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Lawmakers trade barbs in unruly Assembly session

Clashes over early retirement bill • MP slams municipal law over 'quotas'

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: MPs traded accusations yesterday in tense Assembly session that ended without any tangible output after lawmakers decided to delay two key debates for today. Following tense discussions and exchanges, the Assembly decided to debate a controversial bill on reducing the retirement age for men and women and hold a second debate on the jailed lawmakers in today's session.

The session witnessed at least two confrontations over the early retirement bill that forced acting speaker Essa Al-Kandari to adjourn the session temporarily. A large number of MPs protested against a decision by the financial and economic affairs committee to withdraw a draft law stipulating reducing the retirement age for Kuwaiti employees.

The committee's chairman MP Salah Khorshed explained that the action was to allow an independent international research house to study the issue and pro-

vide the Assembly with details about its cost and impact on the state budget. Khorshed exchanged harsh words with MP Abdulkarim Al-Kandari and later with MP Safa Al-Hashem, who accused the committee of acting on orders of the government in a bid to block the passage of the law.

Another clash took place between MP Hamdan Al-Azemi and committee member Askar Al-Enezi. Azemi accused unnamed lawmakers of working against the interests of the Kuwaiti people, but Enezi denied the accusation, saying the committee members cared for the Kuwaiti people as much as others. At one stage, acting speaker Kandari stopped the session due to the quarrels.

During the debate, new Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf said he will provide the Assembly with figures about the government debt and the financial status of the country after a month. This came after demands by MPs to know why the government plans to borrow more funds from the

Continued on Page 11



KUWAIT: MP Safa Al-Hashem (center) speaks as MPs Khalil Al-Saleh (left) and Khalil Abul (right) gesture during a raucous National Assembly session yesterday. — Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

Israeli air strikes, rockets hit Syria

DAMASCUS: The Israeli army overnight carried out air strikes and fired rockets at targets in Syria, causing damage near a military position, the Syrian army said in a statement yesterday. Israel's army has carried out several attacks on the Syrian army and its ally Lebanese Shiite movement Hezbollah since the start of the conflict in Syria in 2011. The Israeli air force carried out strikes on the Qutayfeh area northeast of Damascus, causing the Syrian army to retaliate and "hit one of its planes", the Syrian army said. Syrian air defenses intercepted one rocket, but several more hit "near a military position, causing material damage", it added.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based war monitor,

said the air strikes targeted Syrian army and Hezbollah weapon depots. The strikes sparked "successive explosions and fires, causing material damage" in the depots, where land-to-land missiles have been stored among other weapons, the Observatory said. The Syrian army also said Israel launched land-to-land missiles into Syria from the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, but it intercepted them.

Israel seized 1,200 sq km of the Golan Heights from Syria in the Six-Day War of 1967 and later annexed it in a move never recognized by the international community. Syria and Israel remain technically at war, and the Jewish state fought a devastating war against Hezbollah in 2006. In December, Israeli fighter jets bombed areas near Damascus including a scientific research center and warehouses where weapons and ammunition of the regime and its allies were stocked, the Observatory said. In September, Israeli strikes hit a weapons depot by Damascus airport, targeting a warehouse belonging to Hezbollah, the monitor said. — AFP

Ankara changes embassy street name after spat

ANKARA: Ankara yesterday renamed the street in the Turkish capital where the United Arab Emirates' embassy is located after an Ottoman governor, in a symbolic riposte to Abu Dhabi following weeks of tensions. UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Nahyan retweeted a post on Twitter last month which accused Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's "ancestors of kidnapping people of Madinah in the early 20th century". The post by a user called "Ali Al-Iraqi" also claimed that Fahreddin Pasha - the Ottoman governor of Madinah from 1916 to 1919 - stole from the people of the sacred Islamic pilgrimage city.

Madinah, home to the Prophet's Mosque, which is the burial place of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is the second holiest site in Islam, was then part of the Ottoman Empire and now a major city in modern Saudi Arabia. Erdogan hit back at the Emirati minister, telling him to "know your place" and that the claims were "slander-



ANKARA: A new street sign bearing the name of former Ottoman governor of Madinah Fahreddin Pasha marks the street that leads to the UAE embassy building yesterday. — AFP

ous" to the memory of Turkey's Ottoman predecessors. He later said the minister was "too spoilt by oil and money", in a reference to the UAE's rapid growth in recent decades.

Ankara mayor Mustafa Tuna said late

Monday that 613 Street would be renamed "Fahreddin Pasha" while the nearby avenue would be renamed "Madinah Defender" instead of 609 Avenue.

Continued on Page 11

Khamenei claims Iran foiled plot to overthrow system

BEIRUT: Iran has foiled attempts by its foreign enemies to turn legitimate protests into an insurgency to overthrow the Islamic Republic, supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said yesterday. Comments on his Twitter feed and in Iranian media underscored the establishment's confidence that it has extinguished the unrest that spread to more than 80 cities in which at least 22 people died since late December. "Once again, the nation tells the US, Britain, and those who seek to overthrow the Islamic Republic of Iran from abroad that 'you've failed, and you will fail in the future, too,'" Khamenei tweeted.

The Revolutionary Guards, the military force loyal to Khamenei, said on Sunday security forces had put an end to the unrest that it too said had been whipped up by foreign enemies. At least 1,000 people have been arrested in the biggest anti-government protests for nearly a decade, with the judiciary saying ringleaders could face the death penalty. A judiciary official announced yesterday that a detainee in Arak, a town approximately 200 km south of Tehran, had died after committing suicide, according to Mizan, the website of the Iranian judiciary. On Monday, a separate judiciary official announced that a detainee had committed suicide in Tehran's Evin prison.

The reports have raised concerns among human rights activists and some Iranian politicians that detainees may have been killed by security forces while in custody. "I warn the president and security and judiciary officials to prevent the occurrence of a second Kahrizak," Mahmoud Sadeghi, a parliamentarian, tweeted on Monday. The Kahrizak prison gained notoriety when a handful of detainees were killed and tortured at the site after unrest in 2009.

Khamenei said US President Donald Trump was grandstanding when he tweeted support for protesters he said were trying "to take back their corrupt government" and



TEHRAN: Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei delivers a statement yesterday. — AFP

promising "great support from the United States at the appropriate time!" The Iranian leader tweeted: "... this man who sits at the head of the White House - although, he seems to be a very unstable man - he must realize that these extreme and psychotic episodes won't be left without a response." As well as Washington and London, Khamenei blamed the violence on Israel, exiled dissident group People's Mujahedin of Iran and "a wealthy government" in the Gulf, a probable reference to Iran's regional rival, Saudi Arabia.

In a rare public appearance, the head of Israeli intelligence agency Mossad said the protests were due to Iranian President Hassan Rouhani's failure to improve people's economic or social circumstances, but he said they were unlikely to overthrow the establishment. "In Iran too, we have eyes and ears," Yossi Cohen told a Finance Ministry conference in Jerusalem. "One shouldn't develop high hopes, though I would be happy to see a meaningful revolution," he added.

Khamenei has called the protests - which were initially about the economy but soon turned political - "playing with fireworks", but he said citizens had a right to air legitimate concerns, a rare concession by a leader who usually voices clear support for security crackdowns. "These concerns must be addressed. We must listen, we must hear. We must provide answers within our means," Khamenei was quoted as saying — Reuters

FBI: Encryption 'urgent public safety issue'

NEW YORK: The inability of law enforcement authorities to access data from electronic devices due to powerful encryption is an "urgent public safety issue," FBI Director Christopher Wray said yesterday as he sought to renew a contentious debate over privacy and security. The Federal Bureau of Investigation was unable to access data from nearly 7,800 devices in the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30 with technical tools despite possessing proper legal authority to pry them open, a growing figure that impacts every area of the agency's work, Wray said during a speech at a cyber-security conference in New York.

The FBI has been unable to access data in more than half of the devices that it tried to unlock due to encryption, Wray added. "This is an urgent public safety issue," Wray added, while saying that a solution is "not so clear cut". Technology companies and many digital security experts have said that the FBI's attempts to require that devices allow investigators a way to access a criminal suspect's cellphone would harm internet security and empower malicious hackers. US lawmakers, meanwhile, have expressed little interest in pursuing legislation to require companies to create products whose contents are accessible to authorities who obtain a warrant.

Wray's comments at the International Conference on Cyber Security were his most extensive yet as FBI director about the so-called Going Dark problem, which his agency and local law enforcement authorities for years have said bedevils countless investigations. Wray took over as FBI chief in August. The FBI supports strong encryption and information security broadly, Wray said, but described the current status quo as



NEW YORK: FBI Director Christopher Wray speaks during a cyber-security conference yesterday. — AFP

untenable. "We face an enormous and increasing number of cases that rely heavily, if not exclusively, on electronic evidence," Wray told an audience of FBI agents, international law enforcement representatives and private sector cyber professionals. A solution requires "significant innovation," Wray said, "but I just do not buy the claim that it is impossible."

Wray's remarks echoed those of his predecessor, James Comey, who before being fired by President Donald Trump in May frequently spoke about the dangers of unbreakable encryption. Tech companies and many cyber security experts have said that any measure ensuring that law enforcement authorities are able to access data from encrypted products would weaken cyber security for everyone.

US officials have said that default encryption settings on cellphones and other devices hinder their ability to collect evidence needed to pursue criminals. The matter came to a head in 2016 when the Justice Department tried unsuccessfully to force Apple Inc to break into an iPhone used by a gunman during a mass shooting in San Bernardino, California. — Reuters

Local

Amir receives Chairman, board members of Kuwait Science Club

New board assured of political leadership's support



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Board Chairman of Kuwait Science Club, Deputy Chairman, and board members. — KUNA



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with the newly-formed board of Kuwait Science Club (KSC).

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan Palace Board Chairman of Kuwait Science Club (KSC) Talal Al-Kharafi, Deputy Chairman Ahmad Al-Manfouhi and board members on the occasion of the formation of the new board. Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah

Al-Sabah attended the meeting.

The KSC delegation also met with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and offered him an explanation over the club's recent activities and future plans. His Highness the Crown Prince assured the KSC officials of the political leadership's sup-

port, saying that the Kuwaiti youth's scientific innovations give impetus to national development. The head of protocols of His Highness the Crown Prince's Diwan Sheikh Mubarak Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah was present at the meeting. Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince received His Highness Sheikh

Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah in a separate meeting. His Highness the Crown Prince also received Defense Ministry Undersecretary Sheikh Ahmad Al-Mansour Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, as well as President of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah. — KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with President of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Speaker welcomes GCC parliamentary councils' heads

KUWAIT: Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem welcomed yesterday GCC parliamentary councils' chiefs who attended part of the parliament's ordinary session. Ghanem asserted the deep-rooted ties between the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries in the social, geographical and historical domains. He recalled the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait back in 1990, hailing the distinguished GCC countries' remarkable contribution in the liberation of Kuwait, which reflects the unity of the Gulf region.

The Gulf summit, as well as the 23rd Arabian Gulf Cup that were held recently in Kuwait constituted a great opportunity to boost the unity among the GCC countries, which would reflect positively on the security and stability of the region, he affirmed.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh welcomed the GCC parliamentary councils' chiefs, wishing that this meeting would contribute to the reunification of the Gulf peoples.

Ghanem accompanied heads and members of the delegations who participated in the 11th meeting of GCC legislative councils in an inspection tour of the National Assembly headquarters. Ghanem briefed the visiting delegations on the new building of the members of parliament and construction and modernization projects of the facility.

The 11th meeting of the heads of the Gulf legislative councils was held on Monday under patronage and presence of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Following the meeting, the GCC speakers expressed gratitude to His Highness the Amir for sponsoring and attending the event. In a letter to His Highness the Amir, who holds the rotating presidency of the GCC Summit, the top MPs thanked His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad for the hospitality and his guidance and vision. They expressed sincere wishes that Kuwait enjoyed progress and prosperity under the leadership of His Highness the Amir.

Human resources

At the conclusion of the meeting, GCC parliament speakers have affirmed the impor-



KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem guides heads and members of delegations who participated in the 11th meeting of GCC legislative councils on a tour of the National Assembly headquarters. — KUNA

tance of the nationalization of jobs and investment in human resources of GCC member states. In their final communique, the conferees called for the implementation of nationalizing jobs at GCC states, calling on Kuwait's National Assembly to implement, in coordination with GCC secretariat, activities and events pertaining to this topic. They commended His Highness the Amir's speech in the opening session, affirming the importance of its contents. They said the speech comes to emphasize the significance of keenness on coordination and consultation with all different levels, with the aim of overcoming challenges facing the joint Gulf march in light of surrounding situations. His Highness the Amir stressed in the speech that the collective action is the way to face the Gulf challenges and maintain gains and accomplishments, the speakers added.

They approved several resolutions regard-

ing the topics listed on the meeting's agenda. They were briefed on measures taken to enhance relations with foreign parliaments and parliamentary unions, directing to continue work so as to boost the outstanding ties, according to the communique.



GCC speakers stress on job nationalization

They asked the GCC secretariat, in coordination with Kuwait's National Assembly, to fulfill mutual visits between GCC member states' parliaments and the European Parliament. GCC parliament speakers were also apprised of member states' visions and experiences on "threats of terrorism and terrorist organizations, and means of countering them. They finally sent cables of thanks and appreciations to His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince for hosting the meeting, warm reception and hospitality as well as good organization of the meeting, which contribute to making the event a success. — KUNA

National Assembly appoints new MPs to its committees

KUWAIT: The National Assembly appointed MP Nasser Al-Dosari as member of the parliamentary foreign affairs committee, replacing MP Ali Al-Deqbasi who has resigned from the committee. The assembly also appointed MP Talal Al-Jalal as member of the public utilities committee, replacing MP Mohammad Al-Hadiya, during its session yesterday. The assembly had accepted the resignation of Al-Deqbasi and Al-Hadiya during its session on 19 December. Separately, the parliament turned down a request by the Public Prosecution to strip MP Safaa Al-Hashem of her parliamentary immunity, regarding case (No. 2017/3303) 'municipal misdemeanor'. The MPs discussed during the session a report by the legislative and legal affairs committee concerning the case.

Meanwhile, parliament members expressed their gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-

Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Government of Kuwait for hosting the 38th GCC Summit, the 23rd Arabian Gulf Cup and the 11th meeting of heads of the GCC parliaments and Shura councils.

This came during the session in which they reviewed letters received by His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince. Among the letters reviewed by the parliament was one by His Highness the Amir thanking the Speaker and members of the National Assembly for their congratulations on Kuwait's membership in the UN Security Council for 2018 and 2019 and the new year.

The parliament also reviewed a cable from His Highness the Amir thanking the heads and representatives of the GCC Shura and National Assemblies for their congratulations and appreciation for Kuwait's hosting of the 11th conference for GCC heads of parliaments. The parliament also reviewed a letter from His Highness the Crown Prince, in which he thanked speaker and members of the National Assembly for their congratulations on the occasion of Kuwait's membership in the UN Security Council for 2018 and 2019 and the new year. The MPs praised the great role played by His Highness the Amir in re-uniting Gulf states and all those who raised high the name of Kuwait and drew attention to it being a peace-loving country and a hub for humanitarian work. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem gestures during yesterday's session. — KUNA

Local

No plans for Kuwait to raise fuel prices again

Officials monitor developments after GCC states hiked charges

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Kuwait has no plans to follow in other GCC states' footsteps and hike fuel prices again, a government official said. A governmental subsidies committee has not discussed increasing fuel prices as it continues to monitor oil market developments and discuss the best ways to deal with changes, said the official who spoke on the condition of anonymity. Further, the official said that the Cabinet reviewed the decisions made in four Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states to increase fuel prices, but did not take similar steps.

"The Cabinet only requested conducting needed studies to assess the local situation to make the right decision," he said, pointing out that reports were made by relevant oil officials about the reasons behind the price hikes in UAE, Qatar, Oman and Saudi Arabia, which came after implementing value added tax (VAT) in UAE and Saudi Arabia, noting that the increase was the second in the UAE and Oman, and the fourth in Qatar since four Arab states boycotted it seven months back.

Notably, fuel prices have gone up by 127 percent in Saudi Arabia and 3.9-4.2 percent in the UAE following a 20 percent increase in 2017. Oman increased fuel prices by 2-7 percent and Qatar increased it by 2.8-3 percent. The last time Kuwait raised fuel prices was in September 2016.



17,000 private sector jobs for Kuwaitis

Hiring citizens

Secretary General of the Manpower and Government Restructuring Program (MGRP) Fauzi Al-Majdali hailed the role played by the program in achieving national goals and supporting the national economy through supporting entrepreneurship, replacing expats with national labor and making the private sector attract more nationals.

Speaking after a meeting with the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry's industrial committee to discuss the new ratios of hiring nationals in entrepreneurs' projects, Majdali stressed that this will provide 17,000 private sector job opportunities for Kuwaiti youth. He added that companies will have to pay extra annual fees per work permit issued to non-Kuwaitis above the maximum number allowed.

Majdali added that the national labor support act authorized the Cabinet to review the ratios and penalties every two years, and that since the last review was in 2014 to provide 10,000 job opportunities, MGRP prepared some amendments to decision number 1028/2014 with the aim of appointing more citizens in the private and non-governmental sectors. He added that a study focused on achieving balance between demand and supply related to national labor, assessing the demand through the assessment of the educational system in the



next five years.

Majdali added that the project on national labor ratios and the justification of the sought increase had been discussed with the manpower authority's board of directors headed by Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Hind Al-Sabeeh. He added that the new decision focused on economic activities that will attract nationals.

Housing projects

The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) announced completing the southern Abdullah Al-Mubarak project infrastructure's design and outline, and will start handing them over from Sunday. The authority's

deputy director for planning and design Nasser Khoraiib said that the project includes 3,260 400-square-meter housing units, in addition to blocks for public services to meet the area's demands and needs.

Meanwhile, the housing authority's official spokesperson Ibrahim Al-Nashi said the Chinese contractor of the second contract in the South Mutlaa project requested 11 infrastructure design adjustments, but the requests were rejected because they would affect the entire city's grids. He added that several meetings were held with the contractor to discuss the requests and that the discussion ended by mandating the contractor to stick to the original plans.

Ministers urged to 'adopt' Vision 2035 projects

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Former Municipal Council member Ali Al-Moussa has asked for a follow up on the Kuwait new structural plan dubbed 'Kuwait Vision 2035,' and having future projects reviewed by an international advisor. He also thanked First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah for adopting the 2035 vision "which is expected to make a substantial shift in the country because of the mega development projects it includes."

Moussa said that a primary study on developing five of Kuwait's islands showed that the project would create over 200,000 non-oil job opportunities

and make over KD 35 billion in revenues, which is unprecedented in terms of solving the problem of Kuwaiti youth's unemployment. He added that the Supreme Council for Planning and Development would highlight the best channels to put the 2035 vision into practice in all fields including education, health, environment and various forms of competitiveness.

Moussa stressed that the new vision has many advantages, namely economic ones "which will help create sources of income instead of solely relying on oil." He added that the vision also opens doors for international trade development through signing a strategic partnership agreement with China on building the Silk Road. He urged various officials to pass laws pertaining with the vision and adopt its projects.



Ali Al-Moussa

Kuwait, France discuss ties, regional affairs



KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah meets with the French Ambassador to the State of Kuwait Marie Masdupuy. — KUNA

KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah held a meeting yesterday with the French Ambassador to the State of Kuwait Marie Masdupuy, discussing bilateral relations, regional and international issues. Assistant Foreign Minister for Deputy Premier's Bureau Affairs, Ayham Al-Omar, attended the meeting. — KUNA

Women leadership program seeks to close gender gap

KUWAIT: Kuwait's General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (GSSCPD) has enlisted some 60 women to take part in its leadership program, held in conjunction with

Kuwait University (KU) and the United Nations Development Program. The program is akin to a strategy for women's empowerment and fits into the nation's sustained development goals, GSSCPD's secretary general Dr Khaled Mehdi told the press.

He hailed the program, which includes a series of political and economic training courses organized by KU, as a concrete step to limit gender disparity in the country. Meanwhile, the head of KU's center for women's studies Dr Lubna Al-Qadhi said that the program would allow women to develop their political prowess. She also added that the program gives trainees the opportunity to examine their male counterparts' various practices and tendencies. — KUNA

Kuwait Times

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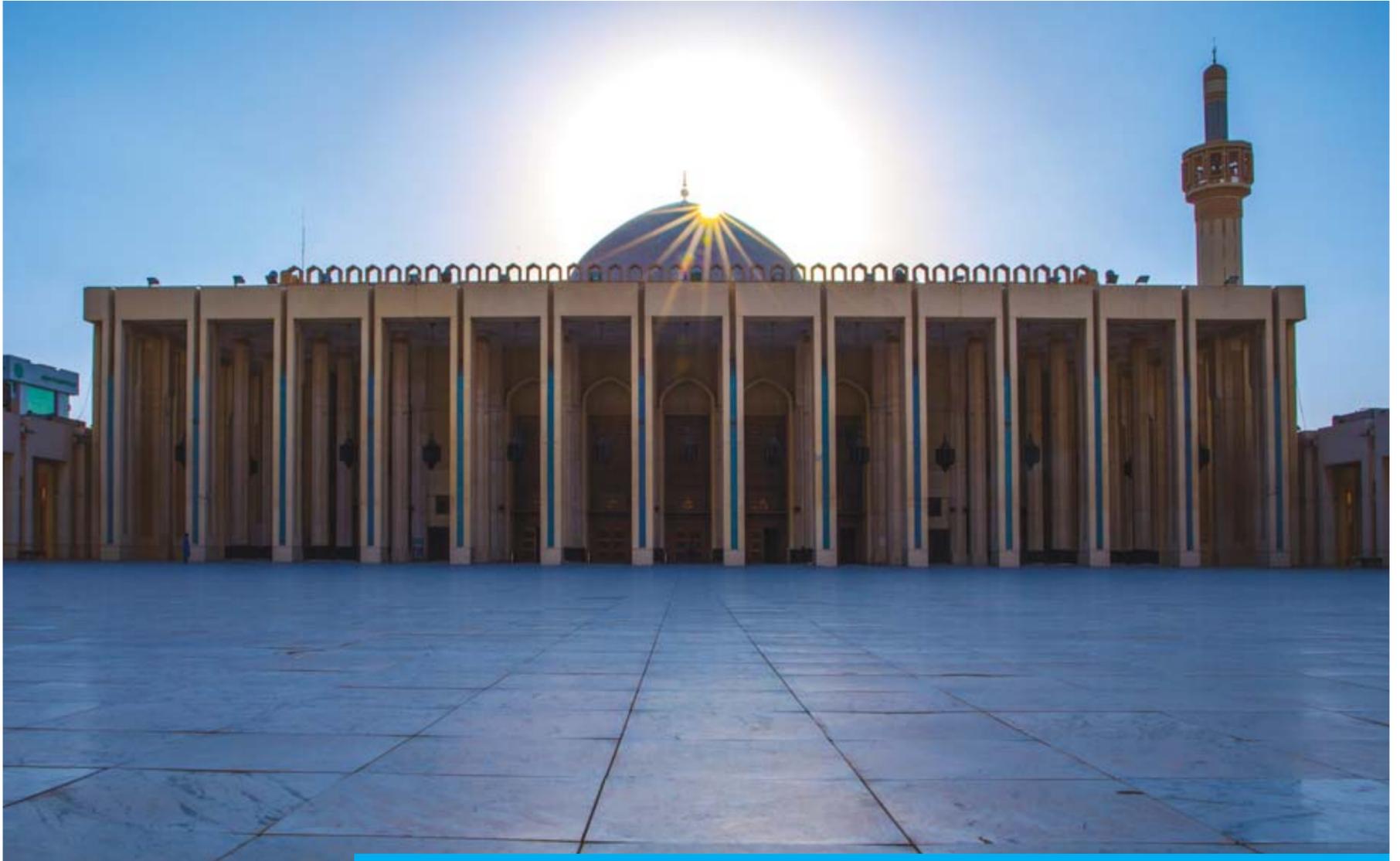
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Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: The courtyard of Kuwait's Grand Mosque. —KUNA

Lack of local tourism options drives spending on short vacations abroad

Report calls for immediate activation of local tourism

KUWAIT: Kuwaitis' spending on short vacations abroad leads to draining their resources and savings, especially for families with limited income, a tourism specialist said. However, the lack of local recreational options forces most families to look for alternatives abroad, said Nabila Al-Anjari, General Manager of Leaders Group for Consulting and Development, representative of the World Tourism Organization in Kuwait.

Anjari's statements came in Leaders Group's monthly report released recently, and which includes suggestions for a number of 'immediate steps' that can help rationalize spending on tourism abroad in a way that goes in line with recent years' plans to cut down expenses in the aftermath of international economic

crises and the fall of oil prices. The report said that the spending of both Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis on short vacations abroad has been increasing regardless of the drop in oil prices, which highlights the states' failure to cut down expenses through saving the endless amounts spent on those vacations.

Leaders Group offers steps to cut spending

Further, the report elaborated that citizens have spent huge amounts of money abroad during the first quarter of 2017. It also quoted Central Bank statistics showing that Kuwaitis' cash withdrawals abroad had increased by 4.9 percent in 2016 compared to 2015. In addition, World Bank's statistics showed that Kuwaitis have spent over \$12 billion on foreign tourism in 2014, which is the year

in which Kuwait and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states started cutting down expenditure after the drop in oil prices.

Notably, short vacations abroad, such as those during Eids, national holidays and weekends, have been consuming more funds compared to the long summer ones. Tourism experts assessed the total cash outflows from Kuwait during the 2013 Eid Al-Fitr holiday at KD 76.25 million.

Problem and solutions

Highlighting the amounts spent on foreign tourism is significant in many ways and is related to Kuwait's issuance of international bonds worth \$10 billion by the end of March to cover deficits of the previous

fiscal year, which had already reached KD 5 billion in January 2017, the report noted. It is also significant in preventing the parliament from passing a proposed bill on increasing fees of government-provided public services, adds the report.

Meanwhile, Leaders Group's research department has come up with many solutions, such as investing part of the sovereignty bonds issued by Kuwait, as well as a portion of the amounts allotted for investment in the 2018 budget in enhancing and activating local touristic and recreational sectors.

The report added that recreational sectors would attract various sects of Kuwaitis and expats, namely families, and would thus cut down the amounts they would spend on short vacations abroad. In addition, this could attract GCC families and expat families living in other GCC states to Kuwait. The report warned that although oil prices have revived by the end of 2017 and exceeded \$60 per barrel, international oil prices are always changing. And in order to avoid reliance on a single source of income, the government should encourage investments in other sectors including local tourism with the aim of immediate reduction of citizens' spending on short vacations abroad.



Nabila Al-Anjari

KRCS celebrates 52nd anniversary of humanitarian work

KUWAIT: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) celebrates its 52th anniversary today by seeking to be a pioneer in humanitarian field in Kuwait and the Arab World. KRCS Chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer said yesterday the society since its foundation in 1966 granted Kuwait an international pioneering position in humanitarian domain exceeding all expectations thanks to the great support by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Sayer added that the KRCS has been offering humanitarian relief for people in need all over the world. KRCS relief supplies in 2017 covered countries such as Libya, Palestine, Somalia, Yemen, Iraq, Syria, the Philippines and Sri Lanka as well as to the Rohingya minority, he said. On the local level, the society paid the school fees for 5,000 children in need, Sayer noted.

Separately, the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization's Secretary General Saleh Al-Suhaibani hailed Kuwait's humanitarian role on both regional and international levels. Suhaibani's remarks were made yesterday during the visit of KRCS Secretary General Maha Al-Barjas to the organization's headquarters in Riyadh,



Saleh Al-Suhaibani



Dr Hilal Al-Sayer

Saudi Arabia. Barjas' visit and meeting with President of Saudi Red Crescent Authority Mohammed Al-Qasim aims to boost communications between red crescent societies in humanitarian and rescue missions, he said.

Suhaibani added that the organization is exerting great efforts to create coordination between Arab red crescent and cross societies to provide immediate donations and aid to those in need in the Arab World. Arab humanitarian work has expanded to cover millions of people, with the continuous presence of donor countries, especially Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, he said. The organization, established in 1965, has the task of supporting development programs, boost media in the humanitarian field, coordinate rescue operations between Arab societies and organize training courses in the field. —KUNA

“ Society paid school fees for 5,000 children ”



RIYADH: Secretary General of Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Maha Al-Barjas meets with President of the Saudi Red Crescent Authority Mohammed Al-Qasim. — KUNA

Local

Maid's trafficking network busted, 15 runaways detained

Hundreds arrested in week-long crackdown

By Hanan Al-Saadoun and Agencies

KUWAIT: Residency detectives recently arrested a gang running a fake domestic helpers office that had been trading in absconding laborers and offering them work on daily basis in violation of the law. Detectives raided the office and found 15 laborers from various nationalities who confessed to running away from their sponsors. Detectives also discovered that some of them had expired residency visas while others were already wanted on other cases.

Crackdown

Various security directorates have launched inspection campaigns under the supervision of the Interior Ministry's Acting Assistant Undersecretary for General Security Affairs Maj Gen Ibrahim Al-Tarrah from December 31, 2017 to January 6, 2018.

The campaigns resulted in arresting 338 absconders and people wanted on various criminal and civil claims, 571 in violation of residency laws, 85 vehicles were impounded while, 88 drug and liquor-related cases, 91 theft and begging cases were filed.

E-passport centers

The Interior Ministry's Relations and Security Media Department said that work has resumed in various e-passport centers after resolving the temporary technical problem. The department added that the centers will work in the mornings and afternoons.

Suicide

A Bangladeshi man committed suicide at Naseem walking track, according to

investigations. Police found the body, which was recovered by forensics. Investigations are underway.



E-passport centers back to normal

Robbery

An Indian man was kidnapped and robbed by a person who impersonate a

police detective. The victim's friend told Fintas police that an impostor searched the victim, forced himself into his car and took his civil ID and mobile phone. The thief forced the victim out of the car in Qusoor before escaping. Separately, an Indian man told Abu Hulaifa police that he was robbed of KD 20 and an iPhone 6 Plus in Mangaf.

Suspects arrested

Detectives arrested two youth: a Kuwaiti and a bedoon, at a checkpoint for possession of sharp objects and drug paraphernalia. Both suspects were interrogated regarding their links with forced robberies, and victims may be called in for identification. One of the men was also found wanted on a debt.

Property damage

Ahmedi prosecutor accused a 23-year-old Kuwaiti of damaging state property, and several traffic citations were issued against him. The man who was in an abnormal condition collided with two patrol cars while driving, causing the damage.

Traffic violations

Ahmedi security director Brig Abdullah Saffah sent a citizen to the Drug Control General Department for the possession of 56 tablets suspected of being illicit. Also, his car was impounded after issuing 12 traffic citations including driving without a license, escaping from police, hitting a pavement, having illegally tinted windows, speeding, and not having a license plate on the back of his vehicle.

National Guard follows modern military tactics in training: Official



KUWAIT: Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Undersecretary Lt Gen Hashem Al-Rifae said KNG is following modern military strategies in training courses to boost fighting skills of its members. KNG aims to execute the terms of its Strategic Document 2020, themed 'Security First' to develop the military and security sector, KNG said in a statement after the conclusion of the 32nd foundational training course

for officers, held at His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Al Sabah military camp, attended by Rifae. Rifae hailed the fighting skills of the participating officers who performed a military exercise upon the conclusion of the course. The exercise, attended by senior military officials, included tactics for fighting terrorism, regaining control of buildings and passing information thoroughly. — KUNA

17% passenger increase at Kuwait Airport

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) announced yesterday an increase of 17 percent in number of passengers using Kuwait International Airport in 2017 as 13.7 million against 11.7 million in 2016. The number of passengers arriving at the airport reached 6.8 million in 2017 compared to 5.9 million in 2016, said Emad Faleh Al-

Juluwi, Deputy Director General for Aviation Safety and Air Transport Affairs.

The number of departing passengers reached 6.8 million in 2017 compared to 5.8 million in 2016, Juluwi said. He noted flights to and from Kuwait Airport in 2017 reached around 111,600 last year compared to around 104,100 in 2016. Commercial flights reached 106,300 in 2017 in contrast to 98,000 in 2016. Cargo-wise, total weight of air cargo transported through the airport in 2017 was 241.6 million kilograms, compared to 195.5 million kilograms in 2016. He added inbound freight traffic reached 185.3 million kilograms in 2017 compared to 161.4 million kilograms the previous year. Outbound freight traffic reached 56.3 million kilograms in 2017 compared to 34 million kilograms in 2016. — KUNA

Chief of Staff, US military official discuss bilateral ties

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Chief of Staff Lt Gen Mohammad Al-Khudher discussed yesterday with the US Chief of the Office of Military Cooperation Brigadier General David P San Clemente and his accompanying delegation issues of reciprocal interests. The department of Moral Guidance and Public Relations in the Defense Ministry said in a statement that the two men discussed issues of reciprocal concern chiefly in the military domain and ways of developing them. The meeting was attended by a number of Defense Ministry senior officials. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Kuwait's Chief of Staff Lt Gen Mohammad Al-Khudher meets with the US Chief of the Office of Military Cooperation Brigadier General David P San Clemente. — KUNA



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Singapore uncovers large-scale oil heist

Legacy of Wilson's racism clouds UN rights office

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AT SEA: Chinese firefighting vessel 'DONGHAIJIU 117' sprays water on the burning oil tanker Sanchi at sea off the coast of eastern China. — AFP

East China Sea oil tanker burns for 3rd day

Search continues for 31 missing tanker crew

BEIJING: Strong winds, high waves and toxic gases are hindering dozens of rescue boats struggling to locate missing sailors from a stricken oil tanker in the East China Sea and to extinguish a fire that has burned for the past three days on the ship. The poor conditions, with rain and waves as high as 3 meters, frustrated efforts to tame the fire and search for the 31 remaining tanker crew members, China's Ministry of Transport said in a statement yesterday. The flames were forcing the South Korean Coast Guard's search and rescue team to stay as far as 3 miles away from the tanker, two South Korean officials told Reuters.

The Chinese government said yesterday it had not found a "large-scale" oil leak, and the ultra light oil, known as condensate, was burning off or evaporating so quickly it would leave little residue - less than 1 percent - within five hours of a spill. That reduces the chances of a crude-style oil slick. Still, condensate is highly volatile when exposed to air and water and concerns were growing the tanker could explode and sink while a flotilla of 13 search and rescue vessels comb a 900-square-nautical-mile (3,100 sq km) area for the crew.

The tanker Sanchi (IMO:9356608), run by Iran's top oil shipping operator, National Iranian Tanker Co, collided on Saturday with the CF Crystal (IMO:9497050), car-

rying grain from the United States, about 160 nautical miles (300 km) off China's coast near Shanghai and the mouth of the Yangtze River Delta. The Sanchi was carrying 136,000 tons of condensate to South Korea, equivalent to about 1 million barrels and worth about \$60 million. Chinese state media

CCTV showed footage on Monday of boats dousing the flames with water as plumes of thick dark smoke continued to billow from the tanker.

The size of the oil spill from the ship and the extent of the environmental harm were not known, but the disaster has the potential to be the worst since 1991 when 260,000 tons of oil leaked off the Angolan coast. "We can't grasp the level of oil contamination at this moment. The cargo is still on fire, so it is hard to figure out if oil is being spilled," Park Sung-dong, an official from South Korea's Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries said. The body of a crew member was found on

Monday in the water near the tanker, China's transport ministry said. It had been handed over to the civil affairs bureau. The crew of the Sanchi are all Iranian nationals except for two Bangladeshi citizens.



Bad weather and flames keep rescuers away from tanker

paigner at Greenpeace East Asia. Satellite imagery of the ship showed the blaze has weakened since the weekend, although the strong winds are dragging the tanker away from the Chinese coast, according to Greenpeace. Between Sunday and Monday, the floating inferno travelled some 50 kilometers (31 miles) south east, according to Rashid Kang, campaigner at Greenpeace East Asia. Another major concern is damage to the region's rich fish reserves. The Zhoushan fishing ground where the crash occurred is known as one of the biggest in the East China Sea, particularly for mackerel and croaker, according to Greenpeace.

Tanker on the move

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Fishermen to the rescue

The CF Crystal suffered limited damage and the 21 crew members, all Chinese nationals, were rescued by a passing fishing trawler on Saturday night, according to a report posted by state-owned Xinhua News to its Twitter account yesterday. "The fire was so fierce. It kept exploding like bombs. So loud," said Zhu Tingwen, a sailor on the fishing boat. The trawler from Zhejiang province scoured for survivors on the tanker, but could not get close enough because of the fire, Xinhua said. "Anyone will go for a rescue in this case," said the fishing boat captain Zheng Lei. "It just happened to be me."

