376	40	800	▲ 12
<b>Telecommunications</b>			<b>8,021,719</b>	<b>2,835,236</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>670.97</b>	<b>▲ 13.60</b>
NEK	747	739	3,438,772	2,552,593	168	739	▼ -1
GRK	242	239	3,199,845	770,228	83	241	▲ 2
CRK	409	400	14,173	5,753	3	400	▼ -9
ABK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	288	▲ 0
ALMUTAHED	351	349	262,353	91,855	28	350	▼ -1
KIB	234	231	783,948	182,372	39	234	▲ 3
BURG	310	305	569,035	175,545	34	306	▲ 3
KFIN	600	592	5,344,304	3,182,042	267	595	▲ 3
BOUBYAN	455	450	547,387	247,048	54	451	▲ 1
AUB	211	208	3,401,509	708,477	135	209	▲ 1
ITHMR	49.7	48.2	21,354,850	1,047,199	390	49.3	▲ 1
WARBASANK	230	226	2,672,913	609,620	128	227	▲ 9
<b>Banks</b>			<b>41,588,795</b>	<b>8,872,733</b>	<b>1,329</b>	<b>937.18</b>	<b>▲ 5.10</b>
KNS	273	273	4,965	1,355	1	273	▼ -1
GNS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	824	▲ 0.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	470	▲ 0.0
WNS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	60	▲ 0.0
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	192	▲ 0.0
FTI	64	64	500	32	1	64	▼ -1.5
WETHAQ	43.2	43.2	100	4	1	43.2	▲ 7.2
BKQWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	▲ 0.0
<b>Insurance</b>			<b>5,565</b>	<b>1,282</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1093.61</b>	<b>▲ 24.40</b>
SOKOUK	48.0	47.0	22863	1,078	4	48.0	▲ 1.0
KRE	58	56	1,885,942	107,641	47	57	▲ 0.2
URC	77	77	4,534	349	1	77	▲ 0.0
NRE	123	122	26,002	3,177	7	123	▲ 1.0
SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	▲ 0.0
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400	▲ 0.0
AREEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	176	▲ 0.0
MASSALEH	38.0	38.0	48,000	1,824	3	38.0	▲ 0.0
ARABREC	30.8	29.3	904,350	27,509	43	30.8	▲ 1.7
ERESCO	34.0	33.6	530,000	17,975	11	34.0	▲ 0.6
MABANEE	714	703	295,367	208,897	33	707	▼ -3.0
RUZZAT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	82	▲ 0.0
INVESTORS	17.5	17.1	12,315,710	213,404	122	17.5	▲ 0.3
IRC	29.5	27.5	207,239	5,990	10	29.5	▲ 0.0
ALTUARIA	94	91	131,830	12,134	6	92	▼ -1.7
SANAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	35.0	▲ 0.0
AAYANRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	74	▲ 0.0
AGAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	67	▲ 0.0
ALAGARIA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	32.0	▲ 0.0
MAZAYA	113	111	421,100	47,235	13	113	▲ 1.0
TUARA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	87	▲ 0.0
TAAMEER	31.8	26.1	2,837,172	87,007	80	31.6	▲ 3.1
ARKAN	82	82	47,287	3,854	1	82	▼ -2.0
ARGAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	160	▲ 0.0
ABYAR	22.9	22.2	4,708,055	109,740	111	22.9	▲ 0.8
MUNSHAAT	70	69	35,500	2,435	4	69	▲ 0.0
FIRSTDUBAI	44.7	41.0	71,100	3,138	7	44.7	▲ 0.2
KBT	47.0	45.8	1,407,039	64,950	80	46.9	▲ 1.2
REAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	496	▲ 0.0
MENA	16.5	15.5	209,710	3,342	15	15.9	▲ 1.1
ALMUDON	33.0	32.1	84,100	2,721	5	33.0	▲ 0.6
MARAKEZ	0.0						

Business

# Ahli United Bank announces KD 250,000 Hassad Islamic Savings Account winner

## The prize draw was a momentous occasion

**KUWAIT:** On 27th December 2017 Ahli United Bank held its Lifetime Salary annual grand prize draw as part of the Al Hassad Islamic Savings Account program, which is the largest prize draw in Kuwait. It was a momentous occasion for SAMAR NAJIB ABDULKARIM AL MAHMOUD who won KD 250,000 as a lifetime salary over 250 months. Ahli United Bank congratulates SAMAR NAJIB ABDULKARIM AL MAHMOUD who is now able to achieve her dream of acquiring a house or her favorite car, to travel abroad, establish a new business or any dream she might have along with her aspirations - and all this, simply by having an account with AUB in Kuwait.

AUB thanks its customers for the underlying trust towards the Bank, one which mirrors the Bank's commitment towards providing the best banking products and services to all its customer segments who can avail more benefits from the Hassad Islamic Savings Account Program, which provides the highest total annual prize value of KD 3,400,000. The program also provides 26 weekly prizes, which represents the biggest number of weekly winners.

To qualify for the Al Hassad Islamic Savings Account prizes, customers only need to open a saving account with a minimum of KD 100. For every KD 50 of quarterly balance in the account, customers earn one chance to enter the

quarterly draw if the balance is maintained for at least two weeks prior to the draw date. Moreover, customers earn one chance to enter the weekly draws for every KD 50 of balance, if the balance is maintained for 7 days at least prior to the draw date. This means the more deposits made, the higher the chances of winning. The Al Hassad Islamic Savings Account's customers in Kuwait and Bahrain are eligible to participate in the draw in line with the account's terms and conditions. For more information on Ahli United Bank's Al Hassad Islamic Savings Account and the wide range of prizes it presents, along with the requirements to qualify for the draw, customers are invited to visit any of the Bank's branches.



**KUWAIT:** The winner Samar Najib Abdulkarim Al Mahmoud and her father receiving the prize from the head of branches at AUB, Amer Najem.

## Zain offers 6 months of unlimited access to iflix

**KUWAIT:** Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced the launch of a new exciting bundle offer to all its customers who subscribe to iflix, the world's leading entertainment service for emerging markets. Zain customers will receive six-months of complimentary unlimited access and a monthly data capacity of 5GB to stream and download their favorite movies and TV shows from iflix's vast library of content of thousands of TV shows, movies and more.

Iflix offers an extensive range of thousands of TV shows, movies and more with Arabic



and English subtitles, including many first run exclusives and award winning programs. In addition to having the best of Hollywood, Bollywood, regional and local programs, as well as over 2,000 episodes of children's content, the service will additionally offer an extensive collection of highly acclaimed Arabic shows and movies.

When Zain's customers first subscribe to iflix, they will be eligible to receive 6 months of complimentary unlimited access as well as a complimentary monthly data capacity of 5GB to stream and download their favorite movies and TV shows on their devices. With over 170 studio and distributor partnerships worldwide, iflix offers users a vast library of top Hollywood, regional Arabic, popular Turkish and other local TV shows and movies, including many first run exclusives and award

winning programs. iflix's proprietary compression and adaptive bit rate technology further ensures that users will have a great viewing experience, by enabling the service to stream smoothly even on low internet speeds. Each subscription allows users to access the service on up to five devices, including phones, laptops, tablets, and television sets, for viewing wherever, whenever. A special feature for iflix subscribers is that they can also download TV shows and movies onto their smartphones and tablets from iflix's extensive catalogue for offline viewing.

## Joyalukkas Ras Al Khaimah branch moves to sparkling new location

**DUBAI:** RAK residents rejoiced the opening of the new Joyalukkas showroom on 29th November 2017. Now situated opposite United Arab Bank on Al Muntasir Road, Al Nakheel, Joyalukkas offers an even wider selection of world-class jewellery amidst stunning new interiors. The showroom was inaugurated by Joyalukkas group Director's Mary Antony & Antony Jos in the presence of Local Dignitaries, Customers & Joyalukkas Management Staffs.

"We're delighted to open our doors once again in Ras Al Khaimah and offer an even better, more rewarding jewellery shopping experience to the residents here," said Mr. Joy Alukkas, Chairman and MD of Joyalukkas Group. "The warmth and excitement with



which the launch was welcomed was simply heartwarming, and we look forward to offering our best products and services to Ras Al Khaimah residents for years to come." Graced by the presence of local VIPs and top Joyalukkas Group executives, the grand launch ceremony was a huge success, with customers eager to explore the million designs of jewelry on this display.

Joyalukkas Ras Al Khaimah showcases tra-

ditional and contemporary designs from the world's best artisans. From handcrafted temple jewelry to the latest trends, jewelry lovers can find the finest selection here. The newly opened showroom will also carry two of Joyalukkas's newest collection targeted at teens and those seeking unique diamond jewelry, as well as signature brands Veda, Pride Diamonds, Eleganza, Masaaki Pearls, Zenina, Apurva and Li'l Joy.

## Qatar Re, reinsurance arm of QIC wins Bond deal of the Year award

**MUSCAT:** Qatar Reinsurance Company, Qatar Re, the reinsurance arm of Qatar Insurance has won the much coveted Bond/Sukuk deal of the Year by Debut Issuer award at the Bonds, Loans & Sukuk Middle East Awards ceremony that was recently held at the Ritz-Carlton JBR, Dubai. Qatar Re was also conferred a number of titles, including "the most oversubscribed issuance from the MENA region, the highest rated hybrid capital issuance in the region and the first US dollar denominated capital market issuance from an insurer based out of the MENA."

The Bonds, Loans & Sukuk Middle East award ceremony recognizes outstanding achievement and celebrates excellence in the Middle Eastern Debt Capital markets. The winners were selected by a judging board comprising influential international investors from the banking and finance industry hav-

ing a 1000 years' collective experience within fixed income markets.

At the end of February 2017, Qatar Re raised Solvency compliant Tier 2 capital to facilitate growth within the business and help the company enhance its global reinsurance footprint. This led to the successful issuance of USD 450million in Hybrid Tier 2 Perpetual Subordinated Capital Notes on 13 March 2017 - a landmark deal for the company and the region's capital markets.

During a three-day accelerated roadshow, which commenced on 2nd March, a two-member execution team mandated lead arrangers target real money accounts in Asia, Europe and the Middle East, allowing the company to gauge market sentiment for the new issuance. A blend of positive investor engagement coupled with the scarcity of this kind of issuance in the region led to a very strong order book growth.

### Better capitalization ratios

The deal was structured with optional deferral of coupons, allowing flexibility of equity treatment while ensuring better capitalization ratios. The transaction carried an



**Khalifa Abdulla Turki Al-Subaey**

intermediate (100%) equity credit rating from international credit rating agency Standard & Poor's. The final order book witnessed an oversubscription of 14.4x and generated orders from over 290 high quality accounts.

A robust demand for the notes prompted the execution team to ensure that the investor base was well diversified. In view of this, 30% of the transaction was allocated to accounts based in Asia, while 29%, 20% and 19% of the transaction were allocated in the UK, Middle East and Continental Europe. About 57% of the paper was allocated to fund managers and hedge funds, while banks, private banks and other insurers accounted for 43% of the allocations.

Commenting on this new accomplishment, Group President & CEO of QIC Group Khalifa Abdulla Turki Al-Subaey stated, "QIC is honored to receive this prestigious award. Not only does it highlight the Group's in-house expertise at capital structuring, but it also puts under spotlight the innovative approaches adopted to ensure that the Group's capital adequacy ratio remains well above the levels mandated by Solvency II."

He further added, "This award inspires us to renew our focus towards our mission to be ranked amongst the top insurance companies in the world. We will continue to ensure sustainable returns for our customers and other stakeholders while showcasing QIC as a leading insurance powerhouse in the region and across global markets."

## Al Danah Millionaire to be announced Live on Jan 11 at The Avenues

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank will be holding its annual Al Danah account draw for the big KD One Million prize, at 7 pm on Thursday, 11 January 2018 at The Avenues Mall in Kuwait. During the exciting evening, the Bank will also be announcing the winners of the red account draw.

The event will be hosted by TV presenter Mr. Omar Al Othman, with special guest the Al Mass Band. Al Danah is Kuwait's biggest draw event of the year; it offers the largest prize linked to a bank account in the world, according to Guinness World Records. As with all Gulf Bank draws, it will be conducted in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Al Danah is Gulf Bank's flagship account and account holders are eligible to win valuable cash prizes through its daily and quarterly draws of up to KD500,000. To participate in the Al Danah draws, customers must have an Al Danah account containing a minimum of KD 200 and the chances of winning increase corresponding to the amount deposited in their Al Danah account.

Customers can open a new Al Danah account at any one of the 57 Gulf Bank branches in Kuwait and keep on

depositing through any local bank, by using the new ePay (Self-Pay) service, which is available on Gulf Bank's Online and Mobile Banking. Furthermore, they can use the Al Danah Deposit Only ATM card which helps account holders deposit their money at their convenience. Customers can also keep track of their chances gained through the Al Danah Chance Calculator, which is available online. Gulf Bank's red is a dedicated account for high school, college and university students aged between 15 and 25 years old, which does not require a minimum deposit. Eligible customers have chance to enter the draw automatically and on a monthly basis, upon transferring their student allowances.

The red account campaign offers customers the opportunity to win a wide range of Apple products on monthly basis. To date, Gulf Bank has announced 33 winners of iPhones, iPads and Apple Watches. At red's final draw, three lucky winners will be receiving Apple products, and the one will be winning a Fiat 500c-Model 2017.

In addition to the monthly prizes and the grand prize, red customers can also get movie tickets at all Cinescape theatres for only KD 2 seven days a week and shop from the USA or the UK with a dedicated company (edfa3ly), which provide a mail box for internet shopping services from their website. Red customers can now also transfer money from anyone, from any local bank into their Gulf Bank account through the all new e-pay service, which also allows customers to pay their mobile bills for Zain, Ooredoo, and Viva and buy iTunes and Google Play cards, instantly using the new 'e-Pay' service available on Gulf Bank's Online Banking and Mobile Banking App.



## Mexico tortilla producers say they will not increase prices

**MEXICO CITY:** Mexico tortilla producers said on Friday they agreed not to raise prices after economy ministry officials promised to help contain rising costs. Homero Lopez, president of the National Tortilla Council, told Reuters that economy officials promised to come up with some measures by next week at a meeting on Thursday. "We will not seek to raise prices indiscriminately," he said, adding that his organization represents 80 percent of the country's tortilla makers.

Earlier this week, producers warned that they could increase the price of tor-

tillas by 20 percent in the coming days due to rising costs of corn and fuels. The corn patties are a staple of the Mexican diet and higher prices have triggered protests in the past. Mexico's government denounced the forecast price hikes as unjustified as it sought to allay public concern about high inflation at the start of a presidential election year.

Deputy Minister for Industry and Commerce, Rogelio Garza, told Reuters on Friday that the meeting sought to find mechanisms that would help the producers stay competitive. "More than a pact, we reviewed market conditions. They agree that there is not sufficient reason to increase prices now," Garza said. Inflation in Mexico is near a 16-year high just below 7 percent, and the forecast tortilla price hike, as well as estimates of rising gasoline costs, triggered outrage on social media and threats of protests earlier this week. The price of the tortilla increased about seven percent in the first 11 months of 2017 to around 14.01 pesos (\$0.7307) per kilo, according to official figures. — Reuters

## Technology

# Major tech firms battle to resolve major security flaw

## Rushing out updates and patches to eliminate the flaw

**PARIS:** Amazon, Google and now Apple—as the list of digital giants hit by the “Spectre” and “Meltdown” computer security flaws grows longer, the race is on to limit the damage. “All Mac systems and iOS devices are affected, but there are no known exploits impacting customers at this time,” Apple—whose devices are usually regarded as secure—said in a post on an online support page on Thursday.

Almost all microprocessors produced over the past 10 years by Intel, AMD and ARM are affected. No PC or mobile device can function without the miniature components that are effectively nerve centers for executing computer programs and apps. And that is what distinguishes them from previous security alerts that have tended to involve software rather than hardware.

