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Panel votes to refer scores of health officials to prosecution

MPs vow to grill Assembly minister over false info

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: A probe committee investigating alleged corruption and financial and administrative violations at the health ministry yesterday approved recommendations to refer former health ministers and a large number of present and former officials to the public prosecution and the anti-corruption authority for investigation into alleged corruption.

Rapporteur of the panel MP Saadoun Hammad said the committee issued recommendations regarding seven issues it investigated. In the first issue regarding sending citizens for medical treatment abroad, the committee called for referring a former health ministry undersecretary and top officials at the foreign medical treatment department to the public prosecution and the anti-corruption authority.

Regarding alleged violations at health offices abroad, the committee called for referring a former health ministry undersecretary, top officials and officials at the Frankfurt and Washington health offices to the prosecution and the anti-corruption authority for investigation. Hammad said the committee called for referring a former health minister to the ministers' trial court for investigation related to alleged corruption in the recruitment of nurses from abroad. It was reported that ministry officials had received millions of dinars from foreign nurses, mainly from India, to secure employment at the health ministry.

The committee also recommended referring a former undersecretary, a former director of nursing services and former directors of companies that signed contracts with the ministry between 2013 and 2017 to the public prosecution and the anti-corruption authority for investigation. It also called for referring a former minister and former top officials for investigation regarding an expansion project at Adan Hospital. The committee also asked the National Assembly to extend its mandate for another year to follow up the implementation of the recommendations.

Meanwhile, MP Riyadh Al-Adasani yesterday said he will file to grill new state minister for national assembly affairs and ex-MP Adel Al-Khorafi over allegations he provided false information. Adasani said he will be joined

by opposition MP Adel Al-Damkhi in the grilling, which will be submitted only after the grilling against the minister of social affairs and labor is completed. He said that Khorafi submitted a proposal signed by a former defense minister, which is against the constitution, adding he will write to the prime minister to dismiss the minister. Adasani also called on the minister to step down, adding that if he is not sacked or does not resign, he will file to grill him.

Also, MP Thamer Al-Suwait yesterday submitted a draft law to amend the Kuwaiti nationality law to grant stateless or bedoon wives of Kuwaiti nationals Kuwaiti citizenship five years after the marriage without waiting for them to apply.

Activists slam orange Indian passports, digital identity project

MUMBAI: India's plan to introduce orange-colored passport jackets for some migrant workers is discriminatory and could increase the vulnerability of workers often duped by middlemen who promise them jobs, said legal experts and campaigners. The Ministry of External Affairs said last week migrant workers who need emigration clearance - those who have not passed 10th grade at school - to travel to a group of 18 countries, mostly in the Gulf region, would soon be issued orange passports.

"Passport holders with ECR (Emigration Check Required) status would be issued a passport with orange color passport jacket and those with non-ECR status would continue to get a blue passport,"

spokesman Raveesh Kumar said on Friday. Indian passports, barring official and diplomatic passports, are navy blue.

The government's plan was roundly criticized. "You cannot divide people on the basis of educational qualifications; it's discriminatory," said S Irudaya Rajan, professor at the Centre for Development Studies in Thiruvananthapuram in the southern state of Kerala, from where many migrant workers originate. "An orange cover shows a person is not well educated, and makes them vulnerable to exploitation. These are already vulnerable people who need more protection, not discrimination," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

There are an estimated six million Indian migrants in the six Gulf states of Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Oman, many of them trafficked and exploited. Many are duped by job agents, and trapped in low paying jobs with few benefits or protections. "Treating India's migrant workers like second class citizens is completely unacceptable," Rahul Gandhi, leader of the opposition Congress party, said in a tweet.

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Erdogan threatens to destroy US-backed Syria 'terror army'

ISTANBUL: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan yesterday threatened to destroy a planned US-backed 30,000-strong border security force in northern Syria, describing it as an "army of terror". Turkey fears that the mooted new force will be comprised of the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) militia, whom Ankara accuses of being terrorists and have been a constant bone of contention in Turkey-US ties.

The new upsurge of tensions between Ankara and Washington also comes as Erdogan has repeatedly threatened that Turkey could launch a cross-border operation to oust the YPG from the Kurdish-held town of Afrin in northern Syria. "America has acknowledged it is in the process of creating a terror army on our border. What we have to do is nip this terror army in the bud," Erdogan said in a televised speech outside Ankara.

The YPG played a key role in the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) alliance that last year ousted Islamic State jihadists from their stronghold of Raqqa in northern Syria. American officials said at the weekend that the new force

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ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (right) and Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani meet at the Presidential Complex yesterday. — AFP

Ancient Omani mediation method gets a makeover

GHALA, Oman: Omani Mahmoud bin Yousef Temtemi found himself in a pastoral predicament this autumn - his neighbor's flock of sheep had overrun his farm and gobbled up his crops, threatening his income. Rather than make a scene or turn to the police, Temtemi chose to raise his complaint in Omani tradition: Through the local "sabla", or council. Dressed in a robe and embroidered cap, Temtemi took his place on a sunny Friday morning at his neighborhood sabla in the village of Ghala - held outdoors on a patch of sidewalk.

"The farm is our livelihood," Temtemi told an AFP

correspondent attending the meeting. "I told myself I would lodge a complaint at the sabla, where the owner of the sheep would be present." In Ghala, just outside the capital Muscat, the sheikh humbly brings breakfast for meetings of the council. The youngest serves coffee. The fellowship broke the ice for the mediation Temtemi sought.

Acknowledging a problem needed to be solved, the men filed over to the meeting hall - a sparse room with little more than benches built into the walls. The elders listened to the farmer's story, discussed, then decided on compensation from the sheep owner. "He will pay 150 riyals (\$390) and keep an eye on his sheep," said a satisfied Temtemi.

Oman's sabla is a unique form of consensus building that many see as central to the Gulf nation's traditions, and which some want to see adapted to the age of the smartphone.

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GHALA, Oman: Omani men chat in the meeting room of the traditional local council known as the "sabla" in this small village near Muscat on Oct 27, 2017. — AFP

Qattan heads health committee

KUWAIT: The Advisory Technical Committee at the Arab Health Ministers' Council selected Kuwait's representative, Assistant Undersecretary for General Health Dr Majida Al-Qattan, as president of the committee during its next round. Qattan said her choice to head this committee during the round



Dr Majida Al-Qattan

that will last until Jan 19 is in agreement with decisions issued during the previous round to empower women. She said the committee is responsible for preparing meetings of the Arab Health Council, in addition to proposing and following work of the technical secretariat. She said the committee's efforts aim at finding Arab integration in the health field. Qattan said the committee reviewed recommendations issued by the executive council's subcommittees, which work throughout the year. She said that among the most important items that were discussed for the 49th round is the role of e-health and its importance in developing healthcare systems, and the selection of the Arab Health Day logo for 2018.

UK's Guardian goes tabloid to reduce costs

LONDON: Britain's Guardian newspaper adopted a new tabloid format and a redesigned masthead with simple black lettering from yesterday as part of a drive to cut costs. The left-leaning newspaper previously had a blue and white masthead and in 2005 had adopted a Berliner format, midway between a broadsheet and a tabloid. "Our move to tabloid format is a big step towards making The Guardian financial sustainable," the paper's editor-in-chief Katharine Viner said in a piece for the first new edition. She called it "bold, striking and beautiful".

Speaking at the relaunch, she vowed that "Guardian journalism itself will remain what it has always been: Thoughtful, progressive, fiercely independent and challenging; and also witty, stylish and fun." The Guardian is selling or scrapping its three presses worth £80 million (\$110 million) to cut costs and printing will be outsourced to tabloid-format presses run by Trinity Mirror media group.

The website, which attracts 150 million monthly unique browsers worldwide, has also undergone a redesign. The company is aiming to break even by April 2019, mainly through cutting costs and boosting digital ad revenue to



The new look tabloid Guardian is seen next to the old broadsheet version of the national newspaper yesterday. — AFP

make up for a sharp decline in print ad revenue. The first tabloid edition's main front-page photograph was of Chelsea Manning, the whistleblower whose leaked diplomatic cables were published by the Guardian, and who is now running for the US Senate.

Tabloid rival The Sun poked fun at its highbrow competitor, boasting on its front page that it was "20p less than The Mirror, £1.50 less than the tabloid Guardian". "From one tabloid to another, here is our suggestion for them to turn around their failing fortunes: Actually report some exclusive, rip-roaring stories ... We know that is an

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News in brief

UAE: Qatar 'intercepted' planes

ABU DHABI: The United Arab Emirates accused rival Qatar of "intercepting" two Emirati passenger planes en route to Bahrain yesterday in the latest incident between the Gulf rivals. Qatar denied that the first plane had been intercepted, but there was no immediate denial from Doha for the second incident. The UAE "General Civil Aviation Authority received a message from a national carrier yesterday morning that an aircraft on a routine flight to Manama was intercepted by Qatari fighter jets", it said in a statement carried by the state news agency. The authority said it was "a flagrant and serious threat to the safety of civil aviation and a clear violation of international law". The authority later said a second Emirati passenger plane bound for Bahrain was also intercepted by Qatari fighter jets. A spokeswoman for Qatar's foreign ministry denied as "completely false" the first incident had occurred.

Ritz-Carlton Riyadh to reopen

RIYADH: The luxury Riyadh hotel used as a prison during Saudi Arabia's crackdown on corruption will reopen for business next month, according to a company employee and its website, suggesting authorities are close to settling the cases of many suspects. Dozens of princes, senior officials and top businessmen were detained and confined in the opulent Ritz-Carlton Riyadh as the government launched the purge in early November. The hotel was closed to normal business. Yesterday, an employee at the office taking bookings for the hotel told Reuters by telephone that bookings by the public would be accepted from Feb 14. The hotel's website now accepts bookings from Feb 14, quoting a nightly rate for its cheapest room of 2,439 riyals (\$650). In a statement, a spokesperson for the Marriott hotel group, which owns the Ritz-Carlton brand, said: "The hotel is operating under the directive of local authorities and not as a traditional hotel for the time being."

Deputy FM confirms broad participation in Iraq's reconstruction conference

Kuwaiti, Ghanaian foreign ministers attend embassy opening



KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Sabah, Ghanaian Foreign Minister Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey and other officials inaugurate the Ghanaian Embassy in Kuwait yesterday. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Sabah and his Ghanaian counterpart Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey meet inside the Ghanaian Embassy in Kuwait.

By Nawara Fattahova and agencies

KUWAIT: The forthcoming conference on reconstruction of Iraq will have broad international participation and a significant contribution, a Kuwaiti official said yesterday. Invitations to the conference have already been delivered to the participating countries, international organizations of the United Nations, international financial institutions, and civil society organizations in various countries of the world. Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah told reporters after the opening of the Embassy of Ghana in Kuwait.

Kuwait will host an international conference from February 12 to 14 on reconstruction in parts of Iraq devastated by the war against the so-called Islamic State (IS). Donor countries and organizations are expected to announce financial contributions at the meeting.

Meanwhile, Jarallah reiterated the strong and historic relations between Kuwait and Egypt, and that three days after the Egyptian Foreign Minister issued a statement announcing his country's strong ties with Kuwait, in response to some media reports claiming that Egypt's relations with Kuwait and some other GCC states are tense.

Important milestone

The embassy of the Republic of Ghana in Kuwait opened yesterday in Hateen in a ceremony attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Sabah, Jarallah, Ghanaian Foreign Minister Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, Ghanaian Ambassador to Kuwait Alhaji Rufai Yahaya Iddi and other officials from both countries.

"This event is an important milestone in diplomat-

ic relations between Kuwait and Ghana. Due to increasing political and economic relations between the two countries, Kuwait opened its embassy in Accra in 2015. For the same reason Ghana decided last year to establish a resident diplomatic mission in Kuwait at the ambassadorial level to accelerate the diplomatic, economic, investment and trade relations between the two countries. Our embassy in Riyadh was earlier accredited to Kuwait," said Botchwey.

"Kuwait has made great strides to strengthen its ties with the world, particularly with African countries. In 2013, Kuwait hosted the third Arab-Africa summit, in which Ghana among other African countries participated. Today, through the desire of Kuwait to open up to Africa, many Africans can explore the potential and opportunities that exist between their countries and Kuwait," she said.

"The opening of the Kuwaiti embassy in Accra in 2015 and the opening of our embassy here will further strengthen bilateral relations for the mutual benefit of our two countries and peoples. There are a significant number of Ghanaian citizens and students in Kuwait, and opening our embassy here is opportune to address some of their concerns. I advise my compatriots to be law-abiding and maintain the good relations that exist between Ghana



Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah speaks to reporters.



Policemen secure the embassy premises yesterday.

and Kuwait. Opening a new mission is not an easy task, so I want to thank the leadership of Kuwait that contributed in opening our embassy. I also appreciate the role of the other African embassies in Kuwait to facilitate the opening of our mission," Botchwey said.

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid noted that opening the Ghanaian embassy in Kuwait will complete bilateral cooperation between the two countries. "Kuwait has great relations and cooperation with Ghana in all

fields. This ceremony shows Kuwait's interest in Arab-African cooperation and to be present in Ghana. There are about 25 non-Arab African embassies in Kuwait, while Kuwait has diplomatic missions in various African countries. Kuwait-African cooperation is continuous. There are many projects ongoing, including by the Kuwait fund that is very active in Africa including Ghana. I believe that Kuwaiti-Ghanaian relations will develop with the opening of the Ghanaian embassy here," he said.

Amiri Diwan Minister meets US, Turkish ambassadors



KUWAIT: Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah meets with Ambassador of the United States to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman. —KUNA



Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah meets with Ambassador of Turkey to Kuwait Aisha Hilal.

KUWAIT: Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah received at Seif Palace yesterday the Ambassador of the United States to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman. He also received

Ambassador of Turkey to Kuwait Aisha Hilal. Deputy Amiri Diwan Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah attended both meetings. —KUNA

DGCA holds training on rescue operations for airplane crash



KUWAIT: A picture shows training in progress on rescue missions for an airplane crash outside Kuwait International Airport. —KUNA

KUWAIT: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) held a training on rescue missions for an airplane crash outside Kuwait International Airport yesterday. The directorate is continuously developing its safety and security measures, as well as standards for search and rescue operations, DGCA President Sheikh Salman Al-Homoud Al-Sabah said in a press statement.

Meanwhile, DGCA said that the training is part of its emergency plan, aiming to boost the skills of all bodies in charge of rescue missions. It added that the training was executed in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior,

Ministry of Defense, Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD), Ministry of Health, Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), Kuwait Airways, Kuwait General Administration of Customs and Wataniya Airways.

DGCA had announced on Sunday that a private small-size airplane made an emergency landing at Kuwait International Airport due to a malfunction in its tires. The plane made an emergency landing due to a technical error in its tires, it added in a statement, and necessary measures were implemented. It did not specify what was the problem of the tires. It confirmed that no one was hurt. —KUNA



DGCA President Sheikh Salman Al-Homoud Al-Sabah and other officials attend the drill.

Local

Local banks instructed to increase Kuwaiti employees to 70 percent

Fatwa and Legislation Department lays off expat researchers

Cabinet orders probe in awarded tenders

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti Cabinet has ordered separate investigations into already awarded public tenders. The order, which was done during a customary cabinet meeting headed by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, came following requests by some state agencies to scrap previously awarded public tenders. The cabinet asked the concerned minister to conduct all-out investigations in order to find the reason for failure to sign relevant contracts in spite of earlier awarding decrees and available financial allocations. Necessary legal action must be taken in case of proven fraud in this regard, the cabinet instructed. Also locally, the cabinet asked the Public Authority for Communications and Information Technology to carry out a territorial communication pathway, upon a relevant recommendation from its economic committee.

At the onset of the meeting, First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah briefed the cabinet on the outcomes of his recent visit to Bahrain, including his meetings with the kingdom's leaders. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah apprised his colleague of the results of a recent visit to Kuwait by Ghana's Minister of Foreign Affairs and

Regional Integration Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, during which mutual issues were discussed and a consultation memorandum of understanding was signed.

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled did the same thing regarding Indian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs V K Sing's latest visit to the country, together with his talks with Kuwaiti officials on ways of promoting bilateral cooperative ties in all fields. He also expounded on the outcomes of talks with Special Representative of UN Secretary-General for Iraq Jan Kubis in Kuwait on Thursday, which focused on the issues of Kuwaiti prisoners of war, missing, properties and national archives, as well as Iraq's reconstruction conference due in Kuwait on February 12-14.

The ministers were further briefed by Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah on Saudi Interior Minister Prince Abdelaziz bin Saud's meetings with Kuwaiti officials on bilateral security cooperation. In Arab and Muslim domains, the Kuwaiti cabinet highly commended Jordanian security authorities for having recently aborted a terrorist plan by the so-called Islamic State (IS) to target the kingdom. It also sharply condemned recent attacks in Pakistan and Iraq, which left a number of policemen and people killed or wounded. In this regard, the cabinet reiterated Kuwait's principled and unwavering stand that decries terrorism in all manifestations and forms, while urging the international community to step up efforts to fight terrorism and thwart terrorist acts that breach all heavenly religions and human values and norms. — KUNA

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Efforts to nationalize leading positions in the banking sector have been relatively fruitful so far, according to Well-informed banking sources who stressed that 33 percent of those positions, including CEOs, their deputies, department managers and heads of various sections are currently occupied by Kuwaitis. The sources added that local banks recently received instructions to increase Kuwaiti employees to 70 percent in various banking positions. The sources said that several leading banks in Kuwait are already managed by Kuwaitis "who have shown remarkable competence and achieved unprecedented success." The sources also noted that Kuwait Central Bank is very committed to such steps and had earlier urged local banks to set well-defined schedules to put such instructions into practice and limit the use of foreigners for training purposes only.

replacing expats with citizens 100 percent, Al-Qabas reported yesterday quoting informed sources. The sources explained that the department's director, Chancellor Salah Al-Mas'ad, issued a directive yesterday terminating all expat 'legal researchers' and urged the Civil Service Commission (CSC) to provide Kuwaiti candidates who can replace them. The sources explained that this decision followed an earlier one terminating expats working in secretarial and other administrative jobs. They also noted that another decision will be issued soon to terminate expat advisors, after which, aside from security staff, the department will be entirely staffed by citizens. Moreover, the sources stressed that Kuwaitis will be carefully selected due to the sensitivity of work in such an advisory department. In addition, the sources said that terminated expats will be notified and given the legal grace period of one to three months before terminating them.

arrive within six months. Notably, the clean fuel project is one of the largest by Kuwait to renovate Ahmadi and Mina Abdullah refineries with a total value of KD 4.68 billion, of which KD 3.2 billion in self-funding and local loans has so far been spent on the project. KNPC signed the largest foreign funding contract in Kuwait's history in May 2017 to fund the second phase of the project, worth \$6.2 billion. KNPC has set a timetable for monthly payments as per bills presented by international consortia executing the project, taking into consideration that 92 percent of the project has been concluded and 95 percent of the equipment has been supplied. Around 110 local and international companies with over 45,000 people are working on the project.