The freighter has been taken to a port near Shanghai where investigators will start work on assessing the cause of the disaster, the government said. China's transport ministry warned toxic gas from the tanker was harmful to the rescue workers and that protective clothing and gas testing equipment was being dispatched to the emergency teams. Trying to contain a spill of condensate, which is extremely low in density, highly toxic and much more explosive than normal crude oil, may be difficult. "We're not going to see a slick like with crude, but it's soluble, toxic and flammable, which is why we're seeing the fire. A lot of it is burning off or evaporating," said Greenpeace's Kang. — Reuters

Mothers urge Indian court to 'free' daughters

CHENNAI: Two mothers have approached a court in south India seeking help to "free" their daughters from a spinning mill where they work, raising questions on the freedom of movement of thousands of women employed in the Indian textile and garment industry. Ellamal Raman, 17, and her cousin Bhuvaneshwari, 18, have not been allowed to leave the KPR Mill Limited's Karumathampatti premises in Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu state since September, according to their mothers.

In their petition to the court - heard yesterday - the mothers said that the teenagers have developed severe rashes on their hands, have been bitten by bed bugs and require treatment. "My daughter has called home many times since, begging me to bring her back home," Raman's mother Chinnaponnu told the Thomson Reuters Foundation by phone. "Last night she was crying and saying she can't do the work. She has rashes on her hands and the mill won't let them out."

KPR Mills Limited - one of the largest manufacturers of yarn in the region, producing approximately 90,000 metric tons of cotton annually - said the women were being fairly treated. Thangavelu Karrupasamy, a manager at the mills, said the girls were being paid minimum wages of 332 rupees (\$5) per day and their medical needs were being taken care of. "Since they joined only in September, they are entitled leave to go home only later this month, during Pongal (harvest festival)," he said. "The police have come and checked on the girls and we have asked the parents to come to the mill." There are more than 1,500 mills in Tamil Nadu, the biggest hub for textile and manufacturers in India, employing up to 400,000 workers to turn cotton into yarn, fabric and clothes.

A majority of the young workers are drawn from poor families and are housed in hostels within the factory or mill premises. The workers, mostly women, are confined to their hostels after their shifts and are only allowed a weekly visit to the neighborhood market with escorts, campaigners say. "Like most mills, this one also has high fenced walls and a lot of security," said Raj Kumar, the lawyer representing the two mothers. "It is impossible for anyone to enter or leave the mill premises without the permission of the management." — Reuters

Netanyahu's son under fire after 'strip club' tape

JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's son has been caught on tape seemingly drunk outside a strip club talking about a key natural gas deal, leading to political fallout yesterday. The audio recording of Yair Netanyahu, who has been the subject of controversy in the past, led to further criticism of his father's handling of Israel's natural gas industry at a time when he already faces two unrelated graft investigations.

Netanyahu's family denounced the broadcast of the recording by Israel's Channel 2 television late Monday as part of a witch-hunt, while Yair Netanyahu said he was obviously joking in the audio said to be from 2015. Yair Netanyahu, now 26, can be heard speaking with the son of Kobi Maimon, a stakeholder in a company that owns a share in Israel's offshore Tamar gas field. Their conversation includes talk of strippers and prostitutes. "My dad arranged \$20 billion for your dad-you can give me 400 shekels (\$116/97 euros)," he says. Yair Netanyahu issued a statement apologizing and saying he was only joking about the gas deal while "under the influence of alcohol".

"These statements do not represent who I am nor the values on which I was raised," he said. "Regarding what I said about the gas deal, it was a joke. Anyone with a bit of common sense understands that right way."



JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (left) and his son Yair visit the Walling Wall in Jerusalem. The Israeli premier's son has been caught on tape seemingly drunk outside a strip club talking about a key natural gas deal, leading to political fallout yesterday. — AFP

Netanyahu faced a difficult political battle over Israel's natural gas arrangements, with opponents saying they overly favour the companies involved. Labor party leader Avi Gabbay said the recording was a "new stain on the corrupt gas deal". There was also criticism over Yair Netanyahu's security arrangements, with at least two lawmakers calling for an investigation. A security guard employed by the state purportedly accompanied Yair Netanyahu to the strip club.

'Everything is fair game'
 Netanyahu's office said it "is not consulted

on protection arrangements for his children decided upon by the security services". The Netanyahu family in a statement said the broadcast of the recording was part of a "witch-hunt against the family that has reached an unprecedented low". "Apparently, everything is fair game to attack the Netanyahu government and family, including using a secret and illegal recording of young men drinking alcohol," it said. The statement also said Netanyahu had no relationship with Maimon and was not aware of Yair Netanyahu's friendship with his son. It said the premier had met Maimon "once 10 years ago". — AFP

International

In rare inter-Korean talks, North Korea pledges an 'invaluable' gift

First official talks between the two Koreas in 2 years

SEOUL: The last North Korean to cross this heavily militarized border was shot by his own comrades, and barely escaped with his life. But when a hefty man proudly sporting lapel pins with the beaming faces of late North Korean leaders Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il led a delegation of about 20 North Korean officials over the tense border dividing the two Koreas yesterday, they did so to praise from both countries.

The visit - part of the first official talks between the two Koreas in two years - was in stark contrast to the past year of spiraling tensions, punctuated by the dramatic defection of a North Korean soldier in November. It was just meters away from where the diplomatic delegations sipped cups of red ginseng tea yesterday.

Arriving in only Western-style business suits despite sub-zero weather and snow piled on the ground, the head of the North Korean delegation referenced the increased tensions over Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program.

"This winter has seen more snowstorms than ever, and rivers and mountains across the country are frozen," said Ri Son Gwon, chairman of the North's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland. "It would not be an exaggeration to say that inter-Korean ties were even more frozen, but public yearning for improved relations was so strong that today's precious event was brought about," he quipped. "We came to this meeting with the thought of giving our brethren, who have high hopes for this dialogue, invaluable results as the first present of the year," he continued in opening remarks, as his officials opened brown paper folders.

Despite skepticism from allies in the United States and Japan, officials in South Korea hope the talks lead to more than just friendly photo ops, including substantive improvements in relations between Seoul and Pyongyang. Just before Seoul's delegation drove into the demilitarized zone, some 20 South Koreans were seen holding up a banner that read: "We wish the success of the high-ranking inter-Korean talks". One man was spotted waving a flag with a unified Korean peninsula.

Lunching separately

The rare meeting came after a year of ramped up North Korean missile launches, its sixth and most powerful nuclear test and an exchange of threats and insults between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump, which raised fears of a fresh conflict on the Korean peninsula. "There is so much focus on our high-ranking talks today, and considering the high hopes, we were thinking about opening up these talks to the general public," Ri suggested. "I see many reporters here, how would you feel if we just opened this up?"

Unification Minister Cho Myoung-gyun said it would be better to stick to practice and brief reporters as often as possible. Cameras and microphones installed in the meeting rooms usually enable government officials to monitor the meetings in real time. South Korean President Moon Jae-in is being kept up to date on all developments as they occur, according to a Blue House spokesman, but he declined to confirm if Moon is monitoring the talks in real-time. "It's impossible for Moon to be glued to a screen all day anyway. He's got his own schedule."



PANMUNJOM: South Korea's Unification Minister Cho Myung-Gyun (left) shakes hands with North Korean chief delegate Ri Son-Gwon during their last meeting at the border truce village of Panmunjom in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) yesterday. —AFP

The officials from the two Koreas sat before bottles of 'Pyeongchang Water' and red ginseng tea, provided by a subsidiary of Lotte Group, a massive South Korean conglomerate that suffered major setbacks in China after it handed over land for a controversial anti-missile system in South Korea. After two meetings in the morning, Ri and his team returned over the border to lunch at Tongilgak, the North's building in the truce village of Panmunjom. The two Koreas usually do not eat together during inter-Korean talks as these breaks are used as opportunities for officials to go over what was discussed and also consult with other government authorities in Seoul and Pyongyang, respectively. — Reuters



N Koreans in Western-style suits cross the tense border

Panmunjom, where Korean soldiers and negotiators meet



PANMUNJOM: South Korean soldiers stand guard at the border truce village of Panmunjom in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) yesterday. —AFP

SEOUL: Among a row of sky-blue huts straddling the border between North and South Korea, soldiers from both sides face off against each other on the world's last Cold War frontier. Panmunjom in the Demilitarized Zone, where officials from North and South Korea met yesterday, is a traditional point of contact on the border but also a physical representation of the 1950-53 Korean War's enduring effects. Millions of Koreans died in the conflict, with the armistice signed at Panmunjom leaving the peninsula divided and the two Koreas technically still at war in the absence of a formal peace treaty.

Despite its name, the DMZ separating the two Koreas is one of the world's most heavily fortified frontiers, brimming with minefields and watchtowers. Panmunjom is the only place in the DMZ where the two sides come face to face, with the border marked only by a low concrete divider. It has witnessed a number of dramatic incidents. Most recently, a North Korean soldier dashed across the border in an extremely rare and dramatic defection in November, when his comrades fired at least 40 rounds in an effort to kill him.

There have been previous defections at Panmunjom, most notably in 1984 when a Russian student from Moscow sprinted across the border and triggered a 30-minute gun battle that left four people dead-although he was unhurt. Another gun battle was

recorded in 1967 when a senior journalist from the North's state-run Korean Central News Agency defected while covering military talks. And there were fears of a full-scale conflict in 1976, after a group of North Korean troops axed to death two American soldiers who were trimming a nearby tree.

Direct line

US presidents visiting South Korea have often gone to DMZ as a symbolic demonstration of Washington's commitment to defend Seoul. But bad weather forced Donald Trump to call off a surprise trip there in November-after his office earlier labeled such visits a "cliche". North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un made a rare trip to Panmunjom in 2012, with state media carrying pictures of him looking across the border at the South through a pair of binoculars amid heightened tensions. Over the

years, the site has turned into a major attraction for visiting foreigners. Tourists to the southern side are given ample warning against actions that could antagonize the North Korean soldiers before they cautiously begin capturing snapshots of the division.

"It's very upsetting that a country is so divided," said Julia Ahn, a 24-year-old student from New York, on a trip to Panmunjom. "It's good information but very hard to swallow." Yesterday's discussions, the first between the Koreans in more than two years, were being held at the Peace House, on the southern side of the neutral area-the North also has a talks venue on its side, Tongilgak. North and South are so deeply divided that there are no direct telephone communications between them for ordinary citizens-but both buildings are connected to Seoul and Pyongyang so the discussions can be closely monitored by officials in the two capitals.—AFP

soldiers attacked a work party trying to chop down a tree inside the Demilitarized Zone, leaving two US army officers dead. Pyongyang launched perhaps its most audacious assassination attempt in Myanmar in 1983, when a bomb exploded in a Yangon mausoleum during a visit by South Korean President Chun Doo-hwan. He survived but 21 people, including some government ministers, were killed. In 1987 a bomb on a Korean Air flight exploded over the Andaman Sea, killing all 115 people on board. Seoul accused Pyongyang, which denied involvement.

Direct confrontation

The North's founding leader Kim Il-Sung died in 1994, but under his son Kim Jong-Il it continued to prod its southern neighbor. In 1996 a North Korean submarine on a spying mission ran aground off the eastern South Korean port of Gangneung, sparking 45-day manhunt that ended with 24 crew members and infiltrators killed. A clash between South Korean and North Korean naval ships in 1999 left some 50 of the North's soldiers dead. In March 2010 Seoul accused Pyongyang of torpedoing one of its corvette warships, killing 46 sailors. Pyongyang denied the charge. November that year saw North Korea launch its first attack on a civilian-populated area since the war, firing 170 artillery shells at Yeonpyeong. Four people were killed, including two civilians.

Going nuclear

North Korea has steadfastly pursued its banned nuclear and ballistic missile programs since its first successful test of an atomic bomb in 2006, as it looks to build a rocket capable of delivering a warhead to the US mainland. Its progress has accelerated under leader Kim Jong-Un, culminating in its sixth and biggest nuclear test in September 2017. Kim has since declared the country a nuclear power.—AFP

India cities look to bike sharing

MUMBAI: A handful of Indian cities are gearing up to launch bike-sharing systems to ease traffic congestion and deadly air pollution, as urban populations surge and vehicles clog the

streets. Bike sharing systems in the southern city of Mysuru and the central city of Bhopal, both launched last June, have met with a tremendous response, officials say.

About half a dozen more cities, including Bengaluru, Pune and Bhubaneswar, are now drawing up similar plans, according to the World Resources Institute (WRI), a Washington DC-based research

organization. "Bike sharing is a viable option for Indian cities - we just need good quality bikes, dedicated lanes and a system that is efficient," said Chandramauli Shukla, chief executive of Bhopal Smart City Corporation.

The corporation implements the federally-funded Smart Cities program to improve services like internet connectivity and public transport in 100 cities across India.—Reuters

Seven decades of tensions between the two Koreas

SEOUL: North and South Korea held their first talks for two years yesterday, stirring hopes of a tentative rapprochement between the bitterly divided neighbors. Tensions soared last year as the North made rapid progress on its banned nuclear weapons programs, while US President Donald Trump engaged in an increasingly bellicose verbal scrap with Pyongyang's leader Kim Jong-Un. Here are some key moments in the decades-long standoff between the two Koreas:

War but no peace

In June 1950 fighting broke out between the communist North and capitalist South, sparking a brutal war that killed between two and four million people. Beijing backed Pyongyang in the three-year conflict, while Washington threw its support behind the South-alliances that have largely endured. The Koreans have been locked in a dangerous dance ever since that conflict ended in 1953 with an armistice rather than a formal peace treaty, leaving them technically at war.

Sending in the assassins

Pyongyang has tested the fragile ceasefire with numerous attacks. The secretive nation sent a team of 31 commandos to Seoul in a botched attempt to assassinate then-President Park Chung-Hee in 1968. All but two were killed. In the "axe murder incident" of 1976, North Korean

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International

Legacy of President Wilson's racism clouds rights office

How do you condemn racism in a building named after racist?

GENEVA: How do you condemn racism on behalf of the global community while sitting in a building named after a racist? Some would argue it's a challenge the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) needs to face up to. The UN rights office is housed in a 225-room mansion built in the mid-1870s on the shores of Lake Geneva which, since 1924, has been named the Palais Wilson, honoring the former United States president, Woodrow Wilson.

A century after Wilson negotiated a peace deal to end World War One and set up the League of Nations—which was based in Geneva and helped establish the Swiss city as a diplomatic centre—his record on human rights, and particularly race, has met fresh scrutiny. That revision had been concentrated at Princeton University—where Wilson was also president—but it has not yet extended to Geneva, a place sometimes referred to as the capital of human rights. While Wilson's legacy and Geneva's identity as the home of major international bodies are inextricably linked, some have suggested that it may be worth rethinking his connection to the UN's rights office, given his woeful actions regarding black Americans. "Wilson was a racist. I think there is no doubt about that", acclaimed Oxford University historian Margaret MacMillan told AFP. "The fact that (the Palais Wilson) houses the rights office... that I do think is unfortunate. That is one of those accidents of history."



A challenge to UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

came to equality for blacks, adopting policies that intensified segregation in the federal government while staffing his cabinet with white supremacists.

"We cannot simply excuse Wilson's racist politicking as a feature of him being 'a man of his time'," Johns Hopkins University historian NDB Connolly wrote in a letter to the committee. Paula J Giddings, a historian at Smith College, said that due to Wilson's actions, racial separation was "inscribed onto the very centre of the nation". The panel ultimately decided to leave Wilson's name on its institutions but called for "transparency in recognizing Wilson's failings and shortcomings".

'A man with many parts'

Wilson is widely commemorated, notably on the Avenue President Wilson in central Paris. And next to the Palais Wilson in Geneva is the deluxe President Wilson Hotel. But his connection to the UN rights office poses specific complications, as much of OHCHR's mandate involves defending the rights of racial and ethnic minorities.

MacMillan said that some recognition of Wilson's achievements in forging the multilateral system was important in Geneva, but suggested a body like the UN's Conference on Disarmament, where the Wilson legacy remains positive, would be more appropriate. In an interview with AFP last month, UN rights chief Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein said he has "always favored a deeper understanding of historical narratives" and would welcome a broader discussion about Wilson's link to the rights office headquarters.

"Clearly president Wilson is a man with many parts," Zeid said. "Were it not for him, it is unlikely there would have been a League of Nations and the UN to follow," he added. "And



GENEVA: The headquarters of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) named Palais Wilson, honoring the former United States president Woodrow Wilson are seen in Geneva. —AFP

the attitudes on racism were reprehensible, certainly seen in today's light, but maybe not just limited to today. At the time as well." He added that input from Wilson experts could "provide the right approach as to how and whether there should be any recognition or not." Zeid also stressed that the Palais Wilson was named by Swiss authorities and the building still belongs to the canton of Geneva, so an offi-

cial name change, however unlikely, would not be the UN's decision.

But the rights office could advocate for a compromise similar to that pursued at Princeton, where historic buildings or institutions retain their names alongside a public acknowledgement—such as a plaque—outlining Wilson's undeniable prejudices. —AFP

News in brief

Airline fires pilots

MUMBAI: An Indian airline said yesterday it had fired two pilots after reports they fought and both briefly left the cockpit unattended during a New Year's Day flight from London to Mumbai. Jet Airways took the step after investigating allegations that a male pilot slapped his female colleague during a heated argument when the plane was mid-air carrying 324 passengers. The quarrel reportedly led the female pilot to leave the cockpit in tears and she had to be persuaded to go back in by cabin crew. At one point the male pilot also left the cockpit, leaving the controls briefly unattended, according to local media reports. "Consequent to the review of the events... Jet Airways has terminated services of both the cockpit crew with immediate effect," Jet said in a statement. The two pilots were grounded last week over the altercation, which Jet had described as a "misunderstanding" that was "quickly resolved amicably".

Snow traps tourists

GENEVA: Heavy snowfall has trapped some 13,000 tourists at Zermatt, one of Switzerland's most popular ski stations, the Alpine resort said yesterday. The snow has blocked all roads and the train leading to the resort in the southern Swiss canton of Valais, which was also hit by some power outages, head of the station Janine Imesch said. There are currently "around 13,000 tourists at Zermatt," she said, while the station website warned that "arrivals and departures are not possible at the moment." The main access road has been closed since early Monday, while the train was halted Monday evening, she said. Zermatt is home to some 5,500 inhabitants and has the capacity to accommodate 13,400 tourists spread across hotels and rental apartments. But the stranded tourists will not be able to take advantage of the abundant snow for the time being, due to the high risk of avalanches in the area.

Christ statue procession

MANILA: Hundreds of thousands of devotees in the Philippines, many of them barefooted, joined a chaotic procession yesterday that featured a black statue of Jesus Christ, one of the biggest annual festivals in the predominantly Roman Catholic nation. The faithful gathered in downtown Manila to follow a carriage bearing the statue called the Black Nazarene, believed to have healing powers, in a parade that began at dawn and may last until evening or even longer. Some of them jostled and climbed onto the carriage as it was pushed and pulled by dozens of men holding ropes, while the crowd waved towels and handkerchiefs in a sign of praise to the kneeling life-sized image that carried a cross on one shoulder. Processions and other religious rites were also held elsewhere in the country of 105 million people to celebrate the feast. Citing police estimates, media said this year's festivities may draw 17 million devotees nationwide, some seeking healing for illnesses and forgiveness for sins and others offering thanks for blessings.

US apologizes to Japan

TOKYO: The US has apologized to Japan over a recent series of accidents involving US military equipment that have sparked anger over American operations in the country, a ministry spokesman in Tokyo said. US Secretary of Defense James Mattis apologized to Japanese counterpart Itsunori Onodera after a string of accidents including the emergency landing of an American military helicopter in Okinawa on Monday. That came just two days after a similar incident on the southern Japanese island, where more than half the 47,000 American troops in Japan are stationed. "The minister said there was an apology from Secretary Mattis," a Japanese defense ministry spokesman said.

US government sets deadline for 200,000 Salvadorans to leave

WASHINGTON: The US government has announced the end of a special protected status for about 200,000 Salvadoran immigrants, a move that threatens with deportation tens of thousands of well-established families with children born in the United States. Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen announced the end of the "temporary protected status" (TPS) granted to Salvadorans already in the United States in 2001, when two major earthquakes rocked the Central American country. They were given 18 months to leave or be deported, which officials said is enough time for a legislative solution to be crafted by Congress to allow them to stay.

"Only Congress can legislate a permanent solution addressing the lack of an enduring lawful immigration status of those currently protected by TPS," said the Department of Homeland Security. Part of a broader crackdown on illegal immigration by President Donald Trump, the move comes after 59,000 longtime resident Haitians and 5,300 Nicaraguans were stripped of similar protections late last year, after having been allowed to set deep roots inside the United States for decades.

Democrats in Congress are also fighting to protect the right to stay inside the US of 690,000 young immigrants known as "Dreamers," people who arrived in the country as children. Trump has said he will back a compromise on the Dreamers if Congress budgets \$18 billion to build an anti-immigrant wall along the border with Mexico. Canada said it wanted to "make sure we're ready" for an influx of Salvadorans, in an effort to prevent the kind of massive flooding of the border that took place after the US ended protections for Haitians.

'My life is here'

Many, if not most, of those shielded by TPS had originally entered the country illegally or overstayed visas, but the program had effectively allowed them to settle down



WASHINGTON: Immigrants and activists protest near the White House to demand that the Department of Homeland Security extend Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for more than 195,000 Salvadorans. —AFP

without the constant fear of deportation. Previous governments rolled over the protected status with little debate, but Trump has pursued a tougher "law and order" approach to the issue. For TPS beneficiaries, the decision was a thunderbolt. "My life is here," said Minda Hernandez, a 48-year-old housekeeper from Long Island who fled conflict in El Salvador 20 years ago—leaving a one-year-old child behind. "This is where my home is, where I pay my taxes. I am happy here—even if I work myself to death."

Now she fears most for her 16-year-old son, who was born in the United States. "There are so many gangs and crime back there," she said. "But how could I leave him here alone?" In San Salvador, President Salvador Sanchez Ceren avoided criticizing Washington and focused on the 18-month grace period. Ceren's

administration "considers this decision to be a recognition of the contribution of our compatriots who hold this migratory benefit, who are an important workforce in that country," the presidency said. Ceren's government has grown closer to the United States, and was one of only eight countries at the United Nations to support the US move to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital in December.

Without a change in the law, some 195,000 Salvadorans will be forced to leave the country by September 9, 2019, in what amounts to one of the Trump administration's most substantial moves yet to enforce its crackdown on illegal immigration. This impacts large communities of deeply-rooted people in California, Texas and around the US capital—more than 135,000 households—according to the Center for Migration Studies. —AFP

UK PM's cabinet reshuffle thrown into disarray

LONDON: British Prime Minister Theresa May's long-awaited government reshuffle was thrown into disarray yesterday after a minister resigned rather than accept a new post. Education Secretary Justine Greening becomes the fourth minister to leave the cabinet since November, after resisting a request to move to the welfare and pensions ministry. Most of May's senior ministers kept their jobs in Monday's reshuffle, including Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, Brexit minister David Davis and finance minister Philip Hammond. The prime minister was prompted to carry out what her office called a "refresh" of the government after sacking her deputy Damian Green last month in a row over pornography found on his computer in 2008.

His departure followed those of the defense and aid ministers in unrelated scandals the month before, capping a tough year for May after she lost her parliamentary majority in a snap election in June. An interim deal on Brexit in December however gave May new impetus, and a long-anticipated reshuffle was arranged. But it began in a farcical fashion when her Conservative party announced a new chairman on Twitter, only to delete the

tweet and later name another lawmaker for the post. "No wonder Theresa May's struggling to negotiate Brexit—she can't even organize a reshuffle," tweeted opposition Labor MP Stephen Kinnock.

Alistair Carmichael, an MP with the pro-European Liberal Democrats, said: "Theresa May wanted to reassert her authority but has come out of this looking weaker than ever." Greening's resignation later Monday is likely to be viewed as a challenge to May's authority, while media reports suggest the health secretary, Jeremy Hunt, also refused a request to move—and so stays on. For her part Greening said in a tweet that educational issues like social mobility matter "more than my ministerial career", and vowed to continue to work for young people as a member of parliament.

Brexit balance

May's room for maneuver is limited by the fragility of her minority government and the need to maintain the delicate Cabinet balance of eurosceptic and pro-European ministers as major Brexit decisions loom. After starting the two-year withdrawal process in March last year, Britain struck a deal in December on the financial settlement with Brussels, as well as on expatriate rights and the Irish border. Negotiations on a transition deal begin this month, while the toughest talks, on Britain's future relationship with the European Union including trade, are set to start in March. Johnson, a leading Brexit supporter, kept his job at the foreign office, despite



LONDON: British Education Secretary and Minister for Women and Equalities Justine Greening arriving to attend a pre-budget cabinet meeting at 10 Downing Street. —AFP

challenging May's strategy last year, as did fellow eurosceptic Liam Fox, the international trade minister.

Finance minister Hammond and interior minister Amber Rudd, who campaigned to stay in the EU, continue as before. Greening was offered the welfare ministry "but declined to take it. The prime minister is disappointed but respects her decision to leave the government", the Downing Street source said. The former Conservative party chairman, Patrick

McLoughlin, had been tipped for the sack after the disastrous snap election in which May lost her majority in the House of Commons.

He also drew fire after a protester interrupted May's speech to the party conference in October—an address that was also marred by a coughing fit and a collapsing set. It was one of several low points in a turbulent year for the prime minister, who took office in July 2016 after the referendum on leaving the EU. —AFP

International

Singapore uncovers large oil heist at Shell biggest refinery

17 arrested in connection with oil theft; 11 charged

SINGAPORE: Eleven men were charged in a Singapore court yesterday in connection with a large-scale oil theft at Shell's biggest refinery, while police said they were investigating six other men arrested in a weekend raid. Police in the island-state said yesterday they had detained 17 men, whose ages ranged from 30 to 63, and seized millions of dollars in cash and a small tanker during their investigations into theft at the Pulau Bukom industrial site, which sits just south of Singapore's main island.

Oil refining and shipping have contributed significantly to Singapore's rising wealth during the past decades. But the case underlines the challenges the industry faces in a region that has become a hotspot for illegal oil trading. The investigation began after Shell contacted the authorities in August 2017, police said in a news release. After "extensive investigations and probes," the Criminal Investigation Department, Police Intelligence Department and Police Coast Guard launched a series of simultaneous raids across Singapore, which led to the arrests.

Nine Singaporeans were immediately charged in the theft, of which eight were employees of the Singapore subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell Plc, court documents showed. Two Vietnamese nationals were charged with receiving stolen goods on a small tanker named Prime South (IMO: 9452804), the documents showed. Shell confirmed yesterday that eight of the 11 men charged were current or former employees at Shell Eastern Petroleum (Pte) Ltd. Shipping data from Thomson Reuters Eikon showed the Prime South had been shipping fuel between Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, and Singapore for the past 30 days.

Grand scheme?
Yesterday's cases could be just the first insight into a grander scheme. The charges seen so far allege three incidents of gasoil theft: on Nov. 21, 2017, of more than 2,322 tons valued at \$51.277 million (\$958,564.78); and on Jan. 5 and 7 this year of a combined 2,062 tons of gasoil, valued at \$51.126 million. The Vietnamese nationals were charged with receiving gasoil in the early evening hours of Jan. 7, at wharf 5 at the heart of Shell's operations on Bukom island, the documents show.

Meanwhile, police say the other six men arrested remain under investigation. During raids on Sunday, police said they seized \$3.05 million in cash and the 12,000-deadweight-tonne tanker. They have also frozen suspects' bank accounts. Shell said yesterday it anticipated "a short delay" in its supply operations at Bukom, its largest wholly owned refinery in the world in terms of crude distillation capacity. It declined to say the total amount of oil stolen. It is the second high-profile case of wrongdoing at companies in Singapore to hit headlines in recent weeks, after Keppel Corporation Ltd's rig-building business agreed in December to pay more than \$422 million to resolve charges it bribed Brazilian officials.

Southeast Asia is seen as a hotspot of illegal oil trading



Oil trading hub
Singapore is one of the world's most important oil trading hubs, with much of the Middle East's crude oil passing through Singapore before being delivered to the huge consumers in China, Japan and South Korea. Singapore is also Southeast Asia's main refinery hub and the world's biggest marine refueling stop. Shell is one of the biggest and longest established



SINGAPORE: A general view shows the Shell petroleum refinery on Bukom Island in Singapore. Singaporean authorities have arrested 17 men for allegedly stealing fuel from a major Shell refinery, and have also seized an oil tanker and millions of dollars in cash. —AFP

foreign investors in Singapore. Its oil refinery on Bukom island can process 500,000 barrels per day. Illicit oil trading is widespread in Southeast Asia. In some cases, oil has been illegally siphoned from storage tanks, but there have also been thefts at sea, including whole ships being seized for the oil cargo.

The Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) says that siphoning of fuel and oil at sea in Asia, including

through armed robbery and piracy, saw sharp increases between 2011 and 2015. There has been a modest decline since then, although the organization said in a quarterly report that oil theft was still "of concern," especially in the South China Sea, off the east coast of Malaysia. The stolen fuel is generally sold across Southeast Asia, offloaded directly into trucks or tanks at small harbors away from oil terminals.—Reuters

Arson burns down kosher grocery on attack anniversary

PARIS: A suspected arson attack on a French kosher grocery store revived fears over anti-Semitism yesterday, three years to the day since an assault on a Jewish supermarket by an Islamist gunman. Prosecutors said the store in the southern Paris suburb of Creteil caught fire in the early hours, days after it was vandalized with anti-Semitic graffiti. "The damage is believed to be very severe," Creteil prosecutor Laure Beccuau said.

A source close to the police probe said it was "too soon to discuss motives" though Beccuau said investigators do not believe the fire was an accident. The store was completely gutted in the fire, with the shelves along the aisles—where the fire is believed to have been started—blackened and charred, an AFP reporter said. The Promo & Destock store, whose owner is Muslim, was one of two neighboring kosher shops in Creteil that were daubed with swastikas last Wednesday.

The second store was also slightly damaged in the fire. Israel's ambassador to France Aliza Bin Noun called the fire a "shameful provocation" on the third anniversary of the January 9, 2015 attack at the Hyper Cacher kosher supermarket in eastern Paris. Jihadist gunman Amedy Coulibaly killed three customers and an employee in an attack that triggered deep concern over growing anti-Semitism. That attack came two days after Coulibaly's close friends Said and Cherif Kouachi gunned down 12 people at the offices of satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, kicking off a wave of jihadist attacks in France.

'Deep-rooted' anti-Semitism

Creteil counts some 23,000 Jews among its 90,000 residents, according to community leader Albert Elharrar who said Jewish groups believe the shops were deliberately targeted at the time of commemorations for the 2015 attacks. "There's a link between the graffiti and the



VAL-DE-MARNE: Photo shows the Hyper Cacher supermarket adjacent to the Promo & Destock store, a French kosher grocery store that was destroyed in an arson attack which has revived fears over anti-Semitism. —AFP

fire," he said. "It's clear that they came for no other reason but to attack a kosher shop on the day of the commemorations."

A record 7,900 French Jews emigrated to Israel the year of the Hyper Cacher attack, many of them citing increased fears over anti-Semitism. Though the exodus has since slowed, a string of anti-Semitic crimes have continued to worry France's large Jewish community. In 2017, a Jewish woman was pushed to her death from a third-floor window by a Muslim neighbor, while a Jewish family was beaten, held hostage and robbed in what rights groups said was a hate crime.

Former prime minister Manuel Valls told Europe 1 radio that more needed to be done to tackle anti-Semitism, which he said had become "deeply rooted" in France. "What has changed over the past three years is the awareness of this level of anti-Semitism," he said.

Valls said French society had failed to mobilize in support of Jews following attacks such as the 2012 Islamist shooting at a Jewish school in Toulouse in which four people were killed, three of them children. "These are crimes that must be prosecuted and condemned, we need to do more," he said.—AFP

Some N Korean businesses defy shutdown order

DANDONG: Some North Korean businesses in China had closed their doors yesterday but others remained open, despite Beijing's deadline to shut down under UN sanctions intended to strip the regime of cash. Fed up with North Korea's nuclear and missile provocations, Beijing has backed a series of UN sanctions against its Cold War-era ally, which relies on China for 90 percent of its foreign trade. But the halting progress in shutting down the businesses demonstrated the uneven enforcement of a commerce ministry directive for them to close by January 9.

A North Korean hotel in the northeastern city of Shenyang stopped taking reservations yesterday. In Beijing a restaurant posted a handwritten note on its door reading "off for today". But elsewhere in China's frigid northeast, the hub of North Korean economic activities in the country, some restaurants, travel agencies and seafood stalls planned to stay open. "Tourism is about connecting people, it's a human right," said North Korean Kim Yongil at the office of North Korean International Travel Agency in the Chinese border city of Dandong, noting they had received no notice to close.

"Stopping people from freely visiting North Korea is a human rights issue. You

are evil," Kim said in an apparent reference to westerners. In a basement stall opposite China's customs administration, North Korean Meng Qingshu had no plans to stop selling dried walleye pollack for \$10 a bag and sea cucumber for more than \$100 a bag. "We sell salty North Korean seafood," she said. "It's from the wild." Seafood imports from the North have been under sanctions since August, and Meng did not explain how the fish was imported.

The UN resolution shutting North Korean joint ventures and cooperative entities does not set a firm date to close, but it laid out a 120-day timetable from its passage in September. Despite its own deadline, China appears to be taking a slower approach, experts say. "The ninth is a key day, the last day for businesses to split up, and they should close," said Lu Chao, director of the Border Study Institute at the Liaoning Academy of Social Sciences, a government think tank. Foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang said China upholds its UN obligations and will "seriously punish" those who violate sanctions.

Hotel cash cow

The 14-floor Chilbosan hotel in the heart of Shenyang, capital of the northeastern province of Liaoning, has been a key source of revenue for Pyongyang. But a woman who answered the phone at the front desk yesterday said they were not taking new reservations for its 154 rooms. "We are closed for the time being... since today," she told AFP, adding that she did not know why.

A day earlier, North Koreans with flag pins on their chests had been tucking into



DANDONG: A Chinese security personnel repairs his bicycle near the Broken Bridge - which once connected China and North Korea - at the Chinese border city of Dandong yesterday. —AFP

breakfast buffets. Guests could watch the North's state-owned television station in their rooms. "Shenyang's Chilbosan hotel is North Korea's largest investment in China or abroad," Lu said. "They invested \$25-\$30 million." Pyongyang operates the hotel in a joint venture with Dandong Hongxiang Industrial Machinery, a company that the US says once accounted for a fifth of trade between China and the North. The US sanctioned the company and filed criminal charges against its Dandong-based owner Ma Xiaohong in 2016, accusing her of ties

to the North's weapons program. In Dandong, Hongxiang's 16th-floor office in Fortune Tower, with a view across the Yalu River to the North's city of Sinuiju, was deserted yesterday. Near the border bridge, a Hongxiang affiliate ran the grand Pyongyang Restaurant as a joint venture with the North Korean People's Insurance Association. Business records show the Insurance Association transferred its shares to another company registered to an apartment address in November, but its establishments were closed "temporarily".—AFP

News in brief

Hamas figure wounded

GAZA: A senior figure in Palestinian Islamist group Hamas was hospitalized in critical condition yesterday with a gunshot wound to the head, after what officials said was an accident. Hamas spokesman Fawzy Barhoum said in a statement Imad Al-Alami, a former member of Hamas's highest political body, was wounded while "inspecting his personal weapon in his home and is in critical condition". A medical source said he had been rushed to a hospital in Gaza City. There was no independent confirmation of details of the incident. Alami has for decades been a senior member of Hamas, which runs the Gaza Strip. Israel has accused him of planning multiple attacks. He lived in exile for more than 20 years but returned to Gaza in 2012.

'Monkey' hoodie outrage

STOCKHOLM: Swedish clothing giant H&M yesterday said it had withdrawn from sale a green hoodie with the inscription "coolest monkey in the jungle" after an ad featuring a black child triggered racism accusations. The company apologized on its Twitter account and said it would investigate the online shopping ad which sparked outrage among observers on social media. "We've not only removed the image from our channels, but also the garment from our product offering," the group said. "We understand that many people are upset about the children's hoodie." NBA superstar LeBron James on Tuesday was the latest public figure to slam the brand. "@hmu got us all wrong! And we ain't going for it! Straight up!" James said in an Instagram post which included a photo of the same ad, but with a crown superimposed on the boy's head, and the text on the hooded sweater replaced by a crown. "Enough about y'all and more of what I see when I look at this photo. I see a Young King!! The ruler of the world, an untouchable Force that can never be denied!!" the athlete said.

Seoul firm on 'comfort women'

SEOUL: South Korea will not seek to renegotiate a deal with Japan on wartime sex slavery, it said yesterday, despite new President Moon Jae-In saying on the campaign trail he "could not accept" the agreement. The issue of women forced into sexual slavery for Japanese troops during World War II is a hugely emotional one that has long marred ties between the South and its former colonial ruler. Ousted president Park Geun-Hye sought to end the decades-long row with a 2015 agreement that included a Japanese apology and payment of one billion yen (\$8.8 million) to survivors. But under the deal, Japan did not admit legal responsibility for the abuses, drawing anger from some survivors who refused to take the money. Ties between the two neighbors—both of them US allies threatened by nuclear-armed North Korea—remain tense over statues placed outside Japanese diplomatic missions by South Korean activists in memory of the victims.