In theory, Spectre and Meltdown could enable a user to “access kernel level memory access, exposing critical information that would be stored there, like system passwords,” said Chris Morales, head of security analytics at Vectra. Luke Wagner, a software engineer at Mozilla, wrote on a security blog that it was “possible to use similar techniques from web content to read private information”.

Effectively, all electronic devices manufactured around the world in recent years contain potentially vulnerable chips. The biggest names in the sector, including Amazon, Google, Microsoft and Mozilla, are now rushing out updates and patches to eliminate the flaw. US giant Intel, as well as its rivals AMD and ARM, have started installing updates. In a statement on Thursday, Intel said it and its partners “have made significant progress in deploying updates” to mitigate any threats. “Intel

expects to have issued updates for more than 90 percent of processor products introduced within the past five years,” an Intel statement said.

### Difficult to exploit?

“In addition, many operating system vendors, public cloud service providers, device manufacturers and others have indicated that they have already updated their products and services.” Apple, for its part, advised only getting apps from its online App Store which vets programs for safety, and said it has already released some “mitigations” to protect against the exploit and planned to release a defensive update for Safari on macOS and iOS in the coming days. But some experts believe that the only real “fix” in some cases would be replacing the chip itself, which would be a huge issue for the computing industry.

That said, the experts concede that hacking the chips would require a very high level of technical expertise and the risks were therefore limited. The US Computer Emergency Readiness Team (CERT) said that it was “not aware of any active exploitation at this time.” In Germany, the BSI

## Nerve centers for executing computer programs



Federal Office for Information Security, similarly found no evidence of any “active exploitation” of the flaw.

In addition to the security flaw, Intel found itself in hot water Friday over the announcement that its chief executive had sold some of his shares in the company. According to the specialist magazine Solutions Numeriques, Intel was aware of the existence of the security flaw in its chips at the end of November. But in the fourth quarter of last year, CEO Brian Krzanich sold nearly 900,000 shares, halving his stake in the



PARIS: Computer processors are pictured yesterday in Paris. —AFP

company, according to Bloomberg.

A company spokesman told Bloomberg that the sale had nothing to do with the issue of the security flaw, insisting that Krzanich had exercised options according to a pre-set timetable agreed long before. Intel shares which slid this week on the news regained slightly less than a percent on Friday to \$44.74 at the close of the Nasdaq exchange. Meanwhile, lawsuits seeking class action status have been filed against Intel

in federal courts in three US states.

The civil suits accuse Intel of “unjust and deceptive” tactics that resulted in people buying computers with flawed chips. A suit filed in federal court in California argued that people with computers powered by Intel chips are faced with the “unappealing choice” of either replacing the machines or accepting “massive security vulnerabilities” and downgraded performance, the suit argued. —AFP

## High tech, low tech: US cities embrace twin approach to crime

**NEW YORK:** Gun violence in major US cities fell in 2017 as police used the latest crime-fighting software combined with a revival of old-fashioned community policing to build trust with a skeptical public. Law enforcement officials and criminologists credit that dual approach with helping extend the decades-long reduction in crime in New York City and reducing gun violence in Chicago by 20 percent in 2017. Crime has dropped precipitously across the United States since peaking in 1991, though some cities have lagged and others have experienced sudden spikes. Chicago became a symbol of U.S. gun violence after homicides soared nearly 60 percent in 2016, drawing frequent criticism from Donald Trump during his campaign for the presidency and after he was elected.

### Volatile swings

Since then, the third-largest US city has revamped policing policies and developed a sophisticated integration of crime-fighting software and hardware such as cameras. It has also built ties to the public through events such as a Halloween party that drew 500 kids to a police station in a high-crime district. While there is no hard evidence that those initiatives were responsible, homicides in Chicago dropped 16 percent in 2017 to 650. That still outnumbered homicides in the two largest US cities, New York and Los Angeles, combined. “There was a promise to never relive 2016,” said Anthony Guglielmi, chief communications officer for Chicago police. “That was a moment in time we never want to repeat in terms of violence.”

While Chicago has seen volatile swings, New York has experienced a consistent reduction in crime, in sharp contrast with a bygone reputation as the country’s murder and mayhem capital. On Friday the New York Police Department reported 290 murders in 2017, down 13 percent from 2016 and 87 percent from 1990, when a record 2,262 people were killed. The New York Police Department called 2017 the safest year in nearly seven decades even as arrests decreased by nearly 400 per day from their high point seven years ago.

Experts do not entirely understand the trend but point to a number of likely factors, including CompStat, the computer analysis of crime data that was developed by New York police in 1994 and has since been replicated in other cities. CompStat gives police daily reports on how they are performing, enabling them to quickly identify trends and deploy officers to trouble spots. Data-driven, evidence-based policing has advanced further with the help of crime-predicting software like HunchLab and gunfire-detection system ShotSpotter.

Technology “helps us to link cases quicker, deploy faster and deploy smarter,” Dermot Shea, the NYPD’s chief of crime control strategies, told a news conference on Friday. The public uproar over police shootings of unarmed black men across the United States in recent years has also convinced police they must adopt neighborhood or community policing. That aims to improve relationships between police and residents of high-crime districts and reduce animosity toward police to gain more co-operation in solving and preventing crimes.

### Relations with people

“Technology is great ... but I think the best thing going for us is the ability for the police officers to establish and have relationships with the people in this great city,” New York Police Commissioner James O’Neill said. Chicago studied the best practices of the New York and Los Angeles police departments, incorporating much of New York’s neighborhood policing model and the use of predictive crime software by Los Angeles. —Reuters

## Twitter won’t block world leaders

**WASHINGTON:** Twitter announced Friday it would not block the accounts of world leaders even if their statements are “controversial,” citing a need to promote a “public conversation” on political issues. The announcement came just days after a tweet from President Donald Trump hinting at the use of US nuclear weapons sparked criticism that the social network was allowing threats of violence.

“Twitter is here to serve and help advance the global, public conversation. Elected world leaders play a critical role in that conversation because of their outsized impact on our society,” the California-based company said in a blog post. “Blocking a world leader from Twitter or removing their controversial tweets would hide important information people should be able to see and debate. It would also not silence that leader, but it would certainly hamper necessary discussion around their words and actions.”

Twitter made no specific reference to Trump or his tweet this week saying he has a “nuclear button” which is “bigger and more powerful” than that of North Korea’s. Some activists said Twitter should have banned Trump and one group projected images on the company’s headquarters with a message “@jack is #complicit,” a refer-

## Spotify boasts 70m subscribers

**NEW YORK:** Spotify announced Thursday that it had hit 70 million subscribers amid reports that the world’s largest music streaming company plans to go public in the coming months. The Swedish company, which has been valued at up to \$20 billion, added the 10 million paying subscribers since its last update in July.

Announcing its new subscriber base online, Spotify did not change its number for total users. It said in June that it had 140 million active users when including listeners who access Spotify’s free, advertising-backed tier. Spotify’s closest rival is Apple Music, which was launched in 2015 as the market shifts away from the purchased downloading of songs on the tech giant’s iTunes. Apple said in September that its streaming service had 30 million paying subscribers, showing a still significant gap with nearly 10-year-old Spotify but also indicating that Apple Music is growing quickly.

The subscriber announcement comes amid reports that Spotify plans shortly to go public, using an unusual direct listing rather than a more common initial public offering. The Wall Street Journal, business network CNBC and news site Axios all reported that Spotify had confidentially filed paperwork at the New York Stock Exchange to pave the way for a direct listing. Axios said that Spotify appeared to be aiming to go public in the current quarter which ends in March, while The Wall Street Journal said Spotify was looking at March or April. A Spotify spokeswoman declined comment.

## Zuckerberg makes ‘fixing’ Facebook a personal goal

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Known for annual personal goals ranging from killing his own food to learning Mandarin, Facebook chief Mark Zuckerberg’s stated mission for this year is to “fix” the social net-



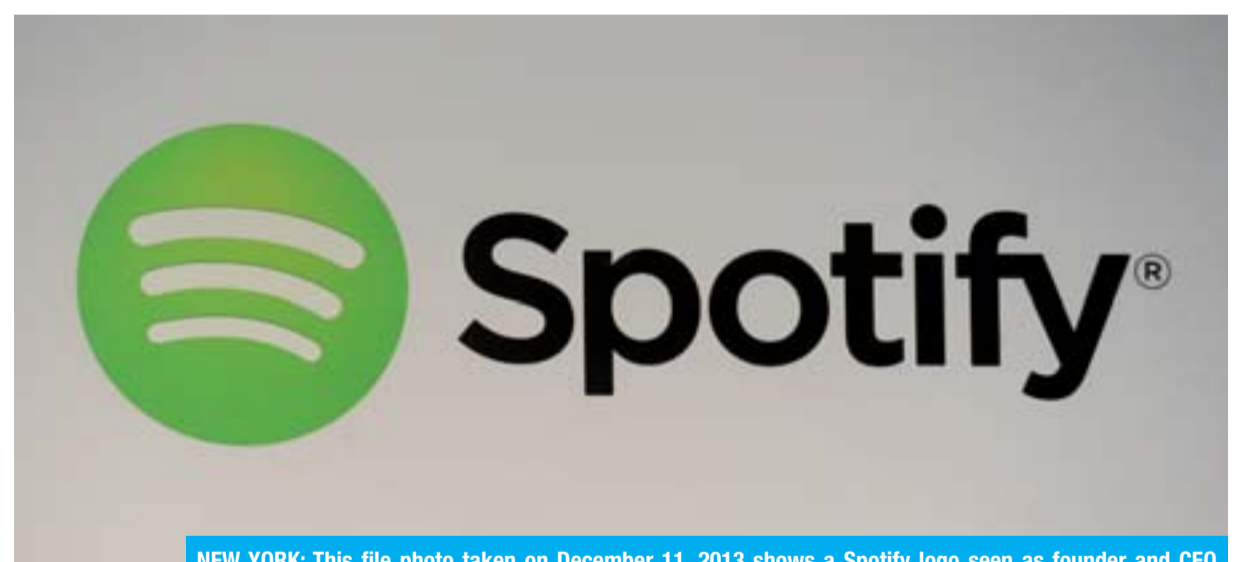
This combination of pictures created on January 2, 2018 shows a photo from North Korea’s official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) taken and released on January 1, 2018 showing North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un (L) delivering a New Year’s speech at an undisclosed location, and US President Donald Trump speaking during a Cabinet Meeting in the Cabinet Room at the White House. —AFP

work. Zuckerberg began taking on New Year’s challenges in 2009, when he wore a neck tie every day as a reminder of the importance of making Facebook profitable despite global financial woes.

“Today feels a lot like that first year,” Zuckerberg said in a post on his Facebook page. “The world feels anxious and divided, and Facebook has a lot of work to do.” His list of targets at the social network included abuse and hate; interference by nation states, and, making sure visiting Facebook was time well spent. “My personal challenge for 2018 is to focus on fixing these

important issues,” Zuckerberg said. “We won’t prevent all mistakes or abuse, but we currently make too many errors enforcing our policies and preventing misuse of our tools.”

He planned to gather experts to delve into topics such as politics, civics, media, and technology in pursuit of his goal. Facebook has been striving to stymie use of its platform to spread bogus information. Google, Twitter and Facebook have come under fire for allowing the spread of bogus news—some of which was directed by Russia—ahead of the 2016 US election and in other countries. —AFP



NEW YORK: This file photo taken on December 11, 2013 shows a Spotify logo seen as founder and CEO Daniel Ek addresses a press conference. —AFP

In a direct listing, Spotify would simply start trading shares rather than securing outside funding through an initial public offering. A direct listing could save Spotify on filing costs and loosen the trading restrictions on its current investors, but could also be risky without the fresh financing to support the share price. Spotify and its fellow streaming sites, which allow unlimited, on-demand listening, are credited with fueling the first substantive growth in the recorded music industry since the start of the internet age.

US music consumption jumped by nearly 13 percent in 2017, the sharpest rise in recent memory, according to analytical firm BuzzAngle Music. But Spotify has also faced criticism and legal challenges from artists who say that they see little of the money. Last week Spotify was slapped with a \$1.6 billion suit by Wixen Music Publishing, which owns the rights to works by artists such as Neil Young and The Doors. The publisher accused Spotify of failing to secure proper licenses in its rush to build a 30 million-song catalog. —AFP

Health

# Global coral bleaching five times greater than 1980s

## Bleaching events occur at 100 locations around the world

**MIAMI:** Coral bleaching, a deadly disease that strikes reefs when oceans heat up, has risen nearly five-fold since the 1980s, threatening the future of these vital ecosystems, researchers said Thursday. Severe coral bleaching events used to happen once every 25 to 30 years. Now, they occur every six years on average, said the report in the journal *Science*.

"Before the 1980s, mass bleaching of corals was unheard of," said lead author Terry Hughes, director of the Australian Research Council (ARC) Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies. "But now, a repeated bout of regional-scale bleaching and mass mortality of corals has become the new normal around the world as temperatures continue to rise." Millions of people worldwide depend on corals for their livelihoods, whether for tourism or scuba diving, or for the fish and sea creatures that make their homes in reefs. When water temperatures rise suddenly, algae in the corals can die, cutting off an important source of nutrients. If warming persists for several months, corals can turn white and die. The study analyzed bleaching events at 100 locations around the world between 1980 and 2016. In the last few years, 30 percent of bleaching episodes could be described as "severe," extending tens to hundreds of miles, or kilometers. The risk of severe bleaching has risen about four percent per year since 1980.

### Stress response

"Coral bleaching is a stress response caused by exposure of coral reefs to elevated ocean temperatures," said co-author Andrew Baird, also of Coral CoE. "When bleaching is severe and prolonged, many of the corals die. It takes at least a decade to replace even the fastest-growing species." The risk of bleaching events has increased most strongly over time in Australia, parts of Asia and the Middle East. The Great Barrier Reef has bleached four times since 1998, including back-to-back events in 2016 and 2017 that wreaked massive damage. Many but not all bleaching events are driven by the tropical warming trend known as El Nino, which last peaked in 2015 and 2016. Climate change—and the continued burning of fossil fuels—is also playing a role, making bleaching events increasingly common.

"The climate has warmed rapidly in the past 50 years, first making El Ninos dangerous for corals, and now we're seeing the emergence of bleaching in every hot summer," said co-author C. Mark Eakin of the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Hughes said he hopes the study will "help spur on the stronger action needed to reduce greenhouse gases in Australia, the United States and elsewhere." —AFP



ISRAEL: This file photo shows a scuba diver checking coral reefs in the Red Sea off the southern Israeli resort city of Eilat. — AFP

## Child mummy in Italy had hepatitis, not smallpox

**MIAMI:** A child mummy in Italy was thought to display the oldest medieval evidence of smallpox, but a new DNA analysis shows the disease was actually hepatitis B, researchers said Thursday. The small child was buried in the Basilica of Saint Domenico Maggiore in Naples, Italy during the 16th century, according to the study in the journal *PLOS Pathogens*. An apparent facial rash led experts to believe, initially, that the child had smallpox, also known as variola virus. Researchers at McMaster University took a second

look, using small tissue samples of skin and bone to identify fragments of DNA. Their genomic analysis showed the virus was hepatitis B, which attacks the liver and can also cause a rash. The discovery confirms that hepatitis B has been around for centuries, and has changed little in the past 450 years, said Hendrik Poinar, an evolutionary geneticist with the McMaster Ancient DNA Center.

"These data emphasize the importance of molecular approaches to help identify the presence of key pathogens in the past, enabling us to better constrain the time they may have infected humans," he said. "The more we understand about the behavior of past pandemics and outbreaks, the greater our understanding of how modern pathogens might work and spread, and this information will ultimately help in their control." Today, hepatitis B infects about 350 million people worldwide and kills about one million people each year. —AFP

## Starfish eating Australia's Great Barrier Reef alarm scientists

**SYDNEY:** A major outbreak of coral-eating crown of thorns starfish has been found munching Australia's world heritage-listed Great Barrier Reef, scientists said on Friday, prompting the government to begin culling the spiky marine animals. The predator starfish feeds on corals by spreading its stomach over them and using digestive enzymes to liquefy tissue, and the outbreak hits as the reef is still reeling from two consecutive years of major coral bleaching.