Senior officials' appointments

Decree number 1/2018 was issued yesterday pertaining the appointment of senior officials at the state security department, said informed sources, noting that Fawwaz Meshal Al-Sabah, Abdullah Mubarak Al-Hajraf and Abdul Aziz Abdullah Khalaf Al-Salem have been appointed as assistant undersecretaries at the department. Meanwhile, decree number 2/2018 was issued pertaining subjecting the supervision of the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) to Minister of Information Mohammed Al-Jabri. A third decree (3/2018) was issued appointing Saleh Sulaiman Hamad Al-Mulla as assistant undersecretary at the ministers' council.

Replacement

Meanwhile, the Fatwa and Legislation Department recently became the first government body to implement the policy of

Clean fuel project

Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) has so far received \$2.5 billion of the foreign funding for the clean fuel project, while the balance of \$3.7 billion will

“ \$2.5 billion received for clean fuel project ”

Dissolved co-op society's board reinstated

By Meshal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeh issued a ministerial decision annulling a previous decree to dissolve the Kaifan Co-op Society's board of directors. The new decision, which seemingly came in response to a grilling motion filed in parliament against Sabeh, urged the appointed board to hand over all documents and society-related work to the previous board within three days.

Meanwhile, the ministry's assistant undersecretary for co-op societies affairs Sheikhah Al-Adwani announced opening a registry for candidates running in elections for co-op societies whose boards had been dissolved over serious financial and administrative violations. Adwani explained that board elections will be held in Abdullah Al-Mubarak, Doha, Sulaybikhat, Subahiya, Dasma and Bneid Al-Gar, Wafra and Sharq co-op societies, and voters will choose nine-member boards in each. Adwani explained that supplementary elections will be held where some board members were relieved from office in Jahra, Mubarak Al-Kabeer and Qurain and Saad Al-Abdullah

co-op societies.

Fabrications

His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Sabah's attorney Emad Al-Saif denied social media reports claiming that his client had met with the families of convicts indicted in the Abdaly cell case, and described those allegations as "fabrications". Saif stressed that IIII Sheikh Nasser highly respects the judiciary and has full trust in sentences passed by its honorable and fair judges. Saif said allegations on Twitter that Sheikh Nasser met the families in the presence of MP Adnan Abdulsamad are completely untrue and stressed that he will take legal measures against those promoting such rumors.

Complicated surgery

Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah yesterday conducted a complicated surgery to implant a cochlea in a six-year-old girl. The minister stressed in a statement after the operation that his ministerial duties will not come in the way of performing his humanitarian duties as a surgeon. Sheikh Basel added that the two-hour surgery was held at Zain Hospital, where he was assisted by Kuwaiti doctors. He added that the child's condition is now stable. Sheikh Basel said that such surgeries reflect advances in Kuwait's health system, adding that the Ministry of Health is on track towards relying on Kuwaiti medical staff to perform complicated surgeries in Kuwait, and thus reduce the need to dispatch patients abroad for treatment.

all confessed to absconding from their original sponsors. They were sent to concerned authorities for further legal action. Meanwhile, several security campaigns were held, during which 31 absconders and wanted persons were arrested. Furthermore, 31 residency violators and a number of people found without IDs were detained, while 66 traffic citations were issued.

Man tries to smuggle in 100 rare birds

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Abdali customs arrested an Iraqi driver who tried to smuggle nearly 100 rare birds into Kuwait yesterday. Nine falcons, 69 sandgrouse birds, and 19 homing pigeons were caught with the man in the operation that was carried out in cooperation with the Interior Ministry. The suspect was taken to the environmental police for further action.

Residency violators caught

Residency detectives arrested 25 expatriates who are in violation of the residency law. Detectives received tips about a residence in Ahmadi governorate harboring several residency violators, and most of them were reported absconding. The house was raided following the necessary legal procedures. The house was being used to provide unlicensed domestic help services, in addition to hosting immoral acts, the Interior Ministry said in a statement. Nine men and 16 women were arrested, and they



KUWAIT: This picture shows falcons caught with a passenger who tried to smuggle them into Kuwait through the Abdali border checkpoint yesterday.

Kuwait Times

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Local

Horeca Kuwait 2018 opens at Kuwait International Fairground

Event helps improve Kuwait's commercial and tourism competitiveness



KUWAIT: Officials inaugurate the Horeca Kuwait 2018 exhibition yesterday at the Kuwait International Fairground in Mishref. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



(From left) Khaled Fawzi, Nabila Al-Anjari, Huda Al-Enzi and Jumana Damous.



Participants pose for a group photo during the event.



Americana's pavilion.



A visitor takes a fruits' cup from one of the participating pavilions in the exhibition.



Another group of participants pose for a group photo.

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The Horeca Kuwait 2018 exhibition opened yesterday at the Kuwait International Fairground in Mishref with the participation of over 80 companies specialized in hospitality, catering and hotel equipment, including many international brands interested in the Kuwaiti and Gulf markets.

The seventh edition of Horeca Kuwait is organized by the Leaders Group Company for Consulting and Development in collaboration with the Hospitality Services Company. "We confirm that Horeca Kuwait is the largest exhibition held in some important touristic countries," said Nabila Al-Anjari, chairperson of the organizing committee of the exhibition and general manager of Leaders Group.

"We have the right to be proud of our ability to improve Kuwait's commercial and tourism competitiveness. This is a sign of the great progress achieved by our exhibition, which has become a destination for all companies, international chefs, hotels, restaurants, hospitality and culinary arts experts," she stressed. "It seems that new segments and companies have become more interested in participating in the exhibition due

to their interest in establishing close relationships with the hospitality industry or in preparation for other projects in this field."

She noted that the participation shows that Horeca is moving in the right direction towards making Kuwait an economic center that is comparable to the most important centers in the hospitality and commercial tourism industry in terms of displaying, promoting, developing, diversifying and integrating services in these sectors.

Important gathering

Executive director of the exhibition and secretary general of the federation of Kuwaiti hotel owners Mohammad Najia said: "Kuwait is witnessing an important and influential gathering, which is an indication of developments in the hospitality sector. Companies and

institutions related to the hospitality industry will take notice of this."

Najia said this year, the exhibition has been a big success in terms of the space sold, the large number of new companies participating and quantitative and qualitative momentum in new activities and events. He said this year's program includes sessions for the first time dealing with specialists and entrepreneurs, such as over food safety and the impact of new innovations on restaurant projects, investment and trade, in addition to cooking competitions. "We can say that the growth this year of the exhibition has exceeded 200 percent," he added.

"The exhibition is excellent and successful year after year with our cooperation and partnership with Leaders Group," said Jumana Damous, General

Director of Hospitality Services. She added that Horeca will reflect positively on many aspects of trade and economic activity.

The three-day event from Jan 15-17, 2018 includes a variety of activities and cooking competitions with many categories that cater to various appetizers, desserts and hot and cold beverages. Meanwhile, a session sponsored by the South African embassy was held yesterday afternoon, where the delegation presented a session on trade and investment in this field. It was followed by a family competition to prepare the best burger.

Cooking competitions are held under the supervision of world-class chefs, including the President of the International Federation of Chefs Chef Lautner, the former chef Samaan Helal, the president of the local kitchen chef, Chef Maroun Chedid, the French ambassador to the Middle East Chef Charles Azar and others.

The opening ceremony of the exhibition was attended by ambassadors, diplomats and business attaches, executive managers of hotel groups, food and hospitality services, experts from Kuwait and abroad, and hundreds of local and international chefs involved in culinary arts.



Specialized in hospitality, catering and hotel equipment

NBK puts innovation into practice

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) participated in the Innovation Challenge program organized by Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) in cooperation with UCLA Anderson School of Management. The program is aimed to develop the team's innovation capabilities through resolution of a challenge or a specific innovation project related to NBK.

The Innovation Challenge started in Kuwait on January 7, 2018 and will continue for four months. Towards the end of the program, the assigned team

will undergo the final module in UCLA Anderson School of Management.

NBK is committed to being one of the biggest advocates of corporate social responsibility in Kuwait, and in specific in the fields of education, supporting students and national talents. The Bank believes in the importance of providing Kuwaiti youth with the opportunities that will enable them to perform and demonstrate their capabilities, as well as in investing in them through training programs held throughout the year to help them gain experience and qualifications and arm them to enter the work market.

NBK places as well great importance in supporting the development of its employees through specialized training programs designed as per academic and scientific standards, providing them with diversified training and professional development programs which are delivered by leaders in the banking and financial sector.





Kashmir border violence kills 12

Indian police investigate brutal rape, murder of teenagers

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NAJAF: Iraqis carry the coffin of a victim during a funeral in the holy city of Najaf yesterday, following twin suicide bombing in the capital Baghdad. —AFP

Baghdad suicide attacks kill 31

Iraq's PM calls for elimination of jihadist ' sleeper cells'

BAGHDAD: Iraq's Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi called for the elimination of jihadist " sleeper cells" yesterday after a twin suicide bombing killed 31 people in Baghdad in the second such attack in three days. There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but most such attacks in Iraq are the work of the Islamic State jihadist group. The bombing comes after Abadi's government declared victory over IS in December and as the country gears up for parliamentary elections.

"Two suicide bombers blew themselves up in Tayyaran Square in central Baghdad," said General Saad Maan, spokesman for the Joint Operations Command, which includes the army and police.

A police officer reported "31 dead and 94 wounded". Tayyaran Square is a bustling commercial centre and a place where day laborers gather in the early morning waiting for jobs. It has been the site of deadly attacks in the past. Iraqi analyst Hisham Al-Hashemi said attacks at the square since 2011 have killed 180 people, "often in the run-up to elections or just after the polls". They aim to "create chaos and exacerbate sectarian divisions," he said. Security

forces cordoned off the scene of the blasts as ambulances gathered in the area, an AFP journalist said.

May elections

Abadi held an emergency meeting with the Joint Operations Command and intelligence officials after the attack, his office said, asking them to "eliminate IS sleeper cells" and ensure the security of civilians. Analysts have warned that IS would increasingly turn to such tactics as it was pushed underground after losing territory spanning the Iraq-Syria border. Just hours after the first attack, another bombing in the east of Baghdad killed one person and wounded three, the police officer said. Attacks increased in

Baghdad after the start in 2016 of a battle to retake second city Mosul from IS. Iraqi forces retook the northern city in July last year. In December, the government announced the

"end of the war" against IS, which has been expelled from the Baghdad region and urban areas of Iraq that it controlled. Jihadist elements are still active, however. On Saturday, a suicide bomb attack near a security checkpoint killed at least five people in northern Baghdad. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for that bombing. The bombings

come as Iraq gears up for elections in May, with voters deeply concerned about security in a country wracked by violence since the 2003 US-led invasion.

'Victory Alliance'

On Sunday, Abadi said he would stand for re-election in the parliamentary polls as the head of a new coalition. Abadi's newly created "Victory Alliance" will compete against the "State of Law" bloc of Nuri Al-Maliki, his predecessor and a key rival who now holds the post of vice president. Both Abadi and Maliki are members of the Shiite Dawa party. Abadi was little known when he became premier three years ago, after Maliki ceded power to him in August 2014 amid IS's sweeping offensive across the country.

Since taking over, Abadi has also rebuilt the armed forces and taken back disputed areas in the north from the Kurds, dashing their hopes for independence. He succeeded in convincing the Hashed Al-Shaabi, a Shiite-dominated paramilitary force that helped fight IS, to join his "Victory Alliance". The Hashed, or Popular Mobilisation Units, are now seeking to become a key political player in Iraq after proving to be a formidable force on the battlefield. In November, IS claimed an attack by suicide bombers on a market on the outskirts of Baghdad that killed 11 people. —AFP



The second such attack in three days

Indian state to criminalize sex buyers to choke up the demand

MUMBAI: Andhra Pradesh will become the first state in India to target people who purchase sex in brothels as part of a crackdown on the sexual slavery of women and children, authorities said. India has strict laws against human trafficking, sexual abuse and operating brothels. Pimps, brothel managers and traffickers are often prosecuted. Yet, those who buy sex from people forced to work in brothels, including children, rarely face charges. That needs to change, authorities say. "People who purchase sex go scot free," said H Arun Kumar, the state government's commissioner for women's development and child welfare.

Andhra Pradesh last week appointed a panel of legal experts and campaigners to study anti-trafficking laws that could be applied to buyers of sex, and to make recommendations within 60 days. Panel member Sunitha Krishnan pointed to a section of the Immoral Trafficking Prevention Act, which says charges may be applied to a "person who carries on prostitution and the person with whom such prostitution is carried on". Campaigners say that anti-trafficking efforts will not work as long as police fail to target people who visit brothels where sexual slavery occurs.

"The buyers are the ones creating the demand," Krishnan told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "Girls will continue to be sold until buyers are criminalized." Of an estimated 20 million sex workers in India, 16 million women and girls are victims of trafficking, according to a 2013 report called by four non-profit groups, including Dunya and the Omidyar Network. Public calls to criminalize those paying to have sex with children have increased recently, and a politician from the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party set up a change.org petition last month to seek tougher action.—Reuters

'Am not racist,' Trump insists

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump vehemently denied Sunday that he was a racist, after his vulgar disparagement of African countries and Haiti complicated a bipartisan deal on immigration. "I'm not a racist. I am the least racist person you have ever interviewed," Trump told reporters at the Trump International Golf Club in West Palm Beach, Florida, where he was having dinner with Republican House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy.

Trump appeared to give up for dead an immigration deal, coming back on the issue in a pair of early morning tweets three days after reportedly referring to African and Haitian immigrants as coming from "shithole countries," triggering global condemnation. "DACA is probably dead because the Democrats don't really want it," Trump tweeted, referring to the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program at the heart of the immigration impasse. Hundreds of thousands of immigrants brought to the country illegally as children—so-called "Dreamers"—face deportation unless a compromise can be reached that would grant them rights to stay.

A bipartisan deal to resolve the Dreamers issue in return for changes demanded by Republicans in the way visas are allocated collapsed in acrimony Thursday over Trump's remarks, which were widely denounced as racist. "I think this man, this president, is taking us back to another place," John Lewis, a Georgia congressman who was on the front lines of the 1960s civil rights movement, said Sunday on ABC's "This Week." "I think he is a racist."

'Defend the indefensible'

Senator David Purdum, a Republican from Georgia, called charges that Trump is racist "ridiculous" and his reported remarks a "gross misrepresentation" of the White House meeting on immigration. But other Republicans, pained by the turn of events, spoke out

against the president as debate over the slur spilled into Sunday television talk shows. "I can't defend the indefensible," said Mia Love, a Haitian-American congresswoman from Utah who campaigned on Trump's behalf in the country's Haitian community. "I still think that he should apologize," she said on CNN's "State of the Union." "I think that there are people that are looking for an apology. And I think that that would show real leadership."

Trump's "shithole countries" remarks were confirmed by Senator Dick Durbin, a Democrat who attended the White House meeting, after it was reported by The Washington Post and other media. But Trump has stuck with a vague denial that he used such language, and so far has made no move to apologize, hurting prospects for a deal on DACA and making life uncomfortable for Republicans as they look ahead to midterm elections this year. The president sought to shift from the defensive by portraying Democrats as not truly interested in an immigration deal.

"They just want to talk and take desperately needed money away from our Military," he tweeted. "I, as President, want people coming into our Country who are going to help us become strong and great again, people coming in through a system based on MERIT. No more Lotteries! #AMERICA FIRST." In Florida, Trump added: "I don't think Democrats want to make a deal. The folks from DACA should know the Democrats are the ones that aren't going to make a deal." He insisted the White House was "ready, willing and able to make a deal on DACA."

'A deal to be had'

But Senator Jeff Flake, a Republican who has been critical of Trump, said Democrats were serious about a bipartisan deal on immigration. He said the compromise presented to the White House Thursday would end a visa lottery system and so-called chain migration under which legal immigrants can bring in family members. The Dreamers would be allowed to stay but not become US citizens, according to Flake. The senator from Arizona said Trump's remarks came in reaction to an element of



FLORIDA: US President Donald Trump speaks to reporters at Trump International Golf Club in West Palm Beach. —AFP

the deal that would reallocate the visas given out in a lottery to immigrants who are currently in a protected status, like Haitians and the Dreamers. "I believe there is a deal to be had," he said.

Trump announced in September he was scrapping the DACA program but delayed enforcement to give Congress six months—until March—to craft a lasting solution. On Tuesday, however, a federal judge ordered the government to keep DACA going pending resolution of court challenges to the president's decision. Unless the order is overturned by a higher court, DACA recipients will now be eligible to submit renewal applications and the government will be required to "post reasonable public notice" that the program is once again active. Meanwhile, dimming prospects for a 2018 spending agreement means lawmakers will have to resort to a temporary funding extension to avert a government shutdown on January 19.—AFP

International

Oil tanker sinking off China raises environmental fears

Bodies of only three of the 32 crew members found

BEIJING: The sinking of an Iranian tanker off China could severely damage marine life, environmental experts warned yesterday, as state media reported an oil spill covering up to 50 square miles at the scene. The Sanchi, carrying 136,000 tons of light crude oil from Iran, went under on Sunday after a new and massive fire erupted, sending a cloud of black smoke as high as one kilometer above the East China Sea. The bodies of only three of the 32 crew members have been found since the vessel collided with the CF Crystal, a Hong Kong-registered bulk freighter, on January 6, sparking a fire that Chinese rescue ships struggled to extinguish.

Iranian officials said there was no hope of finding survivors among the crew of 30 Iranians and two Bangladeshis, prompting grief and anger among families of the sailors in Tehran. "Oil spills from the ship are still burning" at the scene, China's transport ministry said yesterday. An oil spill 11.5 miles long and up to 4.6 miles wide surrounded the site as of yesterday afternoon, according to the official People's Daily newspaper. Dramatic photos showed a huge column of black smoke rising from bright red flames. Alaska-based oil spill consultant Richard Steiner called the accident "the single largest environmental release of petroleum condensate in history".