Police search monastery

MARSEILLE: Police searched a monastery in southern France yesterday for a man suspected of killing his wife and four children who has been on the run since 2011. Witnesses had reported recently spotting a man resembling Xavier Dupont de Ligonnes at prayers at the religious site in Roquebrune-sur-Argens in the Var region. It was in the medieval village, about 50 kilometers west of the Riviera resort of Cannes, that one of France's most wanted men had last been spotted nearly seven years ago. But a lengthy search of the monastery—home to a reclusive order of monks who take a vow of silence—failed to yield any trace of the 57-year-old suspect, sources close to the investigation said. Dupont de Ligonnes is the subject of an international arrest warrant in a case that transfixed France in 2011. The businessman from an aristocratic family is suspected of murdering his wife and their children, aged 13 to 20, in the western city of Nantes in April that year before burying them under the terrace of their elegant townhouse.

Analysis

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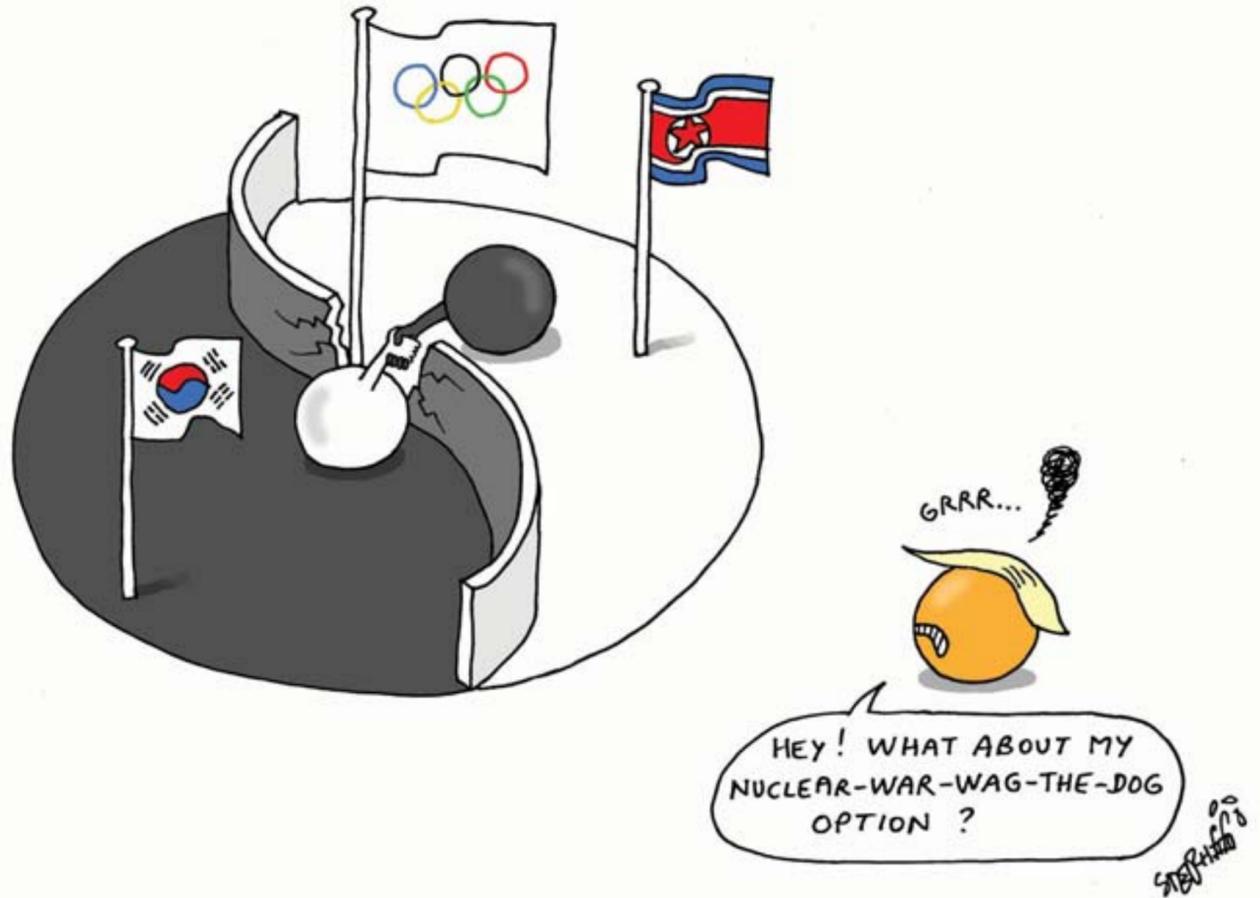
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ESTABLISHED 1961

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EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
FAX : 24835620/1
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163
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Who will lead Britain's central bank after Brexit?

By William Schomberg

Britain is expected to choose a new central bank chief this year to succeed Canadian Mark Carney, who will step down in June 2019, three months after the country's scheduled exit from the European Union. Following is a summary of possible contenders to run the Bank of England (BoE), which oversees the world's sixth-biggest economy and Britain's huge finance industry. No one has yet thrown their hat into the ring.

The outsider insider

Widely tipped by analysts as Carney's most likely successor, Bailey reached the role of deputy governor of the BoE with a focus on banks before becoming chief executive of the Financial Conduct Authority, a financial markets regulator. During his time at the BoE, Bailey helped to steer Britain's banks through the global financial crisis, enhancing his reputation as a safe pair of hands.

However, heading the FCA - which roots out misconduct in Britain's large financial services sector - is fraught with risks. The head of the British parliament's influential Treasury Committee has criticized Bailey for withholding parts of a report into alleged misconduct by state-owned RBS during the financial crisis. Bailey has cited privacy restrictions.

As FCA boss, Bailey sits on important panels at the BoE that oversee banks. Although he has never been interest-rate setter, he once ran the BoE international economic analysis team. Bailey acknowledged the speculation about a move to the BoE in an interview published this week. "You'll be unsurprised to know this question comes up reasonably often," Bailey told Financial News. "But I've got a job and, I have to be honest with you, I have never spent my time thinking about the one I want to do next."

The deputies

Broadbent and Ramsden are deputy governors for monetary policy and for markets and banking respectively, burnishing their credentials as potential successors to Carney. Broadbent, a former Goldman Sachs economist who once trained as a classical pianist, is respected for his economic analysis but has less experience on banking oversight, which has become an important part of the BoE governor's role.

Ramsden only joined the central bank in September although he is no stranger to the Monetary Policy Committee having attended 92 of its meetings in his previous role as the Treasury's chief economic advisor. The two other BoE deputy governors, Jon Cunliffe and Sam Woods, are less likely contenders. Woods focuses mostly on bank regulation while Cunliffe - a former British ambassador to the EU - would be aged 66 at the start of the term which usually runs for eight years, although Carney has chosen to step down after six.

Andy Haldane - free thinker

The BoE's chief economist, Haldane has developed a reputation for floating unconventional ideas, including the abolition of cash as a way to give central banks more muscle over the economies they run. In 2012, he praised the anti-capitalist Occupy movement for suggesting new ways to fix the shortcomings of global finance. Haldane has experience of both sides of the Bank, having served previously as executive director for financial stability, overseeing the risks to the economy from the banking system. But he might be seen as too much of a maverick to take the job of governor.

Outsiders?

The announcement of Carney, the first non-British governor of the BoE in more than three centuries, was a surprise. Should finance minister Philip Hammond also opt for a less obvious candidate, one name that has appeared in Britain's media is that of Sharon White, the head of a telecoms regulator and who previously worked at the Treasury. The daughter of Jamaican immigrants, she has won wide praise for her high-profile roles in the public sector. Another outside contender would be Adair Turner, a former chairman of a now defunct financial services regulator who was in the running last time around. He continues to speak about the British economy and has warned of the risks from high debt levels.

Labor Party governor?

The prospect of the left-wing Labor Party taking power in the next year or so is remote but investors are mindful that Prime Minister Theresa May has only a small majority in parliament after last year's failed election gamble and her Conservative Party is split over how to leave the European Union. Labor leader Jeremy Corbyn and his would-be finance minister John McDonnell are socialists and have in the past proposed that the BoE should fund investment in infrastructure, a big change from its current focus on inflation. If they were to pick the next BoE governor, Ben Seager-Scott, chief investment strategist at Tilney Group, an investment firm, said they might consider former members of an economic advisory committee which included US academic and Nobel Prize winner Joseph Stiglitz and Ann Pettifor, a British economist who is an austerity critic.—Reuters

The Koreas - warm smiles on cold frontier

By Park Chan-Kyong

North and South Korean officials exchanged warm greetings amid light flakes of snow on the world's last Cold War frontier the day, in contrast from previous frosty gatherings. The delegates shook hands and even cracked a joke as they posed for photographers at the border truce village of Panmunjom, before starting talks focused on the North's participation at next month's Winter Olympics in the South.

"We have to curry favor with them," the North's chief delegate Ri Son-Gwon quipped as he shook hands with his Southern counterpart Cho Myoung-Gyon for a second time at the request of photographers. The pair broke the ice with small talk about meteorological conditions. "Despite the cold weather, the people's burning desire to see inter-Korean dialogue and rapprochement are like streams flowing beneath the ice," said a poetic Ri. Ri, the head of the North's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea, and his colleagues walked across the concrete blocks that delineate the Military Demarcation Line at Panmunjom.

South Korean troops stood aside as they crunched over the gravel that separates the zone's emblematic blue huts. Ri donned civilian clothes for the meeting-and, in keeping with social norms in his country, a lapel badge depicting the North's founding father Kim Il-Sung and his son and successor Kim Jong-Il. Ri is said to be close to Kim Yong-Chul, another top North Korean military official and former director of the Reconnaissance General Bureau, the North's spy agency, who is blacklisted by South Korea's unilateral sanctions. In the past Ri has worn military uniform for talks.

He angrily stormed out of one meeting minutes after it began, denying any role by his country in the 2010 sinking of a South Korean warship with the loss of 46 lives. But yesterday he suggested the talks be fully opened to the media, "in light of the great expectations and huge interest from here and abroad in these talks". Cho Myoung-Gyon, the leader of



PAJU: A general view shows a South Korean military guard post (bottom left) before the Imjin river and skyline of North Korea, near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) separating North and South Korea. Top officials from North and South Korea held their first official dialogue in more than two years after months of high tensions over Pyongyang's weapons ambitions.—AFP

the Seoul's delegation—who wore a badge with the South Korean flag—demurred. The two five-strong delegations sat opposite each other at a long table in the Peace House, the talks venue on the southern side of the Demilitarized Zone that splits the peninsula.

Cho, the South's Unification Minister in charge of relations with the North, is a veteran cross-border negotiator who has taken part in talks with the North since the 1990s, including their second and last summit in 2007. "It looks like North

Korea is exuding a lot of confidence," said Koo Kab-Woo, a professor at the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul. "I can't say exactly where that confidence stems from but it has so far been positive," he said. It was a markedly different atmosphere to the last talks between the two Koreas in December 2015, observers said. The mood then was grim and tense before the encounter even got under way. Talks broke down with the two sides failing even to agree on further meetings.—AFP

iPhone addiction may be a virtue, not a vice for investors

By Trevor Hunnicutt

Apple Inc investors are shrugging off concerns raised by two shareholders about kids getting hooked on iPhones, saying that for now a little addiction might not be a bad thing for profits. Hedge fund JANA Partners LLC and the California State Teachers' Retirement System (CalSTRS) pension fund said on Saturday that iPhone overuse could be hurting children's developing brains, an issue that may harm the company's long-term market value.

But some investors said the habit-forming nature of gadgets and social media are one reason why companies like Apple, Google parent Alphabet Inc and Facebook Inc added \$630 billion to their market value in 2017. "We invest in things that are addictive," said Apple shareholder Ross Gerber, chief executive of Gerber Kawasaki Wealth and Investment Management. He also owns stock in coffee retailer Starbucks Corp, casino operator MGM Resorts International and alcohol maker Constellation Brands Inc. "Addictive things are very profitable," Gerber said.

Still, the investment community is increasingly holding companies to higher social standards, and there is some concern that market-leading tech companies could draw attention from regulators much like alcohol, tobacco and gambling companies have in the past. Alphabet and Facebook could not immediately be reached for comment on Monday. Facebook has said social media can be beneficial if used appropriately. In a statement to Reuters, Apple said it has offered a range of controls on iPhones since 2008 that allow parents to restrict content, including apps, movies, websites, songs and books, as well as cellular data, password settings and other features.

"Effectively anything a child could download or access online can be easily blocked or restricted by a parent," Apple said in the statement. Apple shares fell marginally on Monday. CalSTRS holds \$1.9 billion in Apple stock, a sliver of the company's nearly \$900 billion market value, while JANA declined to disclose the size of its smaller stake. "Before Apple speaks, I think it's too early to change the narrative" for investors, said

Peter Jones, vice president of research for Ferguson Wellman Capital Management, which has about 350,000 Apple shares.

Social media companies, not hardware makers, are more deserving of any addiction-related scrutiny, some said. Jordan Waldrep, who invests in alcohol, tobacco and gambling stocks as manager of the USA Mutuals Vice Fund, said blaming Apple for its customers' addiction was analogous to blaming makers of cigarette packs instead of tobacco companies. "The social media, the cigarettes, are the addictive product," he said. Waldrep's Vice fund does not own Apple, but Waldrep said he would consider including social media companies.

Kim Forrest, senior portfolio manager and vice president at Fort Pitt Capital Group, agreed that companies like Facebook, Twitter Inc and Snap Inc might be more at risk than Apple if investors and regulators push back on how much time people spend on mobile devices. "Apple is just the delivery device," said Forrest, who said Fort Pitt has limited Apple holdings. "It's only compelling with software. Software is the dopamine releaser that keeps you coming back."

Twitter declined to comment and Snap could not immediately be reached. The letter from JANA and CalSTRS recommends Apple set up a committee of child-development experts and make more new tools available to parents. In its statement, Apple did not directly respond to the investors' demands but said changes are in store for its parental controls. It did not provide details. "We are constantly looking for ways to make our experiences better," Apple said. "We have new features and enhancements planned for the future, to add functionality and make these tools even more robust."

The addiction issue gained notoriety when former Disney child star Selena Gomez said she canceled a 2016 world tour to go to therapy for depression and low self-esteem, feelings she linked to a social media addiction. Fears about smartphone addiction have already kicked off regulatory backlash. In December, the French education minister said mobile phones would be banned in schools, and draft legislation in France would require children under 16 to seek parental approval to open a Facebook account.

Even tech insiders are among the vocal critics of social media and its addictive potential. "Apple Watches, Google Phones, Facebook, Twitter - they've gotten so good at getting us to go for another click, another dopamine hit," said Tony Fadell, a former Apple executive, on Twitter. John Streur, chief executive of Calvert Research and Management, an Apple shareholder that focuses on social responsibility, said it is plausible that tech devices may some day be understood to hold risks we do not currently understand well. That would



TEXAS: Photo shows the iPhone 6 and 6 Plus on display at the Apple store in Pasadena, California. Paris prosecutors have launched a probe of US tech giant Apple over suspected 'planned obsolescence' in some of its iPhone models, a judicial source said.—AFP

hurt investors if evidence later emerged that companies intentionally built features that create dependency and had evidence that doing so was unsafe. For the time being, John Carey, a portfolio manager at Amundi Pioneer Asset Management in Boston, said concerns over the human impacts from being glued to screens are not likely to cut into profits. The company holds Apple stock, but the funds Carey manages do not. "I doubt there will be any impact on the use of smartphones," he said. "We're already addicted to them."—Reuters



Palestinian protesters wave their national flag near the Israel-Gaza border east of the southern Gaza Strip city of Khan Younis yesterday as they demonstrate against calls for the closure of UNRWA by the Israeli prime minister and cuts in Palestinian aid by the American president. — AFP

Trump goes to the doc, but the speculation won't end

WASHINGTON: Donald Trump is headed to the doctor: Later this week, the 71-year-old US president will undergo his first physical since taking office at a military hospital just outside Washington. But his critics who have openly questioned his mental health, as well as his supporters looking for proof the attacks are wrong, will be disappointed, as physicians are only looking at his weight, blood pressure and cholesterol levels. No psychiatric tests are planned on Friday at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center for Trump, who has described himself as a "very stable genius".

In 2015, Trump's personal doctor Harold Bornstein insisted - in terms seen as a bit too glowing - that the real estate mogul would be "the healthiest individual ever elected to the presidency". But questions persist. A new tell-all book by Michael Wolff paints a portrait of a man whose closest aides doubt his ability to govern. The president has no obligation to undergo an annual physical, and even if he does, he is not required to reveal the

results. But it has become something of a tradition. And the White House says that Trump, the oldest man ever to enter the Oval Office, will follow in the footsteps of his predecessors.

In the 1980s, during Ronald Reagan's second term, a lively debate erupted over whether his intellectual capacity was deteriorating. Several years after he left office, Reagan announced that he was suffering from Alzheimer's disease. In 1994, former president Jimmy Carter himself raised the alarm bell about such situations, writing in the Journal of the American Medical Association about the "continuing danger" to the nation of a president becoming disabled, especially by "a neurologic illness". But nothing has changed since then about presidential succession, or how presidential health is evaluated.

Draft law

In April, Democratic lawmaker Jamie Raskin proposed a bill that would create a panel of 11 people - mainly psychiatrists and neurologists - who could be called upon to assess the president's mental health. The draft had at its core the 25th Amendment to the US Constitution, adopted in 1967, which says the vice president would become president "in case of the removal of the president from office or of his death or resignation".

But the amendment provides no specifics about how the president's mental health would be assessed. "We need this body in general, not just for this presidency but for every future presidency," Raskin told AFP in an interview. "The framers of the 25th Amendment understood the perils of having a president who is somehow incapacitated in the nuclear age," he explained. "I turn on the TV and radio, and people are arguing about whether the president has a neurological incapacity or whether he is mentally fit," Raskin said. "I don't think mental health is a partisan issue... What we really need is a process by which this could be examined if we arrive at a crisis."

In a Republican-led Congress, Raskin's draft has no chance of being approved. But it could fuel the larger debate. For now, some media outlets have called on specialists to offer an analysis of the 45th president from a distance. They look at his tweetstorms, his sometimes surprising body language and his sporadic difficulty in speaking - offering myriad explanations, all of them limited by the fact that they have not examined Trump. White House spokesman Hogan Gidley slammed journalists for what he called an "absolute dereliction of duty" in reporting opinions of "psychiatrists who have never sat down and talked to the president". "It's repugnant," Gidley said Monday. — AFP

Lawmakers trade barbs in unruly...

Continued from Page 1

domestic and international markets to meet the budget deficit. MPs also raised the issue of Kuwaiti employment, with MP Abdulkarim Al-Kandari accusing government departments of violating the law by employing expatriates and covering this up under different methods. MP Azemi said all contracts go to companies owned by certain families, which fail to provide jobs to Kuwaitis.

The Assembly session began debating a government-sponsored draft law for the municipality to replace the exist-

ing law, after the municipality has been without an elected council for some time. But several lawmakers strongly criticized the draft law and the government, insisting that the new draft is even worse than the existing bill. Azemi said the proposed legislation aims at dividing the society by ensuring a council member for each tribe, Shiites and others. It is strengthening the quota system to maintain divisions, he said.

Meanwhile, MP Riyadh Al-Adasani said he was told by the interior minister that the doctor of the central jail is personally looking after the MPs and activists who began a hunger strike two days ago in protest against their "unfair" trial. The Assembly also turned down a request by the public prosecution to strip MP Hashem of her parliamentary immunity over a municipal misdemeanor case. The MPs discussed during the session a report by the legislative and legal affairs committee concerning the case.

Ankara changes embassy street...

Continued from Page 1

The decision, mooted last month, was approved by the Ankara municipality assembly on Monday. "Henceforth, the mailing address of the embassy will be Madinah Defender Avenue, Fahreddin Pasha Street. Good luck with it," Tuna said in a tweet. Turkish television early yesterday showed city workers switching the signs.

Relations between the UAE and Turkey have been

marked by distrust in recent months. Ankara supports Qatar in the seven-month standoff with the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Egypt which cut all ties with the Gulf emirate on June 5. Those Gulf states claim that Qatar supports Islamist extremists and is too close to Shiite Iran, Riyadh's archrival. Ankara rejects the charges.

Turkey summoned the Emirati charge d'affaires in Ankara last month - as the ambassador was temporarily absent - to complain about the social media posting. The Turkish leadership has been wary of criticizing Saudi Arabia and its powerful Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, a close ally of the UAE, in the standoff. But pro-government media have been bitterly critical of Riyadh's policies, claiming they are part of a US-backed move to reshape the Middle East. — AFP

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 Masterkey Properties
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 Black Pearl Consult
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Sales Executive – Kitchen and Sanitary Ware (AB)
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 Doha, Qatar

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 Communication**
 Dallah Group
 Doha, Qatar

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 Vodafone
 Doha, Qatar

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Sports

Nadal beaten in Melbourne, Konta and Williams exit Sydney International

Spain's Pablo Busta defeat Belgian David Goffin



MELBOURNE: Richard Gasquet of France hits a forehand return to Rafael Nadal of Spain during their men's singles match at Kooyong Classic tennis tournament in Melbourne yesterday. —AFP



SYDNEY: Angelique Kerber of Germany hits a return to Venus Williams of the US in their women's singles second round match at the Sydney International tennis tournament in Sydney yesterday. —AFP

MELBOURNE: World number one Rafael Nadal lost his first match of the year 6-4, 7-5 to Richard Gasquet at the Kooyong Classic yesterday, but said he was happy after his troublesome knee held up "fine".

Nadal's knee injury hampered the end of his 2017 season and forced him to skip last week's Brisbane International, but he was able to give it a workout at the non-tour event in Melbourne. Though he lost in straight sets, the Spaniard said he would keep working hard until the start of the Australian Open at Melbourne Park on Monday. "I'm very happy to be back in Australia," he said. "I had a heavy year in 2017 and I started my preparation later than usual.

"But I've arrived in plenty of time. It's great to get the feeling once again of playing a match. "This was a good test for me after some good training, that's the most important thing." The 16-time Grand Slam winner was far from his best in the exhibition encounter against a player he has beaten 15-0 on the ATP Tour in a rivalry dating back to junior days.

Nadal, 31, heads the entry list for the Australian Open and said he will be ready to front up for the first round. "The knee is fine," he said in answer to the inevitable question. "I'm here. "If I was not feeling good I would not be here, so that's good news. "I'll train hard over the next few days for the Australian Open. I will be ready."

'BEST IN HISTORY'

Nadal is not playing any more matches at Kooyong, but he is also scheduled to turn out for a Tie Break Tens tournament at Melbourne Park today evening. Gasquet, who missed Kooyong last year through illness and injury, was happy to get even an informal win over the Spaniard.

"It's always a pleasure to play Rafa-I hope to beat him one day on the ATP before retiring. He's a friend of mine and it's great to play him," he said. "I'm happy with how I'm playing after a test against Rafa, who along with Federer is the best in history." Gasquet took the opening set, relying on a single break for 5-4 before serving it out against an opponent still trying to shake off the rust of inactivity. The Frenchman found himself in more of a battle in the second set despite going up a double break for 3-0.

The deficit barely bothered Nadal, who showed some of his classic form in closing the gap to 3-3. Gasquet forced Nadal to save break points throughout

as the pair stayed level-pegging.

But the Frenchman finally broke for 6-5 and claimed victory with a smash winner on his first match point a game later. Separately, Spain's Pablo Carreno Busta defeated Belgian world number seven David Goffin 1-6, 7-6 (7/4), 6-3. In the women's competition, Germany's Andrea Petkovic rallied to defeat Australian teenager Destanee Aiava 3-6, 6-3, 6-2 in windy conditions.

Earlier, defending champion Johanna Konta was bundled out in the first round of the Sydney International by Agnieszka Radwanska and Venus Williams also lost in her first match of the tournament yesterday.

Radwanska, overpowered in 82 minutes by Konta in last year's final, raced to a 6-3 7-5 victory over the Briton at the Olympic Tennis Centre. Neither player was able to dominate on service in the first set and Konta won just two of her 11 second serve points as Radwanska converted three of her five break opportunities.

Konta again had trouble holding serve in the second set but showed signs of a fightback when she broke

while trailing 4-1, but she could not push on as Radwanska sealed victory in one hour, 49 minutes. Second seed Williams was beaten 5-7 6-3 6-1 by Germany's Angelique Kerber in under two hours.

Kerber started the first set stronger and looked to have Williams on the ropes when she opened up a 5-3 lead and created two set points on the American's serve before Williams rallied. The seven-times grand slam champion survived the Kerber onslaught with an ace and a forehand winner and, with her confidence restored, took the first set.

But Kerber fought back strong as Williams struggled with her service. The German levelled the match at a set apiece and raced into a 5-0 lead in the decider before Williams rallied again, but the American succumbed to the inevitable on her fifth match point, sending a backhand return wide.

Konta's first-round loss continued some worrying early season performances for the 26-year-old world number nine. She struggled last week in Brisbane before withdrawing from her quarter-final with a hip injury.

Radwanska, who was upset by American qualifier Sachia Vickery in the Auckland quarter-finals last week, meets American qualifier Catherine Bellis in the second round in Sydney while Kerber faces Dominika Cibulkova in the quarter-finals. —Agencies

Amir's 7th International Shooting Grand Prix

By Abdellatif Shara'a

KUWAIT: Minister of Commerce and Industry, State Minister of Youth Affairs Khalid Al-Roudhan will open HH the Amir's 7th International Shooting Grand Prix on Saturday at Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex, as representative of HH the Amir.

President of Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations, Chairman of Higher Organizing Committee Eng Duaij Al-Otaibi said that 315 shooters will represent 39 countries from the region, Asia, Europe and Latin America, besides Kuwait.

Eng Al-Otaibi was speaking during a press conference, attended by Deputy Chairman of the Board of KSSC, and secretary General of Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations.

Al-Otaibi said HH the Amir International Grand Prix, is now one of the most important tournaments on the International Shooting Federation's agenda, and it includes all Olympic disciplines, and enjoys the participations of the most talented shooters around the world.



He said there are several activities that go along with the tournament such as the Asian Youth training camp for skeet shooting, in addition to two advanced shotgun and rifle courses for referees, with accredited ISF lecturer.

Al-Otaibi appreciated the support of HH the Amir to hold this tournament annually, and considered this support as the most important reason for Kuwait's shooting outstanding achievements in major events.

Eng Al-Otaibi thanked all those who contributed to the establishment of this sport headed by founder of

amid it all Federer keeps going, winning all his matches at the mixed-teams Hopman Cup in Perth this month and seemingly injury-free.

"I just have to pace myself all the way up to the tournament in Melbourne, and I'll be ready," he said after his Hopman Cup final victory with Switzerland team-mate Belinda Bencic. "I'm just excited going back to Melbourne where I had my fairytale run last year. It was crazy. "It's great to be the defending champion. I take it the right way. I won't put extra pressure on myself, regardless of who's going to play, or not play. "For me it's just important to be in a good mindset, well prepared, and ready to go. And I feel like I am ready."

KYRGIOS IN GOOD NICK

Nadal, who lost to Federer in five sets in a vintage Australian final last year, has opted to join Djokovic at the Kooyong Classic exhibition event for some match practice in the week before the Open.

The Spaniard, who hasn't played since the World Tour Finals in London, had a stellar 2017, winning his 10th French Open, a third US Open crown and the year-ending world number one spot. Six-time Australian Open champion Djokovic pulled out of events in Abu Dhabi and Doha with elbow soreness before heading to Melbourne, and hasn't hit a ball in anger since the problem forced him to quit Wimbledon in the quarter-finals in July.

Big-serving Canadian Milos Raonic is another with a

Kuwait Shooting, Honorable President of Asian and Kuwait Shooting Federations Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah.

Al-Otaibi congratulated Kuwaitis for the lifting of suspension on soccer, and Kuwait's success in hosting "Khaleeji 23", due to the tremendous efforts by the political leadership. He said Kuwait Shooting succeeded in lifting the unjustified suspension on it through court. He also congratulated Dr Humoud Fulaikh Al-Shimmari for his appointment as Director General of Public Authority for Sport.

chequered preparation after wrist surgery last year, while American world number eight Jack Sock hurt his hip while playing in the Hopman Cup. The Australian Open is the second straight Grand Slam to be badly hit by injury issues. The US Open was missing Wawrinka, Djokovic, Nishikori, Raonic and Murray, and after the early eliminations of Alexander Zverev, Marin Cilic, Grigor Dimitrov and Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, it was one of the rare Grand Slams where big names didn't dominate the quarter-finals. If there is to be a winner outside the top guns in Melbourne, those who look most likely are Bulgarian Dimitrov, third in the rankings behind Nadal and Federer, Germany's Zverev and tempestuous Australian Nick Kyrgios.

Dimitrov, once nicknamed 'Baby Fed' for his playing style, enjoyed the best season of his career in 2017, winning four titles, including his first Masters crown in Cincinnati. Zverev, 20, has been touted as the "next big thing" for some years and is coming off five titles last season, yet he has never made it past the fourth round of a Grand Slam.

Kyrgios will have his supporters, especially in Australia, after beating Dimitrov on the way to winning his fourth ATP Tour title and first at home in the lead-up Brisbane International. "Right now it's all about recovering and feeling the ball for the Oz Open. Because obviously I'm playing well under pressure and in pressure situations," said Kyrgios, whose talent has often been undermined by petulant outbursts.—AFP

Five who could fire in Melbourne

MELBOURNE: With injury clouds hanging over some of the top names in the game, here are five young men's players who could take advantage by winning their first Grand Slam title at the Australian Open:

GRIGOR DIMITROV

The 26-year-old Bulgarian heads to Melbourne a dizzy third in the rankings behind only Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer. Nicknamed "Baby Fed" early in his career for his Federer-style game, Dimitrov has struggled to live up to the comparison and was as low as 40 in the world in mid-2016. But he bounced back to enjoy the best season of his career in 2017, winning four titles, including his first Masters crown in Cincinnati.

ALEXANDER ZVEREV

A giant young German who is seen as a trailblazer of tennis's widely touted "NextGen". The 20-year-old heads into the year's first Grand Slam ranked fourth, and is coming off five titles last year. Zverev is one of just four men to beat Federer in 2017 when he defeated the Swiss great in the Montreal final. But Zverev has never made it past the fourth round of a Grand Slam, and he's reached that stage only once, at Wimbledon in 2017.

DOMINIC THIEM

The 23-year-old Austrian finished the 2017 season with a title on clay in Rio de Janeiro and a year-end fifth ranking. Thiem claimed his first win over Novak Djokovic at the French Open quarter-finals on the way to reaching the semi-finals at Roland Garros for the second straight year. His boyhood idols were countrymen Stefan Koubek and Jurgen Melzer, while his favourite shot is the forehand and he prefers to play on clay.

NICK KYRGIOS

A volatile Australian whose potential has often been betrayed by his temperament. He brought last season to an early end when he surrendered to a long-standing hip injury, but has started 2018 in top form, winning the Brisbane International on Sunday, beating Dimitrov along the way. Kyrgios is aiming for a fresh assault on his home Grand Slam, where he threw away a two-sets lead to lose to Andreas Seppi in the second round last year.

ANDREY RUBLEV

The 20-year-old Russian captured his first ATP World Tour title as a lucky loser at Umag before he became the youngest US Open quarter-finalist last year since Andy Roddick, beating Grigor Dimitrov and David Goffin before going down to world number one Rafael Nadal. Now ranked a career-high 32, the run in New York solidified Rublev's status as one of the top 'NextGen' ATP players in the world.—AFP

Federer eyes fresh 'fairytale' as Slam rivals struggle

MELBOURNE: The prospects of an unprecedented 20th Grand Slam victory have strengthened for ageless wonder Roger Federer as his main rivals flounder ahead of the Australian Open. The 36-year-old is coming off an extraordinary 2017, when he won a fifth Australian Open title and a record eighth at Wimbledon, and there could be yet more glory with a depleted field of top contenders in Melbourne.

Andy Murray and Japan's Kei Nishikori are already out of the year's opening Grand Slam with injuries, while 12-time major champion Novak Djokovic is troubled by an elbow complaint and hasn't played for six months. World number one Rafael Nadal withdrew from his first tour event of 2018, in Brisbane, with continuing knee problems, and is seeking match practice in a Melbourne exhibition event ahead of the January 15 start. The 2014 winner Stan Wawrinka, who hasn't played since last year's Wimbledon and subsequent knee surgery, has had little warm-up work and is no longer with his four-year coach Magnus Norman. Yet

Sports

Guptill bludgeons New Zealand to rain-affected victory

New Zealand thrashed Pakistan by eight wickets

SCOREBOARD

NELSON, New Zealand: Completed scoreboard from the rain-shortened second one-day international between New Zealand and Pakistan at Saxton Oval in Nelson yesterday:

Pakistan	
Azhar Ali lbw Southee	6
Imam-ul-Haq c Munro b Boult	2
Babar Azam c Taylor b Ferguson	10
Mohammad Hafeez c Guptill b Santner	60
Shoaib Malik c Southee b Astle	27
Sarfraz Ahmed st Latham b Astle	3
Shadab Khan c Latham b Ferguson	52
Faheem Ashraf c Southee b Ferguson	7
Hasan Ali c Astle b Southee	51
Mohammad Amir not out	8
Rumman Raees not out	6
Extras: (b1, w12, nb1)	14
Total: (for 9 wickets: 50 overs)	246
Fall of wickets: 1-5 (Imam-ul-Haq), 2-14 (Azhar Ali), 3-39 (Babar Azam), 4-84 (Shoaib Malik), 5-108 (Sarfraz Ahmed), 6-127 (Mohammad Hafeez), 7-141 (Faheem Ashraf), 8-211 (Hasan Ali), 9-239 (Shadab Khan)	
Bowling: Southee 10-1-57-2 (3w), Boult 10-0-54-1 (1nb), Santner 10-1-34-1, Ferguson 10-0-39-3 (4w), Astle 7-0-50-2 (1w), Munro 3-0-11-0.	

New Zealand (revised target 151 in 25 overs)	
M. Guptill not out	86
C. Munro c Faheem b Amir	0
K. Williamson c Shadab Khan b Faheem	19
R. Taylor not out	45
Extras: (nb 1)	1
Total: (for 2 wickets: 23.5 overs)	151
Fall of wickets: 1-1 (Munro), 2-47 (Williamson)	
Bowling: Amir 5-1-18-1, Rumman Raees 4.5-0-37-0 (1nb), Faheem 5-0-30-1, Hasan 5-0-37-0, Shadab 4-0-29-0.	

Result: New Zealand won by eight wickets
Series: New Zealand lead 2-0

NELSON: Martin Guptill was at his belligerent best as New Zealand thrashed Pakistan by eight wickets in Nelson yesterday, although captain Kane Williamson admitted a rain delay had done the hosts a favour.

The second one-day international was evenly poised when rain forced the players from the field for more than two hours with New Zealand 64 for two after 14 overs in reply to Pakistan's 246 for nine. When play resumed under the Duckworth-Lewis system New Zealand's target was revised to 151 in 25 overs meaning they had 11 overs left to make 87. "Pakistan showed some real resistance at the end and put some partnerships together which would have been a tricky total on that surface," Williamson said, adding the rain break "worked in our favour a little bit".

But the New Zealand skipper also hailed the "brilliant" partnership involving Guptill and Ross Taylor to get New Zealand home with seven balls to spare. Guptill, 31 off 40 at the break, was 86 not out off 71 deliveries at the end. Taylor advanced from 14 in as many balls to 45 off 43.

"For Martin and Ross to come out after that rain break... and play so beautifully and to see Martin play with freedom at his best was great to watch," Williamson said. "And (with) Ross a calming influence at the other end... it was a brilliant partnership to get us across the line."

It left Pakistan winless after two rain-affected matches in New Zealand with both decided under the Duckworth-Lewis method. "We are very disappointed with our batting," said captain Sarfraz Ahmed. "The first 10 overs is very important and we lost too many wickets in the first 10 overs."

"Our batting is not performing well but later on our lower order batted really well." After Pakistan won the toss and elected to bat Mohammad Hafeez (60) held the first half of the innings together as Pakistan struggled to 141 for seven in the 37th over before Shadab



NELSON: New Zealand's Martin Guptill bats during the second one-day international cricket match between New Zealand and Pakistan at Saxton Oval in Nelson yesterday. — AFP

Khan (52) and Hasan Ali (51) struck out with a 70-run partnership for the eighth wicket.

Pakistan still harboured hopes of levelling the series when they made early inroads into the New Zealand innings claiming Colin Munro for duck and Williamson

for 19 to have New Zealand at 47 for two in the 10th over. However, the momentum changed when Taylor joined Guptill in the middle. New Zealand now lead the five-match series 2-0 ahead of game three in Dunedin on Saturday. —AFP

England's under-fire Bayliss to step down after 2019 Ashes

SYDNEY: England coach Trevor Bayliss will step down after the next Ashes series in 2019, he announced yesterday as the media slammed him over the 4-0 Test thrashing in Australia. Bayliss, who was appointed in 2015 to succeed the sacked Peter Moores, said it would be time for a fresh approach when his four-year contract comes to an end.