"Each starfish eats about its body diameter a night, and so over time that mounts up very significantly," Hugh Sweatman, a senior research scientist at the Australian Institute of Marine Science told Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) radio. "A lot of coral will be lost," he said. That would mean a blow for both the ecosystem and the lucrative tourism industry which it supports. The crown of thorns were found in plague proportions last month in the Swains Reefs, at the southern edge of the Great Barrier Reef, by researchers from the reef's Marine Park Authority, a spokeswoman for the authority said by phone. The remote reefs, about 200km offshore from Yeppoon, a holiday and fishing town some 500km north of Queensland state capital, Brisbane, are well south of the most-visited sections of the Great Barrier Reef, where most culling efforts are focused.

But the government's Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority already killed some starfish at Swains Reefs in December and will mount another mission this month, a director at the authority, Fred Nucifora, said. "The complexity with the Swains Reef location is... they are logistically difficult to access and it is actually quite a hostile environment to work in," Nucifora said. — Reuters

# CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times

248 33 199

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

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## What's On

# NBK sponsors LOYAC's 8-day trip to Thailand

The National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) recently sponsored an eight-day trip organized by LOYAC to Thailand for over 18 young volunteers aged 14-18. The trip included various activities designed to probe local culture through field work, visits to Thailand's landmarks such as rice farms, elephants' conservations as well as taking part in field voluntary activities. In this regard, NBK's PR Manager Ya'qoub Al-Baqer stressed that NBK is always keen on supporting the youth by sponsoring such educational and training programs that encourage them to open to other cultures, develop their skills and knowledge, think about their own future as well as develop their academic and practical experiences.

Al-Baqer also stressed that sponsoring the trip came as part of NBK's constant support to LOYAC's activities which are aimed at empowering Kuwaiti youth and developing their skills. Further, Al-Baqer added that the program included visiting some local schools and taking part in workshops to teach Thai pupils English. He added that the trip also included some seminars about Thai cuisine, language, music and traditions including some famous martial art lessons.



## GUST launches 'Beyond'

Gulf University for Science & Technology (GUST) announced yesterday the launch of its recruitment platform "Beyond", which aims to give students and alumni access to job opportunities in Kuwait across a variety of sectors in the form of full time and part time jobs, as well as internships. The Beyond recruitment platform is customized to benefit GUST's students and alumni by connecting them with potential employers, and is free of charge to use.

The system itself is the brainchild of the Business Development and Corporate Relations Department (BDCR) at GUST, and enables businesses to post their job vacancies, and search for suitable candidates from the university's pool of candidates. GUST Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Professor Salem Marzouq Al-Tuhaih, said, "With this new development, we bring our students closer to realizing their full potential by connecting them



with a myriad of potential career opportunities."

The Beyond platform is an extension of what GUST provides its students with regards to career opportunities. Every year, the BDCR Department hosts the annual Career Fair, which one of largest career fairs in Kuwait. Its aim is to ensure a smooth transition for students into the work force after graduation. This, coupled with the Beyond system means that students can cast a wider net when searching for a job, and are exposed to a variety of opportunities and roles that they may not have otherwise considered.

## McDonald's introduces the Grand Chicken Special Wrap

In celebration of that iconic Grand Chicken Special flavor that everyone loves, McDonald's Kuwait has introduced the Grand Chicken Special Wrap, a fabulous new twist on the beloved classic sandwich. The Grand Chicken Special Wrap features a deliciously crispy piece of chicken topped off with lettuce, rocca, tomato, chicken roll. Swiss cheese, and Dijon mustard sauce, all wrapped up in tortilla bread. The delicious chicken creation will be available at all McDonald's restaurants in Kuwait for a limited time only.

Speaking about this latest menu offering, Sherif Coutry, Marketing Director at McDonald's Kuwait, said: "One of our favorite things to do is to give our customers those classic flavors they love but with a completely new and delicious twist. We recently brought back the Big Tasty Wrap, due to popular demand,



and we thought the Grand Chicken Special, one of our most popular chicken sandwiches, deserved the same wrap treatment." "Our goal is to always be innovative and creative, whether in our menu offerings or in our campaigns and promotions. That means consistently bringing our customers variety, fresh ideas and exciting

concepts." added Coutry. For more information about the Grand Chicken Special Wrap and the rest of the McDonald's menu, please visit [McDonalds.com/kw](http://McDonalds.com/kw). You can also follow McDonald's Kuwait on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter (@McDonaldsKuwait) to learn more about all of McDonald's latest offerings.



## Kala(Art) Kuwait NIRAM 2017 Prize Distribution ceremony

Kala(Art) Kuwait 'NIRAM 2017' Children's Day painting competition in Association with "AMERICAN TOURISTER" has concluded with the prize distribution to all winners at a colorful ceremonial function held at Al Jawhart Al Sakh School (Girls), Riggae on Friday, 22nd December 2017. The program was witnessed by community leaders, business personalities, school principals, art teachers and media representatives. The Painting competition was held on the occasion of the birthday of late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of Independent India.

Mathew Varghese, General Manager, Bahrain Exchange Co Kuwait inaugurated the function and appreciated all winners for their fabulous painting

works, which were displayed at the entrance. Mathew appreciated the organizers for conducting such programs. The spectacular evening started with the National Anthem of Kuwait followed by that of India. The welcome speech was addressed by Sunil Kumar General Secretary, Kala (Art) Kuwait. Organization President Samkutty Thomas chaired the function.

Blood Donors Kerala, Kuwait Chapter were honored with a memento on the occasion and the panel of judges, Artist Shammy John and Artist Sunil Kulanada also were honored by Kala (Art) Kuwait. Kala (Art) Kuwait presented mementos to Bhavitha Bright and Jeeves Erinjery for their tremendous support in co-ordinating the event.

The Judges adjudged unanimously the overall champion ship 1st Position to IES-Bharatiya Vidhya Bhavan, Abbasiya; 2nd Position to United Indian School, Abbasiya, and 3rd Position Fahaheel Al Watanieh Indian Private School. It is noteworthy that a total of 2325 students from 21 Indian schools in Kuwait have participated in the competition classified into 5 groups and the prizes were distributed among five 1st Prizes in to each group, eight 2nd Prizes, ten 3rd prizes, 60 Merit Prizes and 191 consolation prizes



(Total 274 Prizes). The first place winners of each group received a Gold coin & Gold medal; second place winner got a silver medal and third place winner

got a bronze medal apart from memento, certificate. American Tourister sponsored bag and Badr Al-Samaa provided Medical Privilege Card.





TV

AM MOVIES ACTION
01:00 Project Almanac
02:55 Point Break
04:50 Sonmuss
06:20 Knight And Day
08:20 Iron Man 3
10:30 Bermuda Tentacles
12:00 Point Break
13:55 Knight And Day
15:55 Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope
18:00 The Viral Factor
20:05 The Avengers
22:35 Entrapment

ANIMAL PLANET HD

00:50 Untamed & Uncut
01:45 Swamp Brothers
02:15 Swamp Brothers
02:40 Swamp Brothers
03:08 Swamp Brothers
03:35 Swamp Brothers
04:00 Swamp Brothers
06:02 Bad Dog
06:49 Bad Dog
07:36 Meet The Sloths
08:00 Meet The Sloths
08:25 Whale Wars
09:15 Wildest Islands
10:10 Wildest Islands
11:05 Wildest Islands
12:00 Wildest Islands
12:55 Wildest Islands
13:50 Too Cute! Pint-Sized
14:45 Keeping Up With The Kruger
15:40 Dr. Jeff: Mountain Vet
16:35 Swamp Brothers
17:03 Swamp Brothers
17:30 Swamp Brothers
17:58 Swamp Brothers
18:25 Swamp Brothers
18:53 Swamp Brothers
19:20 Shark Attack File
20:15 Lair Of The Killer Crocs
21:10 Monster Island
22:05 Monster Croc Invasion
23:00 Monster Mako
23:55 Untamed & Uncut

BBC FIRST

00:55 Maigret
02:25 New Tricks
03:15 Father Brown
04:05 Doctors
04:35 Eastenders
05:00 Death In Paradise
06:00 Doctors
06:30 Doctors
07:00 Eastenders
07:30 Dickensian
08:20 Stella
09:10 Agatha Raisin
10:00 Doctors
10:30 Eastenders
11:00 New Tricks
11:55 Dickensian
12:45 Stella
13:35 Agatha Raisin
14:25 Doctors
14:55 Eastenders
15:25 New Tricks
16:20 Dickensian
17:10 Stella
18:00 Doctors
18:30 Eastenders
19:40 New Tricks
20:00 Gunpowder
21:00 Line Of Duty
22:00 New Tricks
23:00 Doctors
23:30 Eastenders

crime & investigation network

00:00 Homicide Hunter
01:00 Homicide Hunter
02:00 My Haunted House
03:00 My Ghost Story: Caught On Camera
04:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
05:00 Homicide Hunter
06:00 Homicide Hunter
07:00 The First 48
08:00 The First 48
09:00 Live Pd: Police Patrol
09:30 Live Pd: Police Patrol
10:00 Live Pd: Police Patrol
10:30 Live Pd: Police Patrol
11:00 It Takes A Killer
11:30 It Takes A Killer
12:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
13:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
14:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
15:00 Cold Case Files
16:00 Cold Case Files
17:00 Homicide Hunter
18:00 Cold Case Files
19:00 The Eleven
20:00 Killers: Behind The Myth
21:00 Killers: Behind The Myth
22:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
23:00 Measuring Evil: Britain's Worst Killers

COMEDY CENTRAL HD

00:05 Lip Sync Battle UK
00:55 IdiotSitter
01:20 Rachel Feinstein: Only Whores Wear Purple
02:10 Tosh.0
02:30 Tosh.0
03:00 The Daily Show - Global Edition
03:25 Tosh.0
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 Lip Sync Battle
07:15 Lip Sync Battle
07:40 The Jim Gaffigan Show
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 The Jim Gaffigan Show
11:00 Impractical Jokers
11:25 Disaster Date
11:50 Ridiculousness Arabia
12:00 Impractical Jokers
12:45 Friendszone
13:08 Friendszone
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 Friendszone
16:25 Friendszone
16:50 Friends
17:15 Friends
17:40 Disaster Date
18:05 Ridiculousness Arabia
18:35 Lip Sync Battle

19:00 Lip Sync Battle
19:25 Impractical Jokers
19:50 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
20:12 Friends
20:35 Friends
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
21:25 Comedy Central Presents
21:50 Comedy Salwagef
22:00 Russell Howard's Stand Up Central
22:25 The Half Hour
22:50 The Half Hour
23:15 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
23:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah

Discovery Family

00:30 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
01:20 Zoltan The Wollman
02:10 Zoltan The Wollman
03:00 Zoltan The Wollman
03:50 Kids Do The Craziest Things
06:20 How It's Made
06:40 How It's Made
07:00 Serious Amazon
07:25 Serious Amazon
07:50 Serious Amazon
08:15 Serious Amazon
08:40 How It's Made
09:05 How It's Made
09:30 How It's Made
09:55 How It's Made
10:20 How It's Made
10:45 How It's Made
11:10 How It's Made
11:35 How It's Made
12:00 How It's Made
12:50 Tanked
13:40 Tanked
14:30 Tanked
15:20 Tanked
16:10 Tanked
17:00 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
17:50 How It's Made
18:15 How It's Made
18:40 Breaking Magic
19:05 Breaking Magic
19:30 Pick A Puppy
19:55 Pick A Puppy
20:20 Beverly Hills Groomer
20:45 Beverly Hills Groomer
21:10 Playhouse Masters
22:00 Dinosaurs: Return To Life
22:50 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
23:40 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor

ID

00:50 Kindred Spirits
01:45 A Haunting
02:40 Son Of Sam: The Hunt For A Killer
04:30 Scott Peterson: Pregnant Wife Missing
05:25 Scott Peterson: Pregnant Wife Missing
06:20 Murder By Numbers
07:10 Scene Of The Crime With Tony Harris
08:00 California Investigator
08:25 On The Case With Paula Zahn
09:15 On The Case With Paula Zahn
10:10 On The Case With Paula Zahn
11:05 On The Case With Paula Zahn
12:00 On The Case With Paula Zahn
12:55 I Almost Got Away With It
13:50 I Almost Got Away With It
14:45 I Almost Got Away With It
15:40 I Almost Got Away With It
16:35 I Almost Got Away With It
17:30 Betrayed
18:25 Betrayed
19:20 Betrayed
20:15 Betrayed
21:10 Grave Secrets
22:05 Who Killed Jane Doe?
23:00 Casey Anthony: Killer Mom?
23:55 Village Of The Damned

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
02:40 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
03:05 Binny And The Ghost
03:30 Binny And The Ghost
03:55 Hank Zipzer
04:15 Disney Mickey Mouse
04:20 Hank Zipzer
04:45 Alex & Co.
05:10 Alex & Co.
05:35 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
06:00 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 Star Wars Forces Of Destiny
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 High School Musical 2
11:40 Austin & Ally
12:05 That's So Raven
12:30 That's So Raven
12:55 Frozen: Magic Of The Northern Lights
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
17:50 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 Star Wars Forces Of Destiny
20:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
20:35 Disney The Lodge
21:00 Alex & Co.
21:25 Alex & Co.
21:50 LoloRock
22:15 LoloRock
22:40 Evermoor Chronicles
23:05 Rolling With The Ronks
23:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
23:45 LoloRock

Disney HD

00:10 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
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01:45 Disney Mickey Mouse
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21:25 Alex & Co.
21:50 LoloRock
22:15 LoloRock
22:40 Evermoor Chronicles
23:05 Rolling With The Ronks
23:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
23:45 LoloRock

Disney HD

00:00 The Platinum Life
00:55 The Platinum Life
01:50 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
17:40 The
18:30 Alone: Lost And Found
19:20 Forged In Fire
20:10 Pawn Stars
20:35 Pawn Stars
21:00 Storage Wars
21:25 Storage Wars
21:50 American Pickers
22:40 Forged In Fire
23:30 Alone: Lost And Found

Disney Junior

00:15 PJ Masks
00:40 Vampirina
01:05 Vampirina
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 Calimero
07:15 PJ Masks
07:30 PJ Masks
08:00 P-King Duckling
08:25 Puffy Dog Pals
08:50 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
09:15 Goldie & Bear
09:30 Doc McStuffins
09:40 Calimero
10:00 PJ Masks
10:30 Sofia The First
11:00 Vampirina
11:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
12:00 The Lion Guard
12:30 PJ Masks
12:55 PJ Masks
13:20 PJ Masks
13:45 PJ Masks
14:10 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
14:35 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
15:00 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
15:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
15:55 Goldie & Bear
16:20 Doc McStuffins
16:50 Vampirina
17:15 Puffy Dog Pals
17:40 The Lion Guard
18:10 The Lion Guard
18:35 Sofia The First
19:00 Sofia The First
19:25 Vampirina
19:55 PJ Masks
20:20 P-King Duckling
20:45 The Lion Guard
21:15 Goldie & Bear
21:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
22:00 Doc McStuffins
22:25 Doc McStuffins
22:50 P-King Duckling
23:20 PJ Masks
23:45 PJ Masks

Discovery Channel HD

00:15 X-Ray Mega Airport
01:05 Abandoned Engineering
01:50 Yukon Men
02:35 Yukon Men
03:20 Diesel Brothers
04:05 Misfit Garage
04:50 Deadliest Catch
05:35 How Do They Do It?
06:20 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 Strip The City
10:45 Bushcraft Build-Off
11:30 Ed Stafford: Left For Dead
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 Strip The City
16:15 Bushcraft Build-Off
17:05 Ed Stafford: Left For Dead
17:50 Misfit Garage
18:40 Deadliest Catch
19:25 Yukon Men
20:15 Diesel Brothers
21:00 Diesel Brothers
21:50 Supertrucks
22:40 Fast N' Loud
23:30 Misfit Garage