"Given the poor condition of the hull of the ship after a week of explosions and fire, it is my assumption that none of the cargo holds or fuel compartments remain intact, and thus all of the condensate and fuel has been released," Steiner said. Even if only 20 percent of the ves-

sel's cargo was released into the sea, it would still be an amount about equivalent to Alaska's disastrous 1989 Exxon Valdez crude oil spill, he said. "I don't know of any condensate spill into a marine environment larger than 1,000 tons, and most that we know of have been less than one ton," he said. The Sanchi's own fuel tank was able to accommodate some 1,000 tons of heavy diesel, according to Chinese media.

'Worst situation'

On Sunday state broadcaster CCTV cited Zhang Yong, a senior engineer with China's State Oceanic Administration, as playing down environmental concerns. The Sanchi's light crude would have "less impact on the ocean" than other kinds of oil, and "minimal" impact on humans, given how far the incident occurred offshore, he said. But the sinking of the ship before more oil had a chance to burn off was "the worst situation" possible, Ma Jun, director of the Institute of Public and Environmental Affairs, told the Global Times newspaper.

"The condensate oil, a kind of ultra-light oil on Sanchi, is different than other types of crude oil and is poisonous to marine life," he warned. Unlike crude, condensate does not form a traditional surface slick when spilled. Instead, it generates a toxic underwater plume of hydrocarbons invisible from the sea surface. Whales, porpoises, seabirds, fish, and plankton in contact with these hydrocarbons in the East China Sea will either die quickly or develop "sub-lethal injuries" such as physiological impairment, reproductive failure and chronic diseases, said Steiner.



No hope of finding survivors



AT SEA: Photo shows smoke and flames coming from the burning oil tanker 'Sanchi' at sea off the coast of eastern China. —AFP

The region is also a crucial spawning site for many large fish species, whose eggs and larvae have "undoubtedly been exposed" to the toxic compounds, he said. "Just because there is no traditional surface slick does not mean there is minimal impact. While the toxic phase of the spill may only last a few months, the injury to populations

could persist much longer," he said. He slammed governments for failing to gather environmental data more quickly. "As no one has been conducting a scientific assessment of (the environmental impact), the governments and ship owners are likely to claim, erroneously, there was limited damage." —AFP

French guards block prisons after attack by Al-Qaeda convict

PARIS: French prison officers blocked access to several jails around the country yesterday to demand tighter security after three officers were injured in an attack by a German terror convict last week. The officers' unions say the blade attack by Christian Ganczarski, who is serving an 18-year sentence over the 2002 bombing of a Tunisian synagogue, illustrated the lax approach of prison authorities to violent convicts. Prison guards used washing machines and a pile of burning tyres to block access to the high-security prison in Vendin-le-Vieil on the border with Belgium where he is being held.

Around 100 officers took part in the protest, an AFP journalist at the scene said. In an apparent attempt to defuse the situation the prisons service announced that the director of the facility had asked to be "relieved of his command" following calls by wardens for him to be shown the door. Officers also demonstrated outside Fresnes prison south of Paris, one of France's largest where riot police were deployed, as well as in Marseille and Lyon.

A former top Al-Qaeda member, Ganczarski is accused of masterminding the 2002 suicide blast at an historic synagogue on the Tunisian island of Djerba, in which 21 people were killed. He was sent to jail in 2009. He lunged at guards on Thursday after learning he might face extradition to the US in connection with investigations into the September 11, 2001 attacks, according to union sources. The prison service said he was armed only with scissors and a razor blade. Prison guards' unions said his detention conditions had



NORD: The high-security prison of Vendin-le-Vieil, northern France, is pictured after three prison guards have been injured in a blade attack by a German Al-Qaeda militant. —AFP

recently been eased despite surveillance indicating he was planning an attack. The outgoing head of the prison said he showed no signs of aggression. On Saturday, trade unions walked out of talks with the justice ministry saying they had failed to receive a "concrete answer" to their demands to tighten security around dangerous inmates. The prison

where Ganczarski is held will soon be housing Salah Abdeslam, the sole surviving suspect in the November 2015 Paris attacks which left 130 people dead. Abdeslam will be moved to Vendin-le-Vieil from a prison south of Paris in February during his trial in Belgium over a shootout with police in that country. —AFP

Palestinians meet to respond to Trump's 'slap of the century'

RAMALLAH: Palestinian leaders met yesterday to plan a response to what they see as US President Donald Trump's attack on their long bid for statehood, after Mahmoud Abbas denounced White House peace efforts as the "slap of the century". The rare meeting of the Palestinian Central Council—a high-ranking arm of the Palestine Liberation Organization—was called after Trump's controversial December 6 recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

Palestinians want the annexed eastern sector of the city as the capital of their future state and president Abbas has said Trump's stance means the US can no longer be the mediator in peace talks with Israel. The US president has sought to bring Israel and the Palestinians back to the negotiating table, with talks stalled since 2014. Speaking Sunday evening at the opening of the council, which brings together Palestinians from multiple political parties, Abbas told delegates: "We said 'no' to Trump, we will not accept your project."

"The deal of the century is the slap of the century and we will not accept it," the 82-year-old leader added, referring to Trump's pledge to reach the "ultimate deal". He instead called for an internationally mediated peace process. Israel is unlikely to accept any other mediator than the United States, accusing United

Nations bodies of systematic bias against it. The delegates began meeting yesterday morning, with talks expected to end in the evening with a joint statement. The last meeting of the PCC in 2015 called for the ending of security coordination with Israel, but its decisions were non-binding and it was never implemented.

'Israel ended Oslo'

The Palestinians' relations with the US leadership have deteriorated rapidly since Trump's election. He came to power promising to lead the most pro-Israel administration in history, but also to pursue a peace deal. His envoys, including senior advisor and son-in-law Jared Kushner, had been shuttling between the two sides in search of common ground. But Trump also infuriated the Palestinians by refusing to commit to the idea of an independent Palestinian state and recently threatened to cut hundreds of millions of dollars of US aid.

The Jerusalem announcement prompted the Palestinians to freeze ties with the administration, and Abbas is expected to shun Vice President Mike Pence when he visits the region next week. On Sunday night, Abbas attacked the US ambassadors to Israel and the United Nations, David Friedman and Nikki Haley, calling them a "disgrace". Both Trump appointees have been strong supporters of Israel, with Friedman having backed Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank.

An indignant Abbas also said that Trump had accused them of refusing peace negotiations. "May God demolish your house. When did we refuse?" he said, using a common Arabic curse. Israeli media focused heavily on the phrase yesterday, while Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman said the statement



JERUSALEM: File photo shows US President Donald Trump (left) and Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu shaking hands after delivering a speech at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. —AFP

showed Abbas was "losing his wits and giving up negotiations."

In a speech during a state visit to India, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu did not mention Abbas's comments. Abbas said all options were on the table for responding to Trump's Jerusalem declaration, but did not specifically mention suspending recognition of Israel or ending security coordination with the Jewish state—both policies mooted in the days before the council. He did, however, say the Oslo accords that led to the creation of his Palestinian Authority and envisioned a final resolution to the conflict were in

effect finished. "I am saying that Oslo, there is no Oslo, Israel ended Oslo," he said, referring to persistent Israeli settlement building and other issues seen as eroding the possibility of a two-state solution to the conflict. Hamas, the Islamist party that rules Gaza, is not taking part in the council—arguing it should have been held abroad to avoid Israeli pressure.

In a statement yesterday the party said Abbas's speech "did not meet the ambitions of our people." "The central council must end Oslo and stop security coordination and withdraw the recognition (of Israel)." —AFP

News in brief

Philippines widens evacuation

MANILA: The Philippines ordered the forced evacuation of people from two more municipalities near a restive volcano yesterday as the chief volcanologist warned of a possible hazardous eruption "within weeks or even within days". More than 12,000 residents have already fled to evacuation centers after the 2,462-metre Mayon volcano, in central Albay province, began spewing ash on Saturday and unleashed burning mud and rocks on Sunday. "There is an ongoing forced evacuation from the municipalities of Daraga and Legazpi because of the lava flow," Romina Marasigan, spokeswoman for the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, told reporters. "The lava flow has reached some areas around three kilometers away from the volcano." Mayon, a tourist attraction because of its near-perfect cone shape, showed a bright crater glow on Sunday, signifying lava had started to flow from the crater.

Cyclone death toll hits 51

ANTANANARIVO: The cyclone that slammed into Madagascar earlier this month has claimed 51 lives, with 54,000 people displaced by flooding, heavy rain and high winds, authorities said. Tropical cyclone Ava made landfall on January 5, lashing the eastern part of the African island for 24 hours, with many rivers overflowing, roads cut off and bridges submerged. Twenty-two people are still missing while 161,000 others have been affected following the storms, the National Bureau for Risk and Catastrophe Management (NBRM) said late Sunday. The toll from Ava stood at 29 dead and 80,000 affected one week ago. Madagascar, one of the world's poorest countries, is regularly hit by cyclones. In March last year, cyclone Enawo killed at least 78 people.

Turkmenistan bans 'bad habits'

ASHGABAT: Tightly controlled Turkmenistan has banned broadcasters from showing sex and encouraging "bad habits" in a law designed to create a "positive image" of the Central Asian country on the air. The law, signed by strongman President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov over the weekend according to state newspaper Neutral Turkmenistan, cites "protection of minors" as the reason for the ban on erotic content. While the legislation does not specify what "bad habits" broadcasters should avoid promoting, Berdimuhamedov's government has waged a war on smoking in the republic of five million. The document equally does not explain how content will be judged "pornographic" or "sexual-erotic." In practice, television channels have long shown versions of foreign films with sexual and suggestive scenes edited out. The new law also says broadcasters must aim "to create TV and radio programs (showing) a positive image of Turkmenistan."

2 Moroccan porters die

RABAT: Two women carrying goods between Morocco and Spain's Ceuta enclave were killed yesterday in a stampede at the border between the two countries, a rights group and officials said. The stampede took place at the Tarajal II crossing for pedestrians between the Moroccan border town of Fnideq and Ceuta, rights activist Mohamed Benaissa said. Two women in their 40s named Ilham and Souad, both from Fnideq, were killed, the head of Morocco's Northern Observatory for Human Rights said. Known as "mule women" on the Spanish side of the border and "hamalat" or porters in Morocco, these impoverished women eke out a living lugging back-breaking goods between the two countries. Ilham and Souad were about to cross the border with merchandise when the stampede occurred. Local officials said in a statement that authorities were investigating the deaths. Last year, at least four female porters were trampled to death in crushes at the same border crossing. The porters often carry loads much heavier than their own weight strapped to their backs.

International

Indian police investigate brutal rape, murder of two teenagers

Inmates drug guards, abseil from jail using bed sheets

NEW DELHI: Indian police said yesterday they were investigating the gang rape and murder of two teenage girls whose mutilated bodies were found just hours apart in a state bordering New Delhi. The brutality of the crimes in Haryana, a deeply conservative state in northern India, has created shockwaves even in a region with a grim record of violence against women. Police are pursuing a group of men suspected of raping and murdering a 15-year-old girl from Kurukshetra district whose badly disfigured body was found dumped in a stream on Friday.

District police chief Abhishek Garg said the girl had sustained terrible internal injuries suggesting the attackers used a blunt object during the attack. "At least four men are suspected to be behind the crime," said district police chief Abhishek Garg. "A massive search is underway to arrest the perpetrators", he added. Just hours after the grisly discovery, police in Panipat district on Saturday found the body of a 12-year-old girl in a pond. Panipat police chief Rahul Sharma told AFP that two men, both neighbors of the victim, had been arrested over the crime.

Both had confessed to luring the girl to their house before raping and killing her, Sharma said. The crimes underscore India's atrocious record on sexual violence, which remains high despite authorities vowing to stamp out the scourge. Official figures show nearly 36,000 minors were sexually assaulted in 2016. A UN Committee

on the Rights of the Child in 2014 said one in three rape victims in India was a minor and expressed alarm over the widespread sexual abuse of children.

In a separate incident on Sunday, a 22-year-old woman was allegedly kidnapped and raped inside a car by four men in Haryana before being dumped by her attackers on a roadside. The high rates of assault continue despite an overhaul of laws in the wake of a high-profile fatal gang rape of a Delhi student in 2012 that sparked mass protests. That crime shone a spotlight on the rising levels of violence against women in India, and saw the introduction of tough penalties for offenders and accelerated trials through court.



Brutality of the crimes sends shockwaves

Inmates drug guards

In another development, three inmates have made a daring escape from a high-security jail in eastern India using desserts laced with sedatives and bed sheets to abseil down the walls, a prison official said yesterday. The trio of Bangladeshis incarcerated at Alipore Jail in Kolkata remain at large after pulling off the audacious prison break over the weekend. West Bengal state's prison director Arun Gupta said the runaways made their dash after drugging their jail guards and fellow inmates with spiked dessert. "The trio mixed sedatives in the sweets brought from the jail canteen, and served these to inmates and some prison guards on Saturday night," said Gupta. They then cut through the bars on their cell window



MUMBAI: An Indian student walks past a wall pock-marked with bullet holes opposite the Nariman House cultural and religious centre of the ultra-orthodox Jewish Chabad-Lubavitch movement in Mumbai yesterday. —AFP

and used bed sheets knotted into a length to descend the six-meter walls to the ground below. Their absence was not detected until prison wardens conducted the morning head

count, Gupta said. "It appears guards on the watch towers were sleeping when the three escaped. Three wardens have been suspended," he said. — Agencies

Leader of UKIP splits with girlfriend after 'appalling' messages

LONDON: The leader of Britain's anti-European Union UKIP Party said he had split with his new girlfriend after a newspaper published derogatory comments she made about Prince Harry's fiancée Meghan Markle and black people. Henry Bolton, 54, who became the ailing UK Independence Party's fourth leader in a year when he was elected last September, said he had ended his relationship with model Jo Marney after the "appalling" text messages she sent to a friend were published.

Marney, 25, who began dating Bolton just after Christmas, had described US actress Markle, whose father is white and mother is African-American, as a "dumb little commoner" and said "her seed with (sic) taint our royal family", according to the texts printed in the Mail on Sunday newspaper. Marney also described black people as ugly. "The romantic element of the relationship is over," Bolton told BBC radio, saying they had split up on Sunday night. "However appalling and insulting those comments she made in those direct personal messages were ... I honestly don't believe those are her core beliefs."

Harry said Markle had been subjected to "outright sexism and racism" on social media when he revealed they were first dating in 2016 and that there had also been racial undertones in newspaper comment pieces. The couple announced in November that they were engaged and will marry in May. Led by the charismatic Nigel Farage, UKIP won nearly four million votes in 2015, 12.6 percent of those cast, on its anti-EU platform, projecting it to the forefront of British politics even though it only managed to win one seat in parliament.

Its success helped force former Conservative prime minister David Cameron, who once dismissed the party as being full of "fruitcakes, loonies and closet racists", to agree to hold the 2016 referendum on whether to leave the EU and played a role in encouraging Britons to vote for Brexit. But UKIP has been riven by internal strife since the referendum as it struggles for direction and a clear purpose and it won just 1.8 percent of the total votes cast in a national election last June. Marney was suspended from UKIP after the texts became public on Sunday and senior party figures called for Bolton, a former army infantry officer who also served in the police, to step down himself. —Reuters

Britain to scrutinize 'sexual harassment'

LONDON: A committee of British lawmakers will launch an inquiry into the sexual harassment of women and girls in public places such as streets, public transport, shops, bars and clubs. The cross-party Women and Equalities Committee will examine what more can be done to combat unwanted sexual attention in public spaces other than the workplace, it said. "We are putting a spotlight on a problem that seems to be so routine in women's lives, and yet has received very little attention in public policy," said Maria Miller, committee chair, in a statement. "We want to find out why it happens, what the government is doing to root it out, and what more can be done."

A 2016 national survey published by YouGov found that 85 percent of women aged 18 to 24 had experienced unwanted sexual attention in public places while 45 percent had experienced unwanted sexual touching. The inquiry follows the emergence of widespread allegations in Britain, the United States and globally about sexual assault and harassment. Britain's parliament was among the institutions to become embroiled in a sex scandal after abuse allegations against Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein prompted thousands of women and men to share stories about improper behavior.

British Prime Minister Theresa May and other party leaders have agreed to introduce new safeguards for those working in parliament to try to contain a growing sexual harassment scandal there. —Reuters

Key moments in year one of the Trump presidency

WASHINGTON: Here is a look at several key moments in the first year of Donald Trump's turbulent presidency:

Travel ban: the legal saga

Out of the blue, one week after taking office, Trump decreed a 90-day ban on arrivals of people from seven Muslim majority countries and a 120-day ban on all refugee arrivals. Chaos broke out at US airports, with travelers detained upon arrival, and Americans nationwide staged protests against a measure seen as discriminating against Muslims—though Trump said it aimed to keep out extremists.

Trump's move kicked off a legal saga that has dragged on through the first year of his presidency—and is not yet over. The initial ban was quickly blocked in court, as was a modified version removing Iraq from the countries targeted, and a third iteration adding citizens of North Korea and some Venezuelan officials. Last month, the Supreme Court authorized enforcement of the ban's third version as the legal challenges against it make their way through the courts.

Sacking James Comey

In one of the most momentous moves of his young presidency, Trump abruptly fired FBI director James Comey on May 9, sacking the man leading a probe into whether his election campaign colluded with Russia in an effort to defeat Hillary Clinton. Trump later acknowledged he had the Russia probe in mind when he sacked Comey. In the end, Trump's move backfired. The sacking led to the appointment of a more powerful, independent counsel, Robert Mueller, to head the Russia investigation—which Trump dismisses as "fake news." The former FBI director may also be looking at whether Trump and his inner circle sought to obstruct justice. Two Trump associates, including campaign manager Paul Manafort, have been indicted so far.

Abducted Chibok girls 'vow' not to return to parents

KANO: Islamist militants Boko Haram yesterday released a new video purporting to show at least 14 of the Chibok schoolgirls whose mass kidnapping nearly four years ago became a symbol of Nigeria's brutal conflict. But despite a concerted global campaign for their release, and talks between the government and the militants, the girls shown in the recording vowed not to return to their parents. The 20-minute-long video is the first since May last year, when another woman who also claimed to be among the 219 seized from the town in Borno state said she wanted to stay.

Both videos will compound the suffering of the girls' families and friends but also indicate the extent to which they may have become influenced by their captors. All of those who were shown on camera were wearing black or blue hijabs and at least three were carrying babies. One of the students, her face covered by a veil, said: "We are the Chibok girls that you cry for us to return to you. By the grace of Allah, we will not return to you. "Poor souls, we pity our other Chibok girls who chose to return to Nigeria. Allah blessed you and brought you to the caliphate for you to worship your creator. "But instead you chose to return to unbelief."