"I'm contracted to September 2019 and that will see me out," the 55-year-old Australian told the BBC. "I've always felt that it's time for a change around that four-year mark. A new voice and a different approach reinvigorates things."

The broadcaster said Bayliss told England director of cricket Andrew Strauss of his plans a year ago, but had only now made it public. His contract takes him up to the end of the 2019 Ashes series, when Australia coach Darren Lehmann also plans to call it quits.

Since former Sri Lanka coach Bayliss took over from Moores, England's Test results have been mixed, losing 18 and winning 15. His announcement follows England's chastening 4-0 Ashes defeat, with Australia recording four comprehensive wins-including two innings victories and a 10-wicket triumph.

British media criticised Bayliss after Monday's loss in the fifth and final Test in Sydney, with the Daily Telegraph accusing him of being "laissez-faire". Among England's Ashes low-points, vice-captain Ben Stokes was suspended before the tour pending an investigation into a nightclub brawl, and wicketkeeper Jonny Bairstow drew controversy when he greeted Australia's Cameron Bancroft with a headbutt in a Perth Bar.

"The laissez-faire approach of England coach Trevor Bayliss has spelled disaster in Australia," headlined the Daily Telegraph, which added: "Bayliss presided over a walloping that would bring the guillotine rolling through the streets in other big team sports."

"England have little chance of improving if they stick with Trevor Bayliss," said the Evening Standard, while the Independent asked: "What is the point of Trevor Bayliss?" His decision will trigger speculation about a successor as England's management open their review of the failed Ashes series.

Former Australia fast bowler Jason Gillespie, who was appointed as interim coach of Papua New Guinea in July, was seen as a strong candidate when Bayliss got the job in 2015.

England assistant coach Paul Farbrace could also be tapped to step up to the top job. Bayliss' career with England began with a 3-2 home Ashes victory in 2015, but they suffered their first ever Test defeat to Bangladesh in 2016 and were humbled 4-0 away by India a year ago. — AFP

Sri Lanka cricket cleared of corruption: Board

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka Cricket said yesterday the sport's global governing body had found no evidence of wrongdoing following allegations of match-fixing and other forms of corruption. The board said the International Cricket Council had failed to uncover evidence of graft during an investigation into explosive accusations levelled by former Sri Lankan players.

SLC chief executive Ashley de Silva said ICC anti-corruption investigators visited the island in September and conducted a wide-ranging inquiry. "They do not put out statements after an inquiry, but if there is anything adverse, they would inform us. To date, they have not told us of anything (against Sri Lankan players or officials)," de Silva told reporters.

There was no immediate comment from the ICC. The council's announcement in September that it had begun an inquiry followed corruption allegations by former skipper Arjuna Ranatunga and ex-player and national selector Pramodya Wickremasinghe.

SLC said its executive committee had directed players and staff to cooperate with the ICC's probe. Ranatunga, who captained the islanders during their 1996 World Cup win, has alleged that insider meddling

cost Sri Lanka a repeat tournament crown during the 2011 final against India. Ranatunga, now a government minister, alleged that unusual changes were made to the team before the final which Sri Lanka lost by six wickets. Similar allegations of "unnatural match patterns" and queries over player selection were made by Wickremasinghe.

The ICC announced the probe a day after SLC said that 40 contracted national team players had asked for an immediate inquiry into "shocking" allegations by Wickremasinghe. Sri Lanka cricket board president Thilanga Sumathipala said it was "very unfair" for such allegations to be made without any evidence, adding the ICC had found no proof of foul play.

Meanwhile, all-rounder Angelo Mathews has been appointed Sri Lanka's limited-overs skipper six months after relinquishing the captaincy across all three formats. The 30-year-old stepped down as captain last year after Sri Lanka's shock home defeat to Zimbabwe, which he described as "one of the lowest points" of his career. Dinesh Chandimal was named the new test captain, while Upul Tharanga was put in charge of the limited overs side. Tharanga was then stripped of the captaincy after a string of defeats and replaced by Thisara Perera, who oversaw the team's 2-1 loss in India last month, on a temporary basis. "When I stepped down I never thought of taking over the captaincy again," Mathews, who is expected to lead the side into the 2019 World Cup in England and Wales, told reporters yesterday. "I took a few a few days to think about it, and because of a few reasons I decided to accept it." Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) said Mathews was given the



Angelo Mathews

job "on a long term basis" after he agreed to board president Thilanga Sumathipala's request to shoulder the responsibility. "We need stability running into the World Cup," said Mathews, who will begin the new phase of his captaincy in a tri-series in Bangladesh that also involves Zimbabwe later this month. —Agencies



Yusuf Pathan

India's Pathan suspended for failed dope test

NEW DELHI: India yesterday suspended former international all-rounder Yusuf Pathan for five months for taking a banned stimulant. The ban on the 35-year-old, who last represented India in 2012, was backdated so that it ends on January 14. The Board of Control for Cricket in India said the explosive batsman was routinely tested during domestic Twenty20 competition last year and a sample showed traces of Terbutaline. But

the board said it was satisfied with Pathan's explanation that the substance entered his body through medication while taking a cough syrup and "not as a performance-enhancing drug".

Pathan, who also bowls off-spin, played 57 one-day internationals and 22 T20 games for India and has been an Indian Premier League regular. In 2014 he hit the IPL's fastest 50 off just 15 balls. He is only the second Indian cricketer to fail a dope test. In 2013 Delhi left-arm paceman Pradeep Sangwan was banned for 18 months. The BCCI strongly opposes tests by India's National Anti-Doping Agency. It insists that as a member of the International Cricket Council—a signatory to the World Anti-Doping Agency—it already has strict anti-doping rules. — AFP

Ponting named Australia assistant coach for T20s

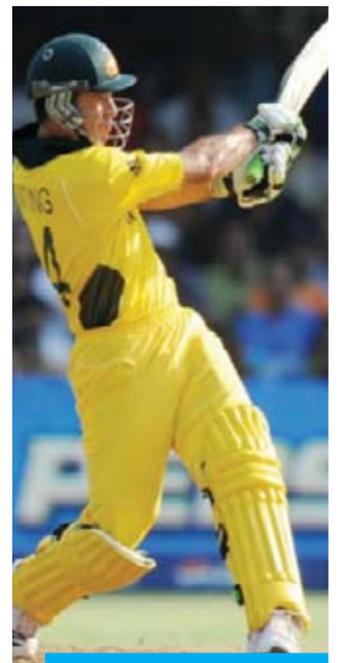
SYDNEY: Ricky Ponting will be an assistant coach during Australia's Twenty20 international series against England and New Zealand next month, Cricket Australia said yesterday. The former Australia captain will work under head coach Darren Lehmann, while Troy Cooley and Matthew Mott will help out during the series.

They have been brought on board while regular support staff Graeme Hick, David Saker and Brad Haddin are in South Africa to assist in preparations for Australia's four-Test tour from March.

Lehmann has previously said he will not seek to renew his contract when his current deal expires at the end of 2019, with Ponting seen as a potential successor. Ponting undertook the T20 role last year when he worked with the Australia squad for the three-match series against Sri Lanka. He has extensive experience of the shortest form of the game, captaining his country in the first ever T20 international against New Zealand in 2005, and then leading the side in the first two editions of the ICC World Twenty20 in 2007 and 2009.

"I loved working with the squad last year against Sri Lanka and I can't wait to be working alongside Darren, Troy and Matthew this time around," Ponting said. "Watching the Big Bash League in my

role as a commentator has shown me we have a wealth of talent available to us in this format and a tri-series like this will give us a great chance to establish a pattern of play that works best for the players." The T20 series will involve matches against New Zealand in Sydney (February 3) and Auckland (February 16) and England in Hobart (February 7) and Melbourne (February 10). —AFP



Ricky Ponting

Sports

Dembele finally able to get stuck in at Barcelona

‘Dembele is adapting perfectly to the club and he’s a great kid’

BARCELONA: Ousmane Dembele has endured a frustrating start to life at Barcelona. Signed from Borussia Dortmund in August for a club record fee of 147 million euros (\$175.3 million), now surpassed by the 160 million euros the Catalans spent on Philippe Coutinho, the Frenchman was brought to Camp Nou to replace Neymar.

Left reeling after Paris St. Germain activated the Brazilian's 222 million euro buy-out clause, Barcelona spent more than half of that money on a player who could light up their attack in the same way Neymar did.

However on Dembele's second start for the club, against Getafe on Sep. 16, he tore his hamstring. What followed was more than three months of recovery work, until he was finally able to make his return last week against Celta Vigo in the Copa del Rey last-16 first leg, as a substitute.

That was followed by his first start since injury, in the 3-0 La Liga win over Levante on Sunday, playing well without making a large individual impact until he was replaced in the 67th minute. Although fans are anxious to see the winger perform at the level he managed at Dortmund, it may take some time for him to build up his form and fitness.

Barcelona team mate Jordi Alba is certain the 20-year-old will get back to his best and improve beyond that too. “(Dembele) is adapting perfectly to the club

and he’s a great kid. You have to have patience because he’s very young, but he’s going to make us better, he has tremendous qualities,” Alba told Gol TV.

“We’re talking about a spectacular player and little by little his performances are going to get better. “He can strike a ball brilliantly with both feet, we don’t know if he’s left or right-footed. And he’s so quick. We haven’t done any tests but I think he’s quicker than me.”

VERSATILE

Coach Ernesto Valverde picked Dembele on the right side of the attacking three midfielders in a 4-2-3-1 formation against Levante, a set-up he last used at Athletic Bilbao.

In the second half the winger moved over to the left flank, showing his versatility, with Andres Iniesta coming inside and Lionel Messi taking Dembele's original spot. “I know that I have a long way to go to get

to my best level and I have to keep working for that,” Dembele told Barca TV. “The hardest thing during this time was maintaining the concentration to recover quickly, I need to have a lot of patience to integrate myself into the team bit by bit.” With Barcelona nine points clear of the competition in La Liga, Dembele has the chance to bed in without pressure and turn a troubled start into a perfect finish, with the club hoping for success on three fronts. — Reuters



BARCELONA: Barcelona's French forward Ousmane Dembele (L) vies with Levante's Spanish defender Antonio Luna during the Spanish league football match FC Barcelona vs Levante UD at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona on January 7, 2018. — AFP

“ I have a long way to go to get to my best level ”

Sultan Qaboos rewards football team for Gulf Cup

MUSCAT: Sultan Qaboos issued orders yesterday to pay out cash rewards and grant residential lands to players of the National Football Team for winning the 23rd Gulf Cup held recently in Kuwait. The official Oman News Agency (ONA) said Sultan Qaboos made the gesture in appreciation for the players’ “grand accomplishment which instilled happiness in all Omanis and residents of this dear homeland, and in recognition of their top professional performance, which reflected the spirit of perseverance that distinguishes all Omani youth as they strive to realize honorable achievements in all international events.”

Oman won against the UAE in the 23rd Gulf Cup final that was held at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium. — KUNA

Zidane named French coach of the year

PARIS: Real Madrid may have ended the year badly, but Zinedine Zidane has been named French coach of 2017 for leading the club to a Liga and Champions League double. “I want to show that I can also be a good coach in tough circumstances,” Zidane said in an article published yesterday in France Football magazine, which gives the award.

Real are going through a bad run. They are fourth in La Liga, 16 points behind leaders Barcelona, and they ended 2017 with a crushing 3-0 defeat at home in the Clasico. On Sunday, they were held to a 2-2 draw at Celta Vigo. “Today, yes, the danger is there, but I’m not going to change. I am aware that I have in front of me great players who listen to me. Playing football, I know how to do that. So things will sort themselves out in the end,” Zidane said.

“Some people may think that everything is always easy for me, that I do everything from instinct, but that’s not true! Whether it is as a player or as a coach, I’ve always worked,” said Zidane. “I’m not protected by what I achieved as a player for this club. Zinedine Zidane is no longer a Real player. That Zidane does not exist anymore. Now it is the coach Zinedine Zidane who must create a career,” he concluded. His side will continue their defence of the Champions League against a French team coached by a Spaniard when Real take on Unai Emery’s Paris Saint-Germain in the first knockout round on February 14 and March 6. — AFP



Zinedine Zidane

Mancini open to Italy coaching job

MILAN: Zenit Saint-Petersburg coach Roberto Mancini said yesterday he was open to taking over the vacant job as Italy national football coach. Mancini, 53, is being touted along with Chelsea manager Antonio Conte and former Bayern Munich coach Carlo Ancelotti to take the reins of the demoralised four-time World Cup winners.

Giampiero Ventura was fired as coach last November days after Italy’s shock failure to reach the World Cup final for the first time in 60 years. Finding Ventura’s successor has been complicated because the Italian Football Federation (FIGC) has to elect a president to replace Carlo Tavecchio who was also forced to resign.

“Before choosing a new coach it seems to me that we have to choose a new FIGC president,” former Manchester City and Inter Milan boss Mancini told Italian talk show “Tiki Taka”.

“But I absolutely don’t rule out Italy, like the other coaches I think. When you’re a coach you can rule nothing out.” Former Chelsea, Real Madrid, Juventus and AC Milan boss Ancelotti—a three-time Champions League winner—had been Tavecchio’s choice. But the 56-year-old, free since his sacking by Bayern Munich last year, has said he would prefer to stay in club management. Former Juventus boss Conte, 48, coached Italy from 2014 before joining Chelsea in 2016, winning the Premier League in his first season. Conte revealed last year that he misses Italy and plans to return to his homeland in the near future. “Italy is my homeland, so once I have had some good experiences, formative experiences, important and life-changing experiences, I’ll be back. I don’t know when but that’s the aim,” he said in September.

The FIGC on Monday agreed their budget for 2018 and have set aside 5 million euro (\$5.6m) to pay the new coach, despite a projected deficit of 9 million euros for the year, according to press reports. Three candidates have their hat in the ring for FIGC presidency—former Italy and Roma star Damiano Tommasi, now head of the Italian Players’ Union; Italian Professional League president Gabriele Gravina and FIGC vice-president Cosimo Sibilio. The election for president will take place on January 29. — AFP



BRIGHTON: Brighton's English defender Connor Goldson (L) vies with Crystal Palace's Scottish midfielder James McArthur during the English FA Cup third round football match between Brighton and Hove Albion and Crystal Palace at the American Express Community Stadium in Brighton, southern England on Monday. — AFP

Brighton beat Crystal Palace on VAR debut

BRIGHTON: Substitute Glenn Murray grabbed Brighton and Hove Albion a 2-1 FA Cup third-round victory over rivals Crystal Palace on Monday as video technology made its bow in England. It was the first time the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) system had been used in English football for a one-off trial, but was never needed to overturn any decision by referee Andre Marriner at the Amex Stadium. There was some confusion over the winning goal in the 87th minute, though, as former Palace striker

Murray bundled in the winner with his knee following a free-kick to score his seventh goal this term.

Palace players protested to the officials after the game that the ball had touched Murray’s arm after his knee, but replays suggested the right decision had been made.

Earlier, midfielder Dale Stephens gave the hosts a 25th-minute lead by rifling a shot through Wayne Hennessey at the Palace goalkeeper’s near post. Mali forward Bakary Sako, making just his fourth start of the season, hammered home a brilliant equaliser for Palace midway through the second period from long range to cap an excellent individual display. But Murray came off the bench to take Brighton through, and they will travel to Championship side Middlesbrough in the fourth round at the end of January. — AFP

China FA warns clubs over Aubameyang ‘bidding war’

SHANGHAI: China’s football association (CFA) warned yesterday that it would punish teams who flout its transfer rules, following reports two clubs are battling to sign striker Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang.

Chinese Super League (CSL) champions Guangzhou Evergrande are reportedly prepared to pay at least 70 million euros for the Borussia Dortmund attacker, trumping an offer by rivals Beijing Guoan. The CFA last year introduced a 100 percent tax on incoming foreign transfers in an effort to encourage Chinese clubs to invest on local youth players, but media reports suggest both clubs are prepared to either incur the penalty or find a way to circumvent it.

Evergrande denied they were pursuing Aubameyang—without explicitly naming him—but that was not before the CFA made plain its anger. The CFA too did not name the striker but made a clear reference to the 28-year-old and Evergrande and Guoan.

“The news of two clubs suspected of engaging in a bidding war on a transfer has caused social concern,” it said in a statement, adding that it had asked them to explain. “In the next step of the investigation, if any violations are found, the

Chinese FA will handle this seriously according to law and regulation.”

Stressing that the 100 percent surcharge was applicable in the current winter transfer window and in the year ahead, the CFA warned: “We will watch closely every club’s transfer movement in the new season and increase scrutiny.”

“The Chinese FA will seriously investigate and will not tolerate any violation or any loophole-exploiting behaviour.” The hard-hitting missive is the latest salvo in the Chinese government’s war on “irrational” overseas investments—a word also used in the CFA statement—as football authorities attempt to rein in CSL clubs who have shelled out record amounts for foreign stars.

A year ago, Shanghai SIPG smashed the Asian transfer record to sign Chelsea’s attacking midfielder Oscar for 60 million euros. However, with the 100 percent levy in place last summer, Tianjin Quanjian secured French striker Anthony Modeste from Cologne on a two-year loan deal, rather than buying him outright.

Dortmund have dismissed the Aubameyang transfer talk as speculation, but Chinese media has been filled for several days with multiple reports that a deal has been reached for him to move to Fabio Cannavaro’s Evergrande after the Bundesliga season. Soon after the CFA statement, Evergrande hit out at “the purely fictitious” reports and threatened legal action. “We will, as we always have, strictly follow the FA’s regulations on transfers,” the club said. “We reserve our legal right to pursue those responsible for the inaccurate reports.” — AFP



Matches on TV
(Local Timings)

ENGLISH LEAGUE CUP		
Chelsea v Arsenal		23:00
beIN SPORTS HD 2		
SPAIN COPA DEL REY		
Deportivo Alaves v Formentera		21:30
beIN SPORTS		
Villarreal v Leganes		21:30
beIN SPORTS		
Real Madrid v Numancia		23:30
beIN SPORTS		
FRENCH COUPE DE LA LIGUE		
Stade Rennais v Toulouse		20:45
beIN SPORTS		
Angers v Montpellier		23:05
beIN SPORTS		
Amiens v Paris Saint-Germain		23:05
beIN SPORTS		

13 Nadal beaten in Melbourne, Konta and Williams exit Sydney



14 Guptill bludgeons New Zealand to rain-affected victory



15 Zidane named French coach of the year



SEOUL: Anti-North Korea activists stage a demonstration against the inter-Korean talks, in Seoul yesterday. North Korea said it was willing to send athletes and a high-level delegation to the forthcoming Winter Olympics in the South as the rivals held their first official talks in more than two years. — AFP

N Korea to attend Olympics in rival South

Olympic organisers welcomed North's participation in Pyeongchang

SEOUL: North Korea will send its athletes to the Winter Olympics in the South, the rivals said yesterday after their first formal talks in more than two years following high tensions over Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programme.

The two sides also decided to hold military talks and to restore a military hotline closed since February 2016. Seoul and Olympic organisers have been keen for Pyongyang - which boycotted the 1988 Summer Games in the South Korean capital - to take part in what they repeatedly proclaimed a "peace Olympics" in Pyeongchang next month. But the North had given no indication it would do so until leader Kim Jong-Un's New Year address last week, instead pursuing its banned weapons programmes in defiance of United Nations sanctions, launching missiles capable of reaching the United States and detonating its sixth and most powerful nuclear test.

"The North Korean side will dispatch a National Olympic Committee delegation, athletes, cheerleaders, art performers' squad, spectators, a taekwondo demonstration team and a press corps and the South will provide necessary amenities and facilities," they said in a joint statement.

Yesterday's talks were held in Panmunjom, the truce village in the Demilitarised Zone that splits the peninsula. The North's delegation walked over the Military Demarcation Line marking the border to the Peace House venue on the

southern side, just yards from where a defector ran across in a hail of bullets two months ago.

Looking businesslike, the South's Unification minister Cho Myoung-Gyon and the North's chief delegate Ri Song-Gwon shook hands at the entrance to the building, and again across the negotiating table. Ri wore a badge on his left lapel bearing an image of the country's founding father Kim Il-Sung and his son and successor Kim Jong-Il, while Cho sported one depicting the South Korean flag.

"Let's present the people with a precious new year's gift," said Ri. "There is a saying that a journey taken by two lasts longer than the one travelled alone." The atmosphere was friendlier than at past meetings, and Cho told Ri: "The people have a strong desire to see the North and South move toward peace and reconciliation."

But there was no mention in the joint statement of a proposal by Seoul to resume reunions of families left divided by the Korean War, or of an offer by the North to

send a high-level delegation to the Games.

Ri also told South Korean journalists that denuclearisation was not on the table and not an issue for the two to discuss. "The target of all our nuclear and hydrogen bombs and ICBMs and all other sophisticated weapons is the US," he said. "These weapons are not aimed at our brethren." There were "many problems" to settle between the two sides, he added, warning of "unexpected obstacles" down the road.

Even so it was a radically different tone from the rhetoric of recent months, which have seen the North's leader Kim and US President Donald Trump trade personal insults and threats of war. Olympic organisers welcomed the North's participation in Pyeongchang, just 80 kilometres (50 miles) south of the DMZ, and a Unification ministry official said the Games would be "a Peace Festival for all the people in the world".

International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach said Pyongyang's decision to take part in the Games

was a "great step forward in the Olympic spirit".

Only two athletes from the North have so far qualified for the Olympics, but hundreds of young female North Korean cheerleaders have created a buzz at three previous international sporting events in the South.

According to South Korean reports any high-level delegation accompanying the team could include Kim's younger sister Yo-Jong, who is a senior member of the ruling Workers' Party.

BEYOND THE GAMES

According to the Unification ministry official, Tuesday's meeting "laid the foundation for restoring the severed inter-Korean ties and normalising them".

It came after Seoul responded to Kim's New Year speech with an offer of high-level dialogue, and last week a civilian hotline was restored after being suspended for almost two years.

But Pyeongchang has snubbed previous attempts by Seoul to set up further family reunions—one of the most emotive legacies of the Korean War—saying it will not do so unless several of its citizens are returned by the South. It was unclear when the proposed military talks—which would be the first of their kind since 2014—would be held.—AFP

“ Great step forward in the Olympic spirit ”

Timberwolves trounce Cavs

MINNEAPOLIS: Taj Gibson contributed three baskets to a 20-4, game-opening run that sent Minnesota on its way to a wire-to-wire, 127-99 thrashing of Cleveland in Minneapolis. Andrew Wiggins finished with 25 points and Jimmy Butler 21 as the Timberwolves won a second straight to open a five-game homestand while snapping a six-game losing streak to Cleveland. LeBron James was held to 10 points, his lowest since October of 2007, for the Cavaliers, who lost for the second time in three outings on a five-game trip.

PELICANS 112, PISTONS 109

Anthony Davis scored a game-high 30 points before being sidelined by an injured ankle in the third quarter and the New Orleans Pelicans held on to defeat the Detroit Pistons, 112-109, on Monday night in the Smoothie King Center in

New Orleans. Davis made 12 of 14 shots and grabbed 10 rebounds in 27 minutes before being injured. There was no immediate prognosis. The Pelicans (20-19) play at Memphis. The Pistons (21-18) visit Brooklyn today. E-Twaun Moore scored 23 points for the Pelicans and DeMarcus Cousins scored 15 of his 20 points in the fourth quarter and finished with 10 rebounds. Jrue Holiday scored 14 points and Rajon Rondo had 12 points and 15 assists. Tobias Harris led Detroit with 25 points, Avery Bradley scored 24, Andre Drummond had 16 points and 14 rebounds, Ish Smith scored 16 and Reggie Bullock and Dwight Buycks scored 10 each.

CLIPPERS 108, HAWKS 107

C.J. Williams copped a 3-pointer with 9.1 seconds left as Los Angeles rallied to hand Atlanta its latest loss, 108-107 in Los Angeles. It capped a rally from a 105-100 deficit that saw the Hawks playing percentages, opting to foul DeAndre Jordan on the Clippers' next two possessions. But Jordan, a notoriously terrible foul shooter who has improved to 60.6 percent this season, drained four straight free throws to pull Los

Angeles (18-21) within a point.

WARRIORS 124, NUGGETS 114

Stephen Curry contributed 32 points and nine assists and Golden State avenged their worst offensive showing this season by beating Denver, 124-114, in Oakland, Calif. Draymond Green had 23 points and 10 assists and Klay Thompson scored 19 points as Golden State won its fifth straight game and improved its NBA-best record to 33-8. The Warriors shot 56.5 percent from the field despite being without forward Kevin Durant for the third straight game due to a calf injury.

SPURS 107, KINGS 100

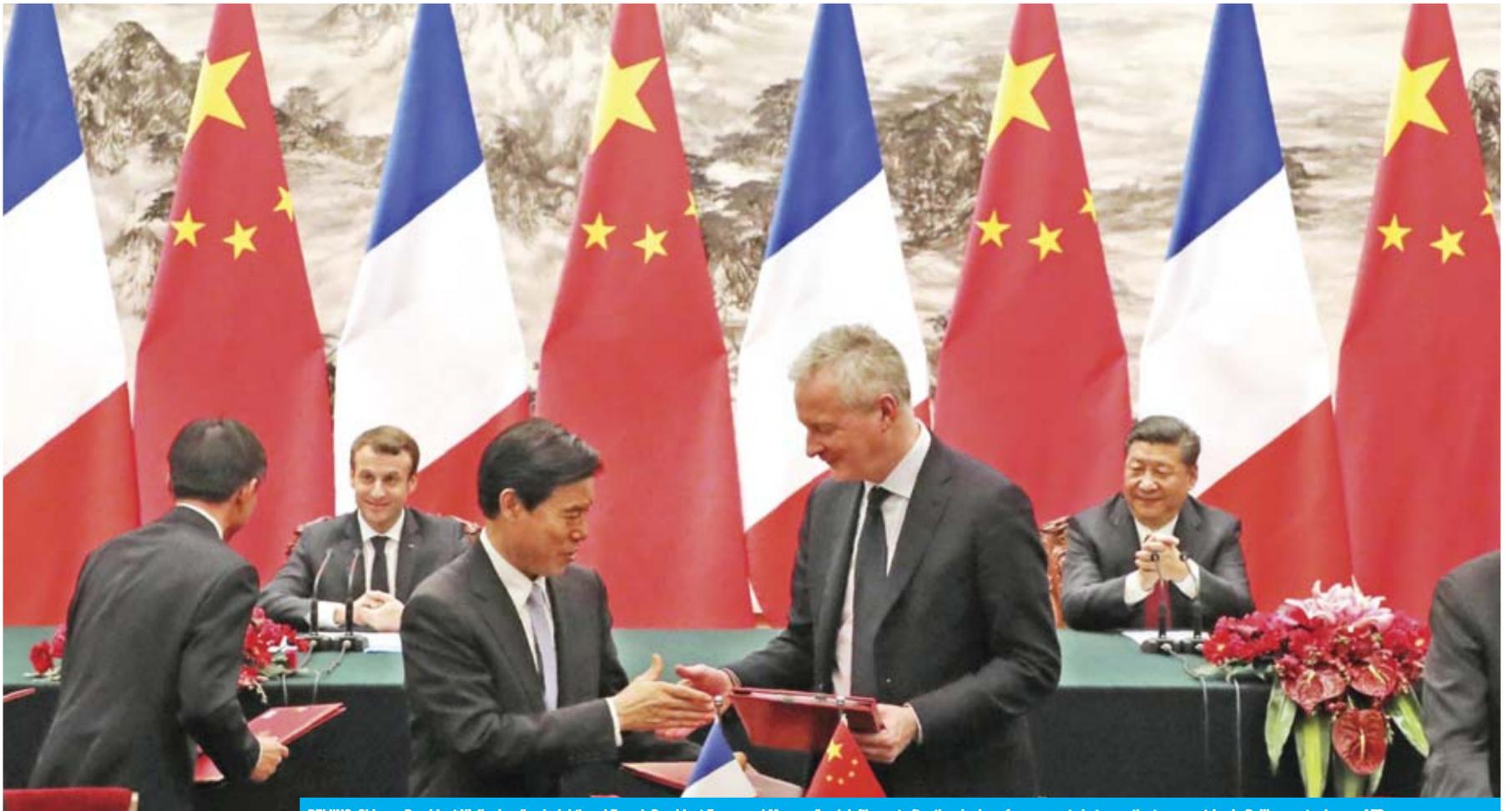
LaMarcus Aldridge had 31 points and 12 rebounds and Davis Bertans enjoyed a career night as San Antonio rallied to a 107-100 victory over host Sacramento. Bertans established career highs of 28 points and six 3-pointers as San Antonio recovered from a 13-point deficit. Bertans was 11-of-15 shooting, including 6-of-9 from 3-point range. Willie Cauley-Stein had 22 points and nine rebounds for the Kings, who lost for the sixth time in the past eight games.—Reuters



CHICAGO: Justin Holiday #7 of the Chicago Bulls passes to teammate Bobby Portis around Clint Capela #15 of the Houston Rockets at the United Center on Monday in Chicago. — AFP

Business

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2018

19 Turkish Airlines introduces inflight toys to delight youngest travelers**20** BOJ bond tweak buoys yen, stocks rally rumbles on**21** Al-Sayer reinforces strategic campaign against 'fake parts'

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping (back right) and French President Emmanuel Macron (back left) react after the signing of agreements between the two countries in Beijing yesterday. — AFP

In China, Macron pitches France Inc

French president heads 50-member business delegation

BEIJING: President Emmanuel Macron offered to open up France to Chinese investment in exchange for greater access to China's booming markets yesterday, warning during talks in Beijing that existing trade imbalances would lead to protectionism.

On the second leg of a three-day state visit, the first of his eight-month-old presidency, Macron is hoping greater openness from China, coupled with lobbying from the 50-strong business delegation travelling with him, will help narrow the 30-billion-euro (\$36 billion) trade deficit Paris runs with Beijing.

But despite bringing with him some of the heaviest hitters in French business, finance and industry—including senior executives from Airbus, BNP Paribas, AccorHotels, EDF and LVMH — there were no immediate announcements of mega-deals. Instead, smaller contracts or commitments to go on talking were signed. BNP Paris was set to announce plans

for a joint-venture on consumer credit, an official said, and added that French nuclear group Areva had "never been so close" to signing a contract to build a reprocessing plant in China. "We have an access to markets which is unbalanced, unsatisfying," Macron told members of the French and Chinese business community at a start-up incubator in Beijing.

"If we don't deal with this responsibly, the first, natural, reaction will be to close up on both sides." In his short time in office so far, 40-year-old Macron has managed to push through reforms to France's labor market and seen a steady rise in business and consumer confidence. Growth forecasts for 2018 have been upgraded.

In the absence of either German and British leadership, with Chancellor Angela Merkel bogged down in coalition negotiations and

Prime Minister Theresa May swamped by Brexit, Macron has emerged as arguably the strongest voice in Europe. The trip to China is well-timed to convey that message and



France wants more openness from China

Macron has not been shy about promoting it, declaring after he arrived that "Europe is back" and announcing that he would visit China every year of his five-year presidency.

But while the rhetoric has been strong, and TV commentary suggests Macron and his glamorous 64-year-old wife Brigitte have been a big hit with the Chinese, the underlying success of state visits is best measured these days in business contracts.

One of the most closely watched sectors is aerospace, with Airbus talks to sell 100 or more jetliners to China, officials familiar with the talks said last week. Jack Ma, founder and executive chairman of online retailer Alibaba, gave Macron's pitch for more openness his backing on Tuesday, but added both sides had a part to play.

"I think he's right, China should open more, China is opening more," he told reporters on the sidelines of a business forum at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. "France should open more, China should open more," he added. Macron, who met President

Xi Jinping on Monday evening, said the two countries would fall into a lose-lose situation if continued restrictions on foreign firms in China prompted France and Europe to put a brake on Chinese investment in Europe.

"Let's open up both instead," said Macron, whose government has at the same time called for greater scrutiny of Chinese investment in Europe, particularly in sensitive sectors, concerned about protecting French interests and security. Despite the relatively small number of deals announced so far, officials were confident of success. "We're confident we'll achieve more than symbolic stuff," a French official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. As well as aerospace, the agrifood sector is seen as key. At the start-up incubator, French engineering firm Fives signed a deal with Chinese online retail giant JD.com, which will set up a logistics center in France to source French food and luxury products for sale online in China. — Reuters

Samsung tips record Q4 operating profit of more than \$14bn

SEOUL: South Korean telecom giant Samsung Electronics expects to post a record operating profit of more than \$14 billion in the fourth quarter, it said yesterday, boosted by huge demand for its memory chips. The booming chip unit has helped the firm overcome a bribery scandal that saw its de facto head jailed and the embarrassing Galaxy Note 7 debacle.

Samsung estimated operating profits would hit 15.1 trillion won (\$14.1 billion) in October-December, nearly double the 9.2 trillion won posted a year earlier. However, the figure was below analyst forecasts, which averaged 16.1 trillion won in a survey by Bloomberg News. Full-year operating profit was projected at 53.6 trillion won—also a record.

Samsung was dealt a blow in August when Lee Jae-Yong was jailed after being found guilty of bribery, perjury and other charges relating to payments made by Samsung to ousted president Park Geun-Hye's secret confidante. Lee is appealing his five-year sentence and says he is

innocent. That came after a damaging recall in 2016 of its flagship Galaxy Note 7 over exploding batteries, which cost Samsung billions of dollars and dealt a blow to its global reputation. But the travails have not impacted demand for Samsung Electronics' products. Fourth-quarter sales were projected to have jumped 23.8 percent year-on-year to 66 trillion won, with full-sales estimated at 239.6 trillion won.

The firm's share price sank 3.11 percent to 2.52 million won in Seoul, with analysts raising concerns about the impact of a stronger won and lower chip prices.

"The won-dollar exchange rate is worrisome," Lee Seung-Woo, an analyst at Eugene Investment and Securities, said in a report before the announcement, according to Bloomberg News. But Greg Roh, an analyst at HMC Investment Securities, said the figures were "satisfactory" despite missing estimates. "I think Samsung overspent on marketing because it was the end of the year," Roh told

AFP, and added: "The first quarter for this year looks good for Samsung."

Samsung will reportedly roll out its new flagship smartphone, the Galaxy S9, next month, to compete with rival Apple's iPhone X. Analysts say that the launch of the new model will boost the mobile division, which faces fierce competition from Apple and Chinese manufacturers.

Since the arrest of some of its top executives last year, the wider Samsung Group—whose turnover is equivalent to a fifth of South Korea's gross domestic product—has dismantled its Future Strategy Office, the coordinating body that oversees major decisions such as acquisitions or entering new business. The group described the move as a "reform plan", which would allow each unit—including Samsung Electronics, its flagship subsidiary—to run more independently in a transparent manner.

Samsung Electronics announced last October the first major reshuffle in its top leadership since 2014, when the wider group's chairman Lee Kun-Hee suffered a heart attack that left him bedridden. The company replaced each of the three co-CEOs who lead its semiconductor, mobile and TV units with younger executives, after its chief executive Kwon Oh-Hyun stepped down saying the South's biggest firm was facing an "unprecedented crisis".

UK retailers lose sparkle over Christmas: Survey

LONDON: British retailers faced a slowdown in sales over the crucial Christmas trading period, survey data showed yesterday, as shoppers were squeezed by higher prices and stagnating wages.

Retail sales rose 1.4 percent last month from a year earlier, according to a survey from the British Retail Consortium (BRC) and financial group KPMG. That compared with 1.7-percent expansion in December 2016.

"With inflation outpacing income growth, shoppers continued to see more of their spending power absorbed by essential items, including food, leaving less left over for buying Christmas gifts," said BRC Chief Executive Helen Dickinson.

"That made this year's festive period all the more nail-biting for non-food retailers, many of whom offered deep discounts in the

last weeks before Christmas in the hope of something to celebrate."

Capital Economics analyst Finn McLaughlin agreed that consumers simply had less cash to buy goods and services. "December's BRC retail sales monitor suggested that Christmas trading failed to provide much relief to retailers with spending growth broadly in line with its subdued average over the past year," McLaughlin said.