Discovery Channel HD

00:15 X-Ray Mega Airport
01:05 Abandoned Engineering
01:50 Yukon Men
02:35 Yukon Men
03:20 Diesel Brothers
04:05 Misfit Garage
04:50 Deadliest Catch
05:35 How Do They Do It?
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11:30 Ed Stafford: Left For Dead
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 Strip The City
16:15 Bushcraft Build-Off
17:05 Ed Stafford: Left For Dead
17:50 Misfit Garage
18:40 Deadliest Catch
19:25 Yukon Men
20:15 Diesel Brothers
21:00 Diesel Brothers
21:50 Supertrucks
22:40 Fast N' Loud
23:30 Misfit Garage

Discovery Channel HD

06:00 Disney II
06:25 Supa Strikas
06:50 Marvel's Guardians Of The Galaxy
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
11:35 Right Now Kapow
12:00 Hatching Pete
13:45 Phineas And Ferb
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
14:15 Phineas And Ferb
14:40 The Suite Life Of Zack & Cody
15:30 Gravity Falls
16:20 Two More Eggs
16:25 Mighty Med
16:50 Mighty Med
17:15 Kirby Buckets Warped
18:05 Supa Strikas
18:30 Marvel's Ant-Man
18:50 Supa Strikas
19:00 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

Discovery Channel HD

00:00 The Platinum Life
00:55 The Platinum Life
01:50 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
17:40 The
18:30 Alone: Lost And Found
19:20 Forged In Fire
20:10 Pawn Stars
20:35 Pawn Stars
21:00 Storage Wars
21:25 Storage Wars
21:50 American Pickers
22:40 Forged In Fire
23:30 Alone: Lost And Found

WAGS LA
WAGS LA
WAGS LA
Revenge Body With Khloe
Kardashian
Revenge Body With Khloe
Kardashian
Keeping Up With The Kardashians
Keeping Up With The Kardashians
E! News
Red Carpet Icons
Keeping Up With The Kardashians
WAGS LA
Keeping Up With The Kardashians

00:00 Man Fire Food
00:30 Man Fire Food
01:00 Restaurant: Impossible
02:00 Mystery Diners
02:30 Mystery Diners
03:00 Man Fire Food
03:30 Man Fire Food
04:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
04:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games
06:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
06:25 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
06:50 Man Fire Food
07:15 Chopped
08:05 Barefoot Contessa
08:30 Barefoot Contessa
08:55 The Pioneer Woman
09:20 The Pioneer Woman
09:50 Siba's Table
10:20 Siba's Table
10:50 Bake With Anna Olson
11:20 Chopped
12:10 Man Fire Food
12:35 Man Fire Food
13:05 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:00 Chopped
15:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
16:00 The Pioneer Woman
16:30 The Pioneer Woman
17:00 Siba's Table
17:30 Siba's Table
18:00 Bake With Anna Olson
18:30 Bake With Anna Olson
19:00 Man Fire Food
19:30 Man Fire Food
20:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
20:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
21:00 Tia Mowry At Home
21:30 Tia Mowry At Home
22:00 The Big Eat - Middle East
22:30 The Big Eat - Middle East
23:00 Chopped

food network

00:10 Coronation Street
00:35 Coronation Street
01:00 Big Star's Little Star
02:00 Coronation Street
03:00 Coronation Street
03:55 5 Star Family Reunion
04:50 Royal Stories
05:05 Tonight At The London Palladium
06:00 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
07:05 Little Boy Blue
08:00 Catchphrase
08:50 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs
09:15 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs
09:45 Royal Stories
10:10 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
11:15 Little Boy Blue
12:10 Cash Trapped
13:05 Cash Trapped
14:00 The Voice UK 2018
15:25 Royal Stories
15:50 Royal Stories
16:15 Catchphrase
17:15 Victoria Christmas Special
19:00 The Voice UK 2018
20:30 Little Boy Blue
21:30 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
22:35 Victoria Christmas Special

itv choice

00:10 Coronation Street
00:35 Coronation Street
01:00 Big Star's Little Star
02:00 Coronation Street
03:00 Coronation Street
03:55 5 Star Family Reunion
04:50 Royal Stories
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08:00 Catchphrase
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09:15 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs
09:45 Royal Stories
10:10 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
11:15 Little Boy Blue
12:10 Cash Trapped
13:05 Cash Trapped
14:00 The Voice UK 2018
15:25 Royal Stories
15:50 Royal Stories
16:15 Catchphrase
17:15 Victoria Christmas Special
19:00 The Voice UK 2018
20:30 Little Boy Blue
21:30 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
22:35 Victoria Christmas Special

itv choice

00:00 How The States Got Their Shapes
01:00 Blood And Glory: The Civil War In Color
02:00 Ancient Aliens
04:40 Ancient Discoveries
05:30 Ancient Aliens
08:00 Ancient Top 10
09:00 Ancient Top 10
10:00 The Human Calculator
11:00 The Human Calculator
12:00 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved
13:00 Ancient Top 10
14:00 Ancient Top 10
15:00 The Human Calculator
16:00 The Human Calculator
17:00 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved
18:00 In Search Of Aliens
19:00 How 2 Win
20:00 Pirate Treasure Of The Knights Templar
21:00 Hangar I: The UFO Files
22:00 Hangar I: The UFO Files
23:00 Ancient Top 10

History HD

00:20 American Pickers Best Of
01:10 Forged In Fire
02:00 Forged: Iron & Fire
02:25 Milwaukee Blacksmith
02:50 DB Cooper: Case Closed?
03:40 Ax Men
05:20 Ax Men
06:00 Alone: Lost And Found
06:50 Forged In Fire
07:40 Pawn Stars
08:05 Pawn Stars
08:30 American Pickers
09:20 American Pickers
09:40 Ax Men
11:00 Forged In Fire
11:50 Pawn Stars
12:15 Pawn Stars
12:40 Swamp People
13:30 Swamp People
14:20 Swamp People
15:10 Alone: Lost And Found
16:00 Forged In Fire
16:50 Pawn Stars
17:15 Pawn Stars
17:40 The
18:30 Alone: Lost And Found
19:20 Forged In Fire
20:10 Pawn Stars
20:35 Pawn Stars
21:00 Storage Wars
21:25 Storage Wars
21:50 American Pickers
22:40 Forged In Fire
23:30 Alone: Lost And Found

NAT GEO people HD

00:15 Sara's Australia Unveiled
00:45 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
01:10 What's For Sale?
01:40 Eat Street
02:05 Eat Street
02:35 Fearless Chef
03:30 Maximum Foodie
03:55 Maximum Foodie
04:25 Fish Of The Day
04:50 Croatia's Finest
05:20 Chef On The Road
06:15 Croatia's Finest
06:40 Croatia's Finest
07:10 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
08:05 Delinquent Gourmet
09:00 Chocolate Covered
09:25 Chocolate Covered
09:55 Living Free With Kimi Werner
10:50 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
11:45 Migue's Feasts
12:10 Fish Of The Day
12:40 Eat Street
13:05 Eat Street
13:35 The Food Files
14:30 Maximum Foodie
14:55 Maximum Foodie
15:25 Fish Of The Day
15:50 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
16:20 Korean Soul Food
17:15 A Taste Of South Africa
17:40 A Taste Of South Africa
18:10 City Chase Marrakech
19:05 Fish Of The Day
19:30 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
20:00 Korean Soul Food
21:00 Maximum Foodie
21:30 Maximum Foodie
22:00 Eat Street
22:25 Eat Street
22:55 The Food Files
23:20 The Food Files
23:50 A Taste Of South Africa

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD

00:10 Crash Science
01:00 Gold Water Gold
02:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
03:00 Fish Tank Kings
04:00 Extreme Ice
05:00 Kung Fu Motion
06:00 Live Free Or Die
07:00 Locked Up Abroad
08:00 A Year In Space
09:00 Explorer XL
10:00 Titanic: Case Closed
12:00 Seconds From Disaster
13:00 Dog Whisperer
14:00 Dog Whisperer
15:00 Yukon Gold
16:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
17:00 Mystery Of The Himalayan Mummies
18:00 The 90s: The Decade That Connected Us
20:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
20:50 Mystery Of The Himalayan Mummies
21:40 The 90s: The Decade That Connected Us
23:20 Brave New World

NAT GEO WILD HD

00:20 Last Devils
01:10 Animal ER
02:00 My Dog Ate What?
02:50 Ultimate Predator
03:45 Extreme Animals
04:40 Urban Jungle
05:35 Cougar V. Wolf
06:30 Monster Fish
07:25 Monster Fish
08:20 Secret Life Of Predators - 2016
09:15 Africa's Super Snake
10:10 Animal ER
11:05 Jobs That Bite!
12:00 Strangest Bird Alive
12:55 My Dog Ate What?
13:50 Ultimate Predator
14:45 Man V. Monster
15:40 Urban Jungle
16:35 Super Squirrel
17:30 Monster Fish
18:25 Wild Scotland S2
19:20 Man V. Monster
20:10 Urban Jungle
21:00 Super Squirrel
21:50 Monster Fish
22:40 Wild Scotland S2
23:30 Strangest Bird Alive

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
02:36 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 Be Blake
05:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:24 Rabbids Invasion
07:48 Get Blake
08:12 Harvey Beaks
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 Real 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 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
15:24 School Of Rock
15:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
16:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
16:36 The Loud House
17:00 Sanjay And Craig
17:24 I Am Frankie
17:48 Hunter Street
18:12 Henry Danger
18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky And Dawn
19:00 School Of Rock
19:24 Game Shakers
19:48 The Thundermans
20:12 Ride
20:36 SpongeBob SquarePants
21:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
21:24 Sanjay And Craig
21:48 Rabbids Invasion

00:15 Shimmer And Shine
00:39 Shimmer And Shine
01:01 Max & Ruby
01:25 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
01:36 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
01:47 The Day Henry Met
01:52 The Day Henry Met
01:57 The Day Henry Met
02:03 Blaze And The Monster Machines
02:24 Blaze And The Monster Machines
02:45 Team Umizoomi
03:09 Team Umizoomi
03:31 Paw Patrol
03:55 Paw Patrol
04:19 Shimmer And Shine
04:42 Shimmer And Shine
05:05 Nella The Princess Knight
05:27 Nella The Princess Knight
05:50 Rusty Rivets
06:14 Rusty Rivets
06:37 Blaze And The Monster Machines
07:00 Blaze And The Monster Machines
07:24 Paw Patrol
07:37 Dora The Explorer
08:00 Nella The Princess Knight
08:10 Kid-E-Cats
08:15 Kid-E-Cats
08:21 Bubble Guppies
08:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines
09:07 Blaze And The Monster Machines
09:53 Nella The Princess Knight
10:15 The Day Henry Met
10:22 Paw Patrol
10:45 Rusty Rivets
10:56 Rusty Rivets
11:05 Wallykazam!
11:28 Bubble Guppies
11:52 Team Umizoomi
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nick jr

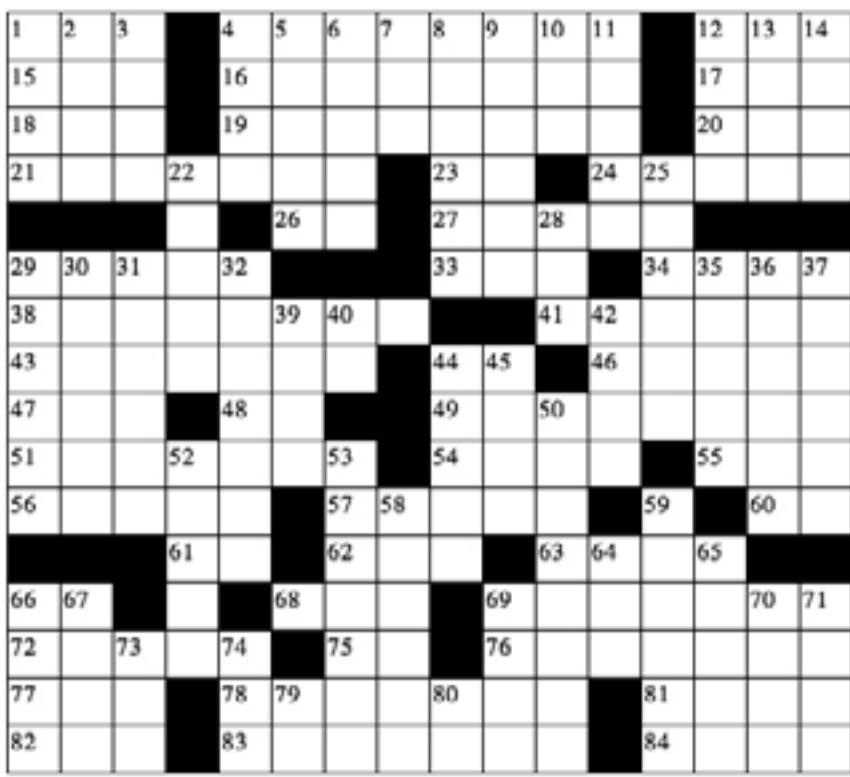
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22:45 Rusty Rivets
22:56 Rusty Rivets
23:05 Wallykazam!
23:28 Bubble Guppies
23:52 Team Umizoomi

DISCOVERY SCIENCE

00:40 How We Invented The World
01:30 The Future Of...
02:20 The Future Of...
03:10 The Future Of...
04:00 The Future Of...
04:48 How Do They Do It?
05:12 How Do They Do It?
05:36 How Do They Do It?
06:00 How Do They Do It?
06:24 Food Factory USA
06:48 Food Factory USA
07:12 Food Factory USA
07:36 Food Factory USA
08:00 How Do They

Stars

CROSSWORD 1802



ACROSS

1. Syndrome resulting from a serious acute (sometimes fatal) infection associated with the presence of staphylococcus.
4. A star-shaped character \* used in printing.
12. The part of the nervous system of vertebrates that controls involuntary actions of the smooth muscles and heart and glands.
15. Made warm or hot.
16. A genus of Colubridae.
17. Resinlike substance secreted by certain lac insects.
18. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
19. Eastern subspecies of northern oriole.
20. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
21. Of or relating to or characteristic of Israel or its people.
23. A public promotion of some product or service.
24. State in northeastern India.
26. An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.
27. The inner and thicker of the two bones of the human leg between the knee and ankle.
29. American professional baseball player who hit more home runs than Babe Ruth (born in 1934).
33. South American wood sorrel cultivated for its edible tubers.
34. Rock that in its molten form (as magma) issues from volcanoes.
38. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
41. Someone given to teasing (as by mocking or stirring curiosity).
43. Small buffalo of Mindoro in the Philippines.
46. United States film maker (1897-1991).
47. Electronic warfare undertaken to prevent or reduce an enemy's effective use of the electromagnetic spectrum.
48. In operation or operational.
49. Causing alarm or fear.
51. A family of birds coextensive with the order Rheiformes.
54. (Babylonian) God of wisdom and agriculture and patron of scribes and schools.
55. The corporate executive responsible for the operations of the firm.
56. Italian architect who pioneered in the use of reinforced concrete (1891-1979).
57. Capital and largest city of the Czech Republic.
60. A radioactive gaseous element formed by the disintegration of radium.
61. A state in midwestern United States.
62. A plant hormone promoting elongation of stems and roots.
63. A member of the Siouan people formerly living in the Missouri river valley in NE Nebraska.
66. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
68. System of measurement based on centimeters and grams and seconds.
72. A genus of Ploceidae.
75. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
76. Ornamentation with beads.
77. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
78. Someone who picks up grain left in the field by the harvesters.
81. At or constituting a border or edge.

82. A unit of absorbed ionizing radiation equal to 100 ergs per gram of irradiated material.
83. A salt or ester of oxalic acid.
84. No longer having or seeming to have or expecting to have life.