Secular 'folly'

It was not clear when or where the latest message, in Hausa and the local Chibok language, was recorded or whether those who appeared on camera were under duress. The woman speaking said the Boko Haram factional leader Abubakar Shekau had "married us off". "We live in comfort. He provides us with everything. We lack nothing," she added. Shekau was also seen, firing a heavy machine gun and making a 13-minute-long sermon in which he said the remaining girls had "understood the fol-

Two more—including former national security advisor Michael Flynn—have admitted lying to investigators and have become government witnesses.

'Pittsburgh, not Paris'

On June 1, 2017, Trump announced America was pulling out of the Paris climate deal, reversing its commitment to fight global warming in spite of appeals from environmental groups, foreign leaders, industry and even his own daughter Ivanka.

Trump painted the accord as a "bad deal" for the US economy, declaring he "was elected to represent the citizens of Pittsburgh, not Paris." This month, he said the United States could "conceivably" return to the deal under more favorable terms, renewing questions about whether he is bluffing—and simply wants easier emissions targets.

Pushing N Korea's buttons

In his maiden speech to the UN General Assembly last September, Trump fired the opening salvo in what would be months of brinkmanship with North Korea's leader Kim Jong-Un—a.k.a. "Rocket Man"—vowing to destroy the nuclear-armed country if it threatened America. As 2017 came to a close, the North Korean nuclear threat had soared dramatically—with Kim boasting that his missile arsenal can hit any city on the US mainland, and Trump faced criticism for stirring tensions. The new year opened to signs of a potential cooling, as Pyongyang reached a landmark agreement to send athletes to the Winter Olympics in the South—with the White House arguing Trump's tough rhetoric, coupled with intense diplomatic pressure, had helped bring the Koreans together. But many analysts fear Trump's erratic outbursts—he recently boasted he has a "much bigger" nuclear button than Kim—dangerously raise the risk of a miscalculation that could lead to disaster.

Merry Christmas, America

On December 22, Trump signed into law the most sweeping rewrite of the US tax code in decades, sealing his biggest legislative victory to date—after the stinging failure to repeal his predecessor's health care law, Obamacare. Delivering on a core electoral pledge, Trump billed the \$1.5 trillion of tax cuts as a "Christmas gift" for the American people. Opposition Democrats branded it a giveaway to the wealthiest that risks blowing a hole in the national



WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump participates in a roundtable at the White House in Washington, DC. —AFP

debt. But Trump and his Republicans are confident the overhaul will play to the party's advantage in this year's crucial mid-term elections.

Trump the peacemaker

Trump came to office boasting he could achieve the "ultimate deal" for Middle East peace, something that has eluded US presidents for decades. On December 6, he threw those efforts into jeopardy by recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital, a decision that overturned decades of US policy. The status of Jerusalem is deeply contentious: Israel claims the whole of the disputed city as its capital, while Palestinians see east Jerusalem as the capital of their future state. Trump's move triggered a spasm of protests, with Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas warning he would "no longer accept" any peace plan proposed by the United States. Since Trump took office, traditional Republicans had competed for the president's ear with the anti-Washington populists who carried him to power. Steve Bannon chief among them. In the opening days of 2018, the establishment regained the upper hand. For months, the president let the firebrand Bannon, who was his top strategist, conduct open war against the Washington "swamp" of party leaders and lawmakers they saw as undermining Trump's revolution. —AFP



KANO: Photo from a video grab released by Islamist militants group Boko Haram shows schoolgirls abducted from the northeast Nigerian town of Chibok in April 2014. - AFP

ly" of secular education. Boko Haram's name broadly translates into English from the Hausa that is widely spoken in northern Nigeria as "Western education is sinful". The group has repeatedly attacked and destroyed schools teaching a secular curriculum in its campaign to create a hardline Islamic state in northeast Nigeria.

The jihadists seized 276 students from the Government Girls Secondary School in the mostly Christian town on April 14, 2014, triggering global condemnation. Fifty-nine of them managed to escape in the hours that followed. A campaign for the release of their classmates has had the support of Hollywood stars to global leaders. A total of 107 girls have now been either found, rescued or released as part of government negotiations with the Islamic State

group affiliate. They have now returned to the northeast and are back in education at the American University of Nigeria, in the Adamawa state capital, Yola.

On January 4, the Nigerian army said it had rescued another of the girls' classmates in the Pulka region of Borno, near the border with Cameroon. Boko Haram has used kidnapping as a weapon of war in the conflict, which has killed at least 20,000 people in northeast Nigeria and displaced more than 2.6 million. Thousands of women and young girls have been seized and held hostage, including as sex slaves, while men and young boys have been forcibly recruited to fight alongside the militants. The video also shows a group of police women, who were also abducted in Borno state last year.—AFP

International

Four Pakistani soldiers killed in India fire across tense frontier

The latest clash between nuclear-armed neighbors

ISLAMABAD: Four Pakistani soldiers were killed yesterday in shelling by Indian forces in the disputed Kashmir region, the Pakistani army said, the latest clash between the nuclear-armed neighbors who have also been exchanging heated challenges. A decades-old dispute over the mostly Muslim Himalayan region of Kashmir, claimed in full but ruled in part by both Pakistan and India, has heated up in recent years after a 2003 ceasefire brought more than a decade of relative peace. "Troops were busy in line communication maintenance when they were fired upon and hit by heavy mortar round," the Pakistani military said of the attack in which the four men were killed, in the Jandrot region.



Pakistani forces respond, killing 3 India soldiers

Pakistani forces responded, killing three Indian soldiers and wounding several, it said. India's military told Reuters that Pakistani forces fired first and no casualties were recorded on the Indian side. On another section of the so-called Line of Control (LoC) dividing Kashmir between the two sides, India said its forces yesterday killed five members of a pro-Pakistan militant group trying to slip into Indian Kashmir. "They crossed the Jhelum river which is de facto border in the area. We allowed them to cross the river and challenged them. All of the five who crossed the river were killed," said an Indian officer, Major General Gulab Singh Rawat.

A Pakistani military spokesman was not immediately available for comment on the second incident. India accuses Pakistan of backing Islamist militants and encouraging

them to attack soldiers in Indian-controlled Kashmir, where a separatist insurgency has simmered for years, and in other parts of India. Pakistan denies that and says India must hold negotiations on the future of Kashmir. The neighbors have fought three wars since their independence from Britain, two of them over Kashmir.

Calling nuclear bluff

Artillery exchanges across the LoC were common for years before the 2003 ceasefire in Kashmir largely brought an end to violence but clashes have again been increasing over the past couple of years. Relations have been particularly tense since India said it had carried out cross-border surgical strikes against militants

hiding in Pakistan in 2016.

Pakistan said Indian forces never crossed onto its territory. On Friday, Indian army chief General Bipin Rawat said his forces were willing to carry out operations inside Pakistan despite the risk of a nuclear conflict, the Indian daily the Hindustan Times reported. "If we will have to really confront the Pakistanis, and a task is given to us, we are not going to say we cannot cross the border because they have nuclear weapons. We will have to call their nuclear bluff," Rawat said at a press briefing.

The comment drew derision from Pakistan's foreign minister who termed the statement "irresponsible" and an "invitation for nuclear encounter." "If that is what they desire, they are welcome to test our resolve. The general's



KASHMIR: A Kashmiri resident rests on a bench as Indian paramilitary troopers stand guard in Srinagar yesterday. —AFP

doubt would swiftly be removed," Khwaja Asif said on Twitter. Pakistan's military has said 52 civilians were killed and 254 wounded by Indian shelling in the region last year,

more than in all of the previous 14 years combined. The two sides accuse each other of repeated violations of the 2003 ceasefire.—Reuters

Floor at Indonesia stock exchange tower collapses

JAKARTA: At least 75 people were injured yesterday when a mezzanine floor at Indonesia's stock exchange building collapsed into the lobby, police said, with victims carried out of the debris-filled building on stretchers. Dramatic CCTV footage showed a group of some 40 visiting students on a balcony section plunge as the floor gave way with a cascade of glass, metal and other material crashing onto the ground floor where several others were walking. A Jakarta police spokesman said the collapse was an accident and not the result of an explosion.

National police spokesman Setyo Wasisto said 75 people had been injured. There were no reports of deaths so far. Television images showed chaotic scenes as victims were taken to hospital or lay on the ground outside the tower complex in the centre of the sprawling city's business district. "I saw many people bleeding," student Rizki Noviani, who was taking part in a competition at the exchange building, told Metro TV. "So many people were carried out of the building and were left on the grass outside... until the ambulances arrived."

The lobby was filled with debris and toppled-over plants near a Starbucks coffee outlet, as hundreds of building employees were evacuated from the complex which was bombed by Islamist militants in 2000. At least 10 people were killed and dozens injured by a car bomb in that attack. "Our search and rescue teams, the police, doctors, the fire-fighters are all still working," Wasisto said. "They are cleaning the debris and also searching for other possible injuries," he added. Those hurt mostly sustained injuries to their legs and arms, including broken bones, a spokesman for one local hospital said. Jakarta police spokesman Argo Yuwono added: "The accident happened at the first floor... It's a floor where many employees are passing by."



JAKARTA: Indonesian policemen stand guard outside the building of Bursa Efek Jakarta of the Stock Exchange after one part of it collapsed in Jakarta yesterday. —AFP

'Panicking'

The collapse took place in one of two towers in the complex. "There was a sound, like something had fallen off a building structure, for about 20 seconds. Everyone was panicking and people were immediately being evacuated," Amalia Putri Hasniawati, a journalist based at the exchange, told AFP. It was not immediately clear what caused the accident at the tower in Sudirman district, which was built in 1995.

"Material degradation could be the cause," construction expert Iswandi Imran told local TV. "It could be corrosion or anything which slowly degrades the strength of the structure so it cannot take the weight any longer. But all that has to be investigated." Despite the chaos yesterday,

trading continued as usual in the afternoon session with the main index closing 0.2 percent higher. The accident happened shortly after noon local time while the market was on its lunchtime break.

"There was a loud banging so people who were inside immediately ran outside of the building," said Metro TV journalist Maria Zein. The local office of the World Bank is housed on the 12th floor of the complex, according to its website. Reports at the time of the 2000 bombing said one of the men responsible was a member of the Free Aceh Movement, a separatist group which had been fighting for a free Islamic state in Aceh province since the mid-seventies. Some 200 cars were also damaged in the blast in an underground parking lot.—AFP

Bangkok brothel raid sparks bribery, trafficking probe

BANGKOK: Five Thai policemen and a human trafficking official are under investigation for allegedly receiving free services from a Bangkok massage parlor accused of coercing underage girls into the sex trade, authorities said yesterday. Acting on a tip-off, police raided the 'Victoria Secret' parlor last week in a Bangkok neighborhood notorious for its gaudy and cavernous brothels where sex is illegal-but openly sold. They found more than 100 sex workers from Thailand, Myanmar, Laos and China, at least three of whom were under 18 and had been forced into the industry.

A ledger discovered during the raid and circulated by local media named more than 20 officials who had received free food, booze and even massages, with a superintendent among five local cops on the list. An unnamed human trafficking official and a tax officer were also named among the recipients facing a probe by the anti-graft office. Monthly receipts dated from March 2014 to October 2017 gave a detailed breakdown of each gratuity. Interior Ministry official Kongrob Kratumnat confirmed the documents were "real", adding detectives were also examining a computer seized at the parlor.

"There is still a lot of information related to many government officials left on the computer which will take



BANGKOK: An employee from the DSI (Department of Special Investigation) sorts through evidence from 'Victoria Secret' massage parlor, after police raided the premises due to suspicions of underage trafficking and prostitution. —AFP

time to investigate," he told reporters. Reports suggested the brothel was also linked to cross-border trafficking of women from poor Southeast Asian countries through Thailand and onto Malaysia. Thailand is renowned for its laissez-faire attitude towards prostitution, which is illegal but widely tolerated. Public officials are routinely implicated in kickback scandals allowing the sex industry to flourish, but police rarely face prosecution in a country where wealth and rank shields wrongdoers from the law.

The age and background of another

25 sex workers from the parlor is being checked in case they are also minors, an official from Thailand's Department of Special Investigation (DSI) told reporters yesterday. "Eighty-five other women could be charged for illegally selling sex and deported," the official added, requesting anonymity. In 2017, Thailand, which draws millions of migrant workers from poorer surrounding nations, remained on Tier 2 of a US watchlist for failing to meet "the minimum standards" to combat human trafficking.—AFP

Philippine news website license revoked; media bodies outraged

MANILA: The Philippine corporate regulator has rescinded the operating license of an online news platform that has been critical of President Rodrigo Duterte's policies, arguing it used a "deceptive scheme" to violate restrictions on foreign ownership of media. The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) yesterday said news website Rappler (www.rappler.com) had violated foreign equity restrictions on media because it "sold control to foreigners", a decision Rappler said was baseless because its two foreign investors owned no shares in the company.

SEC Secretary Armando Pan said the Jan. 11 decision announced yesterday was, however, "not final and executory", and Rappler "may continue" to operate pending appeal. Philippine journalist groups expressed outrage at the decision and called on media organizations to resist efforts to silence journalists. Rappler has had a rocky relationship with the administration of Duterte, who has publicly shown annoyance at its reporting and says it is entirely owned by Americans.

It is the latest critic or opponent of Duterte to be subjected to legal scrutiny brought about by the president's political allies, some apparently in response to his frequent public outbursts against his detractors. Rappler said its filings to the SEC in 2015 made it clear that foreigners had invested in some of its Philippine Depository Receipts (PDRs), but did not own any shares. It said it would appeal, and operate as normal. "We will continue to hold power accountable and we will continue to tell the truth," Chay Hofilena, Rappler's acting managing editor, told reporters. "This has been a continuing wave of harassment since last year ... Now it's out there in the open, we know how to deal with it."

Rappler has not shied away from challenging Duterte's policies and its reporters have been subject to frequent threats by his online army of supporters, often in response to postings made by pro-Duterte bloggers, some of whom hold government positions.—Reuters

News in brief

Turkey's 'Istanbul Canal'

ISTANBUL: The Turkish government yesterday unveiled the route of its planned new canal for Istanbul, a hugely ambitious 45 kilometer project designed to be its answer to the famed artificial shipping lanes in Panama or Egypt's Suez. The project, first announced by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan while he was prime minister in 2011, is by far the most complex of a string of new ventures for the city. The government argues it will create attractive new living areas and take pressure off the Bosphorus Strait that splits the European and Asian sides of the city and is one of the world's busiest shipping lanes. Transport and Communications Minister Ahmet Arslan said that the canal would begin in the Istanbul district of Kucukcekmece on the Sea of Marmara, where there is already an inland lake. It will then head north towards the Sazlidere reservoir before emerging into the Black Sea just north of Durusu.

Nine dismembered bodies

MEXICO CITY: Nine dismembered bodies were found piled in a truck on Saturday night in the violent Mexican state of Veracruz, the governor said on Sunday, describing the crime as a clash of rival gangs. Most of the dead were believed to be members of drug gangs. Veracruz Governor Miguel Angel Yunes told a news conference, citing tattoos found on the bodies. Before the discovery of the truck in Xalapa, the capital of the oil-rich state, authorities found the body of another man, who apparently had been killed as he tried to flee his captors, Yunes said. "It is clear that this was a confrontation between criminals," he said. Escalating tension between drug gangs contributed to a record high number of murders in Mexico in 2017, and it was a particularly bloody year in Veracruz. Murders in the Gulf state rose about 35 percent through November last year compared with the same period in 2016. Four of the 12 killings of reporters in Mexico last year took place in the state.

Women alcohol ban

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka reimposed a decades-old law banning the selling of alcohol to women and preventing women from working in liquor stores on Monday - just days after it was lifted. Finance Minister Mangala Samaraweera revoked the 1979 ban last week. "I spoke with the finance minister, ...prime minister, and several other ministers and asked them to cancel the gazette immediately. The gazette will be withdrawn from tomorrow," President Maithripala Sirisena said at an election rally on Sunday. The move comes as the government's main coalition partners, the centre-left Sri Lanka Freedom Party and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe's centre-right United National Party, are campaigning for long-delayed local elections. Officials at the finance ministry said the ban was lifted after repeated requests from the tourism industry to extend bar hours and allow female tourists to buy alcohol. But that move was criticized by opposition parliamentarians who said the move would damage Sri Lanka's Buddhist values.

Clashes kill 9 in Libya

TRIPOLI: Fighting at the Libyan capital's only working international airport killed nine people yesterday, officials said, after militiamen attacked it in an attempt to free colleagues held at a jail there. Although Mitiga airport was evacuated when the clashes erupted, it was not yet known whether the casualties were all fighters or included civilians. "Initial toll following the fighting on the perimeter of Mitiga airport: 5 dead at Mitiga hospital and 4 dead at the cardiac surgery hospital in Tajura", the national unity government's health ministry said on Facebook. It said it would give the number of wounded in a later statement. Mitiga, a former airbase in eastern Tripoli, has been a civilian airport since the city's main international airport was badly damaged in fighting between rival militias in mid-2014. The North African country has been wracked by chaos since the 2011 uprising that toppled and killed long-time dictator Muammar Gaddafi, with rival authorities and militias battling for control of its oil riches.

Analysis

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The First Daily in The Arabian Gulf

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End of chip boom? Memory chip price drop spooks investors

After a blistering year-and-a-half long surge, a sudden drop in some memory prices, followed by Samsung Electronics Co's disappointing profit estimate, is causing jitters among investors who had bet the chip boom would last at least another year. Amid news that the market has started losing some steam - prices of high-end flash memory chips, which are widely used in smartphones, dropped nearly 5 percent in the fourth quarter - some analysts now expect the industry's growth rate will fall by more than half this year to 30 percent.

That led shares in Samsung to dip 7.5 percent last week, while its home rival SK Hynix fell 6.2 percent. But analysts say that there is unlikely to be a sudden crash, and that 2018 should be a relatively stable year for chipmakers. The \$122 billion memory chip industry has enjoyed an unprecedented boom since mid-2016, expanding nearly 70 percent in 2017 alone thanks to robust growth of smartphones and cloud services that require more powerful chips that can store more data.

Supply also has become more disciplined following years of consolidation that reduced the number of manufacturers to a handful from around 20 in mid-1990s. "Memory chips will likely see a gradual price decline in 2018 if demand remains strong and appetite from servers holds," said Lee Jae-yun, analyst at Yuanta Securities Korea. But growth of 30 percent is a strong gain in an industry known for volatility, and the market is still on course for its longest ever boom after shrinking 6 percent in 2016.