"The squeeze on real incomes has continued to leave consumers with less room for discretionary purchases." Workers' wages are still being eroded by Brexit-fuelled inflation, recent official data showed. Average weekly earnings rose by 2.5 percent year-on-year in the three-month period to October. That lagged behind Britain's annual inflation rate of 3.1 percent. — AFP

GCC markets end year 2017 with a strong performance

Global equities continued positive momentum

KUWAIT: Global equities continue their positive streak for the year, with the MSCI All Country World Index up 1.5 percent in December, bringing the full year performance to 21.6 percent. In the US, the Federal Reserve raised interest rates by 0.25 percent, as markets had anticipated, in their December meeting. President Trump has also officially signed the tax reform law, in an effort to lower rates on corporate and household taxes, and is expected to result in a \$1.5 trillion tax cut. In Europe however, political uncertainty continues to take center stage, as the pro-independence parties won a majority in Catalonia's regional election and Italy passed its 2018 budget, allowing for the dissolution of parliament and new elections. Commodities ended December in the green with Gold and Brent up 2.2 percent and 5.2 percent, respectively with full year performance at 13.5 percent and 17.7 percent. OPEC continues to be compliant with the output curbs, realizing 121 percent of their pledged cuts in December.

In the US, the Markit Manufacturing Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) came in at 55.1 for December, up 1.2 points from the previous month while the Services PMI came in at 53.7, below November's reading of 54.5 due to a drop in new orders, hiring and business optimism. Initial Jobless Claims went up to 245,000 compared to the last reading of 238,000. Durable Goods Orders increased 1.3 percent in November compared to the 0.4 percent decrease in October, boosted by civilian aircraft orders, which rose 14.5 percent for the month to \$12.5 billion. Housing Starts rose 3.3 percent to 1.297m in November, driven by starts for single-family homes up 5.3 percent to 930,000, the highest increase since 2007, while building

NBK CAPITAL

permits fell 1.4 percent to 1.298m. Retail Sales is up 0.8 percent month-on-month in November, exceeding expectations of 0.3 percent, as consumers were getting ready for the holidays. Gross Domestic Product in the third quarter grew at 3.2 percent annualized, supported by strong business spending, specifically nonresidential fixed investment.

US equities were positive in December up 1.8 percent and 1.0 percent for the Dow Jones and S&P 500, respectively and full year are up 25.1 percent and 19.4 percent.

In the UK, manufacturing continues to witness above average growth despite the Markit Manufacturing PMI dropping to 56.3 in December compared to 58.2 in November. The Services PMI on the other hand came in higher than expected at 54.2, compared to November's reading of 53.8. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased by 0.3 percent in November, putting the annual inflation rate at 3.1 percent, its strongest since March 2012. Retail Sales came in surprisingly strong in November, up 1.1 percent, indicating that the continuous drop in Consumer Confidence, currently at -13, has yet to impact household spending. The final reading for the Q3 GDP remained unchanged at 0.4 percent, with the annual rate revised up to 1.7 percent. UK recovered from last month's loss, up 4.9 percent in December, as measured by the FTSE 100 and is up 7.6 percent for the year. In Europe, the Markit Manufacturing PMI went up slightly to 60.6 in

December compared to 60.1 in November on the back of new orders driven by domestic and international demand. The Services PMI came in slightly higher at 56.6 compared to November's reading of 56.2. Consumer Confidence is expected to continue to improve in December, on a preliminary basis at 0.5 percent compared to November's reading of 0.1 percent.

European equities were positive, up 0.6 percent in December, recovering from the previous month's loss, as measured by the Stoxx Europe 600. For the year, the index is up 7.7 percent. In Japan, the trade surplus decreased to JPY 113B in November from JPY 285B in October as exports increased by 16.2 percent and imports slowed to 17.2 percent. The CPI increased in November by 0.7 percent month-on-month, however the annualized figure remains well below the Bank of Japan's 2 percent inflation target. The Nikkei Manufacturing PMI came in at 54.2 in November higher than October's figure of 53.6. Retail Trade recovered in November up 2.2 percent, following October's loss of 0.2 percent while Housing Starts dropped 0.4 percent year-over-year in November.

Japanese equities ended the month and year up 0.2 percent and 19.1 percent respectively, as measured by the Nikkei 225. In domestic currency terms, Chinese exports grew 10.3 percent in November from 6.1 percent in October, indicating stronger external demand in key markets, while imports slowed slightly to 15.6 percent from 15.9 percent. The trade surplus widened to CNY 263.6B in November from CNY 254.5B in October. The CPI was flat in November yet increased by 1.7 percent for the year. Retail Sales increased 10.2 percent year-on-year in

November, largely due to communication equipment sales, which grew 33.9 percent for the year compared to 2.1 percent in October. The Caixin Manufacturing PMI for December came in at 51.7, higher than November's reading of 50.8, while the Services PMI increased from 51.9 to 53.9 in December.

The MSCI Emerging Market Index ended the month of December in the green 3.4 percent. The index also registered gains of 34.4 percent for the year, proving to be the best performing global index. Chinese equities ended the month in the red for the second consecutive month, down slightly 0.3 percent in December however full year performance the index is up 6.6 percent.

The GCC equity markets performed well in December with the MSCI GCC Countries Index ending the month up 3.3 percent and the year up 0.7 percent. The best performing index for the month was Qatar's DSM Index, up 10.5 percent followed by Bahrain up 3.7 percent, Saudi Arabia up 3.2 percent, and Abu Dhabi and Kuwait up 2.7 percent and 0.7 percent respectively. For the second consecutive month, Dubai was the worst performing GCC index, down 1.5 percent followed by Oman down 0.2 percent. For the full year performance, Bahrain was the best performing index, registering gains of 9.1 percent, followed by Kuwait up 5.6 percent and Saudi Arabia up 0.2 percent. The worst performing index in 2017 was Qatar down 18.3 percent, followed by Oman down 11.8 percent and Dubai and Abu Dhabi down 4.6 percent and 3.3 percent respectively. Egypt's EGX 30 ended the month and year in the green 3.0 percent and 21.7 percent respectively.

Trishaws continue to roll on Myanmar's clogged streets

YANGON: Surrounded by a trove of tools and spare parts, trishaw maker Aye Zaw works on his latest model of the pedal-powered three-wheeler, readying it for the clogged roads of Myanmar's biggest city. Undeterred by the rapid transformation of Yangon's streets from sedate thoroughfares to car-choked arteries in just a few years, the 46-year-old revels in defying the changing times with his traditional form of transport. "I love the work very much," the craftsman tells AFP from a workshop bursting with wheel rims, springs, piping and tools.

"I am always finding ways to make trishaws better and better." He joined the family business aged 16, learning the trade from his father, and now works with his younger brother, Htay Zaw, to make around seven trishaws every month.

The cheapest model costs 430,000 kyats (\$315) but customers who pay a little more can opt for a flashier version with steel trimmings. The brothers' reputation has even spread outside of Myanmar, with one creation snapped up by an American tourist and another by an

Israeli embassy official leaving the country. But Yangon's streets are unrecognizable from a few years ago. Myanmar has seen an explosion in vehicle numbers since a military-backed government launched reforms in 2011 that opened the country to the outside world after decades of isolation.

Car import rules were relaxed and traffic now moves infuriatingly slowly. Myanmar has tried to improve the congestion by overhauling the bus system, building flyovers, upgrading a circular railway line, and most recently, introducing water taxis. But the streets remain jammed.

Sixty-year-old Aung Ba is one of the city's 25,000 licensed trishaw drivers and has been peddling Yangon's streets for 30 years, earning about 10,000 kyat (\$7.5) each day. The busier roads are more dangerous, but Aung Ba says there is still a place for the three-wheelers. "It wouldn't be good to drive a car."

But riding a trishaw, I can find my way through as I want," he says sitting beside his vehicle in the city's northern Mayangon Township. Aye Zaw is also confident the iconic vehicle will not disappear from Yangon's streets just yet and would be happy for his son to take over the business. "I don't want to force my son into making or not making trishaws," he says. "But if he loves the trade then of course he should do it."—AFP

Economic crisis means tough start to 2018 for Venezuelans

CARACAS: Luis Briceno built up a small bottle branding business over the last 25 years but in the maelstrom of Venezuela's economic crisis he and many like him are facing closure.

"This New Year is criminal," he said reflecting the anguish of millions of Venezuelans facing acute shortages sparked by falling oil prices, political unrest and corruption. Socialist President Nicolas Maduro last week decreed a 40 percent increase in the minimum wage to try to contain the crisis, after food protests broke out in several cities. But Briceno believes it will only complicate things for his and other small businesses. "It seems criminal, because ask the workers themselves if they want the government to increase the minimum wage and they say no, because the next day everything increases." Although he tries to avoid thinking about it, the 70-year-old businessman knows that the next few months will be crucial for his small firm, which is already battling a shortage of supplies and a hyperinflationary spiral that the government said reached 2,616 percent by the end of December.

To make matters worse, two of his three remaining employees are planning to join the lines of young emigrants fleeing the crisis. Not long ago, his firm used to employ 10.

'Every time you buy less'

In the business district of the capital, 53-year-old housewife Raquel Benarroch said she was saddened by the closure of scores of businesses that "will never open again." "Before, we saw the bottom of the abyss, now we see things much blacker than that." Despite Maduro's announcement of a minimum wage increase, most Venezuelans will still earn only about \$7 a month in salary and food vouchers, based on the commonly used black market exchange rate. Briceno said he pays above minimum wage to



CARACAS: View of partially empty supermarket shelves in Caracas, Venezuela's government forced more than 200 establishments to lower prices in the middle of a hyperinflationary spiral. —AFP

his employees, but he now has to increase the food voucher quotient, which represents 69 percent of the total wage. His costs will rise, and so will costs all along the chain of production, he said. The government says 13 million Venezuelan workers earn the minimum wage or receive the vouchers, out of a workforce of 19.5 million.

Ever-rising inflation means the basic income barely buys a basket of staples like kilo of meat, 30 eggs, a kilo of sugar and a kilo of onions.

"Every time you go shopping you buy less and your budget is limited to food," 50-year-old tourism employee David Ascanio told AFP as he shopped in a Caracas market. On Saturday, the government forced more than 200 supermarkets in the capital to lower prices, causing huge lines to form outside as Venezuelans jumped at the chance to stretch their meager incomes.

Experts say wage increases are needed to cope with hyperinflation, but they are useless without other government measures, such as reducing liquidity. Monetary liquidity increased 1,100 percent in 2017, according to the analysts Rendalores.

"The problem is not the pill that you take, but the one you are not taking," said economist Luis Vicente Leon, adding that the government needed to free up and rationalize the economy

and promote private enterprise. The government said the increases are necessary to counter the runaway inflation, which it has long insisted is part of an "economic war" aimed at overthrowing Maduro.

'For 2018, we have nothing'

Falling oil prices—in a country where oil contributes 96 percent of state income—political unrest, and corruption have decimated the country's economy under Maduro, leading to chronic food and medicine shortages. The Fedecamaras employers' union says industry is working at 30 percent of capacity due to state controls and expropriations.

Having once produced 70 percent of its food needs, the country with the world's largest oil reserves supplied barely 30 percent in 2017 and that was because they could still rely on stores of fertilizers and seeds, said Aquiles Hopkins, the head of the country's agribusiness sector Fedeaagro.

"For 2018, we have nothing," he warned. The IMF forecast a drop in GDP of 12 percent in 2017 and 6.0 percent in 2018. The state as well as its oil company PDVSA have been declared in default due to delays on capital payments and interest on debt. —AFP



YANGON: A trishaw driver sleeping on his cycle in the early evening in Yangon. —AFP

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.683
Indian Rupees	4.26
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
Bahraini 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

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
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 0.001139	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
Svedish Krona	0.032118	0.038118
Swiss Franc	0.303918	0.314918
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.229772	0.241772
New Zealand Dollar	0.210814	0.220314
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.238480	0.247480
US Dollars	0.298150	0.302570
US Dollars Mint	0.298650	0.302570
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003284	0.003868

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

Turkish Airlines introduces new inflight toys to delight its youngest travelers

Airline to ensure sustainable development and eco-friendly operations



KUWAIT: Turkish Airlines, with the world's largest and most comprehensive network in terms of countries and international destinations that reached, continues to find ways to enhance the travel experience for its customers within the context of its award-winning environmental policies.

As from January 2018, the airline will completely revamp its selection of inflight toys now made from all-natural materials. This is in line

with the airline's recognition of the possible harmful effects of plastic on both children and the environment. Turkish Airlines is committed to making certain that every aspect of its operation is consistent with its goal of sustainable development and eco-friendly operations.

The new toys, especially designed for Turkish Airlines, recognize the need to provide young travelers between three and 12 with additional entertainment while inflight. The toy

set gives children this opportunity while simultaneously introducing them to the concept of endangered species. Through play, Turkish Airlines, in conjunction with the World Wildlife Fund of Turkey, hopes to instill an appreciation of animal protection among our children-those who will inherit the world and will be responsible for its care.

The stuffed toys are created from cotton and the wooden parts are manufactured



according to the sustainability rules set by the Forest Stewardship Council.

By developing eco-friendly products and packaging, Turkish Airlines will continue to make innovations.

In this case, the global carrier has worked with the toy industry to develop items that promote sustainability and better health while at the same time increasing wildlife awareness for its youngest guests.

British Airways invests in substantial new catering for world traveller customers

KUWAIT: British Airways is announcing a multi-million pound investment in its World Traveller (long-haul economy cabin) catering, introducing an exciting and expanded new menu, which provides more quantity and quality to both meals and great snacking options throughout the flight.

- Options now include:
- * Pretzels with the welcome drink
- * Four-course meal with starter, entree, dessert, cheese and biscuits, accompanied by a bread roll and bottle of water
- * Second meal or substantial snack depending on the length of the flight
- * Regional meal options served according to destination
- * Magnum ice-creams
- * Tuck box with chocolates and crisps
- * Hot breakfast on longer overnight flights
- * Graze movie-snack box on longer flights
- * Complimentary drinks from the bar

Previously customers travelling in the cabin were served a complimentary snack, a three-course-meal or a light meal, depending on the time and length of their flight as well as a complimentary bar service of hot and cold drinks. The new catering arrives from January 17, and the menus that will change every six months.

Carolina Martinoli, British Airways' director of brand and customer experience, said: "Our customers tell us that when they're taking a long-haul flight, great food and beverages make a real difference to them. It's a huge driver of customer satisfaction so we want to make sure we deliver a great experience. With this multi-million pound investment we've focused on introducing more quantity and quality to the catering, delivering tasty meals and great snacking options throughout the flight."

"Our new four-course main meal has been developed by our team of chefs to be full of flavor at 35,000ft and we've created regional options depending on the route. The second meal option is

either a tasty sandwich or a more substantial pizza wrap, both served with additional snacks, depending on the length of the flight."

"Our customers have also told us they want to be able to save some items for later in the flight, so we've replaced the water cup with a bottle of Highland Spring on the first meal, and added Graze snack boxes on our longest flights. We're also offering Magnum ice-creams on daylight flights from London and a Tuck Box on inbound and overnight flights."

The airline's customers will be welcomed with pretzels and a drink. Once they are settled in, they will be served a four-course meal such as a starter of couscous salad, followed by a main course of chicken casserole with an ale sauce, colcannon mash and seasonal vegetables, or a vegetarian tomato, farfalle and vegetable dish. Dessert will be a Pots & Co salted caramel and chocolate mousse, followed by biscuits and cheese. The meal will be accompanied by a bread roll and a bottle of Highland Spring water.

On the shorter daylight long-haul flights to destinations such as New York and Dubai, fliers will also receive a sandwich such as egg and cress with a chocolate or Nutri-Grain bar. Those on longer daylight flights to destinations such as Cape Town

and Hong Kong will receive a hot meal, such as a pizza wrap or a regional option, with a pot of pasta, a chocolate brownie and a drink as well as a smokehouse BBQ crunch Graze movie-snack box. A hot English breakfast will also be served on these longer flights that operate overnight.

Customers on daylight flights from London will be offered a range of Magnum ice-creams, while those on night flights will be offered a tuck-box with options such as Dairy Milk Buttons, Twix, Kit-Kats and Mini Cheddars, which will also be available in the galley for them to help themselves to.

The airline is also serving regional main meal options around its network, such as chicken in spicy cheng du sauce on flights to and from to China, Hong Kong, Japan and Korea, kathrikai milagu seeragam and channa dal on flights to and from Chennai, Hyderabad and Mumbai and acchhari veg and dal palak on flights to and from Bangalore and Delhi. On flights to the Middle East (Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Dubai, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia), customers can enjoy chicken in spicy Arabic sauce.

Regional breakfasts will also be served including Chicken Congee for Far Eastern routes and an Indian option featuring: Idli Shanna, Sambhar, upma and dosa.

The popular meal options for customers with special dietary requirements will continue to be available to book on ba.com/managementbooking more than 24 hours ahead of their flight departing.

Travellers looking for a special treat can also pre-order meals on flights from Heathrow up to 24-hours before their flight. Options include a Gourmet Dining meal for £18.00, Taste of Britain and Taste of the Far East for £16.00 and a Great British Breakfast, a Healthy Choice meal or a Vegetarian Kitchen option all for £15.00.

British Airways is investing £4.5 billion for customers over the next five years, covering the installation of the best quality WiFi and power in every seat, fitting 128 long-haul aircraft with new interiors and taking delivery of 72 new aircraft. The airline is also investing £600m specifically in Club World, including outstanding catering and luxurious White Company bedding - plus, from 2019, a new seat with direct aisle access. This year British Airways will start services to six new routes including Nashville and The Seychelles.



Gulf Bank invites Kuwait to join its Al-Danah millionaire draw event tomorrow!



KUWAIT: Gulf Bank will be holding its annual Al-Danah account draw event for KD 1 million, the largest bank prize draw in the world, according to Guinness World Records. The event will take place at 7 pm tomorrow (11 January) at The Avenues Mall in Kuwait. During the exciting evening, the bank will also be announcing winners of the red account final draw where a lucky winner will be receiving a Fiat 500c. Additionally, the main event will also offer the audience a chance to win cash prizes by playing Gulf Bank's fun "Catch the Cash" money box game!

The pre-event will start at 5pm with children's activities, followed by the Al-Mass Band, which will be performing traditional Kuwaiti songs and dances at 6 pm. Then the Al-Danah draw, hosted by Media personality Omar Al-Othman, will start at 7pm, during which Al-Danah's newest millionaire will be announced. Red is an account specifically for high school, college, and university students aged between 15 and 25 years. Red prizes include an Apple iPhone, iPad pro, Apple Watch, in addition to the Fiat car. As with all Gulf Bank draws, it will be conducted in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Gulf Bank is happy to announce that in addition to all the prizes and activities noted, it will be offering the audience a chance to win up to

KD 3,000 cash with the exciting "Catch the Cash" money box game. The "Catch the Cash" game is open to all, but you must be present at the event in the Avenues in order to be selected to participate.

Participation is free of charge; participants need to just register at the registration desk, which will be located at Grand Avenue, and then registered names will then be randomly selected. Registration for "Catch the Cash" competition will be opened from 5 pm to the start of the event at 7pm. Selected participants will then step inside Gulf Bank's cash box and try to catch as many flying notes as they can in 10 seconds, and these notes are then exchanged for real cash on the spot.

Al-Danah is Gulf Bank's flagship account and account holders are eligible to win valuable cash prizes through its daily and quarterly. 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. Gulf Bank's red 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, in addition to number of other benefits and advantages.

AUB launches 'Your Investment is Worth Gold' to reward Al-Khair deposit customers

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank (AUB) announced the launch of the unmatched promotional campaign 'Your Investment is Worth Gold' to reward Al-Khair long-term deposit customers. This campaign offers the Bank's customers the chance to enter a draw to win one of 10 valuable gold prizes upon opening an Al-Khair long-term deposit for a period of one year or more. The campaign runs until 28th February 2018. The first prize of the draw is valued at 1 kilogram of gold, the 2nd prize at a half kilogram of gold and the 3rd prize at a quarter kilogram of gold. The 4th to 10th prizes are all valued at 100 grams of gold each. The draw will take place and winners will be announced on 20th March 2018.

The campaign provides customers with one chance to enter the draw for every new KD 10,000 deposited for a period of one year, 2 chances when maintained for 2 years and 3 chances when maintained for 3 years.

On this occasion, AUB's head of branches Amer Najem said, "We at AUB believe that our success is based on building profitable financial relationships with our new and existing customers as well as strong, long-term relationships between the Bank and its customer base. We have allocated these valuable gold prizes during the campaign to enhance the loyalty of our customers, and we are proud to start 2018 with this outstanding campaign 'Your



Investment is Worth Gold'. Moreover, Al-Khair deposits from AUB offer one of the best investment opportunities that are Shari'ah compliant. Now customers can choose a longer tenor for higher profit return reaching a very competitive rate of 2.75 percent yearly for the 3 year Wakala Fixed deposit.

The deposit offers three investment terms (one year, two years and three years) with a minimum deposit of KD 10,000. Profits are deposited to customers' accounts via monthly payments. Furthermore, the Al-Khair long-term deposit can be broken and customers can withdraw their funds before the maturity date, subject to relevant terms and conditions applied.

Eurozone yields steady amid year's first wave of high-grade supply

LONDON: Eurozone government bond yields resisted upward pressure from new supply and a rise in US and Japanese peers yesterday, underscoring the strong demand for European assets in the market.

On a day when three euro zone countries held their first auctions of 2018 and 10-year US Treasury yields hit their highest since March on

news the BoJ had trimmed its purchases of long-dated Japanese government bonds, yields were flat to a touch lower across the eurozone.

Germany, the Netherlands and Austria sold over 3.5 billion euros of bonds between them, receiving strong demand from investors. The yield on all three countries' debt has risen in recent weeks as the European economy motors on. High-grade bonds tend to underperform in benign conditions as investors switch to riskier assets with better returns. But as a result of the sell-off, those bonds are now looking attractive, analysts said.

"The broader picture is yields are still low but we still need to be excited a bit on this (upward) move in the last few weeks," said ING strategist Martin Van Vliet.

The yield on the region's benchmark, German 10-year debt, was flat at 0.43 percent yesterday, well above the mid-December level of 0.30 per-

cent. The Dutch equivalent was also flat at 0.52 percent but was about 16 bps higher than its December low, while Austria has seen its 10-year borrowing costs increase 18 bps over the past month to 0.57 percent.

In a continuation of a recent trend, Southern European debt outperformed, and the gap between Spanish and German bond yields was at its tightest since September. Normally, an improvement in economic conditions would cause investors to be cautious about buying government bonds as it makes an early end to the European Central Bank's bond-buying scheme more likely. But with inflation yet to show a sustained increase, investors would feel reasonably safe buying debt. "To me, the current Bund yield level makes sense given economic data looks rock solid. The only thing we're all waiting for is signs of inflationary pressure," said Van Vliet. — Reuters

Business

BOJ tweak buoys yen, stocks rally

LONDON: A tweak to the Bank of Japan's bond-buying program shunted the yen higher yesterday, while gains from commodity stocks as oil hit its highest since 2015 helped world shares maintain their flying start to the year.

MSCI's all-country world stocks index posted another record high as Europe's main markets shrugged off a tech wobble in Asia and instead cheered Christmas trading updates, the oil gains and more forecast-beating data from Germany. Wall Street was expected to inch to fresh peaks too when trading resumes, though there will be plenty of cross-market cross-winds to tack through.

US Treasury yields-the biggest driver of global borrowing costs-had briefly touched a nine-month high in Europe on the mix of higher oil prices, good economic data and an unexpected move by the BOJ to trim its long-dated bond buys. That stoked speculation it

could start to wind down its stimulus policy this year and saw the yen rise as much as half a percent to 112.50 yen to the dollar.

"It shouldn't be perceived as a monstrous signal of the end of monetary easing but it shows that even the tiniest announcement on a quiet day can have a reaction," said Societe Generale's global head of currency strategy Kit Juckes.

"And it shows that when they start turning their ship around from this policy, the yen is going to go miles." Since it adopted its yield-curve-control policy in 2016, the BOJ has occasionally tweaked its buying, but some market players seemed to take yesterday's move as a signal of possible intent.

The dollar, meanwhile, was rising against most other major currencies including the euro, which having approached three-year highs last week slipped to a 10-day low of \$1.941.

That was despite the biggest increase in German industrial output since September 2009 and suggested investors might be becoming more cautious after a months-long rally that has pushed "long" euro positions to record levels. "I don't think right now levels substantially above \$1.20 are justified," Reichelt said. "I know the market is very optimistic about the euro, but if you look at the data and the central bank, the ECB (European Central Bank) is still on an expansionary path."

Wall Street upbeat

Wall Street's expected tick higher later comes with the fourth-quarter earnings season there just beginning and investors unashamedly upbeat. Citi analysts say global earnings revisions have now been upgraded for 14 weeks in a row, the best run of weekly upgrades since their data series started in

2000. Although high levels of earnings revisions are usually seen at the start or end of the economic/market cycle, they said "it is still too early to call the end of this cycle".

Commodity markets are one of potential factors in that. Oil prices jumped to their highest since mid-2015 on Tuesday amid OPEC-led production cuts and a dip in American drilling.

Brent crude the international benchmark, jettied as high as \$68.29 a barrel, its highest since May 2015, with U.S. WTI crude doing the same as it rose to \$61.91.

Beyond equalling that 2015 high, which was a short intra-day spike, yesterday's high was the strongest for WTI since December, 2014, at the start of the oil market slump. "Speculators continued to increase their net long in ICE Brent ... According to exchange data, speculators increased their position by 4,175 lots to leave them with a record net

lower of 565,459 lots," ING bank said.

Asian trading saw its own milestones. Japan's Nikkei closed at its highest since November 1991. China chalked up an eighth day of gains and stocks in the Philippines jumped 2 percent to a new all-time high. South Korea's KOSPI was dragged down though by a 3.1 percent drop in Samsung's shares after its profit guidance disappointed some analysts who are also wary about longevity of the boom in demand for the firm's memory chips.

Emerging market stocks were a touch lower anyway having hit a 6-1/2 year high this week. Angola's kwanza currency was braced for an expected devaluation, while Venezuela's battered bonds were dealt another blow as a key market body recommended that they should be traded on the presumption that they have as-good-as defaulted. — Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report				
Tuesday January 9, 2018				
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	
Price Index	▲ 20.50	6,518.99	6,498.49	
Weighted Index	▲ 2.51	412.32	409.81	
KSX 15	▲ 6.98	947.71	940.73	

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
IPG	400	399	60,757	24,259	2	400	▲ 10.0
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	800	▲ 0.0
ENERGYH	32.0	30.0	23,815	737	8	31.9	▲ 2.0
GPI	32.0	31.5	303,495	22,256	30	31.6	▼ -0.1
ABAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	70	▲ 0.0
Oil & Gas			788,067	47,251	48	949.53	▲ 9.70
KFOUC	235	225	113,844	26,136	24	228	▼ -4.0
BPCC	720	715	115,760	125,951	21	718	▲ 3.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	630	▲ 0.0
ALQURAN	336	330	288,022	96,150	30	333	▲ 1.0
Basic Materials			877,828	248,237	75	1277.89	▼ -0.70
KCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	472	▲ 0.0
CABLE	474	425	598,185	267,712	78	455	▲ 25.0
SHP	214	206	5,325	1,098	4	213	▼ -1.0
PCEM	976	976	1,000	976	1	976	▲ 24.0
PAPER	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250	▲ 0.0
MRC	70	70	500	35	3	70	▼ -1.0
ACICO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	256	▲ 0.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	156	▲ 0.0
NBCM	195	195	5,617	1,095	2	195	▲ 0.0
EQUIPMENT	37.1	36.1	130,505	5,077	9	36.9	▲ 0.7
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	▲ 0.0
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	▲ 0.0
SALBOOH	52	52	11,500	596	3	52	▼ -3.2
ADLY	855	833	1,074,071	906,309	123	854	▲ 22.0
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	309	▲ 0.0
CLEANING	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	53	▲ 0.0
KDL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	63	▲ 0.0
KGPC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	140	▲ 0.0
HUMANSOFT	3,800	3,748	119,830	449,793	33	3,748	▼ -10.0
NAFAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	890	▲ 0.0
GFC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	71	▲ 0.0
SHOOTING	23.9	22.8	564,809	13,118	29	23.0	▼ -0.8
COG	459	449	32,461	14,635	15	459	▼ -0.0
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56	▲ 0.0
UPAC	585	585	240	140	1	585	▲ 7.0
ALAFOD	375	368	38,225	14,325	8	375	▲ 14.0
MUBARRAD	69	67	96,031	6,554	6	69	▲ 2.3
LOGISTICS	47.0	45.9	586,171	26,078	29	46.5	▼ -0.8
SCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	▲ 0.0
GCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	83	▲ 0.0
QC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	71	▲ 0.0
FCEM	77	77	600,000	46,208	8	77	▼ -1.0
RKWC	72	72	10	1	1	72	▼ -12.7
SPEC	72	72	500	36	1	72	▲ 0.0
Subtotal			3,853,980	1,756,786	354	1851.13	▼ -0.30
Subtotal							▼ -0.30
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	84	▲ 0.0
CATL	245	228	524	120	8	245	▲ 0.0
DANAH	69	68	10,136	703	3	69	▼ -0.5
FOOD	1,100	1,055	1,000	1,096	2	1,055	▼ -0.0
Consumer Goods			11,660	1,919	11	940.08	▼ -3.10
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,100	▲ 0.0
YACD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	178	▲ 0.0
Health Care			0	0	0	1610.51	▲ 0.00
KCIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,149	▲ 0.0
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	246	▲ 0.0
SULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	67	▲ 0.0
CABLETV	19.2	19.2	58	1	1	19.2	▼ -0.5
IFARH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	185	▲ 0.0
OLUAFUEL	115	113	10,428	1,179	12	115	▼ -1.0
MAINTAZAHAT	72	72	31,000	2,225	2	72	▼ -0.0
JAZEERA	670	670	32,500	21,735	2	670	▲ 0.0
SOOR	113	113	27,152	3,068	10	113	▼ -3.0
FUTUREXID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	111	▲ 0.0
ALRAI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	118	▲ 0.0
Jiyad	94	93	1,679,550	157,201	152	94	▲ 1.0
Mazzan	800	796	65,555	53,142	23	796	▼ -8.0
Consumer Services			1,847,283	238,690	202	910.28	▼ -1.00
ZAIN	478	465	1,265,911	588,593	159	474	▲ 4.0
COOREDO	1,089	1,075	6,182	6,653	8	1,089	▲ 4.0
AAN	30.8	29.9	1,794,144	53,785	58	29.9	▼ -1.0
VIVA	795	790	51,683	40,956	57	791	▼ -1.0
Telecommunications			3,187,520	899,987	282	571.06	▲ 0.00
NBK	754	745	2,687,141	1,904,644	153	751	▲ 7.0
GBK	240	239	2,534,553	605,795	66	240	▲ 1.0
CBK	400	400	2,459	964	1	400	▲ 0.0
ABK	299	293	66,900	19,632	7	299	▲ 6.0
ALMUTAHED	350	347	162,608	56,721	19	350	▲ 2.0
KIB	237	234	776,248	183,090	28	235	▲ 1.0
BURG	318	313	104,181	32,892	14	318	▲ 1.0
KFIN	602	597	2,154,599	1,294,547	138	601	▲ 2.0
BOURBYAN	458	453	205,118	93,147	44	454	▲ 0.0
ITUB	208	206	1,858,503	383,554	79	208	▲ 1.0
ITHAR	48.0	46.5	3,146,544	149,548	90	47.8	▲ 1.0
WARBABANK	229	227	1,279,952	291,212	102	227	▲ 0.0
Banks			14,948,806	6,105,770	739	941.13	▲ 4.90
KNS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	270	▲ 0.0
GINS	690	630	3,724	2,423	7	640	▲ 63.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	490	▲ 0.0
WINS	64	56	752	46	3	56	▼ -7.3
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	192	▲ 0.0
FTI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	64	▲ 0.0
WETHAQ	50	50	500	25	1	50	▲ 3.0
BKQWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	▲ 0.0
Insurance			4,976	2,494	11	1050.24	▲ 22.40

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
SOKOLK	49.0	48.4	118,000	5,743	6	49.0	▲ 0.6
KRE	59	57	5,481,377	317,847	108	58	▲ 1.3
URC	77	72	16,509	1,244	3	77	▲ 0.0
NRE	125	123	112,483	13,932	12	126	▲ 1.0
SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	388	▲ 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	37.0	50,200	387	5	38.0	▲ 0.1
ARABREC	31.2	31.1	58,000	1,806	2	31.2	▼ -0.2
ERESCO	34.0	34.0	81,000	1,734	2	34.0	▼ -1.0
MABANEE	711	709	348,279	247,427	31	711	▲ 1.0
INJAZZAT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	82	▲ 0.0
INVESTORS	18.3	17.8	7,704,620	139,075	122	18.1	▼ -0.1
IRC	29.5	29.0	11,302	334	3	29.4	▲ 0.4
ALTJARRA	94	93	189,599	17,856	5	94	▼ -0.3
SIANAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	36.0	▲ 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	112	1,121,260	126,602	6	113	▲ 1.0
TJARRA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	57	▲ 0.0
TAMMEER	31.9	30.8	224,904	7,051	8	31.6	▼ -0.3
ARKAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	82	▲ 0.0
ARGAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	180	▲ 0.0
ABYANR	23.5	22.1	1,509,400	34,971	40	23.0	▼ -0.3
MUNSHAAT	72	69	146,789	10,239	10	72	▲ 3.0
FIRSTDUBAI	44.3	41.0	74,082	3,233	6	44.3	

ALSAYER reinforce strategic campaign against “Fake Parts”

MNSS Toyota Genuine Spare Parts Division holds workshop



KUWAIT: To spread awareness about the serious damages caused by using cheap quality spare parts, showcase activities by Al-Sayer against counterfeit Parts, Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer & Sons Co (MNSS) Toyota Genuine Spare Parts Division, a subsidiary of Al-Sayer Holding held a workshop on counterfeit parts in collaboration with the General Administration of Customs at Salmi and Nuwaiseeb land borders.

The events that took place on 21st & 26th Dec, were attended by Mohamed Hilal Business Director Parts and Accessories, Desmond Lew Business Director Parts and Group Logistics, Saied Al-Shurafa Deputy General Manager Parts and Accessories Sales, Mohammad Nasimi Senior Manager After Sales Marketing, Oommen Philip Deputy Manager Marketing and Pricing, Xavier Yesudas Manager Parts and Accessories Sales, Osama Al Shami Office Head Intellectual Property Rights office General Administration of Customs, Belal Al-Khamis Deputy Manager of Customs Nuwaiseeb border, Madloul Ziad Al-Shammari Asst. Supervisor Al-Salmi border, Tarek Abu Mariam Senior Associate and Mohamed Abdelhamed Associate from Al-Tamimi & Co law firm.

Welcoming the guests Mohamed Hilal said, “We thank the General Administration of Customs for giving us this opportunity. Our gathering today is a continuation of our hard work to activate community partnership with concerned government authorities, private sector institutions and experts to clarify and activate the importance of providing adequate protection for companies, with accredited trademarks, producing goods and services for the health and safety of humans and environment against damages accompanying the handling of counterfeited products and sensual dam-

ages that can be caused by it. We are pleased to work hand in hand serving consumers and our beloved countries interest.”

The main objective of the workshop was to educate the customs officers to differentiate between original and fake parts thru the various tools offered by Toyota Motor Corporation in the manufacturing of genuine parts. The event also featured an interactive question and answer session administered by Saied Al-Shurafa.

Educating the high risk of using counterfeit parts Saeed Al-Shurafa said “The spread of counterfeit parts has become a major concern for manufacturers, sellers and consumers alike. The perpetrators of these illegal activities became more professional, they use packaging materials and posters to conceal being absolutely counterfeit, or change it slightly so that the average consumer can’t distinguish it because of the difficulty of discovering these differences in any pieces.”

“The wide spread of counterfeit parts is an ever worsening problem which threatens manufacturers, sellers and consumers alike. Counterfeit parts pose great risks & danger to consumers and the overall community. Such cheap alternative products are made of materials of poor standards and specifications which cannot offer the required performance by the passage of time and which cannot withstand the tough weather conditions,” said Mohammad Nasimi.

• For example, counterfeit oil strain is made of cheap and low quality materials for lower costs which allow damaging materials to get into engine delivering poorer performance and shorter engine life as well as leakage of oil on the engine leading to the combustion of the vehicle.

• Air filter allowing dust into the combustion cham-



ber causing damage to the engine and heavy repair costs.

• Counterfeit brake discs and brake pads which increase the distance required to stop the car on breaking hence threatening consumer life and safety due to poor brake performance apart from damage to the braking system, the vehicle and higher maintenance costs.

• Counterfeit electrical parts delivering poor engine performance and risk to driver. Vehicles catching fire on the road is an example of the greatest risks and results of using counterfeit electrical parts, trading, promotion or using of which is a crime against consumers.

Al-Sayer has been educating customer and overall public awareness about counterfeit parts and their damaging effects and life threatening risks over the past two decades. These are aimed at educating customer and enhancing his awareness of the existence and the danger in using such counterfeits, and to encourage customers to shun such products and go for only Toyota genuine parts for safe driving and trouble free vehicle performance. Al-

Sayer is using hologram labels to identify and distinguish genuine parts for customers.

This comes in line with the Group’s social responsibility promoting such customer awareness and offering valuable information about modern day technology, safety standards of products, and road safety as well. Al-Sayer is in direct cooperation and coordination with the appropriate government control authorities and Customs authorities providing them with best control tools.