DOWN

1. Of or relating to or characteristic of Thailand of its people.
2. A strong-smelling plant from whose dried leaves a number of euphoriant and hallucinogenic drugs are prepared.
3. Indicating the most important performer or role.
4. United States tennis player who was the first Black to win United States and English singles championships (1943-1993).
5. Showing deterioration from age.
6. (physiology) Of or relating to or producing normal tone or tonus in muscles or tissue.
7. A cgs unit of work or energy.
8. A wired or starched collar of intricate lace.
9. Of or containing iridium.
10. Term of address for a man.
11. A family of Sino-Tibetan languages spoken in southeastern Asia.
12. By bad luck.
13. Karamunar languages spoken in northeastern India and western Burma.
14. A fraudulent business scheme.
22. 100 agorot equal 1 shekel.
25. A deep bow.
28. Nocturnal mouselike mammal with forelimbs modified to form membranous wings and anatomical adaptations for echolocation by which they navigate.
30. Any member of Athapaskan tribes that migrated to the southwestern desert (from Arizona to Texas and south into Mexico).
31. A tool for driving something with force.
32. North American water snakes.
35. Savory jelly based on fish or meat stock used as a mold for meats or vegetables.
36. Danish philologist (1846-1896).
37. French writer who generalized surrealism to literature (1897-1982).
39. Type genus of the Ranidae.
40. (Greek mythology) A maiden seduced by Zeus.
42. A very light brown.
44. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
45. Pompous or pretentious talk or writing.
50. A unit of current equal to 10 amperes.
52. Overgrown with ivy.
53. Small creeping evergreen shrubs.
58. A deceitful and unreliable scoundrel.
59. Protected from heat and light with shade or shadow.
64. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
65. A line spoken by an actor to the audience but not intended for others on the stage.
67. A small cake leavened with yeast.
69. Assist or encourage, usually in some wrongdoing.
70. Any tree or shrub of the genus Inga having pinnate leaves and showy usually white flowers.
71. Advanced in years.
73. An informal term for a father.
74. Gone by.
79. Being ten more than fifty.
80. A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Aries, the new year brings with it a need for looking deeply into your life and your position in it. This could be an appropriate time to change your surroundings and make new friends. You will have an opportunity to receive answers from an unexpected source. A new project will hold your interest and that of a competitor. Your abilities in coordinating people and projects are sharp; you will select winning combinations. Now is the time to work with hypotheticals and theories that you can bring others to understand. You shine at public events where others will be impressed with your looks and your language. You certainly have the ability to express yourself and, of course, you may like to perform. Wonderful time spent with someone you love this evening, aries.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Taurus, you have a way of getting to the cause for certain situations today; you could be called on by someone to help unravel a mystery. There could be a gathering held regarding a new situation unfolding. You have observed the technique of someone else leading this project, you are well prepared to go in another direction as details of the project click with your opinion. This might be a perfect time to relocate or somehow change your surroundings. You may be hesitant to be involved in an outing with friends this evening. You will figure out how to leave an old, outmoded condition behind; you could find this very difficult but it will be for the better. A special dinner this evening with someone you care for will ease tensions, taurus.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Gemini, you could notice some negative energy that causes a feeling of being trapped, as though you couldn't fight your way out of a wet paper bag! Others seem to turn their backs on your strategies and techniques; this will not last long. You will streamline by eliminating old, unused items and habits; you might move things around to create a zen energy for your home. You will be drawn to separating yourself from others. Someone will ask for your guidance on a very intimate situation you were not aware of. Your body feels better today than in a while; diet and exercise is a strong aspect of the cycle you have just entered. The stars are aligned to highlight your most wonderful quirks and abstract qualities; relax and let your hair down tonight, gemini!



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Cancer, you could be tempted to venture where perhaps you shouldn't socially; someone critical is watching you closely. If you go against someone's feelings or strategies, be true to yourself in the politest way you can. You could experience feeling blocked, even trapped, with no way out; be patient and figure this out. Worry could feel overwhelming today. Take a moment to walk, breathe and collect your thoughts and consider you may seem to be too clingy or needy for someone's taste. You will have an opportunity to connect and interpret the feelings of the people most important to you. You may have a wonderful, peaceful time with someone you are very fond of this evening. Clear your thoughts and embrace this evening with a good book, cancer.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Leo, the new year will find you swept up in a new learning experience you did not expect. Take a good look at your taxes; you may find a very helpful loophole. Take your time and slow the impulse to speed through important tasks this week. You could feel as though you are under a microscope; superiors may seek you out to voice displeasure with someone or a certain project. You may invest in a piece of new real estate. You could read a fictitious story that you completely relate to; perhaps it's a movie if you don't care to read. You could be misled and as a result make poor choices you will regret; pay attention and be careful! As you turn your thoughts to mystic matters you could fully realize that you can manifest anything you desire, leo.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Virgo, your hard work from last year will bear fruit this month; relax and smile in the sunshine. The bonds you have developed with people over the years strengthen when someone encourages you on your path. You are able to teach with strong confidence and clarity; this could also indicate that you will address others in a meeting or conference. You may volunteer at a nursing home or animal shelter, whatever this is you will help in a way that truly matters. Fundraising could be just around the corner where you will be approached for your clever thoughts and planning skills. You could be surprised this evening by a call or visit from an old friend you haven't seen in years; now is the time to move forward with no regrets, virgo.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Libra, some things that have confounded you could be cleared up and put away today. You could have to deal with an urge to spend, spend, spend just now. You don't intend to pass a good deal when you see it; watch your purse strings as you try to stay within your budget. Your tax plans need your attention today as you could have forgotten to add or subtract important information. You should get to the center of an issue at work with ease and accuracy. You have a social gathering on your mind; perhaps you've been asked to cater or address invitations. Make an effort to slow your pace so that nothing is overlooked. Make a list and check off chores as you go for better focus and peace of mind. Put your feet up tonight and let your hair down, libra.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Scorpio, perhaps you will have your feelings hurt by someone you hold in high esteem. You might notice that you're having trouble getting your thoughts out. Meetings may not be for you today as you would rather stay close to home and away from people in general. You may feel off balance as you consider purchasing high-end items; next week would probably be a better time after you've given this more thought. This new cycle could represent a good time to take risks at an emotional level; you have a lot of good things offer. Many look up to you as a shining example today as you work with a group. Surround yourself with family and those you are close to for taking in a movie and dinner; a new family member soon, maybe a pet, scorpio.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Sagittarius, a day to yourself could make the difference in your attitude today. This easy, calm day will find interactions with others running smoothly. Someone who admires you will compliment your levelheaded handling of your life and situations. Advice from someone you love could hurt just a bit but remember honesty does more help than harm. You could be called on to address a group that needs leadership. You will find that now is the time to finish a domestic project you staled some time ago. A visit to a museum or flea market could scratch that itch you have for doing something just for you. Perhaps a friend will invite himself or herself to accompany you on a fun outing. Tonight you could stumble upon something lost, sagittarius.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Capricorn, you are ready to make changes in your business and living arrangements. Focus on what you want and you will overcome all obstacles to reach your goals. Now is not the time to try to get others to understand your plans or purpose; instead keep them to your own use and accept that you don't have to give everything away, including your clever concepts! This is a good time to contemplate the moves you want to play when the time is right. Let your conservative views broaden a bit; there is something to be learned today and you don't want to miss this one. Stay out of groups for now. A visit from a young person could recharge your battery! Give your body and spirit a break this evening; relax and smile, capricorn.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Aquarius, this new cycle finds you captivated by beauty, secrets and learning. These add richer texture to your way of going through life now; don't resist, go with it. A window has opened up for sharpening of your spiritual gifts so that they may be used in creating health, wealth and abundance in all aspects of your life. You have recently dealt with physical illness and see to be coming out of it; beware a relapse. Do only what is best when recovering from a period of low energy. Knowing is not enough; in this prickly situation involving more than one, sound judgment is required. Ground yourself later in the day by stretching, walking or meditating on the peaceful moments of your day. You learn some interesting facts tonight, aquarius.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Pisces, welcome to a day you will remember for how pleasant it will be! The energy today will be with you as you perform tasks with no re-dos and make progress toward the end of a large project. Your belongings for work and home will get your attention as you clean and put them in perfect order; you hate the hassle of not being able to find things according to the stars. You will have an opportunity to understand someone else's side of the story if you will be quiet and listen through honest ears. Frustrations are merely a part of life on earth, realize this and go with the flow. There may be a need for your help in directing a certain project with children or this could mean animals. Your family life is rich; this may be the night you are pleasantly surprised, pisces.

Wordsearch Puzzle

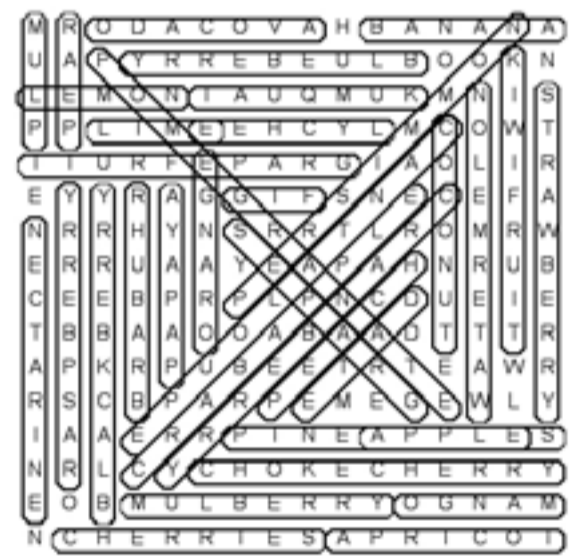
Gardening

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 27 letters spell a Lady Bird Johnson quote.



- |            |              |            |             |
|------------|--------------|------------|-------------|
| ANNUALS    | GARDEN       | ORGANIC    | SEEDS       |
| BEANS      | GERANIUMS    | PEAS       | SHOVEL      |
| BETTS      | GLOVES       | PERENNIAL  | SOIL        |
| BIENNIAL   | GNOME        | PETUNIAS   | SPADE       |
| BROCCOLI   | GREENHOUSE   | PINWHEEL   | SUNSHINE    |
| CARROTS    | GROW         | PITCH FORK | TOMATOES    |
| COMPOST    | HOES         | PLANTING   | TROWEL      |
| CULTIVATE  | HORTICULTURE | RAIN       | TULIPS      |
| DAISIES    | HOSE         | RAKE       | VEGETABLES  |
| DOGGING    | HYDRANGEA    | RELAXING   | WATER       |
| FERTILIZER | LILACS       | ROSES      | WEEDS       |
| FLOWERS    | LILIES       | ROWS       | WHEELBARROW |
| FUCHSIA    | MARGOLDS     |            |             |

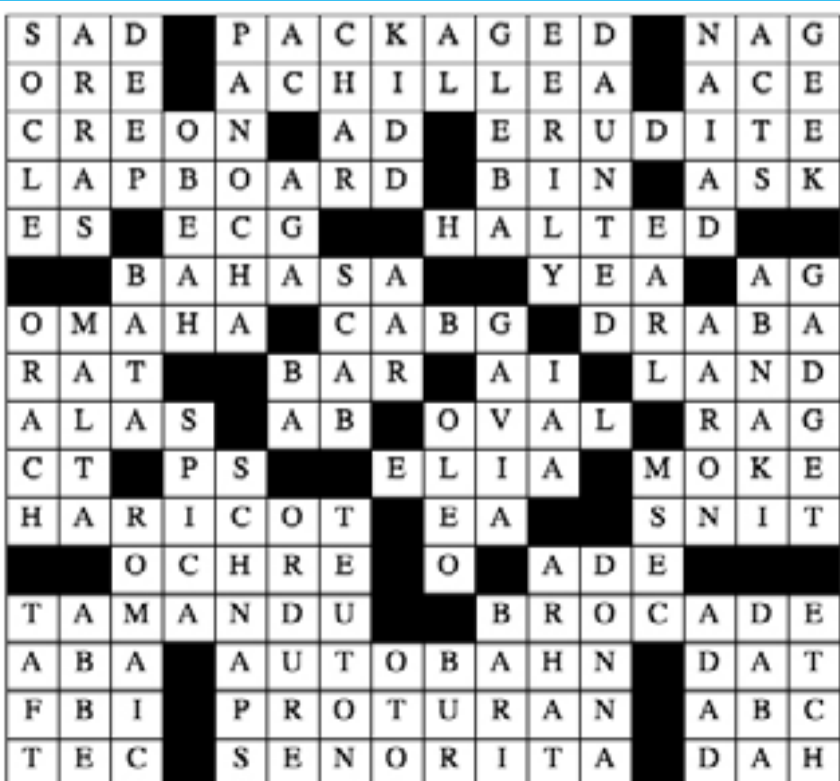
Fruit



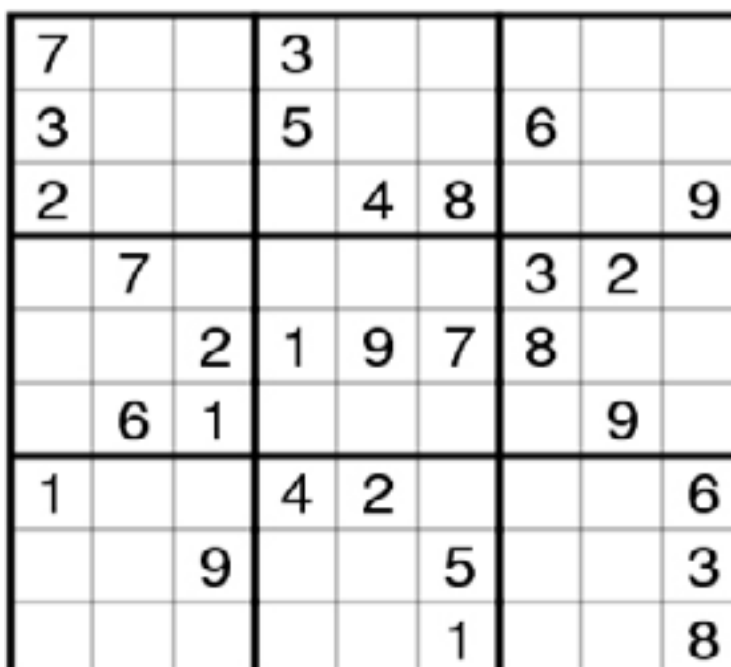
- |              |            |             |
|--------------|------------|-------------|
| APPLES       | DATE       | ORANGE      |
| APRICOT      | FIG        | PAPAYA      |
| AVOCADO      | GRAPEFRUIT | PEACH       |
| BANANA       | GRAPES     | PEAR        |
| BLACKBERRY   | KUMQUAT    | PERSIMMON   |
| BLUEBERRY    | LEMON      | PINEAPPLE   |
| CANTALOUPE   | LIME       | PLUM        |
| CHERRIES     | LYCHEE     | POMEGRANATE |
| CHOCHECHERRY | MANGO      | RASPBERRY   |
| COCONUT      | MULBERRY   | RHUBARB     |
| CRANAPPLE    | NECTARINE  | STRAWBERRY  |
|              |            | WATERMELON  |

The hidden message is: HONEYDEW MELON

Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



# Classifieds

Sunday, January 7, 2018

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## Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

**BY DAY:** Fair with light to moderate north westerly wind to variable wind, with speed of 06 - 26 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

**BY NIGHT:** Cold with light variable wind to light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 06 - 28 km/h.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 06/01/2018 0000 UTC	
KUWAIT CITY	23 °C	14 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	21 °C	06 °C		
ABDALY	23 °C	09 °C		
BUBYAN	24 °C	08 °C		
JAHRA	23 °C	10 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	22 °C	12 °C		
SALMIYAH	20 °C	16 °C		
AHMADI	20 °C	15 °C		
NUWAISSIB	24 °C	11 °C		
WAFRA	23 °C	08 °C		
SALMY	22 °C	07 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Sunday	01/07	Fair and some scattered clouds will appear	22 °C	08 °C	NW	12 - 35 km/h
Monday	01/08	Fair with a chance for rising dust over open areas	21 °C	09 °C	NW	15 - 40 km/h
Tuesday	01/09	Fair	22 °C	08 °C	NW	15 - 38 km/h
Wednesday	01/10	Fair	21 °C	08 °C	NW	06 - 26 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	05:19
Sunrise	06:43
Zuhr	11:54
Asr	14:46
Sunset	17:04
Isha	18:26