Last year's explosive growth gave chipmakers cash to reinvest and boost output, analysts said. The supply of NAND flash memory chips, in particular, will grow 43 percent this year, up from last year's 34 percent, causing prices to drop by about 10 percent, brokerage Nomura estimates. Nomura expects growth in output will be largely led by the likes of Western Digital, Toshiba Corp and Micron Technology Inc as they seek to catch up with top-ranked Samsung, which controls about 40 percent of the flash memory chip market.

No Doom Seen

Smartphone vendors have been including more memory in their phones and charging more for them, allowing them to weather last year's price surge, analysts say. Average DRAM memory of new models launched last quarter increased by 38 percent from the second quarter of 2016, while NAND content measured by gigabyte jumped 84 percent, according to an analysis by BNP Paribas. Such solid demand will keep the industry's margin healthy this year, and chipmakers' investment in more advanced technology will help them cut production costs and stay profitable even as prices ease, analysts say.

Macquarie estimates Samsung's chip division's operating profit margin jumped to 47 percent last year from 26.5 percent in 2016, and will rise further to 55.5 percent this year. While the NAND flash market may soften somewhat, the DRAM memory chip market, which is about \$20 billion bigger than the NAND industry, is seen as much tighter. Prices are expected to gain nearly 9 percent because of a severe supply shortage.

With DRAM manufacturers' rushing to ramp up production - they are likely to nearly quadruple capital spending for 2017 and 2018 combined to \$38 billion from 2016's \$10 billion - prices may decline as much as 18 percent next year, according to Nomura. That gives some investors confidence in the industry's long-term future. "Besides some minute adjustment, I am currently holding Samsung shares almost without change," said Kim Hyun-su, fund manager at IBK Asset Management. "I don't think the share price is expensive as they have recently been increasing dividends a lot - and as of now, the expected profit levels are very high."

Pressure from Clients

Smartphone makers account for about one-third of global memory chip demand, and many have been pressing suppliers to lower prices. In late December, state-run China Daily reported China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) was paying close attention to a surge in the price of mobile phone storage chips and could look into possible price fixing by Samsung and others that make them.

More than 50 percent of Samsung's 2017 memory business revenue came from China, according to chip price tracker DRAMeXchange. "Although supply-demand dynamics are still solid, clients' pressure to lower prices make it hard to predict" what will happen, said MS Hwang, an analyst at Samsung Securities, which is an affiliate of Samsung Electronics. —Reuters

PyeongChang 2018



Bannon, Young and politics of provocation

Two men of the right were pulled from pedestals this past week: One, American, for being a source; the other, British, for having been a columnist. Their rationalizations and attempts at exculpation raise the question: Does journalism operate in a space increasingly divorced from sober fact and judgment? Is most of it being enfolded, ever more completely, into entertainment or political intolerance?

The larger fall from the pomp of power has been that of Steve Bannon, a journalist of the hard-edged right, who at the beginning of Donald Trump's presidency had been chief strategist, and briefly a member of the National Security Council. Bit by bit distanced from the Oval Office he had once entered at will, he was allowed to resign in August - after an interview with the American Prospect put him at odds with the president on North Korea.

It was another interview that forced Bannon to descend to a deeper circle of the Hell of Being Out of It. He spoke to Michael Wolff, author of "Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House," which will be a hard act to beat as book of the year 2018, so momentous has been its effect. Bannon said that Trump's daughter, Ivanka, who plays an important role in his administration as an adviser, is "dumb as a brick" and that a meeting between Trump campaign officials - including the president's son, Donald Jr. - and Russian lobbyists in Trump Tower was "treasonous."

The president, Bannon's erstwhile friend and employer, retorted that the former strategist had "lost his mind" after he left the White House, adding that "I don't talk to him" - the ultimate insult. Bannon's descent continued beyond his fall from Trump's graces. On Tuesday he resigned as executive chairman of the right-wing Breitbart News after its main funder, Rebekah Mercer, lost confidence in him.

Battered on all sides, Bannon - who has not directly disputed his quotes in the book - issued a statement calling the president's son "a patriot and a good man," describing the reporting about Don Jr. as "inaccurate." (Wolff is not renowned for his accuracy, even if much of this book rings true.) Bannon says his support for the president was "unwavering." He expressed regret for his delay in clarifying his comments, which he said had "diverted attention from the president's historical accomplishments."

The British victim is Toby Young, a former journalist

who became an education entrepreneur, setting up "free schools" - institutions that are funded by the state but, much like their American equivalent, charter schools, allowed more flexibility with regard to curriculum and admissions. He was proposed as a board member for a new Office for Students, designed to make universities more accountable to government, but this week he resigned, saying that the furor over remarks he had made in the past would be too much of a "distraction" for him to continue.

In columns, he had claimed that he found working-class

websites can be trusted. Intriguingly, the Collins dictionary defines "provocateur" differently in American and British usages, and in both cases, each of the differing definitions fits both men well. In American English, it is a "writer, artist, political activist, etc whose works, ideas, or activities are regarded as a threat to accepted values or practices". In British English, it is "a person who deliberately behaves controversially in order to provoke argument or other strong reactions". Bannon wished to be "a threat to accepted values and practices;" those of the Democrats of course, and in some ways even more to those closer to him - the Republican establishment. The Breitbart site, which Bannon took over when its creator, Andrew Breitbart, died in 2012, puts out news which is conditioned by its political agenda. The main story in its January 10 edition is headlined "Report: 485 scientific papers published in 2017 undermine supposed 'consensus' on climate change" - a meaningless figure, unless the total number of climate papers is given, which it is not.

Breitbart is, of course, not alone. Fox News continues to dominate the field in ideologically-driven news from the right. On the left, the less-watched MSNBC takes a steadily liberal line, while CNN, Trump's particular TV channel hate, also tends to liberalism. This trend is exacerbating the polarization of America.

The dilemma which Young dramatizes is less obvious, but perhaps more insidious. It is that, by - in the dictionary definition - "behaving controversially in order to provoke argument or other strong reactions," he puts journalistic commentary and opinion in a particular place. That is, largely divorced from observable reality or fairness, produced very largely to attract attention - even if (sometimes especially if) that attention is hostile. It may be amusing; it isn't, it seems, serious. Young's apology consigns it to the status of a provocation: the day of the sober commentary of fact and balance is now for upmarket sites only, reviled by the new journalism as tedious. Both men, however, have been wounded by the clash of contemporary opinion journalism and the public sphere. In the latter, some account beyond that of the market has sooner or later to be made. By apologizing (even in a Bannon-style non-apology) they attempt to slough off their comments, reported or written, as matters of no consequence. —Reuters

Does journalism operate in space divorced from fact, judgment?

students at Oxford University - where he studied - to be "small, deformed... with acne and anoraks." He commented often on the size of women's breasts, wrote that wheelchair ramps at schools were one of the negative effects of "inclusivity," and advocated that embryos treated with genetically-engineered intelligence be made available to parents on low incomes with below-average IQs. In a resignation statement, Young wrote that he was a passionate supporter of inclusivity and "helping the most disadvantaged," but that comments in articles "when I was a journalistic provocateur" were ill-judged or wrong - "and I unreservedly apologize."

Dilemmas

Bannon's regrets (he doesn't believe in saying sorry) and Young's unreserved apologies point to two large dilemmas in contemporary journalism. That is, how to judge what is written as serious, or, to use Young's word, as merely the posture of a "provocateur" - and how far news on partisan

Artisanal allure of Lamborghini among marvels of modernity

The Lamborghini factory in Sant'Agata Bolognese feels like an Aladdin's Cave of luxury Italian cars - a winning mix of modernity and craftsmanship which saw the company celebrate record production levels last year. The supercar manufacturer, founded in 1963, delivered 3,815 vehicles in 2017, boosting its year-on-year sales by 10 percent. But there is little time for champagne quaffing: This summer will see the company release a Super SUV, dubbed the Urus and designed for all terrains, from road, to off road, on ice but also sand dunes.

Widening horizons also meant widening floor space, and the company doubled the site in size from 80,000 square meters to 160,000 square meters, an expansion that will allow it to double production in 2019. For now, five new Urus SUVs are being produced here a day - a figure that will top 20 when the plant is running at full capacity. The new building, inaugurated in May, boasts a new production line and cutting-edge technologies, including "cooperative robots", designed to make life easier for both fellow robots and human operators. "It's a very modern factory, but some of the production is still done by hand and is essential, it's in the brand's DNA," Matteo

Martini from the manufacturing engineering department told AFP.

Tractors to treasure

The historic quarter of the factory, refurbished in 2014, produces the Huracan and Aventador super sports cars, rattling out a dozen of the first and half a dozen of the second per day. The waiting time for a Huracan can be eight months. The production line is divided into 23 stations, with workers given 37 minutes to perform their tasks as the seconds tick away on digital clocks. For the Aventador, workers get 75 minutes at 12 stations. There is more work done by hand here, and it takes 44 days to manufacturer the car.

Its monocoque, a technological jewel, weighs only 147 kilos and is moulded of carbon fiber. The cars cost a pretty penny: the simplest Huracan model will set buyers back some \$180,000 (\$215,000) and around \$337,000 for the Aventador, but the price tag on limited series models can top one million euros. Lamborghini devotees have the son of grape farmers to thank.

Ferruccio Lamborghini made a fortune in tractors before turning his hand to the luxury sports sector and setting out to make "the perfect car". Only 120 copies were ever made of the first commercialized model, the 350 GT, and though production numbers increased, the company is keen to maintain the idea of exclusivity. Customers can personalize their cars, from wheel rims to seam colors.

German perfectionism

The leather for the interiors is checked extremely carefully for possible imperfec-



A Lamborghini (left) is displayed alongside other exotic cars outside the press center at the North American International Auto Show (NAIAS) yesterday in Detroit. — AFP

tions or damage such as mosquito bites. The cars are not only road tested but are also given the 'waterfall' treatment. "They are bombarded with 400 litres of water per minute to check for possible seepage", says Attilio Mandetta, head of the finishing department. Any defects, spotted by eagle-eyed workers armed with lamps, are marked with a small sticker so they can be fixed.

"The whole factory is clinically clean. Everything is done with a very German rigour, established over the years following Lamborghini's 1998 takeover by

Volkswagen," Julien Diez, journalist for Sport Auto magazine, told AFP. The factory boasts 1,600 workers currently, with another 200 to join the team by the end of this year. Lamborghini, which claims to offer above-average salaries in the automotive sector, recently won the "Top Employer Italia" award for the fourth year in a row thanks to its treatment of staff and its medical care and extra-curricular offers. And employees such as Claudio Lammana and Simone Occari say they are treated like "family" and "made to feel like people and not just numbers". —AFP

News



A Turkish woman feeds seagulls as she travels from Europe to Anatolia on the Bosphorus yesterday in Istanbul. — AFP

UK's Guardian goes tabloid...

Continued from Page 1

alien concept to them, but it might help them flog a copy, or two," said the editorial of the Rupert Murdoch owned paper. But rightwing politician Patrick O'Flynn, former political editor of the Daily Express, complimented the new design, tweeting "I really like the look of the new tabloid Guardian. Well done the design team."

Ancient Omani mediation method

Continued from Page 1

"This council is where the old and young come to learn. The youth learn manners from their elders," grey-bearded Sayeed bin Khalfan Nabhani said in Ghala.

Nabhani said the history of the sabla goes back "ages", but some 40 years ago - after Sultan Qaboos took power in Oman - it was granted a degree of government recognition. "From the early 1970s, you had the governor and judge sitting at the council, along with witnesses and people of the villages - plus the person with the problem," said Nabhani. A solution is often found before the judge is called to get involved, he said.

In far-flung areas, the sabla remains central to life, but even there it is changing, with women for example reserving the hall for their own meetings. Hilal Al-Siyabi, an Omani community activist, believes the sabla can - and should - keep up with the times. In the lush Muscat suburb of Saael, a new kind of sabla is under construction. A shell of a building stood off the main road, a mountain range in the background.

Siyabi's voice echoed as he pointed to where LCD screens would be installed and computers set up for a future Internet cafe. "We are leveraging on the concept of sabla to do something much better - something which is beneficial to today's community," he said. This center would embrace the whole family, he explained, with a special emphasis on the young.

Siyabi said an exploratory meeting three years earlier was packed with curious residents - notably women. "Young women," he said. "They were excited to have such a center. They said, 'We are not working but we are going to sell our precious gold to contribute to something like this.'" Siyabi said the government has fully supported the initiative, which seeks to build on tradition in a changing world and keep conflict resolution local. He sees the

The newspaper's aggressive expansion into the US and Australian markets, which involved the hiring of a large staff, and its commitment to free online content resulted in a huge profile-boost on the global stage and a Pulitzer Prize, but also huge financial losses. The Guardian lost £44.7 million in the year ending April 2017, following losses of £68.7 million the previous year. The Scott Trust, which owns the paper, had over £850 million in its investment fund after selling one of its most popular publications in 2013, which was meant to guarantee the paper's independence and ethos without compromising to market forces. However, the scale of the losses has forced the paper to cut costs, with around 300 job losses. — AFP

sabla evolving from its role as a mediation authority to a town hall-style forum and community center.

For Muscat-based public policy analyst Ahmed Al-Mukhaini, the sabla is a "microcosm" of the Omani state: Discreet and tribal. "You don't hang out your dirty linen," Mukhaini said, adding it was no surprise the government supports the continuation of the sabla. Under Sultan Qaboos, Oman has not replaced the sabla - now a "benign form of assembly", the analyst said, but institutionalized it, with modern forms of government continuing to function in the same patriarchal and hierarchical way. "In Oman they spend a lot of time on consensus building, versus majority-based decisions," Mukhaini said.

Authorities in Muscat continue to recognize tribal chiefs as official representatives, registered with the interior ministry. Each tribe's "rasheed", or interlocutor, functions as a conduit to the government, often feeling out sentiment on domestic policy changes, such as recent healthcare privatization proposals. "I'm not aware of any other country where tribal leaders are on a payroll or where the system of sheikhdom is controlled by the government," Mukhaini said.

Even the modern Shura council, Oman's only elected body, is dominated by tribal heavyweights - not the technocrats and intellectuals found in the council of state appointed by the sultan. "The system that remains until now keeps tabs on public opinion or resentment," said the analyst. When Qaboos overthrew his father in a bloodless coup in 1970, the British-educated ruler reached out to the tribes in an early radio address, reassuring tribal leaders and promising to institutionalize their role.

The sabla is so important to Omani culture that it will even decide who will succeed the 77-year-old sultan when he dies. "Basic law gives the appointment of the next sultan to the royal family sabla," Mukhaini said. If the cousins of Qaboos - he has no brothers or heir apparent - fail to choose a successor within a matter of days, Mukhaini said it will fall to the defense council, chief justice and shura council to reach a consensus, this time on behalf of the nation. — AFP

Activists slam orange Indian...

Continued from Page 1

The government has not released any other details of the plan, including a timeline for implementation. "The government could argue that these passports are for the workers' protection, but to a worker it may not seem that way," said Sehjo Singh, a director at advocacy group ActionAid India. "The government must make clear how this system will work in favor of the workers."

Meanwhile, India's ambitious biometric identity project could lead to millions of people being denied access to essential services and benefits in violation of their human rights, campaigners said, ahead of key court hearings on the legitimacy of the program. India launched Aadhaar, now the world's biggest biometric database, in 2009 to streamline welfare payments and cut wastage in public spending.

The government has since made the card mandatory to access a range of services, including benefits such as state subsidies, pensions and scholarships. This "can obstruct access to several constitutional rights, including the rights of people to food, healthcare, education and social security," said Aakar Patel, executive director at Amnesty International India. "The government

has a legal and moral obligation to ensure that nobody is denied their rights simply because they don't have an Aadhaar card," he said in a joint statement with Human Rights Watch (HRW) at the weekend.

Officials at the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), which oversees the program, did not respond to an e-mail seeking comment. The Supreme Court has been holding hearings on the legitimacy of the government's demand to make Aadhaar mandatory for a range of services, despite the court ruling in 2014 that the ID cannot be a requirement for welfare programs. The top court is scheduled to resume hearings on Jan 17. Campaigners and technology experts have raised concerns about privacy and the safety of the data, the susceptibility of biometrics to failure, and the misuse of data for profiling or increased surveillance.

There have been reports of biometrics failing when fingerprints have faded, and of deaths linked to denial of subsidized food when Aadhaar verification failed. Officials in Jharkhand state in October said Aadhaar was not necessary to get subsidized grains, after the death of an 11-year-old girl who campaigners said died of hunger because her family's ration card was cancelled when it was not linked to their Aadhaar card. "It is ironic that a 12-digit number aimed to end corruption and help the poor has become the very reason many have been deprived of fundamental rights," Meenakshi Ganguly, HRW's south Asia director, said in the statement. — Reuters

Erdogan threatens to destroy US-backed...

Continued from Page 1

was needed as the focus shifted from fighting IS extremists to border security in northern Syria. Erdogan yesterday reaffirmed that the Turkish army was ready to launch an operation against the YPG in Syria. "The preparations have been completed, the operation could start at any moment," he said. State media said that Turkey deployed two dozen armored vehicles to the Syrian border yesterday.

Turkey accuses the YPG of merely being the Syrian offshoot of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) which has waged a rebellion in the Turkish southeast for more than three decades and is regarded as a terror group by Ankara and its Western allies. The row is the latest dispute between Turkey and the United States that goes beyond the YPG and Syria to include arguments over a New York court case, detained US consulate staffers and the prosecution of Erdogan's bodyguards in the United States.

"A country - which we call as our ally - is insisting on having an army of terror along our border despite our objections, warnings and well-meaning advice. You will be disgraced in front of your strategic ally," he warned Washington. "Don't get between us and the gang of murderers. Otherwise we will not be responsible for any unwanted incidents that could emerge later," he said. "Don't force us to bury in the ground those who are with terrorists. Our operations will continue until not a single terrorist remains along our borders, let alone 30,000," he added.

The US-led coalition said that 230 people are training to be part of the border security force. The SDF - which is dominated by Kurdish elements after the capture of Raqqa - now controls territory bordering Turkey to the north and Iraq to the east, and alongside land controlled by Syrian government forces to the west. Turkey, despite being a prime foe of the Syrian regime, has in the last months worked closely with President Bashar Al-Assad's ally Russia to bring peace to Syria.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, in an annual Moscow press conference marked by strident anti-US rhetoric, also sounded alarm over the US plan. He said it raised fears that "the course has been set on dividing up Syria" and was out of step with the peace talks aimed at ending the conflict. "Just like our Turkish partners... we are awaiting detailed explanation," he said.