“We will continue to strengthen our marketing efforts towards educating the society about the danger of compromising on quality through purchasing counterfeit parts. No Counterfeit is our aim and we will fully support you to protect the consumer and Kuwait market from this problem,” added Mohamed Nasimi. The events concluded with speeches by Tarek Abu Mariam and Mohamed Abdelhamed representatives from Tamimi and Co Law Offices & Legal Consultants (Toyota representative) explaining intellectual property rights and the laws assigned to them.

“ Committed to deliver best products and after sales service ”



Technology

Tipping point: LG adds Google AI in next 'smart home' push

Google Assistant being integrated into LG products

LAS VEGAS: Consumer electronics titan LG on Monday proclaimed this year a "tipping point" for smart homes, pushing hard into artificial intelligence and building Google Assistant into a smart speaker. LG Electronics is developing technology designed to enable its appliances, televisions and other devices adapt to users and collaborate to handle tasks. The AI platform is "open" to utilizing software made by other companies, LG chief technology officer IP Park said during a press event on the eve of the official opening of the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

"The world has become just too complex for just any single company to insist on a proprietary, closed solution," Park said. LG collaborators include Google and Alexa creator Amazon, according to the South Korea-based consumer electronics titan. "2018 will be the tipping point for the smart home and, more important, for the smart connected lifestyle."

LG US marketing vice president David Vanderwaal said. Google Assistant is being integrated into LG products including televisions, headphones and smart speakers, Park said.

"Our goal at Google is to help people get things done in a natural, seamless way," Google Assistant vice president of engineering Scott Huffman said. Interacting with computers by speaking has proven a hit, and the ability of virtual aids to converse with people is expected to improve quickly, according to researchers from the Consumer Technology Association behind the annual CES gathering. A LG ThinQ speaker with Google Assistant will be available "in coming months," according to Huffman.

Robotic room service

LG's vision for its artificial intelligence platform

“ Even robots have bad days ”

includes enabling appliances, cars, air conditioners and other "everyday" devices to adapt to users' individual preferences as well as collaborate on tasks. "Our products will learn from users to provide intelligent services, not the other way around," Park said. "You won't have to study instruction manuals any more." An on stage-demo of the cute, table-top smart hub device called CLOi went awry though, with the voice-commanded device quickly ignoring the words of an LG executive. "CLOi doesn't like me evidently," quipped LG US marketing vice president David VanderWaal. "Even robots have bad days."

Such moments are playfully referred to as "the curse of the live demo" in Silicon Valley. LG is working on more and smarter robots, showing off concept models crafted to serve as hotel porters, deliver room service meals, or function as shopping carts complete with check-out capabilities. Panasonic announcements on the eve of CES included that it is working with Amazon to build Alexa smart assistant into "infotainment" systems it sells to car makers.

Panasonic planned to deliver Alexa voice command capabilities in cars, with some available even without internet connectivity. The Alexa Onboard technology integrated into Panasonic Skip Gen technology will bring voice functionality for in-car users, and for the first time, offer certain select Alexa capabilities without an Internet connection. "Alexa can help customers with thousands of things in the car - navigation, music, audiobooks and more," said Alexa automotive vice president Ned Curic. "This is a big step toward bringing Alexa to customers wherever they might need her, whether they're at home or on-the-go." Panasonic also collaborates with Google to build Assistant smarts into some of its products.



LAS VEGAS: LG service robots are seen during the LG press conference at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center during CES 2018. — AFP

Fight for homes

"The biggest theme is the fight for the connected home between Google and Amazon," Patrick Moorhead of Moor Insights & Strategy said during a day of back-to-back CES press briefings. "The notion that there is this new layer that can replace apps and operating systems means the stakes are high." If voice-commanded assistants become the new norm for interacting with computers and the internet, being the virtual aide of choice could be a powerful and profitable position.

"Competition is heating up for the smart assistant ecosystem, and the question is who is going to be the smart assistant of choice in 2018," Gartner analyst Brian Blau told AFP at CES. Apple and Google have big leads

in the race, since their rival digital assistants are already on millions of smartphones and computers, according to Blau. "That is why Amazon is being so aggressive; they need millions of more endpoints for Cortana in people's hands," Blau said. "The loser, if any, is Cortana because nobody is talking about them," he added, referring to Microsoft's digital assistant.

But, Moorhead countered, Microsoft is likely playing to its strength by angling to be the dominant digital assistant in workplaces and Cortana is already on some half a billion computers powered by Windows 10 software. "The industry is making strides, but we are a long way away from having everything in your house work together," Moorhead said. — AFP

Apple urged to study iPhone addiction in kids

NEW YORK: Two large shareholders urged Apple to study whether iPhones are proving addictive for children and that intensive use of the smartphones may be bad for their mental health. "There is a growing body of evidence that, for at least some of the most frequent young users, this may be having unintentional negative consequences" on their health, said Jana Partners LLC and California State Teachers' Retirement System (Calstrs) in a letter sent to Apple dated January 6 and made public Monday.

The "growing societal unease" over the intensive use of smartphones by children is "at some point is likely to impact even Apple," they warned. The two shareholders, which between them own about \$2 billion in Apple shares, urged the company to develop additional means for parents to restrict the use of mobile phones by their children. "We specifically ask that Apple form a committee of experts and specialists to research and study this issue and monitor ongoing developments in technology," the letter said.

"Additionally, we encourage Apple to offer parents more tools by enhancing mobile device software to enable age-appropriate setup options including limiting screen time, setting up parental monitoring, etc." The investors said confronting this issue now would enhance the value of the firm in the



LILLE: This file photo taken on November 15, 2014 shows an iPhone displayed in the new Apple store. — AFP

long term for all shareholders. Apple has not commented on the letter, but it provides parental controls on iPhones that allow restricting access to certain apps and content. Although Apple was singled out in the letter, the question of technology and screen time for children has long been debated.

The investors cited a recent study by the Center on Media and Child Health and the University of Alberta, according to which teachers observed that students are negatively distracted by digital technologies in the classroom. In the study, three fourths of teachers said students' ability to focus on

educational tasks has decreased. While it is not clear how many children use these devices, surveys indicate more than one billion smartphones are being sold each year. The letter represents a new source of pressure on Apple, after being forced to apologize last month for slowing down the performance of older iPhone models. Consumer groups had accused the tech giant of slowing down the older models to encourage purchase of newer models, but Apple said the move was meant to optimize performance of phones with older batteries and cut the price of replacing the battery. — AFP

Intel chief says their chip flaw damage contained

LAS VEGAS: Intel chief Brian Krzanich said Monday the impact of a recently discovered vulnerability in computer chips has been limited due to "remarkable" collaboration by the tech industry. Krzanich took the unusual step of addressing the security issue as he delivered a keynote ahead of the opening of the huge Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, an industry event expected to draw some 180,000 people from the sector.

As yet, Krzanich said, there is no information to suggest any loss of data from the so-called Meltdown and Spectre flaws and he added, "We are

working tirelessly to make sure it stays that way." The Intel chief executive made his most high-profile public comments since the release of research highlighting vulnerabilities affecting the chips powering most modern PCs and many mobile devices.

"The collaboration of so many companies (to mitigate the threat) is truly remarkable," Krzanich said. "Security is job number one for Intel and our industry. The primary focus of our discussions (on this issue) is to keep our customers data safe." Researchers at Google showed how a hacker could exploit the flaw to get passwords, encryption codes and more, even though there have been no reports of any attacks using the vulnerability.

Some analysts have warned that the threat is unique because it is an issue affecting hardware used in many computing systems. Krzanich said updates will be available for 90 percent of its products in the coming days and for the rest by the end of January, and urged all computer users to update as quickly as possible. — AFP

Ex-Google engineer fired over gender memo sues

SAN FRANCISCO: A former Google engineer fired after he asserted in a memo that biological causes were behind tech industry gender inequality sued his former employer on Monday, saying he was discriminated against as a white man with conservative political views. James Damore last year caused an uproar in Silicon Valley and beyond when he wrote the internal memo, which later became public. Google said he had perpetuated gender stereotypes and fired him in August.

In the months since, his firing has become a popular cause among right-leaning US bloggers, and Damore hired a Republican Party official as his attorney. Damore and another white male former Google engineer, David Gudeman, filed the lawsuit as a proposed class action in Santa Clara County Superior Court in California. The lawsuit alleges workplace discrimination and retaliation. Google, a unit of Alphabet Inc based in Mountain View, California, said in a statement: "We look forward to defending against Mr. Damore's lawsuit in court."

According to the lawsuit, the company

has failed to protect employees, especially white men, from workplace harassment related to their support of U.S. President Donald Trump or conservative political views. "Damore, Gudeman, and other class members were ostracized, belittled, and punished for their heterodox political views, and for the added sin of their birth circumstances of being Caucasians and/or males," the lawsuit said.

The lawsuit also accused Google of maintaining a secret blacklist of conservative media personalities who are not allowed inside the company's offices. The lawsuit requested an injunction barring Google from discriminating against individuals with conservative political views, as well as for unspecified compensation. Google Chief Executive Officer Sundar Pichai said when Damore was fired that portions of his memo "violate our Code of Conduct and cross the line by advancing harmful gender stereotypes in our workplace." Gudeman was fired in December 2016 after a confrontation with a Muslim coworker on an internal Google forum, according to the lawsuit. The coworker said on the forum that the Federal Bureau of Investigation had targeted him for being a Muslim, and he expressed worry about his personal safety, the lawsuit said. Gudeman responded with skepticism, saying the coworker had provided "zero evidence" for the claim and suggesting the FBI may have had justification. A human resources employee later told Gudeman he had accused his coworker of terrorism based on religion, and that he was being fired as a result, the lawsuit said. — Reuters

Hyundai betting on hydrogen fuel cell

LAS VEGAS: Hyundai unveiled Monday a hydrogen fuel-cell powered vehicle aimed at showcasing its newest technologies, bucking the all-electric trend of most rival automakers. The South Korean manufacturer used the 201 Consumer Electronics Show to debut its Nexo, a sport utility vehicle that uses voice commands, artificial intelligence and can be transformed into an autonomous car. "We call this the next future utility vehicles," said Hyundai vice president Ki-Sang Lee.

Hyundai said it plans to sell the Nexo in California later this year, in a bet on hydrogen even as many rivals turn to battery power. The company said it resolved a number of issues in developing the Nexo, including starts in extreme cold weather and extending the range to nearly 600 kilometers. While a handful of companies have showcased fuel cell technology, obstacles include the lack of hydrogen stations and a low ratio



LAS VEGAS: Hyundai vice chairman Eui Sun Chung (R) and Aurora Innovation founder Chris Urmson present the Nexo, a hydrogen fuel-cell powered vehicle, at the International Consumer Electronics Show. — AFP

of energy efficiency in producing fuel.

"We all understand that technological challenges and innovations are a never-ending process that will continue until we realize a mobile society of maximum convenience, zero accidents and no emissions," vice

chairman Woong-chul Yang. To promote its efforts in self-driving technology, Hyundai has formed a partnership with Silicon Valley startup Aurora Innovation, headed by former Google car executive Chris Urmson, who appeared at the media event. — AFP

Health

Women who work nights face higher risk of cancer: Study

‘Serves as a risk factor for common cancers in women’

MIAMI: Women who regularly work the night shift in Europe and North America may face a 19 percent higher risk of cancer than those who work during the day, said a study Monday. These heightened risks were not apparent among female night-shift workers in Australia and Asia, said the meta-analysis in the journal *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention*.

“Our study indicates that night shift work serves as a risk factor for common cancers in women,” said study author Xuelei Ma, an oncologist at the West China Medical Center of Sichuan University in Chengdu, China. “We were surprised to see the association between night shift work and breast cancer risk only among women in North America and Europe,” he added. “It is possible that women in these locations have higher sex hormone levels, which have been positively associated with hormone-related cancers such as breast cancer.”

The review incorporated 61 previously published studies on the topic, spanning 3.9 million participants from North America, Europe, Australia, and Asia and more than 110,000 cancers.

One drawback to the study was that the differ-

ent definitions of long-term night shift work with some of the papers describing it as “working during the night” and others saying “working at least three nights per month.” But the association was stark. While overall long-term night shift work increased the risk of cancer by 19 percent, the risk of certain cancers were even higher. Female night



Increased the risk of cancer by 19 percent

shift workers saw a 41 percent increased risk of skin cancer and a 32 percent higher risk of breast cancer.

The risk of gastrointestinal cancer was 18 percent higher than in women who did not perform

long-term night shift work. A subset of female nurses was also highlighted in the study, which showed “those who worked the night shift had an increased risk of breast (58 percent), gastrointestinal (35 percent), and lung cancer (28 percent) compared with those that did not work night shifts.” Ma noted it was possible that nurses might be more likely to undergo screening, since they work in the medical profession. “Another possible explanation for the increased cancer risk in this population may relate to the job requirements of night shift nursing, such as more intensive shifts.”

When it came specifically to breast cancer, the risk rose by 3.3 percent for every five years of night shift work, said the study. Previous research has shown that nighttime work can disrupt the body’s circadian rhythms, causing hormonal and metabolic changes that may boost the risk of cancer, diabetes, obesity and depression. “The results of this research suggest the need for health protection programs for long-term female night shift workers,” said Ma. “Long-term night shift workers should have regular physical examinations and cancer screenings.” — AFP

Human muscle tissue grown from stem cells

PARIS: Working human muscle has been grown from stem cells in the lab in a breakthrough that holds promise for sufferers of degenerative muscular diseases, scientists said yesterday. The team from Duke University in North Carolina said they were the first to achieve this feat using adult skin or blood cells which were “reprogrammed” into a juvenile, versatile state. These are called “induced pluripotent stem cells” or iPSCs. Like naturally-occurring stem cells found

in embryos, they can become any other type of human cell.

In this case, the iPSCs were coaxed into becoming skeletal muscle cells, which grew into “functioning human skeletal muscle,” the team reported in the science journal *Nature Communications*.

“It’s taken years of trial and error, making educated guesses and taking baby steps to finally produce functioning human muscle from pluripotent stem cells,” study co-author Lingjun Rao said. The breakthrough was made possible by “unique cell culture conditions” in the lab, and a special 3-D scaffold which allowed the cells to grow “much faster and longer” than other teams had managed, he said in a statement issued by the university.

The tissue contracted and reacted to external stimuli such as electrical pulses or chemical sig-

nals, the team said. They also implanted the muscle fibers into adult mice, where it survived and functioned for at least three weeks, though it was “not as strong” as natural tissue. The team hopes their technique will allow scientists to grow “an endless amount” of functioning muscle in the lab on which to test drugs and gene treatments for degenerative muscle diseases.

“The prospect of studying rare diseases is especially exciting for us,” said researcher Nenad Bursac. “When a child’s muscles are already withering away from something like Duchenne muscular dystrophy, it would not be ethical to take muscle samples from them and do further damage.” The achievement represents an advance on previous work by the same team, which earlier reported the first functioning human muscle tissue grown from cells obtained in muscle biopsies. — AFP

Bats’ brains boil in Australia heatwave

SYDNEY: Hundreds of bats have died in sweltering conditions in Australia, with many dropping from their perches as the scorching temperatures “fried their brains”, wildlife officials said yesterday. A record-breaking heatwave saw the mercury rise to 45 Celsius in Sydney’s western suburb of Campbelltown on Sunday where hundreds, if not thousands, of the animals fell from trees after succumbing to the heat.

“They basically boil,” Campbelltown flying fox colony manager Kate Ryan told the local *Camden Advertiser*. “It affects their brain—their brain just fries and they

become incoherent. It would be like standing in the middle of a sandpit with no shade.” The flying fox, Australia’s largest bat, is listed as a “vulnerable” species nationally with its survival ranked as a “critical priority” under local laws. Sydney recorded its hottest day since 1939 on Sunday when the suburb of Penrith reached 47.3 Celsius.

New South Wales Wildlife Information, Rescue and Education Service (WIRES) said the loss of bats to the brutal conditions could run into the thousands. Rescuers were able to save the lives of more than a hundred of the animals, but many scattered across the ground perished and others died still clinging to trees. “In extremely trying conditions volunteers worked tirelessly to provide subcutaneous fluids to the pups that could be reached and many lives were saved but sadly many were lost too,” WIRES said on Facebook. — AFP



SYDNEY: This handout picture taken on January 8, 2018 and released by Help Save the Wildlife and Bushlands in Campbelltown shows dead bats on the ground. — AFP

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What's On

Sheikha Dr Suad hosts chairman of Oman Shura council



On the sidelines of the GCC speakers' meeting currently held in Kuwait, chairman of Oman's Shura council, Sheikh Khalid Bin Hilal Al-Ma'ouli recently visited the White Palace where he met with Sheikha Dr Suad Mohammed Al-Sabah and her son Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah who congratulated him on the occasion of Oman's national football team winning the 23rd Arabian Gulf Cup. Both sides discussed other cultural, social and economic issues.

KNES celebrates Remembrance and Tolerance Day



In keeping with our school's Philosophy and School Guiding Statement, the Primary Department at Kuwait National English School held a Remembrance and Tolerance Day Assembly to raise pupil awareness on those who lost their lives in the First World War and in unrest around the world on a daily basis as well as on the importance of Tolerance.

KNES is home to both students and staff from different parts of the world, who come from different cultural backgrounds, religious denominations, race groups and nationalities. Our pupils are taught to respect the cultures of all people, irrespective of their color or creed. We reinforce in our students that we all belong to one HUMAN FAMILY. Our

Primary Assembly reinforced what pupils learn during Citizenship and PSHE classes and focused on inculcating in pupils' values such as respect, accepting differences amongst people and cultural diversities, anti-bullying, helping others by supporting charities, showing courtesy to the elderly and disabled in our community and assisting those in need.



TV



00:00 Deadpool
01:55 Virtual Revolution
03:40 Cyborg X
05:20 Batman: The Killing Joke
06:45 Compadres
08:30 Star Wars: Episode VI - Return Of The Jedi
10:45 Virtual Revolution
12:25 Armageddon America
14:00 Batman: The Killing Joke
15:25 Star Wars: Episode I - The Phantom Menace
17:45 Allegiant
19:50 Warcraft: The Beginning
21:55 Tiger House
23:20 The Asian Connection



00:50 Untamed & Uncut
01:45 Treehouse Masters
02:40 Biggest And Baddest
03:35 Swamp Brothers
04:00 Swamp Brothers
04:25 North Woods Law
05:15 Too Cute! Pint-Sized
06:02 Wildest Indochina
06:49 Untamed & Uncut
07:36 Night
08:00 Night
08:25 Swamp Brothers
08:50 Swamp Brothers
09:15 Treehouse Masters
10:10 Biggest And Baddest
11:05 Wildest Indochina
12:00 Swamp Brothers
12:28 Swamp Brothers
12:55 North Woods Law
13:50 Too Cute! Pint-Sized
14:45 Biggest And Baddest
15:40 Wildest Indochina
16:35 Untamed & Uncut
17:30 Treehouse Masters
18:25 Tanked
19:20 Pet Nation Renovation
20:15 Biggest And Baddest
21:10 Swamp Brothers
21:38 Swamp Brothers
22:05 Tanked
23:00 Pet Nation Renovation
23:55 Wildest Latin America



00:50 Unforgotten
01:45 Unforgotten
02:40 Class
03:30 Class
04:20 New Tricks
05:10 Stella
06:00 Eastenders
06:30 Holly City
07:25 Dickensian
08:15 Stella
09:05 Holly City
10:00 Holly City
11:00 New Tricks
11:55 Dickensian
12:45 Stella
13:35 Holly City
14:30 Holly City
15:25 New Tricks
16:25 Dickensian
17:10 Stella
18:00 Doctors
18:30 Eastenders
19:00 New Tricks
20:00 Last Tango In Halifax: Christmas Special
21:00 Top Of The Lake
22:00 New Tricks
23:00 Doctors
23:30 Eastenders



00:00 Deadly Wives
01:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
02:00 It Takes A Killer
02:30 It Takes A Killer
03:00 The First 48
04:00 Deadly Wives
05:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
06:00 It Takes A Killer
06:30 It Takes A Killer
07:00 Homicide Hunter
08:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
09:00 It Takes A Killer
09:30 It Takes A Killer
10:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
11:00 Cold Case Files
12:00 The First 48
13:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
14:00 It Takes A Killer
14:30 It Takes A Killer
15:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
16:00 Cold Case Files
17:00 Homicide Hunter
18:00 It Takes A Killer
18:30 It Takes A Killer
19:00 The First 48
20:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
21:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
22:00 Cold Case Files
23:00 Psychic Kids: Children Of The Paranormal



00:05 Russell Howard's Stand Up
00:30 The Half Hour
00:55 The Half Hour
01:20 Detroiters
01:45 Tosh.O
02:10 The Opposition With Jordan Klepper
02:35 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
03:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
03:25 Tosh.O
03:50 The Opposition With Jordan Klepper
04:15 Kroll Show
04:40 Key And Peele
05:05 Important Things With Demitri Martin
05:30 Impractical Jokers
05:55 Disaster Date
06:20 Ridiculousness Arabia
06:50 Hungry Investors
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 Demitri Martin
10:35 The Jim Gaffigan Show
11:00 Impractical Jokers
11:25 Disaster Date
11:50 Ridiculousness Arabia
12:15 Impractical Jokers
12:40 Friendszone
13:05 Friendszone
13:30 Important Things With Demitri Martin
13:55 Friends
14:20 Friends
14:45 Workaholics
15:10 Key And Peele
15:35 Kroll Show
16:00 Friendszone

16:30 Friendszone
16:55 Friends
17:20 Friends
17:45 Disaster Date
18:10 Ridiculousness Arabia
18:35 Lip Sync Battle UK
19:00 Lip Sync Battle UK
19:25 Impractical Jokers
19:50 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
20:12 Friends
20:35 Friends
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
21:30 The Opposition With Jordan Klepper
22:00 Teachers
22:25 Tosh.O
22:50 Tosh.O
23:15 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
23:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah



00:30 Kids Do The Craziest Things
00:55 Kids Do The Craziest Things
01:20 Now That's Funny
03:00 Bahama Blue
03:50 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
04:40 Tanked
05:30 How It's Made
06:20 Kids Do The Craziest Things
07:00 Kids Do The Craziest Things
07:30 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
07:50 How It's Made
08:15 How It's Made
08:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things
09:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things
09:30 Tanked
10:20 Bahama Blue
11:10 Mythbusters
12:00 The Big Brain Theory
12:50 How It's Made
13:15 How It's Made
13:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things
14:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things
14:30 Tanked
15:20 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
16:10 Bahama Blue
17:00 Mythbusters
17:50 The Big Brain Theory
18:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things
19:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things
19:30 How It's Made
19:55 How It's Made
20:20 Tanked
21:10 Mythbusters
22:00 The Big Brain Theory
22:50 Bahama Blue
23:40 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor

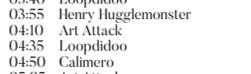


00:50 Village Of The Damned
01:45 Swamp Murders
02:40 Golden State Killer: People Magazine Investigates
03:35 Evil Online
04:30 Village Of The Damned
05:25 California Investigator
05:50 California Investigator
06:20 I Almost Got Away With It
07:10 Nightmare Next Door
08:00 California Investigator
08:25 On The Case With Paula Zahn
09:15 California Investigator
09:40 California Investigator
10:10 Nightmare Next Door
11:05 Betrayed
12:00 American Monster
12:55 On The Case With Paula Zahn
13:50 I Almost Got Away With It
14:45 Nightmare Next Door
15:40 Betrayed
16:35 Murder Chase Me
17:30 On The Case With Paula Zahn
18:25 California Investigator
18:50 California Investigator
19:20 I Almost Got Away With It
20:15 Nightmare Next Door
21:10 Lauryn Is Lost: A Disappeared Special
22:05 Evil Stepmothers
23:00 Village Of The Damned
23:55 Murder By Numbers



00:10 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
00:35 Binnie 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 Binnie And The Ghost
03:30 Binnie 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 Binnie And The Ghost
06:45 Disney Mickey Mouse
06:50 Rolling With The Ronks
07:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
07:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
07:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
08:25 Elena Of Avalor
08:40 K.C. Undercover
08:45 Bunk'd
09:10 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
09:35 Tangled: The Series
09:50 Camp Rock
10:00 Star Wars Forces Of Destiny
10:40 Austin & Ally
12:05 That's So Raven
12:30 That's So Raven
12:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
13:00 Bunk'd
13:25 Tangled: The Series
13:50 Jessie
14:15 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
14:40 K.C. Undercover
15:05 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
15:30 Bizaardvark
15:55 Elena Of Avalor
16:20 Stuck In The Middle
16:45 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
17:00 Tangled: The Series
17:25 Disney Cookbook
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 Descendants Wicked World
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
00:15 PJ Masks
00:40 PJ Masks
01:05 PJ Masks
01:30 Art Attack
01:55 Henry Hugglemonster
02:05 Loopdidoo
02:20 Henry Hugglemonster
02:35 Calimero
02:50 Henry Hugglemonster
03:05 Art Attack
03:30 The Hive
03:40 Loopdidoo
03:55 Henry Hugglemonster
04:10 Art Attack
04:35 Loopdidoo
04:50 Calimero
05:05 Art Attack
05:30 Henry Hugglemonster
05:45 Henry Hugglemonster
06:00 Art Attack
06:30 Henry Hugglemonster
06:45 Loopdidoo
07:00 Henry Hugglemonster
07:15 Calimero
07:30 PJ Masks
08:00 P-King Duckling
08:25 Jungle Junction
08:40 Special Agent Oso
09:15 Handy Manny
09:45 PJ Masks
09:30 Puppy Dog Pals
10:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
10:25 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
10:55 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
11:50 The Lion Guard
12:45 Sofia The First
13:35 PJ Masks
14:30 Doc McStuffins
14:55 P-King Duckling
15:20 Vampirina
15:45 Sofia The First
16:10 Puppy Dog Pals
16:35 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
17:05 Puppy Dog Pals
18:00 PJ Masks
18:25 Puppy Dog Pals
18:50 Sofia The First
19:20 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
19:45 Doc McStuffins
20:10 The Lion Guard
20:35 P-King Duckling
21:00 Vampirina
21:30 PJ Masks
22:25 Sofia The First
22:50 P-King Duckling
23:20 Puppy Dog Pals
23:45 Mickey And The Roadster Racers



00:15 Yukon Men
01:05 Diesel Brothers
01:50 Supertruckers
02:35 Fast N' Loud
03:20 Street Outlaws
04:05 Alaska: The Last Frontier
04:50 Deadliest Catch
05:35 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Extreme Collectors
06:23 Container Wars
06:45 How Do They Do It?
07:10 How Do They Do It?
07:35 Alaska: The Last Frontier
08:20 Extreme Collectors
08:45 Container Wars
09:10 Deadliest Catch
09:55 Diesel Brothers
10:45 Supertruckers
11:30 Fast N' Loud
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 Diesel Brothers
16:15 Supertruckers
17:05 Fast N' Loud
17:50 Alaska: The Last Frontier
18:40 Deadliest Catch
19:25 Yukon Men
20:15 Street Outlaws
21:00 Dangerman
21:50 X-Ray Mega Airport
22:40 Abandoned Engineering
23:30 Alaska: The Last Frontier



00:00 Stan Lee's Superhumans
01:00 Ancient Impossible
02:00 Clash Of Warriors
03:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
04:40 How 2 Win
05:30 Stan Lee's Superhumans
06:20 Ancient Impossible
07:10 The Universe
08:00 Clash Of Warriors
09:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
10:00 Ancient Aliens
11:00 How 2 Win
12:00 America's Book Of Secrets
13:00 Ancient Impossible
14:00 Clash Of Warriors
15:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
16:00 Ancient Aliens
17:00 How 2 Win
18:00 The Universe
19:00 Ancient Impossible
20:00 Command Decisions
20:30 Command Decisions
21:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
22:00 Ancient Aliens
23:00 The Greeks



06:00 Disney11
06:25 Supa Strikas
06:50 Marvel's Spider-Man
07:15 Right Now Kapow
07:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
07:45 Walk The Prank
08:10 Phineas And Ferb
08:35 Mech-X4
09:00 Marvel's Spider-Man
09:25 Lab Rats
09:50 Star Wars Freemaker Adventures
10:20 Gravity Falls
10:45 Kid vs Kat
11:10 Milo Murphy's Law
11:35 Right Now Kapow
12:00 Mech-X4
12:55 Pair Of Kings
13:20 Pair Of Kings
13:45 Phineas And Ferb
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
14:15 Phineas And Ferb
14:40 The Suite Life Of Zack & Cody
15:05 The Suite Life Of Zack & Cody
15:30 Gravity Falls
15:55 Gravity Falls
16:20 Two More Eggs
16:25 Lab Rats
16:50 Lab Rats
17:15 Kirby Buckets Warped
17:40 Kirby Buckets Warped
18:05 Supa Strikas
18:30 Marvel's Ant-Man
18:35 Disney11
19:00 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
19:25 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
19:50 Marvel's Rocket And Groot
19:55 Walk The Prank
20:20 Walk The Prank
20:45 Supa Strikas
21:10 Supa Strikas
21:35 Marvel's Rocket And Groot
21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
21:45 Lab Rats
22:10 Lab Rats
22:35 Phineas And Ferb
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am



05:30 Celebrity Style Story
06:00 Mariah's World
06:55 E! News
07:10 Mariah's World
08:10 E! News: Daily Pop
09:10 Live From The Red Carpet
11:05 Red Carpet Icons
12:00 E! News
12:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
15:00 E! News
15:15 E! News: Daily Pop
16:15 WAGs LA
19:00 E! News
20:00 Red Carpet Icons
21:00 My Fabulous Me
22:50 Celebrity Style Story
23:00 E! News
23:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians



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



00:10 Chopping Block
01:00 Emmerdale
01:30 Coronation Street
02:30 Cash Trapped
03:25 Vera
05:15 Surprise Surprise
06:10 Chopping Block
07:05 Cash Trapped
08:00 Vera
09:35 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs
10:05 Surprise Surprise
10:55 Chopping Block
11:50 Cash Trapped
12:45 Emmerdale
13:15 Coronation Street
14:15 Chopping Block
15:10 Cash Trapped
16:00 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
17:00 Tutankhamun
17:50 Surprise Surprise
18:45 Emmerdale
19:15 Coronation Street
19:45 Coronation Street
20:10 Cash Trapped
21:00 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
21:40 Tutankhamun
22:50 Emmerdale
23:00 Coronation Street
23:40 Coronation Street



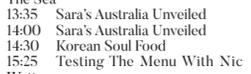
00:00 Stan Lee's Superhumans
01:00 Ancient Impossible
02:00 Clash Of Warriors
03:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
04:40 How 2 Win
05:30 Stan Lee's Superhumans
06:20 Ancient Impossible
07:10 The Universe
08:00 Clash Of Warriors
09:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
10:00 Ancient Aliens
11:00 How 2 Win
12:00 America's Book Of Secrets
13:00 Ancient Impossible
14:00 Clash Of Warriors
15:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
16:00 Ancient Aliens
17:00 How 2 Win
18:00 The Universe
19:00 Ancient Impossible
20:00 Command Decisions
20:30 Command Decisions
21:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
22:00 Ancient Aliens
23:00 The Greeks



00:20 Swamp People
01:10 Swamp People
02:00 American Restoration
02:50 Ice Road Truckers
03:40 Road Hawks
04:30 Swamp People
05:15 Swamp People
06:00 Alone: Lost And Found
06:50 Forged In Fire
07:40 American Restoration
08:30 Ice Road Truckers
09:20 American Pickers
10:10 Ax Men
11:00 Forged In Fire
11:50 American Restoration
12:40 Ice Road Truckers
13:30 Swamp People
14:20 Alone: Lost And Found
15:10 Alone: Lost And Found
16:00 Forged In Fire
16:50 American Restoration
17:40 Ice Road Truckers
18:30 Alone: Lost And Found
19:20 Forged In Fire
19:10 American Restoration
20:00 Counting Cars
21:25 Counting Cars
21:50 Billion Dollar Wreck
22:40 Forged In Fire
23:30 Alone: Lost And Found



02:35 Sara's Australia Unveiled
03:00 Sara's Australia Unveiled
03:30 Island Hunter
04:25 David Rocco's Dolce India
04:50 A Taste Of South Africa
05:20 A Taste Of South Africa
05:45 Maximum Foodie
06:15 Eat Street
06:40 Eat Street
07:10 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
08:05 Sara's Australia Unveiled
08:30 Sara's Australia Unveiled
09:00 Island Hunter
09:55 David Rocco's Dolce India
10:20 A Taste Of South Africa
10:50 A Taste Of South Africa
11:15 Maximum Foodie
11:45 Eat Street
12:10 Eat Street
12:40 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
13:35 Sara's Australia Unveiled
14:00 Sara's Australia Unveiled
14:30 Korean Soul Food
15:25 Testing The Menu With Nic Watt
15:50 A Taste Of South Africa
16:20 A Taste Of South Africa
16:45 Maximum Foodie
17:15 Eat Street
17:40 Eat Street
18:10 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
19:05 Sara's Australia Unveiled
19:30 Sara's Australia Unveiled
20:00 Korean Soul Food
21:00 Testing The Menu With Nic Watt
21:30 A Taste Of South Africa
22:00 A Taste Of South Africa
22:25 Maximum Foodie
22:55 Eat Street
23:50 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea



00:10 Yukon Gold
01:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
02:00 Air Crash Investigation
03:00 Seconds From Disaster
04:00 Yukon Gold
05:00 Reinventing Seoul: Smart City On The Rise
06:00 Extreme Ice
07:00 Dog Whisperer
08:00 The Big Picture With Kal Penn
08:30 The Big Picture With Kal Penn
09:00 Disappeared: The Search For Cody Dial
10:00 Kung Fu Motion
11:00 A Year In Space
12:00 Mission Saturn
13:00 Titanic: The Final Word
14:00 The Big Picture With Kal Penn
14:30 The Big Picture With Kal Penn
15:00 The 90s: The Decade That Connected Us
17:00 Explorer XL
18:00 Titanic: Case Closed
20:00 Titanic: The Final Word
20:50 Explorer XL
21:40 Titanic: Case Closed
23:20 The Big Picture With Kal Penn
23:45 The Big Picture With Kal Penn



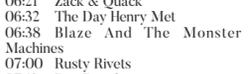
00:20 Monster Croc Hunt
01:10 Monster Fish
02:00 Attack Of The Big Cats
02:50 Monster Fish
03:45 Asia's Deadliest Snakes
04:40 Ultimate Predator
05:35 Attack Of The Big Cats
06:30 Monster Fish
07:25 Asia's Deadliest Snakes
08:20 Ultimate Predator
09:15 Cougar V Wolf
10:10 Man V. Monster
11:05 Ultimate Animal Countdown
12:00 Dolphin Dynasty
12:55 Bite, Sting, Kill
13:50 Monster Fish
14:45 Africa's Super Snake
15:40 Wild 24
17:30 Battle Of The Swamp Dragons
17:30 Alan V. Monster
18:25 Ultimate Animal Countdown
19:20 Africa's Super Snake
20:10 Wild 24
21:00 Battle Of The Swamp Dragons
21:50 Alan V. Monster
22:40 Ultimate Animal Countdown
23:30 Dolphin Dynasty



00:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
00:36 Rabbids Invasion
01:00 Rabbids Invasion
01:24 Sanjay And Craig
01:48 Sanjay And Craig
02:12 Winx Club
02:36 Winx Club
03:00 Harvey Beaks
03:24 Harvey Beaks
03:48 The Loud House
04:12 The Loud House
04:36 Breadwinners
05:00 Breadwinners
05:24 Get Blake
05:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
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 Harvey Danger
10:12 Game Shakers
10:36 Regal Academy
11:00 Winx Club
11:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
11:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
12:12 The Loud House
12:36 Rabbids Invasion
13:00 Breadwinners
13:24 Harvey Beaks
13:48 Hunter Street
14:12 I Am Frankie
14:36 The Thundermans
15:00 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 Harvey 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
22:12 Breadwinners
22:36 Harvey Beaks
23:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
23:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles