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	22 °C
MIN. Temp.	10 °C
MAX. RH	84 %
MIN. RH	29 %
MAX. Wind	SE 50 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

## Airline

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

## REQUIRED

For a Restaurants Company

- Hot Western Cuisine Cooks & Chef – 5 Nos
- Cold Western Cuisine Cooks – 3 Nos
- Pizza and Pastry Bakers – 2 Nos
- Waiters and Waitresses – 12 Nos
- Captains – 4 Nos

\* Transferable article 18 visa required

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Call after 12:00 noon

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**EMERGENCY 112**

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

### DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Sunday 7/1/2018					Departure Flights on Sunday 7/1/2018					
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time		Airlines	Flt	Route	Time		
JAI	572	Mumbai	00:05	AXB 393	Kozhikode	13:15	JZR	176	Dubai	13:40
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	KAC 792	Madinah	13:20	FDB	076	Dubai	13:45
KAC	504	Beirut	00:30	KAC 774	Riyadh	13:40	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
JZR	539	Cairo	00:50	PAL 668	Manila	14:00	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
KAC	102	London	00:50	KAC 204	Lahore	14:10	AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:15
PGT	858	Istanbul	00:55	KAC 692	Muscat	14:15	JZR	124	Bahrain	14:30
THY	772	Istanbul	00:55	KAC 618	Doha	14:15	KAC	673	Dubai	15:05
WAN	416	Beirut	01:05	QTR 1078	Doha	14:20	FDB	060	Dubai	15:10
RJA	642	Amman	01:05	FDB 059	Dubai	14:20	KAC	785	Jeddah	15:25
DLH	625	Bahrain	01:45	KAC 516	Tehran	14:20	QTR	1079	Doha	15:30
UAE	853	Dubai	01:45	KAC 672	Dubai	14:25	SV	A501	Jeddah	15:45
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50	GFA 221	Bahrain	14:40	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:45
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	SVA 500	Jeddah	14:40	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:50
JZR	555	Alexandria	02:15	KAC 304	Mumbai	14:50	KAC	743	Dammam	16:05
QTR	1086	Doha	02:20	KNE 529	Jeddah	14:55	PAL	669	Manila	16:10
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	KAC 662	Abu Dhabi	14:55	KAC	619	Doha	16:10
WAN	548	KTM	02:40	KAC 788	Jeddah	15:10	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:55	ETD 303	Beirut	15:15	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	KAC 502	Amman	15:30	OMA	646	Muscat	16:35
JZR	125	Bahrain	03:00	KAC 562	Muscat	15:35	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:40
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:05	OMA 645	Sohag	15:45	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:40
JZR	241	Amman	03:05	FEG 937	Dubai	15:45	FEG	932	Alexandria	16:45
KAC	414	Bangkok	03:05	UAE 857	Doha	15:55	KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10	QTR 1072	Cairo	16:00	QTR	1073	Doha	17:15
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	JZR 535	Sharjah	16:00	KAC	503	Beirut	17:15
QTR	1076	Doha	03:50	ABY 127	New York	16:00	JZR	240	Amman	17:15
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	KAC 118	Jeddah	16:00	JZR	266	Beirut	17:15
KAC	382	Delhi	04:15	JZR 779	Dubai	16:25	KAC	283	Dhaka	17:30
KAC	1544	Cairo	04:25	FDB 051	Dubai	16:40	FDB	052	Dubai	17:40
KAC	418	Manila	04:25	RJA 640	Amman	16:55	UAE	858	Dubai	17:45
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:35	KAC 542	Cairo	17:05	KAC	357	Kochi	17:45
KAC	284	Dhaka	04:50	SVA 510	Riyadh	17:15	KAC	361	Colombo	17:45
FDB	069	Dubai	04:55	GFA 215	Bahrain	17:30	RJA	641	Amman	17:55
JZR	609	Hyderabad	05:10	JZR 777	Jeddah	17:40	WAN	415	Beirut	18:00
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:20	WAN 984	Tbilisi	17:50	KAC	331	Trivandrum	18:00
JZR	143	Doha	05:25	UAE 875	Dubai	18:00	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
THY	770	Istanbul	05:25	FDB 063	Dubai	18:10	KAC	338	Riyadh	18:15
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	05:30	JZR 177	Cairo	18:15	JZR	538	Cairo	18:15
KAC	358	Kochi	05:40	MSR 620	Doha	18:30	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	QTR 1080	Doha	19:00	JZR	184	Dubai	18:30
KAC	344	Chennai	05:50	KAC 744	Dammam	19:10	JZR	608	Hyderabad	18:40
KAC	678	Dubai	06:00	KAC 776	Riyadh	19:20	KAC	381	Delhi	18:50
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:10	ABY 123	Sharjah	19:25	FDB	064	Dubai	19:10
QTR	8511	Doha	06:25	RBG 555	Alexandria	19:25	WAN	115	Bahrain	19:20
KAC	362	Colombo	06:25	GFA 217	Bahrain	19:30	UAE	876	Dubai	19:30
WAN	338	Alexandria	06:40	KAC 156	Istanbul	19:30	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
BAW	157	London	07:10	JZR 483	Istanbul	19:40	QTR	1081	Doha	20:00
FEG	933	Sohag	07:30	KAC 674	Dubai	19:45	RBG	556	Alexandria	20:05
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:35	FDB 057	Dubai	19:50	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:05
FDB	053	Dubai	07:35	KAC 616	Bahrain	19:55	GFA	218	Bahrain	20:15
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00	KAC 104	London	20:00	JZR	554	Alexandria	20:30
UAE	855	Dubai	08:35	KAC 620	Doha	20:15	FDB	058	Dubai	20:35
IRC	528	Ahwaz	09:05	OMA 647	Muscat	20:20	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	20:40
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	KAC 166	Rome	20:20	KAC	301	Mumbai	20:50
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	QTR 1088	Doha	20:45	KAC	353	Bengaluru	20:55
QTR	1070	Doha	09:10	DLH 624	Frankfurt	20:45	OMA	648	Muscat	21:20
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	ALK 229	Colombo	21:20	KAC	1543	Cairo	21:20
JRA	665	Shiraz	09:40	MEA 402	Beirut	21:20	DLH	624	Bahrain	21:30
WAN	342	Sohag	10:15	ETD 307	Abu Dhabi	21:25	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
MSC	415	Sohag	10:15	KAC 786	Jeddah	21:25	QTR	1089	Doha	22:00
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC 172	Frankfurt	21:30	KAC	411	Bangkok	22:05
WAN	114	Bahrain	11:00	UAE 859	Dubai	21:35	KAC	205	Islamabad	22:05
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00	KAC 676	Dubai	21:40	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:10
QTR	1074	Doha	11:20	OMA 647	Muscat	20:20	KAC	203	Lahore	22:10
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	KAC 167	Rome	20:20	MEA	403	Beirut	22:20
WAN	134	Doha	11:55	QTR 1082	Doha	20:45	ALK	230	Colombo	22:25
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	JZR 483	Istanbul	19:40	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:30
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:10	KAC 674	Dubai	19:45	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:35
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	FDB 057	Dubai	19:50	KAC	383	Delhi	22:40
FDB	075	Dubai	12:45	KAC 616	Bahrain	19:55	UAE	860	Dubai	23:00
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45	KAC 620	Doha	20:15	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
KAC	742	Dammam	12:50	OMA 647	Muscat	20:20	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	KAC 166	Rome	20:20				
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	QTR 1088	Doha	20:45				

## Lifestyle | Movies

# Golden Globes celebrate the year of the genre movie

In a year of devastating hurricanes, ubiquitous sex assault scandals and a strikingly candid presidential Twitter account, it is little wonder that cinemagoers are turning to escapist fantasy. With fairy tale romance "The Shape of Water" leading the nominations for the Golden Globes, dark farce "Get Out" topping critics' lists and horror movies making \$1 billion at the box office, 2017 may come to be seen as the year of the genre movie.

Jordan Peele's "Get Out," which satirizes suburban white guilt over racial inequality in the United States, is emblematic of the rise of genre films in this year's awards season. It has been almost a year since its release, and most movies brought out that far ahead of Hollywood's various prize-giving ceremonies are long forgotten by the time the trophies are being polished. Yet "Get Out" is up for two Globes on Sunday and entertainment website Eonline.com has been extolling its virtues as a genuine contender.

## VYING FOR GLOBES

Guillermo del Toro's "The Shape of Water," a hot favorite among the movies vying for the best dramatic film Globe, has seven nominations in total. The Cold War-era piece tells the story of a young, mute woman (Sally Hawkins) who works at night in a government laboratory and falls in love with a captive merman-like amphibian creature. Alexander Payne's sci-fi satire "Downsizing" and Edgar Wright's heist thriller "Baby Driver" are also seen as genre movies that would not normally get a second glance on awards nights, yet both are vying for Globes on Sunday.

### Nightmare president

In recent years, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, which runs the Globes, has rewarded movies celebrating Tinseltown ("La La Land," "The Artist," "Birdman") or heartfelt rites-of-passage flicks ("Boyhood," "Moonlight"). Historical or journalistic stories like "The King's Speech" and "Spotlight" are also firm favorites—usually at the expense of more fantastical, escapist movies. At the genre end of the market, only westerns like "The Revenant" and "Hell or High Water" have been pulling their weight.

Sasha Stone, of the Awards Daily website, says the arrival of Donald Trump at the White House can largely explain why fantasy and horror have received more attention than usual from audiences and prize juries. "In a different kind of year, probably 'Get Out' wouldn't be such a strong contender," she said. "But with the combi-



(L-R) Golden Globe Ambassador Simone Garcia Johnson, President of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association Meher Tatna, Host Seth Meyers, CEO of Dick Clark Productions and Executive Producer Allen Shapiro, EVP of Television for Dick Clark Productions and Executive Producer Barry Adelman and Mayor of Beverly Hills Lili Bosse roll out the red carpet during the 75th Annual Golden Globe Awards Preview Day.

nation of the nightmare that is our president and the lack of any other major movies to come along to overshadow it, 'Get Out' stands a really good chance at being the favorite this year."

While Peele's film can be enjoyed as straightforward horror, Stone argues that it steps outside the limits of genre because it works equally well as a "metaphor for the horrors in our culture." "The Shape of Water," meanwhile, has been welcomed more generously than many fantasy movies because it comes from the mind of a master, a director who has proved his skill at genre with the triple Oscar-winning "Pan's Labyrinth."

### Bloodlust

The genre movie hasn't always been an endangered species. In the 1990s and early 2000s, Jonathan Demme's cult thriller "The Silence of the Lambs," Peter Jackson's "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King" and musical gangster comedy "Chicago" all won the best film Oscar. In the 1970s, chillers like "Jaws" and "Rosemary's Baby" would be a fixture on the awards circuit. Go back further still, and it becomes apparent that the first Oscar

winners of the 1920s and 1930s were high-end genre films, according to Jonathan Kuntz, a professor of film at the University of California, Los Angeles.

The last decade or so have been unkind to genre movies but they are on their way back, with frightening films in particular regaining their mojo. The New York Times magazine recently ran a cover story describing 2017 as "The Year of Horror," dedicating several of its inside pages to the best actors in recent examples of the genre. The cover featured Australian Oscar winner Nicole Kidman, one of the most popular actresses of her generation, who diversified this year with a starring part in the gory creep-fest "The Killing of a Sacred Deer."

Noting that horror films have made more than \$1 billion in ticket sales over 12 months, the magazine attributed the movie going public's new bloodlust to the torment of the daily news cycle. "Horror movies probably don't need the world to be horrifying to be good," it speculated. "But when things are bad, the genre has a way of telling you they could be worse."—AFP



Preparations are underway at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, California for the 75th Annual Golden Globes Awards.

## The Golden Globes and Hollywood's gender equality shame

The 75th Golden Globes will present a man with the award for best director for the 74th time on Sunday, shutting women out of the race despite a bumper year for female filmmakers. The last 12 months have seen Greta Gerwig make her solo directorial debut with the acclaimed "Lady Bird" while "Wonder Woman" director Patty Jenkins delivered the biggest female-made live-action movie in history.

Dee Rees's Netflix racial drama "Mudbound" has a near-perfect approval rating on reviews website Rotten Tomatoes, and Kathryn Bigelow made headlines worldwide with the gut-wrenching 1960s crime drama "Detroit." Throw in Sofia Coppola, Amma Asante and Valerie Faris, all of whom made much-admired movies last year, and it begins to look decidedly odd that the nominees for best director at the Globes are all middle-aged men.

Guillermo del Toro is expected to win for "The Shape of Water," edging out Martin McDonagh ("Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri"), Christopher Nolan ("Dunkirk"), Ridley Scott ("All the Money in the World") and Steven Spielberg ("The Post"). An analysis of previous nominees by AFP shows that just five women have been selected to compete for best director in the storied history of the Globes, which goes back to the early 1940s. Barbra Streisand—the only female winner, for "Yentl" (1983)—and Bigelow were both nominated twice, while Coppola, Jane Campion and Ava DuVernay complete the tiny list.

### No change

"Hollywood's female director problem has been the source of much dialogue over the past several years," said Stacy Smith, a professor at the University of Southern California's Annenberg Inclusion Initiative. "The evidence reveals that despite the increased attention, there has been no change for women behind the camera." The 90-member HFPA declined to comment but

sources with knowledge of the issue argued that it would be unfair to single out the organization for what was an industry-wide issue. The Oscars rather make the point, with their even worse record of just four female best director nominees since 1927, including Bigelow, who won in 2009 for "The Hurt Locker." USC published an analysis on Thursday, co-authored by Smith, on more than a decade of movies which also demonstrates that gender equality across the wider industry is practically non-existent.

The study—"Inclusion in the Director's Chair?"—combines data on the gender, race and age of 1,223 filmmakers working on 1,100 top-grossing films released from 2007 to 2017. Just four percent were female, and among those there were just four black and two Asian women,



The Mayor of Beverly Hills Lili Bosse attends the 75th Annual Golden Globe Awards Preview Day.

plus one Latina. Around half of the men on the list went on to work on another top-grossing movie during that decade, while more than 80 percent of the women weren't hired for a big film project again.

### Why isn't it 50-50?

The ongoing USC study is updated every year, and only eight women were added in 2017—a sign, according to Smith, that little progress has been made. "As we said last year, most female directors are 'one and done' when it comes to helming popular films, particularly women from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups," said Smith. "In 2017, none of the women entering the ranks of 100 top film directors appeared in our study previously. This is not true progress."

According to the report, Warner Bros. released the most female-directed movies, but the figure is still staggeringly low—just 12 in 11 years. Meanwhile, less than a fifth of the board members on the seven largest entertainment companies are female and male film executives outnumber the women by more than two to one. Two-time Oscar nominee and gender equality activist Jessica Chastain points out that institutional sexism, far from being just a Hollywood problem, is the product of a patriarchal system which includes Wall Street and the media.

The 40-year-old Californian told AFP in a recent interview she became aware of discrimination in filmmaking even before her career got going, as she was studying at New York's prestigious Juilliard School for the performing arts. "Very early on, I realized there was in each class about two-thirds men and one-third women, and I asked a professor: 'Why isn't it 50/50?'" said the actress, who earned a Globes nod for best actress in a drama for "Molly's Game." "And he said, 'Well, there are more parts for men than women.' But how are you going to change the place unless you change that thinking?"—AFP

## Globes newcomer Timothee Chalamet shoots for the stars

Virtually unknown a year ago, Timothee Chalamet is the very definition of a breakout star, featuring in two of 2017's hottest movies and vying Sunday for a Golden Globe. The 22-year-old New Yorker has been showered with acclaim and awards nominations for his starring role in Luca Guadagnino's paean to the universal heartbreak of first love, "Call Me by Your Name." Chalamet—who embodies the Socratic ideal of youthful, unshuffled beauty with his brown curls, porcelain cheekbones and coquettish green eyes—has charmed critics with his performance as precocious, sensitive teenager Elio.