For once in agreement in Ankara, the Damascus regime lambasted the plan to create the force, saying it would consider its members "traitors". A foreign min-

istry source, cited by state news agency SANA, said the move "represents a blatant attack on the sovereignty and territorial integrity and unity of Syria." Assad's allies have also chimed in. In an apparent reference to the force, senior Iranian official Ali Shamkhani said it was "doomed to failure". Fars news agency reported.

Turkey meanwhile is also keeping a close eye on the northwestern Syrian province of Idlib which is almost entirely controlled by anti-government forces dominated by the jihadist Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham (HTS). It has urged Russia and Iran to rein in their Syrian regime ally and stop bombing the area, in a dispute that has led to rare public tensions with Moscow. Russia is hoping to hold a Syria peace congress in Sochi on January 29-30 with the specific aim of setting up a new constitution for post-war Syria. But Turkey has made clear it will go nowhere near the event if there is any representation by the YPG there.

Meanwhile, Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani held talks in Turkey yesterday with his chief Erdogan, as tensions again surged between the emirate and its regional foes. The talks, announced only hours in advance, got underway at Erdogan's presidential palace in the capital Ankara, the Turkish presidency said. Erdogan has been a major supporter of Doha in the crisis that has left Qatar diplomatically and economically isolated.

On June 5 last year, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt cut ties with Qatar accusing it of backing extremism and fostering ties with their Shiite rival Iran. Doha, however, denies the claims and Ankara has insisted there is absolutely no evidence to back them. Erdogan has strongly denounced the sanctions against Doha and, in a show of solidarity, Turkey has also sent cargo ships and hundreds of planes loaded with foodstuffs.

In recent years, Qatar has emerged as Turkey's top ally in the Middle East, with Ankara and Doha closely coordinating their positions on a number of issues. Notably, both are outspoken against Assad. Ankara has a military base in Qatar, a key foothold for Turkey in the Gulf. But Turkey also does not want to wreck its own relations with regional kingpin Saudi Arabia and its hugely powerful new Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

Erdogan has carefully worked to improve Ankara's relations with Riyadh, hit in 2013 by the ouster of president Mohamed Morsi in Egypt, a close ally of Ankara. The Turkish leader has levied only the most veiled criticism against Saudi Arabia during the crisis, although the pro-Erdogan Turkish press have repeatedly bashed the kingdom. Tensions with the UAE however flared when UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Nahyan retweeted a post on Twitter last month critical of the former Ottoman rulers of the region. Ankara in response renamed the street in the Turkish capital where the UAE embassy is located after the Ottoman governor of the time. — AFP

Kuwait Times

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Sports

Kuwait wins three gold medals in annual shooting tourney

Strong start by Kuwaiti shooters in the Grand Prix



By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Kuwait's 10 meter Air Rifle for women shooter Maryam Arzouqi began the day by winning Kuwait's first gold medal in the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah 7th International Grand Prix Tournament being held at Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Shooting Complex. Arzouqi scored 247.8 points, while Egypt's Shaimaa Hashad scored 242.5 and claimed second place and Bahrain's Sara Al-Doseri won third place with the score 222.8.

The event was very competitive between shooters especially Arzouqi and Hashad, and it was decided in the final round.

Secretary General of Arab and Kuwait Shooting Federations lauded the new record in the 10m air rifle event, and was happy for the strong start by Kuwait shooters in the Grand Prix.

Meanwhile in the Women's Trap event Kuwait's shooters Shahad Al-Hawal came on top with the score of 48 out of 50, and Sarah Al-Hawal was second to Shahad by scoring 46 hits out of 50 as Italy's Isabella Christiana was third with 30 hits.

In the men's trap event, Khalid Al-Mudhaf from Kuwait fought through stiff resistance and competition and won first place and the gold medal, leaving Italy's Luca Miotto in second place with the score of 46 and



Emanuele Buccolieri, also from Italy ended in third place.

Meanwhile, the Asian Shooting Federation held its meeting Sunday evening at the Regency Hotel, the meeting was chaired by Sheikh Ali Al-Khalifa, while President of Arab and Kuwait Shooting Federations Eng. Duaij Al-Otaibi attended the meeting. Those in the meeting, then met the honorary President of Asian and Kuwait Shooting Federations Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-



Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah.

Sheikh Ali Al-Khalifa said several issues related to shooting including its future in Asia and internationally.

He said it was good to have the suspension lifted on Kuwait, adding that there will be good news at the "Olympic" level, and we are with Kuwait at all times.

Meanwhile, Engineer Duaij Al-Otaibi said "we are happy with the large participation of shooters. He said the ASC approved the technical, training and officiating

course, and lauded the voluntary and employee teams at the ASC for their hard work and efforts.

Shooter Maryam Arzouqi said the technical level of the tournament was distinguished due to the presence of highly talented shooters, which made competition more exciting. She said that she benefited from the training camp that was held prior to the Grand Prix, especially that the trainers' instructions gave her the ability to secure the title.

James starts another long drive to success

NORTH CAROLINA: Dustin Johnson and Rory McIlroy have the potential to compete in long drive competitions, but would have to focus exclusively on the discipline for a year or so to be competitive, according to world champion Justin James. James won the world final in Oklahoma last year by smashing the ball 435 yards. Long hitters on the PGA Tour typically drive about 330 yards. "Someone like D.J. or Rory if they really trained for it, it's possible (they would be competitive)," the American told Reuters ahead of Monday's launch of the 2018 Volvik series.

"Those guys at the moment would not get within 50 yards of anyone out here. "Our ball speed (leaving the clubface) is more than 120 miles per hour. The average on the PGA Tour is 170." James added that the competition is completely different from the normally quiet expected on the tee in regular golf, while competitors have just two minutes to hit four drives, the longest of which counts, within a marked grid usually some 50 yards wide.

"It is challenging (to concentrate), drastically different to professional golf, with music blaring in the background, fans yelling, an announcer," James said. "The pace is so fast it's hard to stay in rhythm and make that good golf swing. It's a very exciting environment."

"I am a guy who is low key and I've had an advantage having played (as a pitcher) in minor league baseball, learning how to manage my (arousal) level. I try to play it low key." James, 26, knows well that there are many ingredients that must be baked into smashing the ball vast distances. "You learn quickly it's much more than just putting work in the gym and trying to swing at 150 mph," he added. "There's a lot of science, spin rate, angle of attack. How are you maximizing. "I constantly work to make the biggest turn I can with correct mechanics. My hips take a beating."

The World Long Drive Championship, now owned by Golf Channel, comprises nine events in the US and one in Canada from March until the final in early September. Swede Sandra Carlborg is the reigning women's champion.

Prize money in each event will be a minimum of \$30,000 for the men and \$15,000 for the women, with the final worth \$270,000 and \$40,000. International qualifiers also will be held in Japan, Germany, Britain and New Zealand, with the winners of each advancing to the final.

A competing circuit, the Long Drive World Series, will also hold 10 events from February through November, in 10 different countries, starting in Dubai and culminating in Turkey. — Reuters

Davis powers Pelicans, 'Wolves roll over Portland

LOS ANGELES: Anthony Davis scored a season-high 48 points as the New Orleans Pelicans rallied from a 19-point third quarter deficit to defeat the New York Knicks 123-118 in overtime on Sunday.

Davis also had 17 rebounds for the Pelicans, who were down 16 after one quarter and behind by nine with four minutes remaining in the contest. "I just kind of felt like tonight was definitely my night," Davis said. Jrue Holiday added 31 points, and DeMarcus Cousins had 15 points, 16 rebounds, seven steals and five assists and for the Pelicans.

Holiday also had three baskets and a couple of free throws in overtime to help seal the win in front of a crowd of 19,800 at Madison Square Garden. "We did a great job in the overtime," Pelicans coach Alvin Gentry said. "AD was just huge for us, and when you get into those zones like that he's really good."

Kristaps Porzingis and Tim Hardaway each scored 25 points for the Knicks, who lost their third straight and 10th in their last 12 games. Jarrett Jack had a season-high 22 points, and Enes Kanter finished with 18 points and 10 rebounds in the defeat.

Sunday's loss was not a good sign for the Knicks, who start a seven-game, two-week, cross-country road trip on Monday against Brooklyn. "I think we've just got to do a better job of when we're up 12, 15 points, we've got to take it to another level, another notch," Hardaway said. "We haven't been doing that these last couple of games."

Elsewhere, Jimmy Butler scored 24 points as the Minnesota Timberwolves extended their win streak to five games with a 120-103 rout of the Portland Trail Blazers. Karl-Anthony Towns had 20 points and 11 rebounds for his NBA-leading 37th double-double of the season for the 'Wolves who recorded all five of their wins at home. It is just the third time in club history they have won five contests on a homestand.

Jamal Crawford came off the bench to score 10 points as Minnesota's new veterans and young stars start to come together and learn how to close out games. Damian Lillard scored 21 points, and C.J. McCollum and Pat Connaughton each had 18 for Portland, who were down by as much as 26 points. Portland suffered their third loss in a row as injuries have taken their toll on the team this season.

Also, Goran Dragic's 25 points propelled Miami to a 97-79 victory over the Milwaukee Bucks that pushed the Heat within one game of the Cleveland Cavaliers for third place in the Eastern Conference. The Heat, a tad sluggish to start, used a 14-0 second-half scoring run to notch their seventh straight victory, tying the Eastern Conference-leading Boston Celtics for the longest active winning streak in the league.

WINNING FORMULA

"I thought the guys really stepped it up in the second half," Miami coach Erik Spoelstra said. "It was



NEW YORK: Jrue Holiday #11 of the New Orleans Pelicans passes the ball against the New York Knicks on Sunday at Madison Square Garden in New York City, New York. — AFP

NBA results/standings

Minnesota 120, Portland 103; Phoenix 97, Indiana 120; New York 118, New Orleans 123 (OT); Miami 97, Milwaukee 79.

Eastern Conference			GB	Western Conference					
W	L	PCT							
Boston	34	10	77.3	-	Golden State	35	9	79.5	-
Toronto	29	12	70.7	3.5	Houston	30	11	73.2	3.5
Cleveland	26	16	61.9	7	San Antonio	29	15	65.9	6
Miami	25	17	59.5	8	Minnesota	29	16	64.4	6.5
Washington	25	18	58.1	8.5	Oklahoma City	23	20	53.5	11.5
Detroit	22	19	53.7	10.5	New Orleans	22	20	52.4	12
Indiana	23	20	53.5	10.5	Denver	22	21	51.2	12.5
Milwaukee	22	20	52.4	11	Portland	22	21	51.2	12.5
Philadelphia	19	20	48.7	12.5	LA Clippers	21	21	50.0	13
New York	19	24	44.2	14.5	Utah	17	25	40.5	17
Charlotte	16	25	39.0	16.5	Phoenix	16	28	36.4	19
Brooklyn	16	27	37.2	17.5	LA Lakers	15	27	35.7	19
Chicago	16	27	37.2	17.5	Dallas	15	29	34.1	20
Orlando	12	31	27.9	21.5	Memphis	13	28	31.7	20.5
Atlanta	11	31	26.2	22	Sacramento	13	29	31.0	21

great to see those inspiring efforts. Even at the end, the loose balls, (James Johnson) diving on the floor. You don't need to do that at that point, but that's becoming the DNA of this group."

Dragic connected on nine-of-17 shots from the floor en route to his 25 points. Guard Josh Richardson added 16 points and Tyler Johnson chipped in 14. "They've won seven in a row now and they're playing hard on

both ends," Bucks coach Jason Kidd said. Milwaukee regained the advantage, but the Heat responded with a scoring explosion that started with a three-pointer by Tyler Johnson and ended with a jump shot by Dragic. They enjoyed a double-digit cushion until they were called on to fend off a Bucks charge in the final frame. Dragic's second-half surge included a burst of 11 straight points, including three three-pointers. — AFP

Sports

Drones, aircraft and injuries fail to stop Marcel Hirscher

On the World Cup circuit, Hirscher is peerless

WENGEN: It takes more than an ankle injury, a mishap involving a military aircraft or a drone falling on to the piste to stop Marcel Hirscher. The relentless Austrian is recognised as one of the finest-ever skiers after winning six successive titles in the overall World Cup, regarded as the pinnacle for skiers as it combines results from all disciplines over the whole season.

Yet, an Olympic gold remains conspicuously absent from the 28-year-old slalom specialist's trophy cabinet. He missed out on medals at the 2010 Games, finishing fourth in the giant slalom and fifth in the slalom, and had to settle for silver in the giant slalom in Sochi where he was pipped by compatriot Mario Matt on a tough, controversial course.

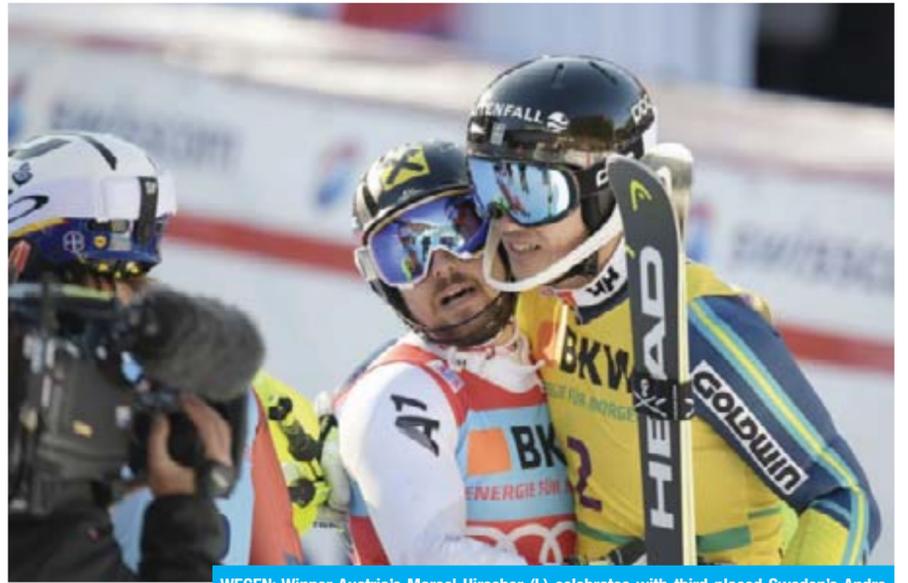
It is not something that bothers him unduly, however. "If I win gold, that would be great," he said last year. "But if not, I don't think people are going to say that my career was rubbish." On the World Cup circuit, Hirscher is peerless. He won nine races on the way to claiming his first overall World Cup in 2012 and has gone on to become the first skier to win it six times. Hopes of a seventh title this term appeared to be jeopardised when he broke his ankle in a training accident in August but Hirscher was never going to be bothered by that sort of setback. He won the giant slalom at Alta Badia by a huge 1.70 metres and on Sunday filled one of the few holes in his career by winning the slalom at Wengen, the only so-called classic where he had not previously triumphed. It was his eighth World Cup win of the season and fifth in a row in the slalom. "Marcel is in a league of his own and it's

really hard to compete with him... we are trying our best," said Swedish skier Andre Myhrer after the Wengen race. The all-action Hirscher chooses motocross, kayaking and white-water rafting as his way of relaxing although he likes a quiet walk to wind down after a big race. It seems that nothing can get in his way. Two years ago, Hirscher was nearly struck by a camera-carrying drone which fell from the air and missed him by centimetres during a World Cup giant slalom at Madonna di Campiglio. He went on to finish second.

Last year, the giant slalom at the world championships in St Moritz was delayed after a military aircraft taking part in a training exercise cut the cable of an overhead television camera. The camera fell into the finish line area but no skiers were hurt and Hirscher won the race.

Marc Girardelli, himself the winner of five overall World Cup titles, said Hirscher's form after his recovery may have demoralised his rivals further. "It was a hammer blow for every skier who has been preparing for months," he said. "He has come back from injury, he is still in pain and is still faster than everyone else. I've never seen anything like it." Twice overall World Cup champion Aksel Lund Svindal told Reuters that Hirscher would almost certainly come to be regarded as the sport's second-greatest exponent after Ingemar Stenmark, who won 86 World Cup races.

"It's his consistency... he is able to pull through race after race after race," said Svindal. Svindal said Hirscher's dominance was especially remarkable in a sport where the slightest mistake can prove disastrous.



WENGEN: Winner Austria's Marcel Hirscher (L) celebrates with third-placed Sweden's Andre Myhrer (R) after the men's Slalom race at the FIS Alpine Skiing World Cup in Wengen. — AFP

"It's small margins, if you make a mistake you're out," he said, adding that Hirscher's avoidance of the speed events did nothing to detract from his record. "If you can

have that kind of consistency, then it doesn't matter, you don't need to do downhill. You're still a worthy winner of the World Cup." — Reuters

Superstar Bjorndalen not picked for Pyeongchang

OSLO: Norway's biathlon star Ole Einar Bjorndalen, who has won the most medals in the history of Winter Olympics, has been omitted from the team for next month's Games in Pyeongchang. "The results achieved by Ole Einar Bjorndalen during the World Cup... are not good enough. He unfortunately did not meet the criteria" of the selection, the head of the Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee, Tore Oevreboe, said. Bjorndalen, who turns 44 in a few days, has competed in every Winter Olympics since the 1994 event in Lillehammer, Norway, and was hoping to participate in a seventh Olympiad in Pyeongchang next month. "It sucks that I can't go," he told television broadcaster TV2, adding that he disagreed with the Norwegian Olympic Committee's decision.

"I think I could have found my form in time for the Games," TV2 said Bjorndalen planned to make a decision about his career at the end of the 2018 season. Holder of a record of 13 Olympic medals (eight gold, four silver and one bronze), Bjorndalen is the best biathlete in history and also counts 95 individual vic-



OBERHOF: File photo taken on January 05, 2018 shows Ole Einar Bjoerndalen of Norway competing in the men's 10 km sprint event at the IBU Biathlon World Cup in Oberhof. Bjorndalen, who has won the most medals in the history of Winter Olympics, was not chosen yesterday to go to next month's Games in Pyeongchang. — AFP

ories in the World Cup and 20 world titles.

He won all four biathlon events—the sprint, the pursuit, the 20-kilometre individual and the 4x7.5km relay—at the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City.

But in South Korea, Norway will be represented by brothers Johannes and Tarjei Boe, Emil Hegle Svendsen, Lars Helge Birkeland, Henrik L'Abée-Lund and Erlend Bjoentegaard. — AFP

Dutch talisman Kramer hoping to strike 10,000m gold

LONDON: The Dutch speed skating team at the Winter Olympics in South Korea is hoping their talisman Sven Kramer can complete his dominance of the longer distances with an elusive gold in the 10,000 metres.