00:15 Shimmer And Shine
01:01 Max & Ruby
01:24 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
01:45 The Day Henry Met
01:50 The Day Henry Met
01:56 Blaze And The Monster Machines
02:42 Zack & Quack
02:53 Kid-E-Cats
03:03 Shimmer And Shine
03:25 Nella The Princess Knight
03:37 Paw Patrol
03:59 Little Charmers
04:11 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
04:23 Dora The Explorer
04:46 Max & Ruby
05:08 The Day Henry Met
05:13 Nella And The Princess Knight
05:35 Shimmer And Shine
05:59 Wallykazam!
06:21 Zack & Quack
06:32 The Day Henry Met
06:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
07:00 Rusty Rivets
07:12 Paw Patrol
07:37 Dora The Explorer
08:00 Nella The Princess Knight
08:12 Kid-E-Cats
08:18 Kid-E-Cats
08:24 Bubble Guppies
08:47 Blaze And The Monster Machines
09:10 Paw Patrol
09:34 Shimmer And Shine
09:57 Nella And The Princess Knight
10:08 Nella And The Princess Knight
10:19 The Day Henry Met
10:25 Paw Patrol
10:49 Rusty Rivets
11:00 Rusty Rivets
11:12 Wallykazam!
11:36 Bubble Guppies
12:00 Team Umizoomi
12:23 Shimmer And Shine
12:46 Shimmer And Shine
13:10 Max & Ruby
13:33 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
13:44 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
13:56 The Day Henry Met
14:01 The Day Henry Met
14:06 Blaze And The Monster Machines
14:29 Blaze And The Monster Machines
14:52 Zack & Quack
15:03 Kid-E-Cats
15:08 Kid-E-Cats
15:14 Shimmer And Shine
15:36 Nella The Princess Knight
15:49 Paw Patrol
16:11 Little Charmers
16:23 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
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17:26 Nella And The Princess Knight
17:37 Nella And The Princess Knight
17:49 Shimmer And Shine
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21:02 Blaze And The Monster Machines
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21:24 Paw Patrol
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22:11 Nella And The Princess Knight
22:22 Nella And The Princess Knight
22:33 The Day Henry Met
22:39 Paw Patrol
23:03 Rusty Rivets
23:14 Rusty Rivets
23:26 Wallykazam!
23:50 Bubble Guppies



00:00 Grey's Anatomy
01:00 Grey's Anatomy
02:00 Grey's Anatomy
03:00 Fashion Star
04:00 Project Runway All Stars
05:00 Project Runway
06:00 Grey's Anatomy
07:00 Grey's Anatomy
08:00 Grey's Anatomy
09:00 Fashion Star
10:00 Project Runway All Stars
11:00 Project Runway
12:00 Grey's Anatomy
13:00 Grey's Anatomy
14:00 Grey's Anatomy
15:00 Fashion Star
16:00 Project Runway All Stars
17:00 Project Runway
18:00 Cedar Cove
19:00 Cedar Cove
20:00 Cedar Cove
21:00 Fashion Star
22:00 MAFS: The First Year
23:00 Project Runway



00:20 The Undateables
01:05 My Extreme Excess Skin
01:50 Monsters Inside Me
02:35 Meet The Putmans
03:20 Kate Plus 8
04:05 Toddlers & Tiaras
04:50 Randy To The Rescue
05:35 Say Yes To The Dress
06:00 Extreme Cheapskates
06:45 Iyanla: Fix My Life
07:30 Oprah: Where Are They Now?
08:15 Kate Plus 8
09:00 Cake Boss
09:25 Toddlers & Tiaras
10:10 Extreme Cheapskates
10:55 Hair Goddess
11:40 Outtaughtered: Busby Quints
12:25 Meet The Putmans
13:10 Say Yes To The Dress UK
13:55 Toddlers & Tiaras
14:40 Kate Plus 8
15:25 Hair Goddess
16:10 Love At First Swipe
16:35 Cake Boss
17:00 Iyanla: Fix My Life
17:50 Extreme Cheapskates
18:50 Randy To The Rescue
19:40 Say Yes To The Dress
20:10 Cake Boss
21:00 Dr Christian Will See You Now
21:50 What Have I Got?
22:40 Body Bizarre
23:30 90 Days To Wed



01:25 Ghost Team One
02:55 Boomerang
05:00 A Merry Christmas Miracle
06:35 Down With Love
08:30 Christmas Eve
10:15 Wiener Dog
11:50 Spy Hard
13:20 Down With Love
15:15 Once I Was A Beehive
17:15 Yoga Hosers
18:45 Kindergarten Cop 2
20:30 Mr. Deeds
22:10 The Longest Yard



01:55 A Dangerous Woman
03:45 Hoosiers
05:50 The Quiet Hour
07:25 My Sister
09:25 It Boy
11:10 Hoosiers
13:15 African Safari
14:50 The Flying Scotsman
16:40 No God No Master
18:30 Lorenzo's Oil
20:55 R.I. Love You
22:45 Amores Perros



01:20 Felix All Around The World
02:50 Papelecho & The Martian
04:15 Beyond Beyond
05:50 Swan Princess: Royally Undercover
07:20 Moomins And The Comet Chase
08:45 Quest For A Heart
10:15 Bunny Tales
11:35 Rainbow Valley Heroes
13:10 Beyond Beyond
14:45 Swan Princess: Royally Undercover

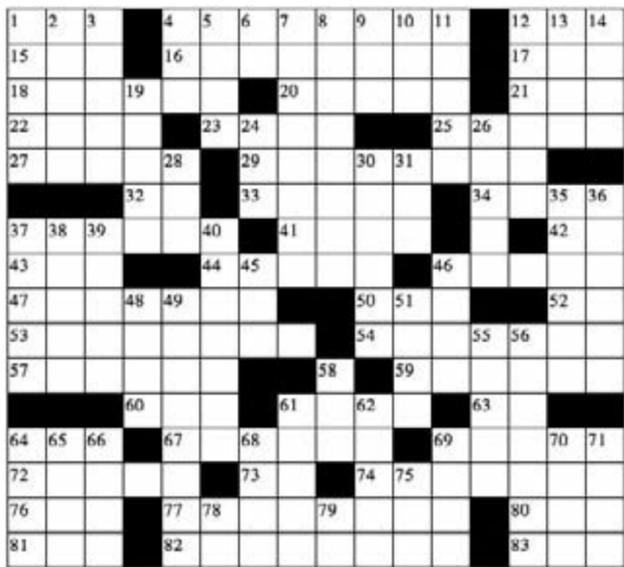
16:15 Elias And The Royal Yacht
17:00 Bunny Tales
19:40 The Fairy Tales Tree
20:30 Mia And The Migoo
22:10 Elias And The Royal Yacht
23:35 Quest For A Heart



00:15 Boys Don't

Stars

CROSSWORD 1805



ACROSS

- Ratio of the adjacent side to the hypotenuse.
- United States writer noted for his typographically eccentric poetry (1894-1962).
- Large brownish-green New Zealand parrot.
- Used of a single unit or thing.
- A person who has been freed from slavery.
- (often followed by 'of') A large number or amount or extent.
- Aristocratic Italian family of powerful merchants and bankers who ruled Florence in the 15th century.
- The Fate who cuts the thread of life.
- The residue that remains when something is burned.
- Any culture medium that uses agar as the gelling agent.
- (computer science) A kind of computer architecture that has a large number of instructions hard coded into the cpu chip.
- Having a face or facing especially of a specified kind or number.
- The capital and largest city of Yemen.
- A cartridge (usually with paper casing).
- Unknown god.
- A series of things depending on each other as if linked together.
- (law) A comprehensive term for any proceeding in a court of law whereby an individual seeks a legal remedy.
- Very generous.
- A small island.
- A state in midwestern United States.
- A sweetened beverage of diluted fruit juice.
- To fix or set securely or deeply.
- A bar of sand.
- A federal agency established to coordinate programs aimed at reducing pollution and protecting the environment.
- A radioactive gaseous element formed by the disintegration of radium.
- A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
- A Chadic language spoken in Chad.
- A town in central Belgium.
- Included seven times in every 19 years.
- Dish baked in pastry-lined pan often with a pastry top.
- A ductile gray metallic element of the lanthanide series.
- The cry made by sheep.
- United States swimmer who in 1926 became the first woman to swim the English Channel (1903-).
- A member of a Turkic people of Uzbekistan and neighboring areas.
- A chronic inflammatory collagen disease affecting connective tissue (skin or joints).
- The condition of not containing or being covered by a liquid (especially water).
- Lacking self-confidence.
- Cause to grow thin or weak.
- A drug combination found in some over-the-counter headache remedies (Aspirin and Phenacetin and Caffeine).
- The seat within a bishop's diocese where his cathedral is located adv.
- Small family of usually tropical butterflies.
- The syllable naming the sixth (sub-

mediant) note of a major or minor scale in solmization.

DOWN

- Any of several plants of the genus *Camassia*.
- Lake in northwestern Russia near the border with Finland.
- A car that is closed and that has front and rear seats and two or four doors.
- A fluorocarbon with chlorine.
- In or relating to or obtained from urine.
- A state in New England.
- A woman sahib.
- A green or yellow or brown mineral consisting of a hydrated silicate.
- Resonance of protons to radiation in a magnetic field.
- (slang) A gangster's pistol.
- Snarled or stalled in complete confusion.
- The basic unit of money in Zambia.
- Freedom from difficulty or hardship or effort.
- A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
- Of or relating to Iraq or its people or culture.
- A federal agency that supervises carriers that transport goods and people between states.
- A town and port in northwestern Israel in the eastern Mediterranean.
- An associate degree in applied science.
- United States tennis player who dominated men's tennis in the 1920s (1893-1953).
- Used of a single unit or thing.
- A range of mountains (usually with jagged peaks and irregular outline).
- Someone who earn wages in return for their labor.
- (Babylonian) A demigod or first man.
- Capable of being corrupted.
- (used only in combination) Having a heart as specified.
- The use of nuclear magnetic resonance of protons to produce proton density images.
- Something causes misery or death.
- A small quantity of liquid.
- Surrounded by hostile forces.
- A setting with precious stones so closely set that no metal shows.
- Tropical American tree producing cacao beans.
- Having few if any teeth.
- Being ten more than one hundred eighty.
- Any of several tall tropical palms native to southeastern Asia having egg-shaped nuts.
- The cardinal number that is the sum of five and one.
- United States tennis player who was the first Black to win United States and English singles championships (1943-1993).
- Make amends for.
- A feeling of strong eagerness (usually in favor of a person or cause).
- A member of an Algonquian people living in central Canada.
- Type genus of the Nepidae.
- United States writer (born in Poland) who wrote in Yiddish (1880-1957).
- The 7th letter of the Greek alphabet.
- Informal terms for a mother.
- Being one more than one.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Aries, as a new year opens your hidden side comes to the fore. You will notice a strong interest in the unknown business of others, private matters, even your own sexual fantasies. Before deciding how you feel, look at where the truth has stopped and emotions have begun. Observe closely and honestly for that is how you will learn to repair yours and the hurts of others. Occupy yourself with something whimsical and light a play or movie, a book or an article, maybe find that new pair of shoes. The stars are aligned for you to make things happen at home and work. You will become comfortable with the new aspects of your chosen path. Your passions are high and an intimate time with your loved one can be sensational, aries.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Taurus, this is not a day for putting important tasks aside: fun times will have to wait as you tend to what you said you would tend to. You could find yourself left behind by the group; your work comes first much to their chagrin! Being alone to focus will move you projects forward. Intimacy, control and wealth are a priority just now; just the thought of these stimulates something deep within you. You long to grasp the unknown, the forbidden subjects in life. Be certain you are within your own person limits; stepping out or away from them could be disastrous. Shouldn't you consider this: discovering motivations and plans is at the fore. You will get to the bottom of something this evening, taurus.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Gemini, strong tension will create an environment of betrayal when intimate, most private secrets become exposed: there will be an opportunity to see through the muck, find the problem and take care of it. Free yourself of grudges and anger, these serve to weigh the spirit down. New people, habits and energy will become available; your mood is tender and sensitive. You prefer honest, forthright people with nothing shady or needy about them; keep your notes and all the facts together. You could feel the need to start over with a clean slate: this is a time when saying goodbye to habits will come easy. Your leadership skills are strong and your ability to work with groups is at the fore. Gather this evening with a close knit group of loved ones, gemini.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Cancer, you will take great pride and joy in your environment and the people in it. There will be a closer bond formed with someone you care for. Someone will admire a new purchase you make and indicate they want to follow your example. Your carnal needs will demand attention this month and allow you to feel free to express yourself with abandon. You could feel a strong desire to be in charge, calling the shots as you see fit, in a new venture, which could involve money and health. You are interested in gaining more knowledge about the mysteries of life. Be careful that your thoughts could be muddled and as a result someone could lead you down the wrong road: start the evening with meditation and prayer for better thinking, cancer.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Leo, all eyes are on you as the group seeks solutions to complicated situations. You are in the perfect frame of mind for leading people to victory. You could be faced with decisions that clash with your moral standards: think about this long and hard, you will find a way. You will be enticed by your need for sexual satisfaction. Private matters are attractive to you and could cause problems: remember that curiosity killed the cat! You want to figure out what motivates people and why. You will be compelled to look at the past year so that you can regroup and change some plans you should not have made. It is through helping others that we gain much satisfaction and evolution: this is at the top of your very long list just now, leo.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Virgo, you will notice, especially today, that your attitudes and goals have taken a very different turn. Most important to you now is letting people see you at your best and recognizing all that you have to offer. Your focus is on your outward appearance and refined behavior: only the outer you counts; the inner will just have to wait. The things that provide entertainment and pleasure are important because you feel you've gone without them for so long; be careful not to lose your true self in this phase of life. You have taken on the choice to radiate vibrant and accomplished energy. Your success this month could be impressive. You have become more assertive and determined regarding your goals: you will not back down easily, virgo.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Libra, your sensual side demands your attention: this could be connected to an internal or external power struggle you will likely become involved in. You may actually find more questions than answers by looking in the secret shadows. People who know about your open door policy may seek your help or opinions regarding personal business. Someone could approach you with an offensive manner because they don't agree with you on an emotional level! Get rid of anything that has outlived its purpose and can no longer give you pleasure or serve you. You could feel more focused on your future than ever. Experience a getaway tonight with someone you enjoy immensely. Find an interesting activity to complement the love that is in the air, libra.



Scorpio (October 23-November 19)

Scorpio, you may find yourself having to deal with some primal needs: you want to be in control of new projects, you desire sex on your own terms and you are focused on making the money you need to feel secure. You are curious about the motivations of others. You could feel a strong desire to be a better person, to stop doing the same things over and over to sabotage yourself. Only you can fix you and you are resentful when anyone else tries to change or manipulate you. This could call for extra effort on your part: seeing a problem is the first step toward repairing it. There are good energies around whatever you set your mind to attaining. You could come across a potential investment. Soak in a warm tub or get a massage tonight for sweet dreams, scorpio.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 19)

Sagittarius, you will have a chance to visit with a friend who asks for your help in a personal matter. Keeping your distance would be best but support for your friend is in order. Whatever the case, a situation that is easy to observe and absorb goes with your spirit throughout the day. Secrets of an embarrassing nature could surface concerning someone close to you. You will shine when you enter the room just before a meeting: your aura is a powerful burst of color today. You may feel restless and unable to satisfy a yearning for something more in your life. Try not to be dissatisfied with your blessing, for that is the best way to lose them. You will begin healing from a painful emotional break that was necessary to create positive energy, sagittarius.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Capricorn, communicating with large audiences or smaller groups will come easily today. Don't let naysayers or negative people put a damper on your day. You're on your game and can't be stopped! Creating timetables and coordinating events are a piece of cake and you make it look effortless even if it's not. Listen to the input of your co-workers. You will sift through the suggestions and unite the right ones for the project. Trust your judgment and try not to second-guess your decisions. This evening, walk, run, play outdoors to prepare for a good night's sleep. Let your thoughts be on the positive outcomes you seek. Sometimes we have to experience clouds to appreciate the sunshine, capricorn.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Aquarius, sexuality, material gain and dominance are what turn you on right now. You are interested in the unknown and forbidden: is someone flirting that shouldn't perhaps you're the one who is out of line; remember, you get what you give. You will get to the bottom of a nagging problem and bring it to an end. Friends will need your help on a project and your ideas will be exactly what they need. A kind person is there for you today and lends a kind ear; your turn will come to listen to them when they need. Your aloof mood will make it easier to reconfigure something when no one wants to cross you. You could discover a new treatment for an ailment. Someone makes known how much you unknowingly helped him or her, aquarius.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Pisces, an event could possibly solidify your home and hearth for life, you may know what this is now. If you begin to work yourself into a routine of exercise now, as you get older the routine will come naturally: this is important. The stars are aligned for the energy of self-examination and honesty. You may have great clarity about who you truly are and what motivates you; you could come away with quite a few surprises. Pent up frustrations may erupt according to your chart: some founded, others not so much. You could find yourself thrown into the role of diplomat when a sibling and a parent lock horns: remember honesty is the best policy. You could discard no longer needed items with ease as you get down to brass tacks and go green, pisces.

Wordsearch Puzzle

The Golden Girls

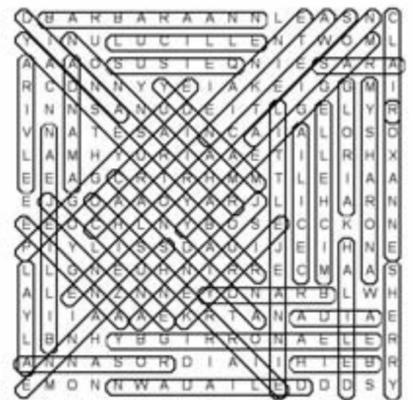
Find and circle all of the words and names from *The Golden Girls* TV show. The remaining letters spell the name of a spinoff *The Golden Girls*.

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

- | | | |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| BEA ARTHUR | COMEDY | RUE MCCLANAHAN |
| BETTY WHITE | DOROTHY | RUSTY ANCHOR |
| BIG DADDY | ESTELLE GETTY | SHADY PINES |
| BLANCHE | FRIENDSHIP | SITCOM |
| CHARLEY | MIAMI | SOPHIA |
| CHEESECAKE | MILES | SOUTHERN BELLE |
| CLAYTON | RELATIONSHIPS | ST OLAF |
| COCO | ROSE | STAN |

Yesterday's Solution

Songs With Girls' Names



- | | | |
|-------------|----------------|----------------|
| ADSA | DSANA | MY SHARDONA |
| ALISON | ELEANOR RIGBY | NIKITA |
| AMANDA | ELVIRA | OH SHERRIE |
| ANGIE | GLORIA | PEGGY SUE |
| BARBARA ANN | JANNA | SHANON |
| BETH | JOLENE | ROXANNA |
| BILLIE JEAN | KYRIE | ROXANNA |
| BRANDY | LAYLA | RUBY TUESDAY |
| CANDIDA | LITTLE JEANNIE | SARA |
| CARRIE ANNE | LUCILLE | SHERRY |
| CECILIA | MAGGIE MAY | SUSIE Q |
| CLAR | MANDY | SUZANNE |
| DELILAH | MICHELLE | SWEET CAROLINE |
| DELTA DAWN | | |

The hidden song title is: LUCY IN THE SKY WITH DIAMONDS

Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



Breathe easy

Your nose knows more than you might imagine. Here's how to keep it happy and healthy.

By Leslie Garcia,
The Dallas Morning News

What helps us smell tomatoes at a farmers market, taste the corny dogs at the state fair? What reminds us to call the doctor when the air gets a bit stuffiness-inducing?

Our nose. It helps us breathe, it helps us smell, it helps us taste. "It is important in terms of quality of life," says Dr. Thomas Hung, an otolaryngologist in private practice at Medical City Dallas.

"You're miserable when you can't breathe through your nose. It's amazing how unpalatable food becomes when you can't smell."

Makes us reach for a tissue at the mere thought. Or at least have more respect for that protuberance — be it ski-jump, upturned, bulbous or button — in the middle of our faces.

Read on and see why we no longer look at a nose in quite the same way.

WHY DOES YOUR NOSE RUN?

Allergies and infections are the two most common causes. Viruses stimulate the nose to secrete more mucus, thus leading to the call for a tissue.

With allergies, the allergen (be it cats, dust, etc.) stimulates histamines to be released from cells lining the nasal cavity.

Mucus glands are thus stimulated, secreting more mucus. The histamine also causes blood vessels to dilate, which could cause congestion, not running.

Throughout history, theories of runny noses have included:

- Your brain must be liquefying. This courtesy of the second-century Greek physician Galen, whose theory, at the time, made sense because so many people died of colds.
- You must be lacking sexual self-restraint. This was from a 1920s Baltimore physician, who said it was the body's form of punishment.

Olfactory bulb

This is under the front part of your brain, just above the nasal cavity. It sends signals to parts of your brain, which interpret what type of smell the odor molecules are.

Olfactory epithelium

Located on the roof of the nasal cavity, this contains receptors that are sensitive to odor molecules that travel through the air.

Nasal cavity

This air-filled space behind the nose connects with the back of your throat. Only the roof of your mouth separates the nasal cavity from the inside of your mouth.

Sinuses

These air-filled pockets help lighten the weight of the otherwise heavy skull. They help filter, moisten and warm the air we breathe before it gets to the lungs.

Section of the lining of the nose magnified.

Septum

This cartilage wall dividing the nostrils starts deep within the skull.

THE TRUTH ABOUT MUCUS

Mucus membranes produce between a pint and a quart of mucus a day. We don't tend to notice the amount (thank goodness) because stomach acids dissolve it. But if a virus attacks these tissues, the mucus loses much of its water content (making it thicker), and it flows more slowly.

Mucus changes color depending on what's going on in your body. But contrary to what you may have heard, green or yellow mucus doesn't necessarily mean you have a bacterial infection. It could be viral.

"The truth is that mucus turns colors because of an increase in leukocytes, which are responsible for fighting infections," Hung says.

That increase, and the byproducts of leukocytes, give mucus a green, yellow or brown color.

NOSE FACTS

- During a normal day, we breathe nearly 25,000 times.
- Many people inhale mainly through one nostril at a time, alternating nostrils every one to three hours.
- About 80 percent of what we taste is affected by what we smell.
- When we're hungry, our sense of smell becomes stronger.
- After a year, we can recall smells with 65 percent accuracy. By comparison, after only three months, visual recall of photos drops to 50 percent.
- We have about 5 million olfactory receptor cells. Rats have 10 million, rabbits 20 million and bloodhounds close to 220 million.
- We smell many more odors than our brains register. Only when an aroma pleases, irritates or reminds us of something do we take notice.
- When we breathe, our noses warm the inhaled air to our body temperature and humidify it to 100 percent saturation. The moistness and dampness help keep the air from damaging our lungs.
- Nose jobs — excuse us, rhinoplasties — hail from the Renaissance. The Catholic Church excommunicated the most celebrated surgeon because he was believed to be tampering with God's work.
- Describing a smell is infinitely more difficult than describing a sound or a scene. One reason: The area of the brain that deals with odor competes with that used for language.
- Anosmia is the inability to smell; phantosmia is smelling something that isn't really there.
- Last year, about 300,000 rhinoplasties were performed in the United States.

SNORING FACTS

- About a fourth of adults are habitual snorers. Why? Being overweight can contribute to it. So can bulky throat tissue and poor muscle tone in the nose and throat. But we're interested in these nose-related reasons:
- When your nose is blocked or stuffy, you need extra effort to pull air through it. This makes a vacuum in the throat, pulling together the throat's floppy tissues. Voilà! Snoring.
- Deformities in the nasal septum, the wall separating your nostrils, can cause an obstruction that leads to snoring.

KEEPING THE NOSE HEALTHY

Nasal irrigation is a simple way to minimize the effects of colds, allergies and other nasal conditions.

Nasal irrigation

Regular flushing of the nose with a salt-water solution, using a neti pot, left, was originally developed in India.

Directions:

1. Lean over sink, turn head to side.
2. Insert pot spout into one nostril; tip pot so solution flows into one nostril, out the other; insert pot into other nostril and repeat.
3. Blow out through both nostrils to clear nose.

SOURCES: MERCK MANUAL, INTELHEALTH, HEALTHGOODS.COM, MCT

Questions for an ear, nose & throat doctor

We had a few delicate questions about noses. Here's how Dr. Thomas Hung, a physician in private practice at Medical City Dallas, answered them.

Q: What is it about the nose that interests you?

A: The nose has an aesthetic quality. When we look at people, one of the first things we're attracted to is their nose. We're sensitive to picking up the symmetry, so we focus on it. It gives the face contour, character, yet also has a function in terms of breathing, as well as taste.

Q: Why do our noses run when we cry?

A: We have tear ducts in the corners of our eyes, close to the nose, which drain tears from the eyes into the nose. Thus, when we cry, some tears spill over and run down our face, but tears also drain into the nose, thus making our nose run.

Q: What's the best way to stop a nosebleed?

A: Sit upright and pinch your nostrils shut for 15 minutes. No pecking. Then let go. If your nose continues to bleed, pinch again

for 15 minutes. If it's still bleeding, perhaps go to the emergency room. People on blood thinners and those taking aspirin daily, where the clotting ability is diminished, can have a nosebleed for hours.

Q: What happens when we smell?

A: The molecules of a certain scent make their way to the top of the nose. They go straight up to where the nose meets the brain, to the small perforations where the olfactory nerve endings sit. The smell molecules trigger these to fire. Then the molecules go to the part of the brain responsible for smell in the frontal lobe, where you recognize, 'Oh! That's a rose.' Or, 'That's gasoline.'

Q: How can we keep our noses healthy?

A: For allergies, once you recognize you have them, especially if they're seasonal, get yourself on medications. Antihistamines work best before exposure. It's almost too late once you get the runny nose. I generally recommend a regimen of nasal humidification, more frequently in the winter. ... It takes a little getting used to, but once you do it, it feels pretty good.



TOM SUMLIN/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Lifestyle | Gossip



Black Eyed Peas release new track without Fergie

Black Eyed Peas have released a new song without Fergie. The 'My Humps' hitmakers - will.i.am, Apl.de.ap and Taboo - have dropped political track 'Street Livin' which focuses on gun violence and other issues in the US, for their first single since 2016's '#WherestheLove' remix "featuring The World", a version of their hit song 'Where is The Love?'. Alongside a link to the music video, they wrote on Twitter: "We have the POWER to make change together. Prison Industrial Complex. Immigration. Gun Violence. Police Brutality. These issues are critical for our families, friends, communities, and world. Stay Woke. Take Action Now. #BEPStreetLivin (sic)" It comes after will.i.am pre-

viously said Fergie could rejoin the group in the future, if they decided to reunite in Virtual Reality (VR) form. The producer and 'The Voice UK' coach said: "There are infinite possibilities for the world to create. "We could create virtual Black Eyed Peas. "You could go back to when we started the group in 1998 and experience that story, you could go back to when we first got signed in 1997 when we first got signed to Interscope. "What we were thinking in 2003 when we put Fergie in the group, there's so much you can do." It's not yet known if 'Street Livin' is a one-off single or whether the band are in the studio preparing a follow-up to 2010's 'The Beginning' LP. 'London Bridge' hitmaker Fergie - who released her sec-

ond solo record 'Double Dutchess' in September - insisted at the end of 2017, that she hasn't officially quit the group, and that she would love to team up with her bandmates on a new album. She said: "I've never left The Black Eyed Peas. We've never broken up officially, I guess we're just on a break. We're family. They're like my work family. That's forever. "Honestly, I would have loved to be able to do my album in one tenth of the time, do a Black Eyed Peas album in that same time, tour both, have another child. There's just not enough hours in the day."

Timberlake album will 'disrupt order'

Justin Timberlake's long-time collaborator says 'Man of the Woods' will "create a new world order". The 'Can't Stop The Feeling' hitmaker debuted a totally different sound on lead single 'Filthy', and Danja - who co-produced with the likes of The Neptunes and Timbaland - says Justin is ready to share with the world his roots as an artist, which vary between hip-hop and R&B to country music. Addressing speculation that the 36-year-old star has gone completely country on the album, Danja - whose real name is Floyd Nathaniel 'Nate' Hills - told Complex magazine: "I don't know who ever said he was making a country album. You know, he's always mixing a lot of different things together. "It's always funk, R&B, soul, hip-hop, country." Sharing a description of the forthcoming release, he said: "I like to think of 'Filthy' as the disruption between the world we're living in and his world. "Filthy" was just that kick in the door: "I'm here, let me erase everything that you've been listening to. "Let me disrupt the order, the world order and kind of create a new world order with this world that he grew up in." On Monday Justin announced an arena tour in support of the record, which will kick off at the Air Canada Centre in Toronto on March 13, before wrapping it up in his hometown of Memphis on May 30. It will be his first full tour in four years following the '20/20 Experience World Tour'. In a promo clip posted on social media, Justin explained that he was inspired by the outside on the record, and that that will be reflected with his production. He said: "The outdoors is the inspiration for a lot of these songs. That's the main idea. The tour will be able to bring the outside in. "How can we bring that to life? I want people to see the inspiration for how it ended up sounding. I've never seen that done before-bring the outside in." The 'SexyBack' singer recently revealed his record focuses on his wife Jessica Biel and their two-year-old son Silas, as well as his roots in Memphis.



Bieber was lined up for Fifty Shades Freed duet

Fifty Shades Freed' producers originally intended for Justin Bieber to sing with Rita Ora on 'For You'. Bosses at Universal Pictures were desperate to get the pop megastar on the track "with or without" Rita, after securing Taylor Swift on the last movie, 'Fifty Shades Darker', with former One Direction star Zayn Malik on 'I Don't Wanna Live Forever'. However, the 'Sorry' hitmaker was reportedly intent on not taking on extra jobs during his hiatus. An insider told the Daily Star newspaper: "Originally Universal Pictures wanted Justin Bieber to sing a song on the soundtrack, either with or without Rita. "He's the biggest male pop star in the world and so that's what they aimed for. "They had the world's biggest female pop star in Taylor Swift do the last film, so they were keen for something a bit different because Zayn Malik sang that with her and he comes from One Direction as well." Zayn's former bandmate Liam Payne ended up recording the track with the 'Your Song' singer, which he was over the moon with. In a newsletter to his fans, the 'Strip That Down' hitmaker wrote: "Buzzing to start the new year having a new single out with Rita Ora called For You! We had a lot of fun making this in the studio so I hope you like it! It's the lead track from the new Fifty Shades Freed movie. It's out now so go give it a listen. (sic)" Meanwhile, lead star Jamie Dornan has recorded a cover of Sir Paul McCartney's hit 'Maybe I'm Amazed' for the soundtrack. The 35-year-old actor stars as Christian Grey in the final installment of the 'Fifty Shades' series which was based on the trio of novels by E.L. James, and it seems as though his starring role won't be the only contribution he makes to the movie. According to the official track listing - which was announced on the movie's Instagram page on Monday - Jamie lends his voice to a rendition of the song, which was first released by the former Beatles legend in 1970 for his album 'McCartney'. The track was never released as a single, but a live version was recorded with Paul's post-Beatles band Wings for their live album 'Wings Over America', where it became a top 10 hit in America and reached number 28 in the UK.



LANA DEL REY POSTPONES KANSAS CITY GIG

Lana Del Rey has postponed her Kansas City concert after falling ill with flu. The 'Born To Die' hitmaker was due to perform at the Sprint Center yesterday but took to Twitter overnight to inform her 8.29 million followers that she won't be recommencing the run until Thursday in Chicago, to give her time to recover. However, the 'Video Games' star has reassured her fans that promoters are doing all they can to "make up the date". She wrote: "Kansas City, Missouri, I'm so sorry to have to cancel the show tomorrow but I've come down with the flu so I'll be resuming the tour in Chicago. We will try and find a make up date - and refunds are available at point of purchase. (sic)" The 32-year-old singer is currently facing legal action over similarities in her song 'Get Free' to Radiohead's classic 'Creep'. At her Denver show on Sunday, Lana said that the track from her LP 'Lust For Life' could be removed from the record, but that it would not stop her benefiting from her personal attachment to the song. She told the crowd: "I just want to say that I do have a particular song that Radiohead wants 100% of my publishing for, and actually the only reason why I mention it is I wanted to let you know ... that regardless of what happens in court, the sentiment I wrote in that song, which was my statement song for the record, my personal manifesto, my motto manifesto. The 'Video Games' singer recently confirmed reports that the indie rock group are suing her for copyright infringement. She wrote: "I just want to let you know that regardless of what gets taken down off of everything, those sentiments that I wrote, I really am going to strive for them even if that song isn't on future physical releases of the record." Radiohead, fronted by Thom Yorke, believe there are too many similarities between 'Creep' and 'Get Free', but were said to be keen



to avoid a court battle. A source said previously: "Both teams are trying to thrash it out behind the scenes to prevent it from going to court. "It's understood that Radiohead's team are hoping for the band to either receive compensation or be credited on the list of songwriters to receive royalties." The track is currently credited to Lana, Kieron Menzies and Rick Nowels.

Sam Rockwell loves doing darker films



Sam Rockwell always wanted to do "darker stuff". The 49-year-old actor has starred in a number of comedy rolls but admitted he also enjoys playing more serious roles and is set to portray George W Bush in Adam McKay's Dick Cheney biopic. Speaking to The Guardian newspaper, Rockwell said: "I've always wanted to do darker stuff, but I like to be silly too. "Though comedy also takes it out of you. I mean, it's not digging ditches, but mentally. "You do 16-hour days, with a deadline. Working with Adam McKay and playing George W Bush, with Christian Bale as Dick Cheney... that's responsibility, you know? You gotta have a beer at the end of the week." Rockwell is now starring alongside Frances McDormand and Woody Harrelson in the new Martin McDonagh movie 'Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri', and he has nothing but praise for the filmmaker. He said: "I put him [McDonagh] up there with David Mamet, Quentin Tarantino, Harold Pinter, Sam Shepard, Kenny Lonergan. "His writing is astounding. And now he's

this amazing film director. He's made three pretty good movies, and this is probably his best. "I'm not embarrassed to tell you I've seen it more than once. I'm so proud of it. "It's easy, working with Martin. I'll be nervous to read in front of him for the first time. "I work with coaches and do my homework, so I'm usually pretty prepared. Then he'll make little adjustments like the hair. But it's never, like, 'you're way off the mark'. "He casts the right people, ultimately." Rockwell won the Supporting Actor award at the Golden Globes on Sunday and has been nominated for a BAFTA for his role as Jason Dixon in the new movie and said he enjoys "rubbing shoulders" with other celebrities. He said: "It's fun. It's nice to get props, but you can take the piss out of it all at the same time. "There are moments of enjoyment when you're rubbing shoulders with a mentor like Gary Oldman. "That's a kick. Tom Hanks, who I've worked with. Meryl Streep. Judi Dench."