The teen, a bored 17-year-old American who must spend summer in rural northern Italy, becomes transfixed by Oliver (Armie Hammer), the handsome graduate student who has come to work with Elio's professor father. In the latest of his numerous awards for the part, Chalamet won the rising star trophy alongside co-honoree Gal Gadot at the Palm Springs film festival in California on Tuesday.

"It's truly an awesome feeling to get to be in the rising stars category tonight alongside Gal Gadot. Gal, your film has literally made 250 times more money than my movie has," the self-effacing star said. He thanked Hammer for his "big brotherhood" before turning to his friend's wife Elizabeth Chambers with a cheeky smile and thanking her for "letting me crawl all over your husband for two months."

### Hard to ignore

Chalamet said when the film was released in late November that the role, for which he had to learn Italian, had "changed" him. Guadagnino is full of praise for his "sublime" young star. "He is such a courageous and surprising actor... He is always in the moment," the director said. "Could Timothee Chalamet pull off an upset at the Golden Globes by winning best film drama actor for 'Call Me by Your Name?'" wondered awards prediction website Gold Derby. "Gary Oldman ('Darkest Hour') has been the presumptive Oscar-season frontrunner since before his film was even released in November, but there are signs that he may be vulnerable."

Sacha Stone, of the Awards Daily website, said Chalamet was in vogue not just because he's in a beloved movie but also because people were seeing him for the first time as a "charismatic and good looking young star." Add to the mix his various skills—he was already fluent in French due to his family roots before taking on Italian, and plays piano and guitar in the movie—and you have an actor with "the right balance of good looks and talent that make him hard to ignore," added Stone.

### Showbiz family

Like 23-year-old "Baby Driver" actor Ansel Elgort, another rising star vying for Globes glory, Chalamet studied at the prestigious LaGuardia high school for the performing arts in New York. It was there that he met his one-time girlfriend Lourdes Leon-Madonna's daughter. Chalamet comes from a family of artists, inheriting his performing chops from his mother, former Broadway dancer Nicole Flender, and his creative side from his grandfather, the screenwriter Harold Flender. His aunt is television producer and writer Amy Lippman and his older sister Pauline is a Paris-based actress.

With a head start in the business, Chalamet already has a decade of work on his resume, including a role as the son of Matthew McConaughey's space pilot in Christopher Nolan's "Interstellar" (2014). He has also been a murder victim in the flagship detective series "Law and Order," and a college student in "Homeland." Had he missed out on "Call Me by Your Name," 2017 would still have been a huge year, with roles in Scott Cooper's brutal western "Hostiles" and Greta Gerwig's awards season darling "Lady Bird," cementing his profile.

In "Lady Bird," Chalamet steals the show as an edgy musician and all-around cad who starts up a relationship with Saoirse Ronan's Catholic schoolgirl. This year, he is due to star in Woody Allen's "Rainy Day in New York" opposite Elle Fanning, Jude Law and pop star Selena Gomez, and he also takes on the role of a drug addict in the drama "Beautiful Boy."—AFP



Timothee Chalamet attends the 29th Annual Palm Springs International Film Festival Awards Gala at Palm Springs Convention Center in Palm Springs, California. — AFP photos

Lifestyle | Movies

# WRITER BARRY RIDES HIGH ON EPIC WESTERN WITH A TWIST



Irish playwright, novelist and poet Sebastian Barry poses during a photo session in Paris. — AFP

Sebastian Barry thought he was having too much fun writing his rollicking historical novel "Days Without End" for it to be any good. But his epic tale of love, loss and friendship that spans the Irish famine, the Indian Wars of the American West and US Civil War has become a runaway hit, with Nobel prize winner Kazuo Ishiguro calling it a "true leftfield wonder... a superbly lyrical western offering a sweeping vision of America in the making."

Even as the prizes pile up—the book has won both the Costa and Walter Scott prizes, making him the only writer ever to have won the awards twice—Barry claims to have been spun by its success. "I was convinced it was a non-functional error, that it could not possibly work as it was far too exciting to write," the Dubliner said. "You can go 10 years, maybe a whole lifetime without that, and it is beautiful when it happens. You know how rare and unlikely it is."

Not all that rare though in Barry's case. He has been clocking regular hits both on stage and on the page with his finely crafted exhumations of the thwarted lives of his Irish ancestors since his breakout West End and Broadway hit "The Steward of Christendom" in 1995. His most-loved book "The Secret Scripture" was piped to the Man Booker Prize in 2008, while the First World War tragedy "A Long Long Way" was listed as one of the best novels of the past 25 years by the British newspaper The Observer.

"The whole adventure of these books has been to try and find, if only in the imagination, the bits and bobs of my family that weren't talked about, the people around whom a silence fell," he said. "Days Without End" follows the seemingly unpromising fate of an ancestor on his maternal side called Thomas McNulty.

### Tender gay love story

After watching his family die of hunger in the Irish town of Sligo and surviving an equally horrific Atlantic crossing, the teenage Thomas

and we were worried. We live in a mountain district where a number of young men have not made the transition from a happy childhood to the demands life made on them."

Since then Toby has "given me a university training in what it means to be gay and has opened my eyes to this wondrous condition of being," Barry said. "Occasionally your life has a huge boon you never looked for. Classically the child is the father of the man and I am a different person because of my son," he said.

## "DAYS WITHOUT END"

becomes one half of a cross-dressing saloon act with a handsome boy called John Cole he meets "under a ditch in Missouri". When the pair can no longer sustain the illusion, they join the US Cavalry and cut a breathtaking swathe through mid-19th century America. Their tender love story is the heart of the novel—and it comes from a very deep place.

Barry, 62, dedicated the book to his "amazing, talented and fierce son" Toby, who came out to him when he was 16. His voice still wavers as he remembers the day. "He had been very unhappy

### Great American novel

To some extent Barry also modeled Thomas and John Cole's easy intimacy on his own son's relationship with his boyfriend. "Maybe because they are of the same gender they know things about each other, the physics, the inner knowledge of the heart and soul. They are attentive to each other in an almost mathematical way," he said.

Barry first attempted two decades ago to grapple with the "historical tragedy of an Irish person, essentially an aboriginal, being forced to

go to America, joining the US Army and taking part in the destruction of the Native American people, who were not unlike himself." But he abandoned the novel. The legendary chronicler of the West, Peter Matthiessen, the author of "The Snow Leopard", offered to help. "'Come talk to me when the smoke clears,' he told me," Barry said. "I never did and when he died I thought, 'I have to do it now.'"

The book, Barry said, is partly a plea to "our lovely American friends about accepting that their country is founded on a genocide," as Matthiessen long insisted. "It's not blaming, it's psychiatric. It's just good for mental health," Barry argued. Yet his book could not be more American in that its great themes are survival and redemption despite the worst that humans can do. But Barry laughed off "some people calling it a great American novel written by an Irishman."

"Sometimes you go to New York and you get discovered, then they rediscover you again 20 years later. The literary memory is short, and it is not surprising given the endless freight train of books that get published... 'Still, it's a lovely feeling that the circus just doesn't want you for a weekend.'—AFP



## 'Walking Dead' handed maximum fine over stuntman's death

The production company behind AMC zombie series "The Walking Dead" has been hit with the maximum possible fine over the death of a stuntman, the US government said on Friday. The Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) said it had cited Stalwart Films for "failing to protect employees from fall hazards while filming the television show 'The Walking Dead.'" "OSHA issued a serious citation and proposed penalties totaling the maximum allowable fine of \$12,675," it said in a statement.

John Bernecker died in hospital in July after falling 22 feet from a balcony headfirst onto concrete during filming in Senoia, Georgia. An assistant director told police Bernecker missed a safety cushion "by inches" and tried to break his fall by grabbing a railing after he slipped, celebrity news website TMZ reported at the time. Film and TV shows released last year were among the worst in recent history for serious accidents on set—most of which happened during filming in the previous two years.

Stunt pilot Alan Purwin and Venezuelan co-pilot Carlos Berl were killed in 2015 when their plane crashed in Colombia during filming for Tom Cruise's "American Made." Cruise himself broke an ankle during a stunt last year, although that was for a 2018 movie, "Mission Impossible 6." Olivia Jackson, a stunt double for "Resident Evil:

The Final Chapter," was severely injured in a motorcycle accident on set in South Africa in 2015, leaving her in a medically-induced coma for two weeks.

Her horrific injuries included brain trauma, a severed artery in her neck, broken ribs, a shattered collar bone and nerves torn out of her spinal cord. Her left arm had to be amputated. Days later, crew member Ricardo Cornelius was crushed to death by a utility vehicle that slid off a platform he was operating. In 2016, a construction worker was killed while dismantling one of the sets for "Blade Runner 2049" in Budapest, Hungary.

OSHA Atlanta regional administrator Kurt Petermeyer said the death on the set of "The Walking Dead" should serve as a "wake-up call" for Hollywood. "The entire industry needs to commit to safety practices for actors and stunt people involved in this type of work," he added. Bernecker's resume included stunt performances in several recent films, including "Get Out," "Logan" and "The Fate of the Furious."

Stalwart Films circulated a statement to US media describing Bernecker's death as "a tragic and terrible accident," adding that it complies with—and frequently exceeds—industry safety standards. "We disagree with the issuance of this citation and are considering our response," it added.—AFP

## Diane Kruger discusses her challenging 'In The Fade' role

German-born actress Diane Kruger's latest role as a woman whose husband and son are killed in an attack in the German movie "In The Fade" left her "physically exhausted" and taking a step back from acting. "I didn't take a movie for a long time. I just felt like I couldn't. I was feeling I was drowning," Kruger said. "I just needed time for myself to get my life back in order," she added.

Kruger, known for films such as "Inglourious Basterds" and "Troy," plays Katja in director Fatih Akin's "In the Fade," about a woman who marries her husband while he is in prison. Years later, a devastating tragedy leaves her husband dead and Katja on a mission for justice, suspicious that Neo-Nazis might be behind her loss. German director Akin, who is of Turkish descent, said he wanted to explore racism

and specifically Neo-Nazis in Germany within the film.

"There are people in this country, which I consider is my country, who want to kill me just because I look like how I look like with black hair and brown eyes. They want to kill me for it, for nothing. This bothers me," Akin said. "I don't like that, so I have a feeling that I need to express my anger so the film gave me the opportunity to express it on paper and later on film," he added.

The film has garnered both Akin and Kruger strong praise from critics, and Kruger was named best actress at France's Cannes Film Festival last year. "In the Fade" is Germany's entry to the Oscars, one of nine films short-listed in the foreign language film category.—Reuters

# Oscar-winner Haggis accused of abusing four women

Oscar-winning Canadian filmmaker Paul Haggis is now accused of sexual abuse by four women, according to an amended civil suit filed on Friday in New York. Haggis, who wrote and produced "Crash," and penned the screenplay for "Million Dollar Baby," is also known for his high-profile split almost a decade ago from the Church of Scientology. The allegations against him are the latest in a torrent of accusations made against powerful men that began with the fall of film mogul Harvey Weinstein in October, over numerous accusations including rape.

Three women alleging to be victims of Haggis's abuse are referred to in the lawsuit amended Friday and initially filed on December 15 at a New York court by a film publicist, Haleigh Breest. She accused Haggis of abusing and raping her in January 2013 when she was 26. On the same day Haggis, 64, filed his own action against Breest, denying the accusation and accusing her of seeking "to extract many millions of dollars" from him. Breest's lawsuit says that since she filed her claim "three other women have accused Paul Haggis of rape and sexual abuse."

Those three are identified only as Jane Doe one, two and three. The first woman, a publicist who worked with Haggis on a television program, alleged that in 1996 he forcefully kissed her before making her perform oral sex and then raping her. Another woman, who wanted to propose an idea for a show, alleged that she had to flee from his office in 2008 when he kissed her by force. The third woman, whom Haggis met at a film festival, said she was abused in 2015 when he tried to forcefully kiss her.

According to the law firm of Emery Celli Brinckerhoff & Abady, who are acting for the plaintiff and passed the allegations to AFP, the claims show that Haggis "is a serial predator who has preyed upon women for many years." A lawyer for the film-maker, Christine Lepera, did not immediately comment when reached by AFP but in a statement to the Deadline.com website said he "denies these anonymous claims in whole." She said that Haggis "views the fact that these reports appear to be spearheaded from the law-firm representing Ms Breest, as a further tactic to try to harm him and continue their effort to obtain money." — AFP



This file photo shows director Paul Haggis at the 2016 Revlon Holiday Concert for The Rainforest Fund Gala in New York City. — AFP

## 'Logan' gets surprise nod from Hollywood writers

Acclaimed "X-Men" spin-off "Logan"—featuring a beleaguered, bleaker version of Wolverine—on Thursday joined the tiny clique of superhero movies nominated for Hollywood's top writing awards. The Writers Guild of America nominated the Fox movie's script by Scott Frank, James Mangold and Michael Green in its adapted screenplay category alongside "Call Me by Your Name," "The Disaster Artist," "Molly's Game" and "Mudbound."

It was the biggest surprise among the nominations, which recognized critical hits "The Big Sick," "Get Out," "I, Tonya," "Lady Bird" and "The Shape of Water" in the original screenplay category. "Logan," directed by Mangold and starring Hugh Jackman and Patrick Stewart, was one of the best-received action movies of 2017 and has a 93 percent approval rating on reviews website Rotten Tomatoes.

"Loosely based on Mark Millar and Steve McNiven's comic-book Old Man Logan, the script... tempers its brutality with a testament to family and a need to

belong that crosses borders and bloodlines," wrote Rolling Stone critic Peter Travers. "Make no mistake, Logan earns its tears. If Jackman and Stewart are serious about this being their mutual X-Men swan song, they could not have crafted a more heartfelt valedictory."

Comic-book movies don't tend to score big in the awards season except in technical categories, but Fox's "Deadpool," another "X-Men" spin-off, was another exception in last year's WGA awards. Starring Ryan Reynolds, the film eventually lost out to Denis Villeneuve's alien invasion drama "Arrival" for the adapted screenplay prize.

In 2015, the guild nominated the similarly irreverent "Guardians of the Galaxy," but that didn't win either. The WGA awards is one of the last major award ceremonies ahead of the Oscars. Winners will be honored on February 11, at concurrent ceremonies in Los Angeles and New York.—AFP



## 'Bloodless' Trump bores me, says 'West Wing' creator

Aaron Sorkin has long been rumored to be considering a revival of award-winning political drama "The West Wing"—but he has ruled out a show based on Donald Trump's administration. The Oscar-winning screenwriter and director told ABC's "Nightline" in an interview airing Friday that a Trump-centric reboot of the show would "look like dead air." "I don't find him to be a terribly interesting character. He is exactly what he looks like," Sorkin told the late-night news program's co-anchor Juju Chang.

The original series, which ran from 1999 to 2006, was set in the White House under fictional two-term Democratic President Josiah Bartlet, played by Martin Sheen. But Sorkin, who is vying for a third Golden Globe for the screenplay of his feature directorial debut "Molly's Game," says he wouldn't develop a president based on Trump because "there's no nuance" in the 45th POTUS. "He only ever talks about two things—himself and his enemies, and that's it," Sorkin says in the interview, which airs at 12:35 am Eastern time on ABC.

"So it's a character that you wouldn't believe... in a drama. He doesn't have any of the qualities that you need to tell a story. There's just no blood there." Fans have been playing up the chances of a revival since "The West Wing" came off air, but the rumor mill has been working overtime since the show found new life on streaming platforms like Netflix.

Sorkin, who is reportedly Hollywood's highest paid screenwriter at \$4 million a movie script, has a standing offer to reboot "The West Wing" but has repeatedly refused, NBC Entertainment chairman Bob Greenblatt told reporters at the Television Critics Association press tour last summer.