The 31-year-old has won the event five times at the world single distance championships and broken the world record three times, and an Olympic gold in Pyeongchang would ease the heartache he endured at the 2010 Vancouver Games.

Kramer won gold in the 5,000 in Vancouver and finished first in the 10,000 final, but was disqualified for choosing the wrong lane after he received incorrect instructions from his coach.

The seven-time Olympic medallist took gold in the 5,000 and team pursuit at the Sochi Games four years ago, but finished behind team mate Jorrit Bergsma in the 10,000.

"That's for sure his target," Arie Koops, technical director of the Dutch speed skating association, told Reuters. "Of course he'd like some more medals not only that one, but gold in the 10,000 will be a special target for him."

Yet the Dutch may not have it all their own way in South Korea, with Kramer and Bergsma likely to face competition from Canada's Ted Jan-Bloemen, who was born in the Netherlands. The 31-year-old Jan-Bloemen obtained Canadian citizenship in 2014 and currently holds world records in both the 5,000 and 10,000, but next month's Olympics will be his first.

Kramer, in contrast, got his first taste of the Winter Olympics at Turin in 2006, where he won silver in the 5,000 and bronze in the team pursuit. Speed skating runs in Kramer's family—his father Yep competed in the 1980 and 1984 Olympic Winter Games—and his experience on the ice and reputation as one of the world's best all-round skaters make him a formidable opponent.

It was Kramer's experience that led to him being named to race in the mass start for the Netherlands at the Games, much to his own surprise as he is also in the 5,000 and team pursuit. — Reuters

Germany rightfully eye medals again: Hoppe

BERLIN: Germany can rightfully expect bobsleigh medals at next month's Pyeongchang Winter Games, Olympic champion and German youth coach Wolfgang Hoppe said, with the sport's powerhouse looking to reclaim gold in the four-man event.

Germany, either East, West or unified, have won seven of the 10 four-man bobsleigh Olympic gold medals since the 1976 Innsbruck Games. They did not win in Vancouver in 2010, while the Russian winners of the 2014 Olympics have since been disqualified for doping. The Germans have also won the last three golds in the two-man bobs.

"We will be challenging for medals," said Hoppe, who won six Olympic medals both for East Germany and Germany after reunification in 1990, and also coached Sandra Kiriasis to 2006 Olympic gold. He now works for the bobsleigh federation as a youth coaching coordinator.

"The results of the past weeks have shown growth. The Canadians and the Americans look good and Switzerland

can play a role. It is a question of the form on the day, a fine-tuning of equipment. But I think we will be competing for medals." The Germans' performances so far this season have been impressive, with a top-three finish in St Moritz at the weekend in the four-man bobs being denied only due to a disqualification over weight.

"It is a purposeful sport, single-minded," Hoppe said, adding that Germans received high-level training from a very young age given the competition. "The athletes have good skills going into competitions. They are used to high-level training from youth level," Hoppe said.

Germany is also the only nation in the world with four sliding centres. By comparison Canada and the United States have two while Switzerland has just one. "These four tracks offer athletes the chance to use them regularly. That makes for intense training from early on," Hoppe said.

The 60-year-old Hoppe, who won two gold medals at the 1984 Sarajevo Olympics and was also unified Germany's flag bearer at the 1992 Albertville Games, said German reunification and the collapse of the Soviet Union had further increased competition among German athletes.

"From two countries we (Germans) suddenly became one, with a lot of good athletes and coaches. The Soviet Union broke away into several countries, Yugoslavia as well." "We in Germany in a way were disadvantaged because we had to work that much harder to just be selected to compete at big events. Competition was fierce." — Reuters

Canada set for multi-pronged assault in Pyeongchang

LONDON: Canada's speed skating team for the Winter Olympics in South Korea is much stronger than four years ago and will offer medal threats in multiple distances, according to the country's Dutch coach Bart Schouten.

Canada won only two medals at the Sochi Games in 2014, with Denny Morrison taking silver in the men's 1,000 metres and bronze in the 1,500, but the intervening years have seen the team step up a level in terms of performance.

"We have multiple medal threats in multiple distances and that is one of the goals we had as Canada," Schouten told Reuters from his training base in Calgary. "We just didn't want to be dependent on, like in Sochi, one skater doing well. "We really had to go as a team to try to increase our level in all the distances and to have multiple people be in a position to win a medal at the Games.

"I think we've really succeeded at that." Canada is the only country that could potentially deny the Dutch men a gold medal in the longer distances they have traditionally dominated. Ted-Jan Bloemen, the current world record holder in the men's 10,000 and 5,000, is Canada's strongest medal prospect and Dutchman Sven Kramer's closest rival for gold at the Games.

Bloemen, who has dual Canadian-Dutch citizenship, was raised in the Netherlands but after failing to nail down a regular place in a commercial team in that country, opted to race for Canada in 2014.

"He gave me a call and asked if he could skate for Canada," Schouten said. "We felt it was a great opportunity for us to see if we could strengthen our long distance programme. "He was welcomed by all the other skaters on the team. They could have seen him as a competitor, but they really felt he could make everybody stronger, which he did."

"Since then he's steadily progressed in a stable situation where he felt at home and welcomed. "I think he improved technically and tactically, got stronger physically, and as a result his performances have been getting better and better."

DEEP TALENT POOL

The popularity of ice hockey in Canada and a network of speed skating clubs means the country has a healthy pool of skaters to choose from. Morrison and Bloemen are the senior members of the team at 32 and 31 respectively, while Vincent De Haître is one of the youngest members in the squad at 23.

"Vincent de Haître is a possible medallist in the 1,000 and the 1,500," Schouten said. "And I think we have a good chance in the 500 with two skaters that won gold medals in the World Cups this year, Alex Boisvert-Lacroix and Laurent Dubreuil."

Ivanie Blondin will challenge for medals in the mass start and the women's 5,000 and 3,000, and Canada will also send strong teams for both the men and women's team pursuit. "Canada is a really strong team where people are working together well and I think we've stepped up a level of performance over the last couple of years," Schouten said. "We're really looking forward to bringing our best performances in Korea." — Reuters

Sports

Captain Kohli shines, but South Africa on top in second Test

South Africa lead the three-match series 1-0

SCOREBOARD

CENTURION, South Africa: Scores at close of play on the third day of the second Test between South Africa and India at Supersport Park yesterday:

South Africa, first innings, 335

India, first innings (overnight 183-5)

M. Vijay c De Kock b Maharaj	46
L. Rahul c and b Morkel	10
C. Pujara run out (Ngidi)	0
V. Kohli c De Villiers b Morkel	153
R. Sharma lbw b Rabada	10
P. Patel c De Kock b Ngidi	19
H. Pandya run out	15
R. Ashwin c Du Plessis b Philander	38
Mohammed Shami c Amla b Morkel	1
I. Sharma c Markram b Morkel	3
J. Bumrah not out	0
Extras (b8, lb1, nb1, w2)	12
Total (92.1 overs)	307
Fall of wickets: 1-28 (Rahul), 2-28 (Pujara), 3-107 (Vijay), 4-132 (R. Sharma), 5-164 (Patel), 6-209 (Pandya), 7-280 (Ashwin), 8-281 (Shami), 9-306 (I. Sharma)	
Bowling: Maharaj 20-1-67-1, Morkel 22.1-5-60-4 (Inb, 1w), Philander 16-3-46-1, Rabada 20-1-74-1, Ngidi 14-2-51-1 (1w).	

South Africa, second innings

A. Markram lbw b Bumrah	1
D. Elgar not out	36
H. Amla lbw b Bumrah	1
A. de Villiers not out	50
Extras (lb1, w1)	2
Total (2 wks, 29 overs)	90
Fall of wickets: 1-1 (Markram), 2-3 (Amla)	
Bowling: Ashwin 12-0-33-0, Bumrah 8-2-30-2 (1w), I. Sharma 4-0-14-0, Shami 5-1-12-0.	
Match situation: South Africa lead by 118 runs with eight wickets remaining in the second innings.	

PRETORIA: India captain Virat Kohli blazed a magnificent century, but South Africa hold the upper hand as they reached 90 for two in their second innings on a difficult wicket after rain and then had light curtailed day three of the second Test yesterday.

The home side lead by 118 runs having bowled India out for 307 after lunch, despite a classy 153 from Kohli, who played almost a lone hand in scoring half his side's runs. AB de Villiers (50 not out) has taken the attack to the Indian bowlers after South Africa had sunk to three for two in their second innings on a wicket that is more Pune than Pretoria, with variable bounce and taking massive turn for the spinners.

De Villiers will resume on day four with opener Dean Elgar (36 not out), who has battled for rhythm but hung



**Magnificent
153 runs from
217 balls**



CENTURION: India's captain Virat Kohli (L) raises his bat and helmet as he celebrates scoring a century (100 runs) during the third day of the second Test cricket match between South Africa and India at Supersport cricket ground yesterday in Centurion. — AFP

around in an unbeaten third wicket partnership of 87.

South Africa had been rocked earlier by a double-strike from Indian seamer Jasprit Bumrah (2-30), who trapped both Aiden Markram (1) and Hashim Amla (1) leg before wicket with deliveries that skidded through after keeping low. There would have been plenty of panic in the South African dressing room at that point, but De Villiers started playing attacking shots from the moment he reached the wicket to transfer the pressure back onto the tourists. Kohli had spoken before the match about showing more

“intent” against South Africa's seam attack and he duly delivered, compiling a brilliant 153 not out from 217 balls.

He now has 21 Test tons to go with 15 half-centuries, a conversion rate when passing 50 that is only bettered in the game by Australian great Don Bradman, who made 29 hundreds and 13 fifties.

India had resumed on their overnight score of 183 for five, but lost Hardik Pandya (15) to a farcical run out as the all-rounder ambled into his crease and failed to put his bat down, only to be undone by a direct hit from Vernon

Philander. Kohli and Ravichandran Ashwin (38) shared a quick-fire seventh wicket stand of 71 in 14.2 overs, before the latter fell to Philander (1-46). Mohammed Shami (1) edged a Morne Morkel (4-60) delivery to slip, while the latter also accounted for Ishant Sharma (3) when he was caught at short-leg. Kohli was the last batsman out as he tried to attack the bowling, caught at deep mid-on to become Morkel's fourth victim of the innings. South Africa won the opening test of the three-match series by 72 runs in Cape Town. — Reuters

Tamim guides Bangladesh to easy win over Zimbabwe

DHAKA: Opener Tamim Iqbal struck an unbeaten half-century to guide Bangladesh to an eight-wicket win over Zimbabwe in the opening match of a tri-nation one-day international tournament in Dhaka yesterday. Tamim scored 84 off 93 balls at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium as Bangladesh cruised to 171-2 in just 28.3 overs. The hosts earlier dispatched Zimbabwe for 170 in 49 overs as left-arm spinner Shakib Al Hasan claimed 3-43. Sikandar Raza top-scored for the visitors with 52 as well as taking 2-53. Bangladesh never looked in trouble, with Shakib striking twice in the first over after skipper Mashrafe Mortaza won the toss and opted to bowl. Mashrafe and Mustafizur Rahman quickly reduced Zimbabwe to 51 for four, before Raza provided some brief resist-

ance with his dogged 99-ball innings.

Peter Moor supported Raza with 33 before Rubel Hossain (2-24) took two wickets off successive balls, fast-tracking Zimbabwe's collapse and becoming Bangladesh's fifth bowler to claim 100 ODI wickets. Mustafizur, who claimed 2-29, produced an off-cutter to uproot Blessing Muzarabani's off-stump and end Zimbabwe's innings. Tamim, who hit eight fours and a six, lost his opening partner Anamul Haque early on for 19 but added 78 with Shakib (37) for the second wicket to set up the innings for Bangladesh.

Shakib—who won the man of the match award—said the win stood the hosts in good stead ahead of their match against Sri Lanka, the other team in the tri-nation series.

“Keeping up momentum is very important. This win should give us some confidence before facing Sri Lanka, who I think will offer us a tough challenge,” he said. Zimbabwe captain Graeme Cremer blamed poor batting for their defeat. “It was not one of those wickets where you could score easily. We had a lot of soft dismissals in our batting line-up,” he said. Zimbabwe play Sri Lanka in their next match of the tournament at the same ground tomorrow. — AFP



DHAKA: Bangladesh cricketer Mushfiqur Rahim (L) plays a shot as the Zimbabwe wicket-keeper Brendan Taylor (R) looks on during the first One Day International (ODI) cricket match of the Tri-Nations Series between Bangladesh and Zimbabwe at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium. — AFP

Jaguars outlast Steelers to book playoff date with Patriots

WASHINGTON: Jacksonville rookie Leonard Fournette ran for 109 yards and three touchdowns Sunday, powering the Jaguars over the Pittsburgh Steelers 45-42 and within another victory of their first Super Bowl. Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger completed 37-of-58 passes for a post-season Pittsburgh record 469 yards and five touchdowns but it was not enough for the hosts to advance in the NFL playoffs.

Jacksonville moved into the American Conference final next Sunday at defending champion New England, where the winner will advance to next month's Super Bowl. It's the third trip for the Jaguars so near the NFL championship spectacle, having lost to Tennessee in 2000 and at New England in 1997 in prior conference finals.

The New Orleans Saints were set to face host Minnesota later to determine which club would travel to Philadelphia for next Sunday's National Conference final. A blocked punt by Pittsburgh's Robert Golden set up the Steelers for their first drive of the fourth quarter in Jaguars' territory, but the hosts turned over the ball on downs and Jacksonville made them pay.

Jaguars quarterback Blake Bortles hit Keelan Cole with a 45-yard pass to set up Fournette's third touchdown run, a 3-yard trot up the middle, that gave Jacksonville a 35-21 edge with 10:34 remaining.

The Steelers took an all-or-nothing gamble on fourth down and Roethlisberger responded with his fourth touchdown pass, connecting with Antonio Brown on a 43-yard scoring strike to pull Pittsburgh within 35-28. Bortles answered with a 14-yard touchdown pass to Tommy Bohanon to complete a 75-yard march and give Jacksonville a 42-28 lead with 4:19 remaining.

Roethlisberger wasn't credited with a scoring toss



PITTSBURGH: Leonard Fournette #27 of the Jacksonville Jaguars dives into the end zone for a touchdown against the Pittsburgh Steelers during the first half of the AFC Divisional Playoff game at Heinz Field on Sunday in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. — AFP

but his lateral to Le'Veon Bell allowed the rusher to run eight yards for a touchdown that pulled the Steelers within 42-35 with 2:18 remaining. Pittsburgh decided to attempt an onside kick to keep possession of the ball, but the Jaguars recovered and Josh Lambo kicked a 45-yard field goal with 1:45 remaining.

The Steelers drove downfield again but used too much time, Roethlisberger's 4-yard touchdown toss to Juju Smith-Schuster too little and too late. Jacksonville scored on the opening drive, Fournette diving one yard for a touchdown to cap an eight-play, 66-yard march.

Roethlisberger, who threw a career-high five interceptions against the Jaguars' top-rated pass defenders in a 30-9 regular-season rout last October, tossed another Sunday to Jacksonville's Myles Jack.

On the next play, Fournette ran 18 yards around the right side into the front corner of the end zone and the

Jaguars led 14-0. Jacksonville's T.J. Yeldon scored on a four-yard touchdown run 3:29 into the second quarter and the Jaguars surged ahead 21-0 as stunned Steelers fans shivered silently in the cold.

Roethlisberger answered with a 23-yard touchdown pass to Brown to get the Steelers on the scoreboard. But “Big Ben” lost a fumble caused by Jacksonville's Yannick Ngakoue and the Jaguars' Telvin Smith recovered and returned the ball 50 yards for a touchdown.

Roethlisberger responded with a 36-yard touchdown pass to Martavis Bryant with 25 seconds remaining in the second quarter to pull the Steelers within 28-14 at half-time. After the second-half kickoff, the Steelers marched 77 yards in 10 plays with Roethlisberger flipping a 19-yard touchdown pass to Le'Veon Bell to lift Pittsburgh within 28-21 just 5:51 into the third quarter. — AFP

Stokes charged with affray over nightclub fight

LONDON: England all-rounder Ben Stokes was charged with affray yesterday following an incident outside a nightclub, casting fresh doubt over his international future after he missed the side's ill-fated Ashes tour.

Cricket chiefs said they would meet within the next 48 hours to decide if he will be allowed to take part in England's upcoming tour of New Zealand, for which he has already been selected. The confrontation in September in the southwestern city of Bristol reportedly left a man with a fractured eye socket and saw Stokes, 26, suspended from international cricket until further notice by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), meaning he missed the Australia tour.

“The CPS was passed a file of evidence by Avon and Somerset Police on 29 November in relation to an incident of disorder in Bristol city centre,” said a spokesman for England's Crown Prosecution Service.

“Further material was subsequently received in late December. Following a review of all the available evidence, the CPS has today authorised the police to charge three men with affray in connection with the incident.”

Stokes will appear alongside two other men at Bristol Magistrates' Court on a date to be fixed following the incident which took place in the early hours of September 25 after England had beaten the West Indies in a one-day international match in the city.

He had already been ruled out of England's ongoing one-day series in Australia and his next involvement in senior cricket could be in the lucrative Indian Premier League after he was cleared by the ECB to play in a second season of the franchise Twenty20 tournament.

England crashed to a 4-0 defeat in Australia in the absence of the dynamic Durham all-rounder, who is an aggressive middle-order batsman, lively paceman and excellent slip fielder. Stokes sparked talk of a possible England recall by playing for Canterbury, his New Zealand birth province, for a month, but has since returned home to be with his wife and young family.

Last week Stokes was included in England's 16-man squad for their upcoming Test tour of his native New Zealand but the ECB added the rider that “his involvement remains subject to any relevant legal or disciplinary developments in relation to the incident in Bristol in September.”

England cricket chiefs responded to Monday's announcement by saying they would decide this week if Stokes would be made available to play in New Zealand. “ECB is aware that Ben Stokes has been charged with affray in relation to an incident in Bristol in September,” said a board spokesman.

“The board will now convene within 48 hours to decide on Ben Stokes's availability to represent England at this stage. A further announcement will be made in due course.” Under English law, affray, which refers to fighting in public, can carry a sentence of up to three years in prison if the case is heard in a crown court. But if the case is tried in a magistrates' court, the maximum penalty is a fine or six months in prison. — AFP

Sports

Suarez fires Barcelona nine clear in Sociedad fightback

Messi overtakes Gerd Muller with 366th La Liga strike

MADRID: Luis Suarez stole the show with a brace and an assist as Barcelona fought back from two goals down to win 4-2 at Real Sociedad on Sunday and restore their nine-point lead at the top of La Liga.