Wright identified with Winston Churchill

Joe Wright found he identified with Winston Churchill. The 45-year-old filmmaker has helmed the new wartime movie 'The Darkest Hour' - starring Gary Oldman as the Prime Minister - but when Wright first started out making the film, he found that he had some similarities with Churchill. In an interview with Time Out London magazine, Wright said: "It's not like Churchill's been a hero of mine, but I was sent this screenplay and was shocked to find myself identifying with him. "He was a man who had made a lot of mistakes, and then found himself in this position of extraordinary responsibility. "He suffered an immense crisis of confidence, and then was able to turn that around and overcome. Also the responsibility of parenthood and marriage, and being a man. In this movie, Churchill [represents] an aspect of me. And then I put more of myself into the screenplay, those elements

of self-doubt." 'The Darkest Hour' tells the story at the beginning of World War II as within days of becoming Prime Minister, Churchill must face one of his most turbulent and defining moments of the conflict: exploring a negotiated peace treaty with Nazi Germany, which could guarantee Britain's independence and that of the Commonwealth. As the Nazi forces roll across Western Europe and the threat of invasion of the UK, Churchill must resist attempts by his own political party and an initially skeptical King George VI, to stand firm against the dangers facing his country and not buckle to the Nazis. The film has received critical acclaim and Oldman recently won the Golden Globe for Best Actor in a Motion Picture and has been nominated for a BAFTA in the Leading Man category. — Bang Showbiz

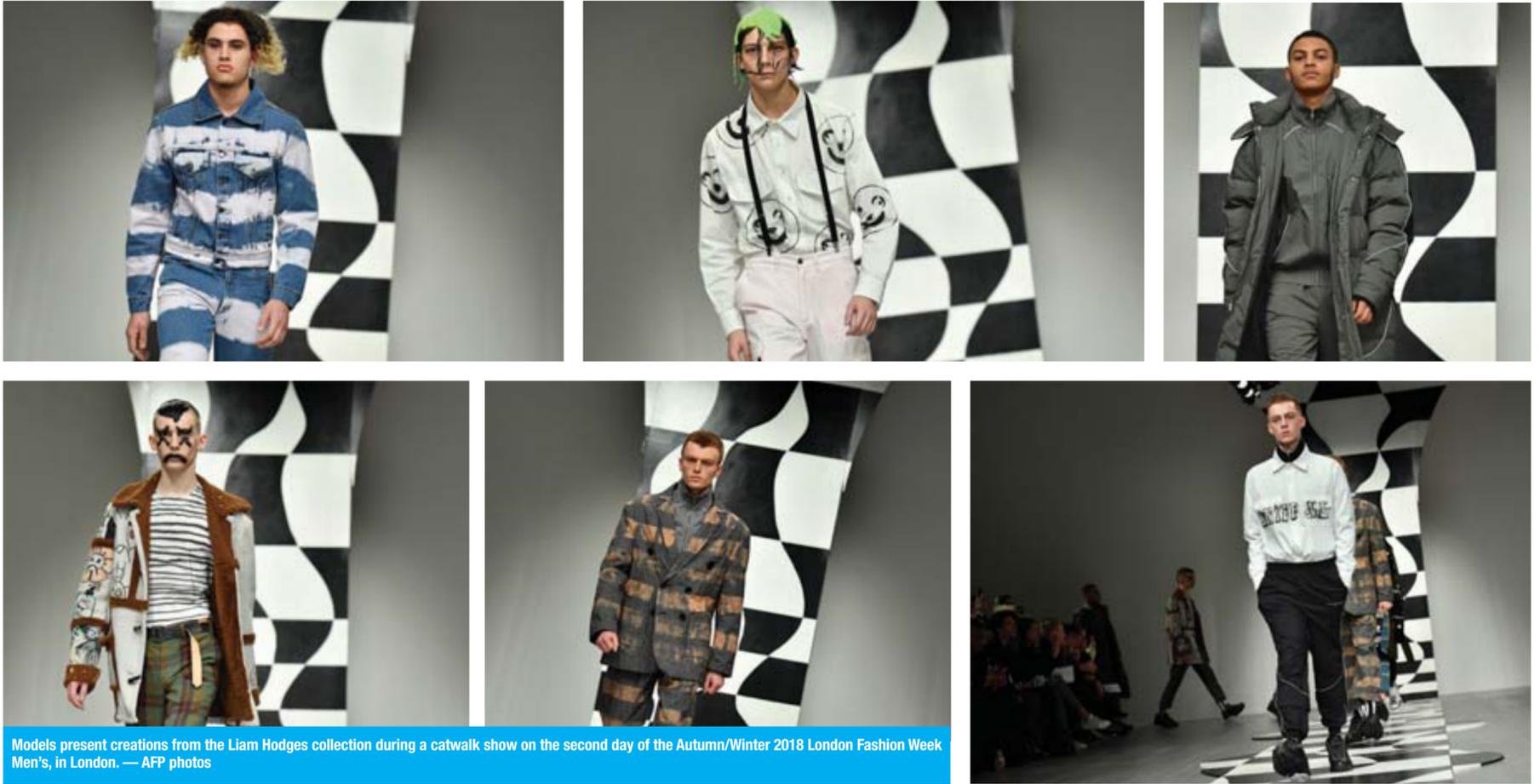


Plummer almost retired before landing All The Money In The World role

Christopher Plummer nearly retired before landing the John Paul Getty role in 'All The Money In The World'. The 88-year-old Hollywood legend replaced Kevin Spacey in the Sir Ridley Scott biopic after the 'Seven' actor was accused of a number of sexual assault allegations, but Plummer admitted he was contemplating ending his career before he got the call. Speaking to The Daily Telegraph newspaper, Plummer said: "I want to keep working in my fifth act, until I drop dead. You know, things were coming to an end, and I thought 'I suppose I've got to retire now', even though I didn't want to. Then Ridley called me. When I read it, it was clear to me that it was a classic role. I couldn't wait to get my hands on it." Unlike Spacey, Plummer revealed he didn't have to wear any prosthetics for the role but because Getty was a "mysterious

recluse" the actor had to use his imagination. He said: "He was such a mysterious recluse, there's very little on him. So even if I'd had all the time in the world, I wouldn't have picked up anything much. There's very little of it to be heard - just some poor recordings in a monotone. So I had to use my imagination. "But I think we ended up getting a pretty close approximation of the character - without wearing ridiculous prosthetics, or anything like that." The film follows the kidnapping of 16-year-old John Paul Getty III (Charlie Plummer) and the desperate attempt by his devoted mother Gail (Michelle Williams) to convince his billionaire grandfather (Plummer) to pay the ransom. Recently Williams and Mark Wahlberg, who stars as advisor and CIA operative Fletcher Chase, revealed they agreed to reshoot the scenes without being paid.





Models present creations from the Liam Hodges collection during a catwalk show on the second day of the Autumn/Winter 2018 London Fashion Week Men's, in London. — AFP photos

Outerwear and out there: London wraps up men's fashion week

Gender fluid clothes, dartboards and bright orange—here are some of the trends and highlights from Men's Fashion Week in London, which wrapped up on Monday:

Young talent

Organizational reasons kept big names away from this edition—Burberry presents its mixed male/female collection in February—so the men's event went back to its roots by promoting young designers. London is the "capital of creativity", said Caroline Rush, the head of the British Fashion, which organizes the showcase. One example is MAN, an initiative by retailer Topman and non-profit Fashion East that helps develop new talent.

This year it supported the London debut of gender fluid design duo Art School. Male and female models wore clothes designed to be worn by either, including a red pinstriped shift dress overlaid with a belted corset, the wearer's hairy chest showing through.

Orange alert

There is nothing like wearing bright colors on dull winter days, and What We Wear, the label founded by London rapper and singer/songwriter Tinie Tempah, had neon orange scarves, t-shirts and trousers inspired by high-visibility construction wear. At Christopher Raeburn, which prides itself on sustainable designs, orange was also a dominant theme in a collection that transformed air and sea rescue uniforms into modern streetwear, with long padded jackets, gloves and waterproof boots. Hussein Chalayan used a palette of brown, yellow and black, while Oliver Spencer, who creates tailored casual chic, used ochre and charcoal grey in his latest collection modeled by a range of ages.

Urban cowboy and dystopia

After the carefully-coiffed metrosexual and the bearded lumbersexual, is it time for the urban cowboy? It's not impossible, if you believe Astrid Andersen—a young designer who matched sportswear with Stetson hats, electric blue puffas and overclothes with tartan designs.

Liam Hodges offered a more subdued look, which stayed true to his hip-hop and neo-punk roots while imagining a disturbing future, with "killer clown" smileys adorning oversized black jumpers.

Clothes you won't wear

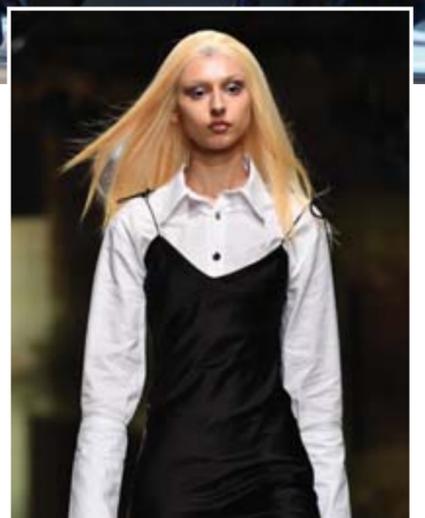
An outfit resembling two dartboards, one worn on the head—the face a bullseye—and one on the body, over a



shimmering, colorful dress with an electrical extension cord for a necklace. It was the creation of Rottingdean Bazaar, a label by James Theseus Buck and Luke Brooks, two former students from London talent hub Central Saint Martins, who are forging a reputation for provocative style.

Vivienne Westwood: fashion.com

Notably absent from this season's Men's fashion week in London, the high-priestess of punk chose to display her latest collection through a series of images and videos posted online. "Don't Get Killed" had a military theme, with models sporting cartridge belts and khakis and posing on army beds, multicolored oil drums and military-style bunk beds. A long-time political campaigner, including against Brexit, the British designer also staged models holding European and British flags.—AFP



Designers of Art School, part of the MAN collection, join models wearing their creations during a catwalk show on the third day of the Autumn/Winter 2018 London Fashion Week Men's.

Forget Milan, Florence is cradle of Italian fashion

Think Italian fashion and you are likely to think of chic central, Milan. But "Made in Italy" actually has its roots in Florence, where the hotly anticipated Pitti Uomo trade fair opens this week. The most famous men here may be naked—from Michelangelo's David to the sea-god Neptune—but every year the Tuscan city becomes the capital of men's fashion, putting on four heady days of ready-to-wear shows.

The event, which kicked off yesterday, is a must for buyers, journalists and fashionistas—drawing some 36,000 last year—who gather to gawk, gossip and go mad over the latest trends at the city's imposing Fortezza da Basso fortress. Some 1,200 brands are expected to present their autumn-winter collections at the 93rd edition under headliner Karl Lagerfeld, with old hands like Paul & Shark alongside newcomers such as M1992 by Italian DJ Dorian Stefano Tarantini.

It was Tuscan businessman Giovanni Battista Giorgini who organized the first Italian fashion show, hosting a gathering with US and Canadian buyers, journalists and distributors at his home in 1951—largely in a challenge to French fashion. Then relatively unknown labels such as Simonetta, Pucci, Fontana and Cuppucci went down a storm and Giorgini replicated the shows the following year in a grand hotel, before they became a fixed feature at the majestic Pitti Palace.

It was under the Pitti's glass chandeliers that the biggest houses—Gucci, Schiaparelli, Ferragamo—showed off their creations until the 1980s, making "Made in Italy" a byword for the highest quality and most sought-after fashion. "Florence's relationship with fashion is rooted in its economic, political and cultural history, dominated by powerful craft guilds," says Angelo Cavicchi, president of the Pitti Discovery Foundation and the Florence Center for Italian Fashion.

Preserving ancient skills

From the 12th to the 17th century, the city boasted 21 such bodies protecting the interests of the rich and influential in the art and crafts world, the most powerful of which were known as the Arti Maggiori. The elite Arte di Calimala, the guild of cloth finishers and foreign cloth merchants, was among them. It imported raw fabrics before transforming them into refined materials and exporting them in a trade that drove the city's economy. The Calimala competed with other guilds—like the wool or silk merchants over who could finance the greatest architectural and artistic works in the city, from the bronze doors of the Baptistery to the Cathedral's famed dome.

"It was comparable to the key support private companies, including many fashion houses, bring today to cultural projects," says Saverio Pacchioni, a member of the Associazione Partners Palazzo Strozzi, which persuades firms to promote the arts in Florence.

The modern-day city manages to defend its position as a fashion leader by preserving local craftsmanship and working in partnership with its close neighbor Prato, the country's leader in supplying fabrics to the ready-to-wear industry.

Florence boasts historical gems such as the Antico Setificio Fiorentino, a silk factory founded in 1786 which still produces jacquard weaves and damasks by hand on looms that once belonged to the city's noblest families. And the city's traditional skills are protected from the march of time thanks to fashion schools like Polimoda, which ranks among the top 10 such institutes in the world.—AFP

RIO COUNTING DOWN TO CARNIVAL UNDER PARTY-POOPER MAYOR

Rio's annual carnival is seen as a money-making extravaganza for the city. But evangelical Mayor Marcelo Crivella isn't a fan and slashed funding for next month's parade, forcing samba schools to cut their cloth accordingly. Before his bombshell announcement in June that he was halving the budget of some \$7 million, newly-elected Crivella broke with tradition by not attending the opening of the event in what was widely seen as a snub to its wild party culture. Rio's 13 elite samba schools reacted by threatening to call a halt to the world's most famous carnival.

But the storm has since subsided, and one month to the day before the start of the party, the sewing machines are busily whirring in Samba City, a zone of warehouses and workshops where the magnificent floats and costumes are made. "With or without money, I enjoy the carnival" is the theme of one of the best known Samba schools, the Mangueira. It's a school whose idea of "sin" in a dig at former evangelical bishop Crivella is "not to enjoy the carnival."

"The subsidy cut forced us to adapt our resources to make a beautiful, grandiose carnival, though one that is accommodated to this new reality," artistic director Leandro Vieira told AFP, even if he believes the mayor's motives to be religious rather than financial.

'Show will go on'

"It's been a difficult year" of preparation, said Fabio Pavao, who helps manage the Portela school. "The schools need the support of the public authorities, and with a mayor who likes carnival, everything is much easier." The city's top samba schools—the so called Special Group—compete at Rio's Sambadromo arena with spectacular parades featuring lavishly decorated floats and thousands of dancers dressed in sequined micro-costumes. Many schools see Crivella's subsidy cut as a declaration of war on the event, which last year brought in close to a billion dollars in tourism revenue to the city.



A member of a samba school waits for the start of a street parade at Copacabana beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



People work on the costume for the Mangueira samba school at Cidade do Samba (City of Samba), where costumes and floats for Rio's Carnival are made, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. — AFP photos

"We did not have the money to pay the subsidy in a comprehensive way, my responsibility as the mayor is huge and I cannot leave the hospitals without medicines and I cannot leave the schoolchildren without snacks," the 60-year-old mayor said, justifying the cuts as an inevitable reflection of Brazil's economic crisis. But carnival director Vieira said Crivella had other motivations. "For the evangelical doctrine, the carnival is the festival of the devil," said Vieira.

"An evangelical can think this way, but the mayor of Rio cannot. It's a tradition that brings powerful income to the city and that's what scares me the most, because it

shows that this conservative thinking can even go against financial logic."

'Not a reveler'

The head of the city's Riotur tourism office, Marcelo Alves, insisted there were no political or religious reasons for cutting resources. "The mayor is not a reveler. We should respect that. But that doesn't mean he doesn't like carnival. It's very different, he likes it so much that, in a meeting, he even sang a samba that he recorded," Alves told AFP. He added that not a day went by that Crivella—a renowned gospel singer didn't call him for reassurance

that preparations were running according to plan. Riotur in fact worked to get private funding for the samba schools to try to close the gap left by the budget cuts. The schools were grateful but regretted the extra funds had not arrived sooner, as they had already been forced to plan for a smaller parade. The big question is whether Crivella will attend. "I hope he's there, because it's his role to be there. And who knows, if he sees the parade he may even like it," said Pavao. — AFP



A man works on the costume for the Portela samba school at Cidade do Samba (City of Samba), where costumes and floats for Rio's Carnival are made, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



Leandro Vieira, 34, artistic director of the Mangueira samba school, draws a costume inside their barrack at Cidade do Samba (City of Samba), where costumes and floats for Rio's Carnival are made, in Rio de Janeiro.



Members of a samba school perform during a street parade at Copacabana beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

London play charts real-life drama of 'Jungle' migrant camp

A boy is found dead and smoke fills the air ahead of a police raid: traumatic memories from France's "Jungle" migrant camp are being recreated on a London stage. More than a year since police swept through the squalid camp near the port of Calais, clearing out an estimated 7,000 migrants, the ordeal is captured vividly in "The Jungle" playing to sell-out crowds at the Young Vic theatre. The play is the creation of two writers who set up their own theatre amid the chaos in Calais, with casts including migrant actors.

"We ended up wanting to chart the creation of that society and then the destruction, or downfall, of that society," playwright Joe Murphy told AFP. Murphy and fellow writer Joe Robertson, both 27, set up the Good Chance Theatre in September 2015 at the heart of the Jungle, their actors performing under a second-hand geodesic dome tent. Three of the migrants who acted in Calais are now performing in "The Jungle", which lays bare the precarious and dangerous times faced by those searching desperately for a passage to Britain.

Episodes in which characters race off to try their luck-seeking their "good chance" in Jungle lingo-on the roads towards the port bring tears to patrons' eyes. A total of 33 migrants died in the Calais area in 2015 and 2016, mostly being hit by vehicles as they tried to climb into lorries, or by trains about to pass through the Channel Tunnel. The

camp was widely seen as a result of a controversial 2003 accord that effectively moved Britain's border with France to the French side of the Channel, creating a magnet for migrants fleeing war and poverty in the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

Despair, music, laughter

The play's scenes of despair are punctuated by music and laughter, as different nationalities try to live together and naive British volunteers turn up with breakfast cereal and good intentions. "We have tried to be as honest as possible about the role we played and the role that the volunteers played in Calais," Robertson said.

"We've tried to be really critical at times of the impact individuals have when they try and help." The play's narrator is Ammar Haj Ahmad, himself a refugee from Syria, who did not pass through Calais and sees his role as creating empathy. "It's my task to invite people to strip with me, to really be vulnerable, whether we cry or we don't cry, to look people in the eye and say, 'now you know,'" he said.

'Dangerously explorative'

The desire to understand what happened across the Channel is a main draw of the show, which closes on Tuesday, before the playwrights move on to their next project. Later this month Good Chance Paris will open in



Writers Joe Robertson (right) and Joe Murphy pose outside the Young Vic Theatre in central London. — AFP

the northern Porte de la Chapelle area, bringing the dome tent used in Calais to the French capital. "We will be a theatre that welcomes people of all backgrounds, who've been in the city and were born there and lived there all their lives, and those that arrived there the day before," Murphy said.—AFP

'Jumanji' bounds out of jungle to top N American box office

Sony's family-oriented movie "Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle" roared into first place this weekend in North American theaters as horror film "Insidious" edged into second past a slipping "Star Wars" installment, final data show. "Jumanji," starring Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson and funnymen Jack Black and Kevin Hart, netted an impressive \$37 million for the three-day weekend, bringing its domestic total to \$246 million in its third week out, said website Exhibitor Relations.

The film, following four teens who find themselves inside the video game world of Jumanji, has grossed more than \$500 million worldwide and opens in the huge Chinese market next weekend. In second place was Universal's newly released "Insidious: The Last Key," with a take of \$29.6 million. The horror film, the fourth installment in the "Insidious" franchise, stars Lin Shaye and Angus Sampson and follows a parapsychologist investigating a haunting in her childhood home. News for third-place "Star Wars: The Last Jedi" was mixed: the latest in the hugely popular series has now taken in \$1.2 billion worldwide, but it continued to slow in North America, totaling \$23.7 million in its fourth week.

The space saga stars Daisy Ridley, Oscar Isaac, Adam Driver and two members of the series' original cast, Mark Hamill as Luke Skywalker and the late Carrie Fisher as Princess Leia. Fourth place went to Fox's "The Greatest Showman," a "good old-fashioned cornball PG musical" (so says Variety.com) about larger-than-life circus impresario P.T. Barnum. With the popular Hugh Jackman in the lead role, the film took in \$13.8 million in its third week, down only slightly from the previous week. And in fifth was another musical, "Pitch Perfect 3," a Universal sequel that took in \$10.3 million in its third week. The movie's cast, led by Anna Kendrick, follows the continuing adventures of glee singers the Bellas.

Rounding out the top 10 were:
"Ferdinand" (\$7.7 million)
"Molly's Game" (\$6.9 million)
"Darkest Hour" (\$6.1 million)
"Coco" (\$5.4 million)
"All the Money in the World" (\$3.6 million)—AFP

Fantasy film 'The Shape of Water' leads Bafta nominations

Fantasy film "The Shape of Water" gained 12 nominations at this year's Baftas, announced yesterday, leading the pack as the movie awards season gets under way. Steeped in Cold War secrecy, the tale of a cleaner at a US government lab and the Russians who are after her discovery—is in the running for awards including best film and special visual effects. Guillermo del Toro is also nominated as best director for his film, which picked up two gongs at the Golden Globe Awards on Sunday.

But despite winning best original score and best director at the Hollywood ceremony, "The Shape of Water" failed to convert nominations to wins in five other categories. Mirroring the Golden Globes' picks, the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (Bafta) showered crime drama "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing Missouri" with nine nominations after the movie picked up four trophies on Sunday.

Matching such Bafta hopes was "Darkest Hour", about British wartime prime minister Winston Churchill, also with nine nominations ahead of the February 18 ceremony. The three most-nominated movies all feature in the best film category, along with coming-of-age romance "Call Me by Your Name" and World War II film "Dunkirk". The Academy also highlights British cinema talent, with 19th-century drama "Lady Macbeth" and "God's Own Country", about a farmer's relationship with a migrant worker, nominated for the outstanding British film award. The category also includes satire "The Death of Stalin" as well as "Darkest Hour", "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing Missouri" and the animation "Paddington 2". The Bafta ceremony will be held at London's Royal Albert Hall, two weeks ahead of the hotly anticipated Oscars on March 4. — AFP



This file photo shows a member of staff polishing BAFTA award winners masks ahead of the BAFTA British Academy Film Awards at the Royal Albert Hall in London. — AFP



This file photo shows members of the cast, including in front seat, Kevin Hart and Dwayne Johnson and in rear, Karen Gillan and Jack Black, arriving for the premiere of the film 'Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle' in Hollywood, California. — AFP

Lifestyle | Features



Iraqi children pose for a photo in a classroom in the battered city of Mosul.



Iraqi children read books at school.



Iraqi children walk to school in the battered city of Mosul. — AFP photos

Teachers in Iraq's Mosul learn to cope with traumatized pupils

On a classroom whiteboard in the battered city of Mosul the words "rediscovering how to smile" outline the heartbreaking task of Iraqi teachers striving to heal their students' mental scars after brutal Islamic State group rule. Dozens of Iraqi teachers—many battling trauma themselves—have gathered at a university, where instructor Nazem Shaker seeks to guide them in helping children still struggling to cope months after IS was driven from the devastated city. Shaker has drawn a

and escape the stress, pressures and bad memories that haunt them, he adds.

'Executions, deaths, explosions'

It is not just the years of IS rule that haunt the waking lives and sleeping hours of the children in Iraq's second city. The ferocious nine months of urban combat that saw Iraqi troops force out the jihadists in July with the help of airstrikes by a US-led coalition have left deep marks—both physical and mental. School headmaster Noamat Sultan encounters the destructive impact of the psychological trauma daily. "One of our students was very aggressive and kept on picking fights with his classmates," he tells AFP. "We had a long discussion with him and discovered that his father and brother had been



Iraqi children walk in the rubble as they head to school in the battered city of Mosul.

“RELATIVES KILLED, WITNESSING BEHEADINGS, DESTRUCTION AND POVERTY”

killed recently in an explosion." With the help of the boy's older brother and more attention from teachers, he has gradually been coaxed back to himself.

"We have already managed to convince him not to drop out of school," said father-of-eight Sultan. Physical education teacher Rasha Ryadh has seen the heavy toll from the "psychological pressures caused by seeing executions, deaths, explosions and the loss of loved ones", but is sure the students can recover. "They are ready to respond positively to the rehabilitation programs because they want to banish the thoughts and memories that drag them back to the period of Islamic State group rule," she says.

Such is the case for 12-year-old schoolboy Ahmed Mahmud, who despite his youth says he is "exhausted"

by everything he has seen. "When I sit down in class I don't have the will to study," Mahmud says. "I think back to the time of IS and I remember those who were executed like my uncle. They threw people off buildings and forced us to watch."

'Didn't say a word'

The 900 students at head teacher Sultan's school are able to study in just half of the building after fighting reduced the rest to rubble. The few remaining classrooms are seriously overcrowded, and benches meant for two pupils often have five or more crammed on them. Twelve-year-old Osama is not yet among them. He is still reeling from seeing an air strike send most of the other houses in his street crashing down on top of his neighbors. "For weeks he didn't say a word," says his mother Umm Osama. The boy still needs help to dress, wash and eat, and often seems lost inside himself. "Sometimes without warning he'd leave the house and just wander around aimlessly for hours," his mother says. "Several times it was hard to find him." — AFP



Ahmad Waadallah, a professor of psychology, leads a training to school teachers on how best to handle students suffering from trauma at a university in the battered city of Mosul.

"problem tree" on the board whose roots are a litany of anguish: "relatives killed", "witnessing beheadings", "destruction" and "poverty". He hopes that through a program of games, mime and sport, teachers will be better able to help students reach the goals outlined in the top branches of his diagram, where "hope" and "optimism" join the aspiration to smile again.

"How to live together and eradicate violence," he says are key lessons that have to be passed on. The teachers must help show students how to reconstruct their lives

From Reagan to Trump, and maybe Oprah, US celebrity politicians abound

Talk show queen Oprah Winfrey's impassioned Golden Globes speech triggered speculation about her political future. A 2020 presidential race between Oprah and Donald Trump, himself a TV titan, would be the celebrity-political battle of the millennium, made for-and-by-television. But they are by no means the first American screen stars to throw their hats in the political ring. Here are some notable standouts.

The Great Communicator

Prior to Trump, there was Ronald Reagan, the celebrity who achieved the greatest success in politics. Reagan earned notoriety as an actor in films like "Knut Rockne, All American," in which he starred as football player George "The Gipper" Gipp. He identified first as a Democrat but switched parties in the 1950s. Elected twice as president of the Screen Actors Guild, the charismatic Reagan became California's Republican governor in 1967, and won a landslide presidential victory in 1980 against Jimmy Carter.

Other Hollywood stars

Reagan paved the way for several other silver-screened politicians, most notably Arnold Schwarzenegger. The former Mr Universe bodybuilder and star of the "Terminator" movies followed Reagan's path to political stardom by becoming governor of California in 2003. But Schwarzenegger was born in Austria, meaning he could never serve as president. Fred Thompson, who had roles in "Die Hard 2" and "The Hunt for Red October," parlayed his celebrity into a political career, serving as a Republican in the US Senate from 1994 to 2003. He ran unsuccessfully for president in 2008, and returned to acting.

Actor-filmmaker Clint Eastwood, star of "Hang 'Em High" and director of "Million Dollar Baby," has been involved in political issues for decades. From 1986 to 1988, he served as mayor of Carmel-by-the-Sea, California.

The wrestler

Perhaps the most colorful television personality to enter US politics is Jesse "The Body" Ventura, a former Navy SEAL who became a popular bad-boy wrestler in the World Wrestling Federation, watched by millions in the 1970s and 80s. His joke candidacy for governor of Minnesota in 1998 gained traction as he pushed a populist platform. Seen as a precursor to Trump's wild win in 2016, Minnesota voters sent a message to business-as-usual politicians, narrowly electing the bombastic wrestler.

Today, professional wrestling has made it to the White House. Linda McMahon, the ex-chief executive of WWE and a former Senate candidate herself, now heads the Small Business Administration under Trump.

Talk and reality show stars

Jerry Springer became host of a tabloid-themed talk show in the 1990s, after serving as mayor of Cincinnati for a year from 1977. Springer also mulled runs for US Senate in 2000 and 2004, but did not formally enter the race. Reality TV star Sean Duffy, a cast-member on MTV's "The Real World: Boston," is currently a Republican congressman from Wisconsin. Sonny Bono and his pop-star wife Cher scored a huge television hit with 1970s variety program "The Sonny & Cher Show." Bono served three years in the House of Representatives in the 1990s.—AFP

Oprah for president? Speech sparks fevered speculation

Could Oprah Winfrey run for president and beat Donald Trump? Hollywood, liberals and fans are abuzz with speculation that the billionaire chat show queen is harboring White House ambitions after an impassioned Golden Globes speech. Winfrey had barely heralded a "new day" following a sexual harassment watershed, before calls snowballed for one of America's most famous women, a self-made tycoon born into poverty, to run for the highest office in the free world. Hollywood's loathing of Trump and Democrats' bafflement that a crass-talking reality star with no previous government experience could win the presidency have fueled talk of well, why not another television star, only one with the "right" politics?

Twitter ignited, New York home-ware company Fish Eddy sold out of a 2020 Oprah mug and Democrats championed her as preferable in every way to Trump, who himself named Winfrey as his first pick for vice president in an interview 20 years ago. On board Air Force One, Trump's spokesman Hogan Gidley was grilled about the speculation by reporters travelling with the president to Nashville, answering that his boss would "welcome the challenge, whether it be Oprah Winfrey or anybody else." The only fly in the ointment? Winfrey's denial of any plan to seek office. "I don't, I don't," she reportedly said backstage when asked if she planned to run. "There'll be no running for office of any kind for me," she told CBS last October.

But CNN quoted two anonymous "close friends" as saying Winfrey was "actively thinking" about a presidential run. Her longtime partner also suggested that she could be persuaded. "It's up to the people," Stedman Graham was quoted as telling The Los Angeles Times. "She would absolutely do it." "She launched a rocket tonight, I want her to run for president," Meryl Streep told The Washington Post. "I don't think she had any intention (of declaring). But now she doesn't have a choice." If the speculation is

wishful thinking, Winfrey's fame and wealth, extraordinary personal story overcoming poverty, child sexual abuse and pregnancy to build a \$2.6 billion fortune and Oscar-nominated acting career, would stack up nicely in her favor.

"I slept on it and came to the conclusion that the Oprah thing isn't that crazy," tweeted Dan Pfeiffer, a former senior advisor to Barack Obama, the president whom Winfrey was credited with helping to elect in 2008.

'Float above Trump'

Bill O'Reilly, the former Fox News anchor forced out in disgrace by sexual harassment allegations and an early champion of Trump, hailed Winfrey as a formidable ticket. "How can any politician attack Oprah, a feminine icon, human rights hero, civil rights champion and beloved human being?" he wrote in The Hill. "She would most likely float above President Trump's bombast-coming across as positive and reasonable." A March 2017 poll by Quinnipiac University gave Winfrey a 52 percent favorable

rating compared to Trump's then 41 percent job approval rating.

Last September, Winfrey tweeted a New York Post editorial that trumpeted her as the Democrats' best hope of beating Trump in 2020. "Thanks for your VOTE of confidence!" she wrote. "You need a star," wrote the Post. "She can do it - in theory. The question is: Would she want to?" Raised in Nashville, Milwaukee and Mississippi, Winfrey was raped and sexually abused as a child and became pregnant aged 14, but miscarried the baby. After college, she went into journalism before reigning for 25 years as queen of the US talk show, ushering in an era of confessional television before becoming the first black woman to own a television network, OWN, the Oprah Winfrey Network.

At the start of the Golden Globes on Sunday, host Seth Meyers playfully encouraged her to run against Trump. Becoming the first black woman to accept the Cecil B. De Mille lifetime achievement award, her speech wove together gender, poverty and race. "For too long, women have not been heard or believed if they dare speak the truth to the power of those men," she said to a standing ovation. "So I want all the girls watching here now to know that a new day is on the horizon." Would the electorate be ready to put not just another television star but another political outsider in the White House?

"There's a feeling among many in the country that prior political experience is actually a deficit," said Cindy Rosenthal, political science professor at the University of Oklahoma. But if politics is a money person's game, then the odds are still long. "There is money around for Oprah, Michelle Obama and George Clooney—but the odds suggest The Donald is going to be hard to beat," said Rupert Adams, spokesman for global betting chain William Hill. — AFP



Oprah Winfrey poses with the Cecil B DeMille Award in the press room during The 75th Annual Golden Globe Awards at The Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, California. — AFP

Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2018



People take a boat to see giant water lilies (Victoria amazonica) - known as Yakare Yrupe in Guarani - which appear every three to four years in great numbers and size (more than a meter and a half in diameter), in the Paraguay River in Piquete Cue just north of Asuncion. Water lilies are seen every year but not in such quantities and size and locals treat them as a national treasure. — AFP

Show rescues photo comics from dustbin of history

What have Sophia Loren, John Cleese and Woody Allen got in common? They all began their careers in the oft-derided world of photo comics or photonovels. The genre, infamous for stilted storylines and sugary romantic melodramas, is finally getting its day in the sun in a major museum retrospective in France. The lingering kisses and frozen horrified looks that were the bread and butter of photo comic stories now seem irredeemably kitsch. But in strait-laced postwar Europe they were lapped up by millions even after the dawn of television-sparking moral panic and condemnation by both the pope and communist leaders.

Well into the 1960s one in three French people were avid readers, according to the curators of the "Roman-Photo" exhibition at the Mucem museum in Marseille, which claims to be the first definitive look at a genre "that has rarely attracted the attention of historians". Indeed many of the people who created photo comics were so scornful of them that they left very little behind for posterity.

Yet "photonovels were one of the biggest pop cultural successes of the 20th century," said co-curator Frederique Deschamps. "modern fairy tales filled with cars, fridges, record players and other objects that symbolise modernity, romance and desire." From their birth in Italy in 1947, photo comics reflected changing moral values and fed the slow rise of feminism with stories about touchy and taboo subjects like "divorce, abortion and women's rights at work", said her co-curator Marie-Charlotte Calafat.

'Opium of female masses'

"They do not deserve their retrograde reputation at all," she added, "it's the reverse actually." Instead they were real barometers of the "aspirations of society with storylines where women questioned their place," Calafat insisted. So much so that even the reforming Pope John XXIII denounced them in 1959, prompting one liberal Catholic weekly to call them "the opium of the female masses". A lobby group made up



This file photo shows a figure of Satanik, a character from an Italian noir comic book, during a press preview of the exhibition "Roman-Photo (Photo-Novel)" at the Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations (MUCEM - Musee des civilisations de l'Europe et de la Mediterranee) in Marseille, southern France. — AFP photos

of French communists, Christian intellectuals and some feminists also famously branded them "infantile magazines that undermine morality and break up families". Eventually though even the Church gave in and began using photonovels to recount the lives of the saints.

The genre soon spawned imitators in Britain and the US, where the satirical magazine *Help!* called on the budding comic and acting talents of Woody Allen, John Cleese and fellow Monty Python member Terry Gilliam. Photo comics also featured in *National Lampoon* as "photo funnies", with Americans borrowing the Italian word "fumetti" for the genre, meaning speech bubble (literally "little puff of smoke").

Sex and schlock horror

But as the 1960s wore on and TV became increasingly dominant, sales began to wane, pushing publishers to ape Hollywood and up the sex and shock factors. A large part of the Marseille show is dedicated to *Killing*, a sadistic Italian photo comic character who stole from other criminals and took particular pleasure from torturing scantily-clad women. The French version of the series, *Satanik*, was banned after 19 issues in 1967, but the brutal anti-hero who wore a skeleton costume-spawned a bootleg

Turkish version called *Kilink* that featured in several cult films, borrowing liberally from French and Italian pulp movies "Fantomas" and "Kriminal". But it was pornography that gave photo comics their longest and most lucrative afterlife in such bestselling top-shelf magazines as the Italian *Fotosex*. The British tabloid *The Sun* still uses photo strips to illustrate its *Dear Deirdre* problem page, which inevitably turns on sexual dilemmas or titillating situations. And photo comics continue to be widely used for health education worldwide.

Putting the exhibition together, however, was not an easy task. Curator Deschamps said she began her interest in the genre after finding a stack of the French magazine *Nous Deux* (Us Two) in a skip. As she dug deeper into the subject she discovered that the originals of most of the massively selling magazines had also been confined to the dustbin of history, leaving researchers with little to go on. Without chancing upon thousands of negatives of original photos in the archives of the Mondadori publishing house in Milan, she said they would not have been able to stage the show. The exhibition runs at Mucem, Marseille, until April 23, 2018. — AFP



Women standing in front of cover pages of the photo novel "Nous Deux" during a press preview of the exhibition "Roman-Photo (Photo-Novel)".



A figure of Satanik, a character from an Italian noir comic book, during a press preview of the exhibition "Roman-Photo (Photo-Novel)".

Bizarre News

Alton Towers' new ride based on Wicker Man film



Alton Towers Resort have announced a new ride set to open in spring. The Wicker Man is the UK's first new wooden rollercoaster experience in 21 years and includes a globally unique twist with the ride standing at 57.57ft tall - the height of a six storey building. The new ride is set to dominate the very centre of the theme park and will appear to burst into flames as the wooden track races three separate times through the structure. Bradley Wynne, Creative Lead at Alton Towers Resort, said: "We are delighted to finally be announcing Wicker Man as the latest ground-breaking thrill attraction from Alton Towers Resort for 2018. "Guests will be 'chosen' to take part in a celebratory 'rite of passage' as they race through the flaming Wicker Man. "We hope visitors will be blown away by Wicker Man's breathtaking scale whilst the primal essence of the wooden coaster and astonishing effects will leave them delighted, exhilarated and eager to ride again."

Game of Thrones voted most bingeable show

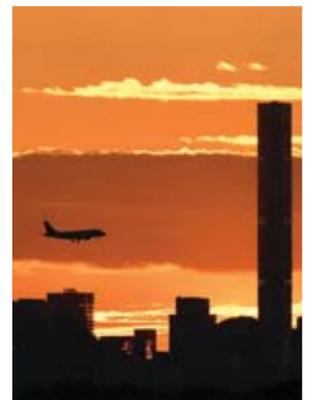
'Game of Thrones' has been voted the number one TV series most likely to get bums on sofas. The award-winning HBO show - which is based on George R R Martin's hit novels - made the likes of Kit Harington and Emilia Clarke household names and has now been hailed the most bingeable boxset, beating shows like 'Breaking Bad' and



'Downton Abbey'. The poll of 2,000 adults found 44 per cent now prefer to watch TV on demand and one in five follows more TV series than they did five years ago. Steve Mitchell, head of TV product management at Samsung UK, said: "There has been a radical change in how people watch TV and their favorite programs. "Whether through boxsets or streaming, we all have an opportunity to watch whatever content we want at a time that's convenient."

Woman gets plane to herself after booking on wrong flight

A woman managed to get an entire flight to herself after accidentally being booked on the wrong type of flight. Beth VerSteege took a selfie showing the empty rows on her flight from Rochester, New York, to Washington DC, the Mirror Online reported. The passenger got VIP treatment after she managed to book herself on a flight that was intended for airline staff. Her



original flight had been cancelled and the passengers were moved to the crew-only aircraft - but Beth missed the announcement that the airline had put the holidaymakers on an earlier flight. On Reddit, Beth said: "One of the airport agents came over while I was waiting and asked if that was the flight I was waiting for, then said, I knew this would happen. "When my flight was cancelled eight hours earlier a confused agent gave me and half the passengers a seat for the plane in the pic before another agent realized everyone could go on an earlier flight. "They made the announcement over the speaker but I'd already left to go back to my parent's house nearby to wait." Luckily, she was able to board the plane and despite being the only passenger on the hour-long flight, Beth didn't ask for any food or drink.—Bang Showbiz