Sorkin told the Hollywood Reporter in an interview published in November that his preferred scenario would involve Sterling K. Brown ("The People vs. O.J. Simpson") as the president with "some kind of jam, an emergency, a very delicate situation involving the threat of war or something." The long-since-retired Bartlet, he said, would be consulted "in the way that Bill Clinton used to consult with Nixon." —AFP



Local Moroccan girls attend a ballet class at the Stars Cultural Centre in Casablanca's northeastern suburb of Sidi Moumen. — AFP photos

## A creative outlet for Casablanca's deprived youth

"Teaching young people to dream again" is the vision of a Moroccan cultural centre in a rundown Casablanca district, once home to a group of suicide bombers who killed 33 people in 2003. Based in a white building next to a tramline and opposite a mosque, the Stars Cultural Centre in Sidi Moumen regularly hosts more than 300 young people for classes in music and music theory, classical dance, hip-hop, English and French.

"When we tell young people that violence is not a means to express themselves, we must find them other means," said filmmaker Nabil Ayouch, who co-founded the centre with artist Mahi Binebine. Ayouch's connection with the district began with his film "Horses of God", which looked at how young people in the neighborhood were becoming radicalized. When he organized a screening of the film in Sidi Moumen, Ayouch realized something: "Even in an area without rights, there is the right to hope."

That seed of an idea eventually led him to set up the centre in the district that was home to 12 suicide bombers, who carried out the May 2003 attacks in Casablanca. Yacine, 14, is studying piano and music theory and hopes that one day he can become a concert musician and perform with an orchestra. "The training is much better than at the Casablanca Conservatoire," he said. Students' families pay for the lessons but those on limited means receive subsidized rates. The centre offers free film screenings, hosts foreign artists and gives shows that attract spectators from far and wide.

### Conservative society

"Back in 2014, there was nothing—no culture, no cinema," said the centre's assistant manager, Soumia Errahmani. But funded by private donations and foreign cultural institutes, the centre has shown that "there are also stars and not only terrorists" in the district, she said. The 24-year-old,

her hair covered with an Islamic headscarf, said the project had taught her that "if you want, you can". She herself signed up for a class because she had "always dreamed of playing guitar and percussion".

### Invisible walls

Performances and lessons at the centre take breaks around Muslim prayer times. Ayouch, who grew up among the tower blocks of the working-class Paris suburb of Sarcelles, said the centre aims to break down the "invisible walls" both mental and geographical, which "confine culture to the city centre".

In November, he opened a similar centre in the Beni Makada district of Tangiers, a neglected, over-crowded neighborhood known for drug dealing and police raids. Director Annafs Azzakia Ben Sbih told AFP the centre aimed to "show that there are also young talents" and change the way people see a neighborhood many would previously have avoided.

Further centers are planned in disadvantaged districts of Marrakesh and Fes. Ayouch said the idea is to create "a network with similar programs and shared programs, with passionate teachers who are trained and rewarded, who can make openings for young people to jump into", Ayouch said. It was through the centre that Meriem, 21, became a rapper. She is working on a new record, "What belongs to girls," and dreams of going on tour. Her father opposes her hobby but her mother is supportive. "She encourages me and tells me 'go ahead,'" she said.—AFP

“Centre offers free film screenings”

She put together a band, Africa Vibes, and stayed. Now she manages student registrations at the centre and works to "reassure parents". In Morocco's conservative society, "the relationship with art in general, and with dance in particular, is very difficult," she said. But today, "parents come to see the shows, they are proud of their children," she said. "Mothers, who were worried about seeing their daughters dancing, come to ask for advice, some borrow books."



Local Moroccan children attend a music class.

## Short on stars, London aims to stay in fashion with youth

Grappling with the digital revolution upsetting all corners of the industry, Men's Fashion Week kicks off in London on Saturday with fewer shows and star names. But this fixture in the British fashion calendar is attempting to stay relevant by going back to its roots, and promoting a more youthful image. Burberry deserted the event last year and now unveils its men's wardrobe at Women's Fashion Week, riding the trend towards less rigidity around gender.

JW Anderson, the label of Jonathan Anderson, who is artistic director of the Spanish luxury leather goods line Loewe, has followed suit, choosing to present only two runway shows per year instead of four. Punk icon Vivienne Westwood has now said she will be presenting her autumn-winter 2018-19 collection not in a catwalk but "through the form of film and imagery", according to a statement from her company.

Designers have embraced a digital transformation of the industry in recent years, including the use of websites and social networking platforms for advertising and selling their latest collections. "Not only are digital and combined menswear and womenswear shows often more cost-efficient, but such strategies also present the brand in a cohesive manner, whilst reaching new audiences," Samantha Dover, of the analysis firm Mintel, told AFP.

Kristabel Plummer, editor of the fashion blog I Want You To Know, said designers are now more practical when it comes to catwalks and called the changes "sensible business decisions". "There's no point doing things in the way they've always been done, if that's not right for the brand. "Increased flexibility and innovation can only be a positive thing, in this challenging consumer landscape," she said.

### Era of content

"Brands need to move at the speed the world does, and today that is fast," Anderson told The Guardian in a recent interview. "We live in the era of content. We put something on Instagram and it gets reposted and it's everywhere and a minute later it's gone, over," he added. The drift away from London Men's Fashion Week by established designers has seen the number of parades drop by a dozen this year.

It has led to questions over whether the British event, the younger of the annual fashion weeks, can still compete with Paris, Milan and New York. Organizer The British Fashion Council hopes it can still flourish by allowing young and upcoming local designers to showcase their talents. Caroline Rush, its chief executive, said the 2018 edition will be "a celebration of discovery and the creative diversity that

has made London an international hub for menswear."

A raft of emerging names in British fashion will feature their clothes during the schedule, including the luxury streetwear of Edward Crutchley—dubbed a "rising star" by Vogue—and the bold neo-punk hip-hop wardrobe of Liam Hodges. They are joined by Christopher Raeburn, a pioneer in ethical fashion and recycling materials, and Astrid Andersen, who designs sportswear. "There's a variety of brands on the schedule," said Plummer, pushing back on notions London Men's Fashion Week is petering out. "Perhaps a new gem will emerge, thanks to the extra attention," she added.—AFP



People gather at the Zocalo square in Mexico City to get a piece of traditional 'Rosca de Reyes' (Kings' cake) on Epiphany's eve. — AFP photos



## Thousands of Mexicans polish off massive king cake

Mexico City's giant plaza was girdled with king cake late Friday as part of the capital's traditional Three Kings Day celebration. Some 250,000 people turned out to the main plaza known as the Zocalo to devour the enormous brioche-style king cake, known as "Rosca de Reyes." Some 2,142 bakers helped make the rosca—which measured 1.44 kilometers and weighed 9.375 tons—for the city's annual Epiphany

eve feast. "This rosca is so delicious!" exclaimed Dolores Rodriguez, who at 84 years old was attending the party for the first time.

Mexico City's government emphasized that this year a portion of the delicacy—traditionally adorned with candied fruits—was made without sugar, so people avoiding sweets could still partake. Mexican families eat the confection in the run-up to Epiphany on

January 6, the day Christians believe the Three Wise Men brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh for the baby Jesus. A baby Jesus figurine is hidden in the cake and the person who finds it must make tamales—a corn dumpling—on February 2, the Day of the Candles, for those who ate a piece.—AFP





## First-timer's guide to Gothenburg, Sweden

By Anna Kaminski

**G**othenburg is Scandinavia's largest port and sometimes lovingly referred to as Sweden's 'second city'. It's best known for producing Volvos, but over the last couple of decades it has managed to reinvent itself as a modern travel destination.

Nowadays, cutting-edge design has replaced industrial grit in Gothenburg's formerly run-down neighborhoods. Warehouses and industrial buildings have been turned into art galleries, Michelin-starred restaurants grace the local dining scene, and independent coffee shops dot the city. Add a lively night scene and a string of peaceful islands right on its doorstep, and it's easy to understand why Gothenburg is giving Stockholm a run for its money.

shops and cafes and renovated wooden landshövdingehus houses.

Bordering Haga to the west is Linne; independent designer shops and al fresco patios are found all along Linnegatan boulevard. The adjoining 'long streets', such as Andra Långgatan have held onto their classic watering holes, which remain pleasantly down to earth.

Frihamnen, Gothenburg's innermost harbor and port area, is at the forefront of the city's rebirth. Partially derelict since 2000, it is being turned into Jubileumsparken - a new leisure park that will be a major part of Gothenburg's 400th anniversary in 2021. Its features will include a man-made beach, a floating pool and a spectacular sauna, designed by the award-winning architect group Raumlaborberlin.

### Art and design

Stockholm gets headlines for its all-enveloping design scene, but Gothenburg is no lightweight. The city boasts a treasure trove of trendy interior design shops in a compact area in the city centre. Places like Artilleriet/Artilleriet Kitchen, Rum 21, Floramor & Krukatos and many more make for an unbeatable day of décor inspiration. Cutting-edge architecture is also part of Gothenburg's appeal. Kuggen (Lindholmplatsen), resembling a red Colosseum, is a marvel of green engineering, while the distinctive red-and-white skyscraper Göteborgs-Utkiken (a.k.a. The Lipstick) towers over the harbor and offers tremendous views from the top.

### City of culture

As Volvo's home of manufacturing, Gothenburg has an enduring relationship with the car company. Visitors can both take a tour of the car factory itself and immerse themselves in all things Volvo-related at the Volvo Museum. But there is much more to the city than car culture, including several world-class museums.

Science and technology meet the rainforest at the incredible Universeum. Meanwhile, the Konstmuseums art collection, spanning from the 15th century to the present day, is one of the finest in Europe. Stadsmuseum is the only place in Sweden where you can see an original Viking longship, while Sjöfartsmuseet explores the city's more recent maritime culture. And once you're all museum-ed out, head to Liseberg, Sweden's largest amusement park, to unwind.



### Where to eat

Gothenburg's dining scene is defined by the abundance of fresh fish and seafood, caught off the west coast of Sweden. Swedish oysters, seasonal smoked prawns, grilled crayfish and catch of the day dominate the menu at local institution Restaurang Gabriel inside the legendary Feskekorka ('fish church') fish market.

Other good places to sample the sea's bounty include Fiskekrogen, locally beloved for over two decades for its shellfish platters, and Strommingsluckan, a humble food truck at Magasinsgatan 17, serving nothing but freshly grilled herring with mash and lingonberries. The creative, seasonal menu at Michelin-starred Sjomagasinet focuses heavily on seafood, as do the multi-course tasting menus of its Michelin-anointed brethren, Koka and Thornstroms kok.

Seafood aside, Gothenburg's diverse dining scene encompasses a multitude of world cuisines, from Thai and Ethiopian to gourmet hot dogs, with numerous chefs championing Sweden's slow food movement as well. And if you're looking to meet local foodies, visit the splendid Sälhallen ('The Market Hall') with some 40 delis and restaurants.

### Island escape

If you get tired of the hustle and bustle of the city, catch tram 11 to Saltholmen boat terminal and take a boat to the southern archipelago - nine peaceful, car-free islands. Carved of granite and sparsely covered with greenery, they are ideal for long walks, bicycle rides, exploring villages and smokehouses or just sunbathing on the rocks. Branno, Styrso and Vrangö have guesthouses. Vrangö also has good swimming spots, as does tiny Vingå.



### Welcome to the neighborhood

Gothenburg is made up of a number of distinct neighborhoods, so it helps to get your bearings early on. Its historic city centre is separated from the rest of town by a jagged moat. Vasastan is where you'll find most of the art galleries. Gothenburg's most important museums are found off Avenyn, the city's main boulevard.

Trendy Magasinsgatan is the top spot for Swedish fashion brands, while the streets around Jarntorget are filled with increasingly hip and ethnically diverse eateries. Of the city's formerly hard-luck nooks, none have seen greater transformation than Haga, one Gothenburg's oldest districts. Its cobbled streets are now lined with quirky



# Lifestyle

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A picture shows a pier over the Chiemsee lake in Seon-Seebruck in southern Bavaria. — AFP

## The mysterious Nine Domes Mosque of northern Afghanistan

In the white dusty plains of northern Afghanistan, archaeologists are seeking to unravel the secrets of one of the oldest mosques in the world, whose structure is still standing after a thousand years of solitude. The Nine Domes Mosque, named for the cupolas that once crowned its intricately decorated columns, glimmers with remnants of the blue lapis lazuli stones that encrusted it. Carbon dating in early 2017 suggests the ancient structure in Balkh province was built in the eighth century, soon after Islam swept into Central Asia—but exactly when, and who by, remains a mystery.

The very survival of this modest square of just 20 by 20 meters has beguiled experts. “It’s a miracle it’s still standing despite time and erosion,” said Italian architect Ugo Tonietti, from the University of Florence, who specializes in heritage conservation. The mosque, which has weathered the centuries partly due to the arid climate of the region, is one of the best preserved Islamic buildings of its age in the world and is “highly valuable and highly vulnerable”, he said.

Time has washed most of the color from its columns, but the mosque was once a dazzling spectacle. “This is a masterpiece. You have to imagine how it looked like, fully decorated with lapis, some parts in red, it was all covered and painted; it was like a garden of paradise inside, with a sky above, the domes with white and blue decoration,” he said. The delicate vine leaves etched onto the pillars

resemble those seen at Samarra, Tonietti said, referring to the powerful ninth century Islamic capital city that ruled the Abbasid Empire extending from present day Tunisia to Pakistan.

But the mosque at Balkh could be even older, with the carbon dating and historical sources suggesting it could have been built as early as the year 794. “This means that the mosque of the Abbasid Empire has been influenced by Afghanistan, not the other way around,” said Julio Sarmiento-Bendezu, director of the French Archaeological Delegation in Afghanistan, who is leading excavations at the site.

### On the trail of Genghis Khan

“This mosque is exceptional in its beauty, conservation, decoration and the knowledge it holds,” he said. But Noh Gonbad, its Persian name, was only rediscovered by chance. In the late 1960s, an American archaeologist travelling in the region asked local people to take her to a mosque destroyed by Genghis Khan, the Mongol emperor who rampaged across the region in the early 13th century. Villagers led her to this lonely, half-buried temple some 20 kilometers west of Mazar-i-Sharif.

Once found, however, the building languished once again as war was unleashed on Afghanistan, enveloping the country in decades of bloodshed, and it was not until 2006 that excavations began on the site. “We thought at

first that it was an isolated monument, but as we went on we saw that it was stuck to other older structures,” said Sarmiento-Bendezu. “At the end of the 8th century, the Buddhist world was in torment in the region. No doubt it was built on the remains of a monastery.”

“This is a masterpiece”

In July archaeologists unearthed the base of the pillars, at a depth of 1.5 meters, but surveys suggest even deeper remnants. “This is a window open to the ancient period, here we can find the base of the next culture to come,” said Arash Boostani, an Iranian architect and engineer from the University of Tehran, who was commissioned by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) to work on the site. A specialist in conserving historical monuments, he said that some of the flower designs on the mosque are pre-Islamic and have been absorbed from local culture.

The building, which has been protected from the elements by a metal roof, remains vulnerable because its brick and patchwork structure is susceptible to erosion. Noh Gonbad’s domes were toppled soon after the mosque was built and have lain at the site during the centuries since. “With the earthquake in 819 most of the mosque collapsed,” Boostani said. Another earthquake a hundred years later hit the outer walls and most of the 15 arches. The experts stretched fibreglass nets to support the two main, deeply cracked arches, and injected cement—without altering the gypsum decorations.

“The place has always been occupied,” Sarmiento-Bendezu said. “Monastery and then mosque, abandoned and squatted in—we found fireplaces. ‘Pieces of the domes, however heavy, were transported and used to cover nearby tombs: why give yourself this burden if the building did not have strong symbolic value?’” Noh Gonbad remains a place of pilgrimage: the women come to gather on Friday and weep over the tomb of an obscure saint, Hadji Pyada, the walking pilgrim, buried there in the 15th century. “Like all excavations, those of the Nine Domes Mosque pose more questions than they answer,” says the archaeologist.—AFP



This photograph shows scaffolding for the ongoing conservation work at the ninth-century mosque Masjid-e Haji Piyada in Balkh Province. — AFP photos



This photograph shows the gate of the ninth-century mosque Masjid-e Haji Piyada.