Suarez struck in the 50th and 71st minutes, his first a delightful chip from just inside the area, after laying on Paulinho six minutes before the break to start the comeback from first-half goals from Sociedad's Willian Jose and Juanmi.

A stunning Lionel Messi free-kick five minutes from time completed the comeback, which puts Ernesto Valverde's side on 51 points, well ahead of second-placed Atletico Madrid, 1-0 winners at Eibar on Saturday.

The win also moves Barca a full 19 points in front of arch-rivals Real Madrid, who are languishing in fourth and closer on points to the relegation zone than leaders Barca after Saturday's 1-0 home defeat by Villarreal.

Real's embarrassment allowed third-placed Valencia to move eight points clear of Zinedine Zidane's side with a 2-1 win at third-from-bottom Deportivo La Coruna on Saturday, which came thanks to goals from Goncalo Guedes and Rodrigo.

Barca came into Sunday's clash having not won at Sociedad since 2007 and with 34 minutes gone it looked like the hex was going to continue.

Jose gave the hosts a shock lead after just 11 minutes when he headed home Xabi Prieto's superb cross, and a shambolic looking Barca were deservedly two down 23 minutes later.

Juanmi burst through the away side's distracted back-line to meet Sergio Canales' excellent through ball, and the Spaniard saw his shot deflected off Sergi Roberto and creep inside Marc-Andre Ter Stegen's near post.

Suarez burst into life as the first half came to a close and gave the Catalans hope with a fine low cross that Paulinho just had to guide home to pull a goal back. The Uruguayan then scored a sensational equaliser in the 50th minute, striding towards Messi's pass and clipping a looping shot over Sociedad stopper Geronimo Rulli, before putting his side into the lead 21 minutes later.

Rulli's long clearance was fired back with a powerful shot by Thomas Vermaelen that found Suarez clean through on and ready to crash home Barca's third. Messi's free-kick, a dipping curler that any goalkeeper would have struggled to save, was the icing on the cake for Barca and the Argentine, who overtook Gerd Muller to become the top scorer in the history of Europe's top five leagues with his 366th La Liga strike.

Real coach Zidane was given some respite from the fierce criticism he received following Villarreal's first ever win at the Bernabeu, as Sevilla missed the chance to draw level on points in the race for Champions League qualification when they lost 1-0 at lowly Alaves on Sunday.

Manu Garcia's 52nd-minute strike pulled Alaves out of the relegation zone and left Sevilla sixth on 29 points, three behind fourth-placed Real. The defeat for Sevilla extends Vincenzo Montella's losing start in La Liga, with the Italian guiding his new club to two straight league

best team in the country.

But he admitted the forward would walk into United's team while he would not necessarily be an automatic choice in City's star-studded line-up. Runaway Premier League leaders City boast an dazzling array of attacking talent with the likes of Kevin De Bruyne, Leroy Sane, David Silva, Raheem Sterling, Gabriel Jesus and Sergio Aguero vying for places.

Sanchez would certainly feature for City, who lost their unbeaten Premier League record at Anfield on Sunday, as they chase silverware on four fronts but he would struggle to pin down a permanent starting berth at the Etihad.

STARTING SPOT?

Second-placed United, who are 15 points behind City, also have an impressive selection of forwards but Sanchez could expect more playing time alongside Romelu Lukaku at Old Trafford, with doubts growing over the future of Zlatan Ibrahimovic following his recent return from a long-term injury.

Sanchez joined Arsenal from Barcelona in 2014 and in a stellar 2016/17 campaign scored 30 goals and made 17 assists, though his form has since dipped. His loss would be a major blow for Arsenal, who face losing another big-name player to one of the Manchester clubs, with Sanchez likely to follow the path taken by Robin van Persie, who swapped the Emirates for Old Trafford in 2012.

A number of Arsenal players have also joined City in recent years including Samir Nasri, Gael Clichy and Kolo Toure. Wenger left Sanchez out of his squad to face Bournemouth on Sunday, where they slipped to a damaging 2-1 defeat, leaving them eight points off the top four.

Arsenal themselves have been linked with a £35 million move for Bordeaux forward Malcom but Wenger, who said the club would need a replacement if Sanchez were to leave, refused to confirm his interest in the Brazilian. — AFP



Arch-rivals Real Madrid in fourth place



SAN SEBASTIAN: Barcelona's Uruguayan forward Luis Suarez (R) celebrates his second goal with Barcelona's Argentinian forward Lionel Messi (2R) and Barcelona's Spanish defender Gerard Pique during the Spanish league football match between Real Sociedad and FC Barcelona at the Anoeta stadium in San Sebastian. — AFP

losses since replacing cancer-stricken Eduardo Berizzo, following last week's 5-3 home Seville derby loss to Betis. Espanyol played out a 1-1 draw with Athletic Bilbao in

Sunday's other game, with Inaki Williams equalising for the Basques six minutes after Gerard Moreno's 29th-minute opener. — AFP

Man United tipped to beat City to Sanchez signing

LONDON: Manchester United appeared to be closing in on Arsenal forward Alexis Sanchez yesterday, leading the chase to sign the Chile international ahead of long-time suitors and local rivals Manchester City.

If the transfer goes ahead it would be the second blockbuster move of the January transfer window involving Premier League clubs following Philippe Coutinho's big-money move from Liverpool to Barcelona. Sanchez, 29, looks to have played his last game for Arsenal, with manager Arsene Wenger saying on Sunday that his move could be confirmed "in the next 48 hours".

However there is uncertainty as to whether he will pick the red or blue half of Manchester. Pep Guardiola's City, whose move for the player collapsed at the end of the summer transfer window, are understood to be reluctant to pay a reported fee in the region of £35 million (\$48 million, 39 million euros) for a player who is out of contract at the end of the season.

United boss Jose Mourinho has done nothing to rule out United's interest in Sanchez, calling him a "phenomenal player" and admitting that if there is a "fantastic opportunity" to sign a top player in the January transfer window, the club would be interested.

Former England captain Alan Shearer said the signing would be a huge coup for United because he has been a Guardiola target for some time. "I don't know what Sanchez is thinking but my guess—and it is a guess—is that he will choose City," Shearer said on the BBC website, adding that the player knows Guardiola from his time at Barcelona and would be joining the



Alexis Sanchez

Trailblazing black England player Regis dies, aged 59

LONDON: Former West Bromwich Albion and Coventry forward Cyrille Regis, who blazed a trail for black footballers in the English game has died at the age of 59, the Professional Footballers' Association announced yesterday.

Regis, born in French Guiana, won five caps for England between 1982 and 1987, having been one of the stars of the Baggies team between 1977 and 1984. He scored 112 goals in 297 appearances for Albion before moving on to Coventry, winning the FA Cup with the Sky Blues in 1987.

Along with Laurie Cunningham and Brendon Batson, who joined West Brom in 1978, the trio of black players were nicknamed "The Three Degrees" after the singing trio of the same name.

Terribly sad news this morning that footballing pioneer Cyrille Regis has died aged 59, the PFA tweeted. "A true gentleman and legend, he will be deeply missed. Our sympathies to his family and friends."

Former England captain Alan Shearer tweeted: "What a man. What a centre-forward! One of my earliest football memories was walking into WBA for a trial as a 13 year old kid, seeing Cyrille Regis and being in awe of him. RIP big man." —AFP



Cyrille Regis

Man Utd great Giggs named Wales boss

CARDIFF: Former Manchester United great Ryan Giggs said yesterday he was "itching" to get back into football after being unveiled as the new Wales boss—his first permanent managerial post. Giggs, who replaces Chris Coleman, revealed he had sought advice from his former United manager Alex Ferguson over the job.

The former winger, 44, has been out of football for 18 months since leaving the coaching staff at Old Trafford when Jose Mourinho replaced Louis van Gaal in 2016. "I'm tremendously proud and excited to be the next Wales manager and I can't wait to get going," Giggs said at his official unveiling in Cardiff. "It's a great opportunity and I'm excited. I played 64 times for my country. I'd like to think I'll be the same kind of manager as I was a player, with professionalism but also a little bit of fun along the way." Giggs said he had picked the brains of his former boss at Old Trafford, under whom he spent almost his entire career. "I've spoken to him over the last 24 hours and I'll speak to him in more depth but obviously I want to be my own manager," he said. "I was itching to get back into football, that's where I belong."

Giggs's first fixture in charge of Wales will be in the 2018 China Cup against the hosts in Nanning on March 22. He had been the clear favourite for the Wales job since he declared his interest last month and the Welsh FA was keen to make the appointment before the UEFA Nations League draw, which takes place in Switzerland on January 24. Giggs, who was in charge of United as caretaker for four games at the end of the 2013-14 season after David



SOUTH WALES: Newly appointed football manager of Wales, Ryan Giggs (C), President of the Football Association Wales, David Griffiths (L) and Chief Executive of the Football Association Wales, Jonathan Ford pose for photographers at the Hensol Castle hotel. — AFP

Moyes was sacked, spent two seasons as Louis Van Gaal's assistant coach. His departure from Old Trafford ended a long association with the club where he made a record 963 appearances as a player, scoring 168 goals. Giggs knows his status as one of Wales's greatest players is no guarantee he will succeed as the national team's boss.

"It opens doors but so many times it's been said having a good career as a player doesn't make you a good manager," he said. "I've got a great group of players to work with who have been so successful over the last four or five years. Who can forget watching us at the Euros? I want to

get us back there. "I think there's a good balance. There's experienced players and good young players coming through and I can't wait to work with them."

Coleman spent nearly six years as Wales manager before leaving to take over relegation-threatened Sunderland in November. He became the most successful manager in Welsh football history when he guided the country to the semi-finals of Euro 2016 — Wales's first major tournament for 58 years-only to suffer the heartache of missing out on this year's World Cup finals in Russia. — AFP

Matches on TV (Local Timings)		
FRENCH LEAGUE		
Olympique Marseille v Strasbourg	21:00	beIN SPORTS
Girondins de Bordeaux v Caen	21:00	beIN SPORTS
Monaco v OGC Nice	23:00	beIN SPORTS

12 Kuwait wins three gold medals in annual shooting tourney



14 Stokes charged with affray over nightclub fight



15 Man United tipped to beat City to Sanchez signing



MELBOURNE: Hungary's Tímea Babos hits a return against Coco Vandeweghe of the US during their women's singles first round match on day one of the Australian Open tennis tournament in Melbourne yesterday. — AFP

CoCo goes bananas, Americans slip up

Bencic sends Venus crashing in Melbourne

MELBOURNE: CoCo Vandeweghe's petulant standoff over a shortage of bananas was the low point on a horror day for the United States at the Australian Open yesterday as a procession of American players skidded out of the season's first grand slam in the first round.

A miserable day session for America saw US Open champion Sloane Stephens, seven-times grand slam winner Venus Williams, men's 16th seed John Isner and eighth seed Jack Sock, the highest ranked US player in the men's draw, exit the tournament.

Meanwhile, top seed Rafael Nadal ruthlessly brushed aside Victor Estrella Burgos to power into the second round of the Australian Open yesterday.

The world No.1, a beaten finalist to Roger Federer in Melbourne last year, clinically took apart the 81st-ranked Dominican to forge a 6-1, 6-1, 6-1 win in 94 minutes on Rod Laver Arena.

He next plays Leonardo Mayer of Argentina. "I'm very happy to be back, it's a very important beginning for me. It's good news for me," he said.

"I want to enjoy every moment I'm here on this court." The Spaniard left nothing to chance with eight service breaks and 28 winners in a complete first-up performance, dispelling fears over any knee trouble.

Nadal, 31, wore no strapping on his knee, appeared to

move freely and combined his trademark power game from the back of the court.

It took his Australian Open record to 52-11 as he chases his second Melbourne Park title after beating Federer in the 2009 final. Nadal, who is gunning for a 17th major title, was hampered by a knee injury at the tail-end of the 2017 season.

The evening brought little relief, with defeats for Irina Falconi and Kevin King bringing the tally to 12 Americans sent packing out of the 15 in first-round action. Vandeweghe was given two code violations during her stormy 7-6(4) 6-2 defeat by Hungarian Tímea Babos at the Hisense Arena.

The first came after she refused to restart play at the end of the first set until a ball-kid delivered her bananas. "How are they not on court? I mean, c'mon, that's not my fault," she said during an argument with the chair umpire.

"Why do I have to play under a different set of rules? I

don't have to make myself uncomfortable because it's ill prepared. "I have needs and it's not my fault that this court is ill prepared." The American was docked a point toward the end of the second set after appearing to curse at 51st-ranked Babos.

Vandeweghe told reporters she was not happy about Babos getting "in her face" but the Hungarian denied trying to rile her up. "She always does that (loses her temper)," Babos said. "A couple of rackets are broken every match, this time it was I believe a time violation, but I'm not sure. "The second one I believe was an insult against me. "The second one I believe was an insult against me."

If the umpire heard it then it must have been this."

STEPHENS OUT

Vandeweghe became the third of four American women who made the semi-finals at last year's US Open to fall at the first hurdle at Melbourne Park.

The fourth, Madison Keys, begins her tournament against China's Wang Qiang today. US Open champion Stephens, the 13th seed, was bundled out in three sets by China's Zhang Shuai. It was her eighth successive defeat since her maiden grand slam triumph. Fifth seed Williams, who lost last year's final at Melbourne Park to her sister Serena, was beaten in two sets by resurgent Swiss Belinda Bencic. Venus praised her opponent for playing "above and beyond" but was otherwise tight-lipped and sullen during her post-match media duties.

Isner was sent packing in four sets by unfancied local Matthew Ebden on Margaret Court Arena while Sock slipped to a 6-1 7-6(4) 5-7 6-3 defeat by 41st-ranked Japanese Yuichi Sugita on Show Court Two.

Ryan Harrison was a rare shining light as he battled manfully to defeat Israeli Dudi Sela in a tough five-setter. There was also a dominant victory for Nicole Gibbs and Mackenzie McDonald won a battle of qualifiers.

They were mere scraps on a day when the star spangled banner was left decidedly mangled. "I don't know, it's a tough sport," said Sock, who came crashing back to earth after the high of reaching the last four at the ATP Tour Finals in November. "Obviously, it wasn't my day ... it wasn't some of the American women's day but I guess that it happens and that's tennis." — Agencies



Nadal kickstarts 2018 in style

France suspends referee who kicked player

PARIS: The referee who kicked a player during a French Ligue 1 game and then sent him off has been suspended "until further notice", the French Football Federation (FFF) said yesterday. Tony Chapron kicked Diego Carlos of Nantes towards the end of Sunday's match against Paris Saint-Germain after being knocked over when the pair collided in a bizarre incident.

Chapron then showed the player a second yellow card. He apologised yesterday, saying Carlos had bumped into him but that his own reaction had been "clumsy" and "inappropriate". The FFF said its technical committee of referees had decided that Chapron be "withdrawn... until further notice".

He will be called to appear before the French league's disciplinary commission to explain him-

self. The sanction means he has been removed from refereeing duties for tomorrow's Ligue 1 game between Angers and Troyes.

The FFF statement added that 45-year-old Chapron—who recently took charge of a game in China—had reviewed video footage of the incident and "noted that his fall had been caused accidentally." Chapron apologised, saying in a statement to AFP yesterday: "The Nantes player, Diego Carlos, crashed into me.

"At the time of the collision, I felt a sharp pain where I had recently suffered an injury. My unfortunate reaction was to stick my leg out towards the player." Footage of the incident quickly went viral across the world.

Chapron and Diego Carlos were racing to catch up with a breakaway by PSG's Kylian Mbappe as the game, which the visitors won 1-0, moved into stoppage time at the Stade de la Beaujoire. The referee appeared to cut across the Brazilian defender and contact was made, sending both to the floor.

As he got up, Chapron kicked the player, catching him on his right foot. He then started to walk away before turning around and brandishing a second yellow card. He also awarded PSG a free-kick. "He told me that he had never wanted to

kick the player and that he had felt himself pushed in the back," said Nantes president Waldemar Kita after talking to Chapron.

"It's a joke. I got 20 text messages from across the world telling me this referee is a joke," Kita told French television. Nantes midfielder Valentin Rongier had a good view of the incident and called for the referee to be given a lengthy ban.

"He says he slipped, but I know he kicked him," Rongier told Canal+. "I know it's very difficult to referee but you have to question them from time to time... We do that, we get a 10-match ban."

Ex-Real Madrid goalkeeper Iker Casillas was among those to express their bemusement on Twitter, joking that the referee should have got a red card himself. "Surely the good man will have apologised. It was spontaneous," wrote Casillas.

"That said, for me it's aggression and red! Three matches minimum!" Chapron has been refereeing in France's top flight since 2004 and has taken charge of more than 400 matches, including the French Cup final in 2014. Earlier this season he was invited to referee in the Chinese Super League, officiating the game between Shanghai Shenhua and Tianjin Teda in October. He recently told a French local television channel that he would retire at the end of this season. — AFP



NANTES: Nantes' Brazilian defender Diego Carlos (L) receives a red card from French referee Tony Chapron during the French L1 football match between Nantes and Paris Saint-Germain (Paris-SG) at the La Beaujoire stadium in Nantes, western France, on Sunday. — AFP

Business

TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2018

18 GCC's 2018 outlook for sovereign creditworthiness remains negative**20** Euro hits 3-year high as Europe leads optimism**21** Turkish Airlines performed well beyond expectations in 2017

DETROIT: Journalists photograph the new Mercedes G-Wagon at a Mercedes press event on the eve of the 2018 North American International Auto Show Press Preview in Detroit, Michigan, on Sunday. — AFP

US auto industry jobs fall under Trump

Consumer preferences shift from cars to crossovers and trucks

DETROIT: A year after dressing down car-makers for cutting US jobs due to trade agreements and automation, has President Donald Trump delivered on his vow to turn the tide?

The US president got some good news just four days before the Detroit auto show when Fiat Chrysler announced it would shift production of its Ram 1500 to Michigan, adding 2,500 jobs.

"Thank you Chrysler, a very wise decision," Trump said on Twitter. "The voters in Michigan are very happy they voted for Trump/Pence. Plenty of more to follow!" Notwithstanding FCA's announcement last week, the overall picture for US auto jobs has been much less impressive in the year since Trump became president, jobs figures show.

Net employment in the auto sector (manufacturing and suppliers) stood at 783,200 at the end of November, down from 788,900 at the end of 2016, according to the US Bureau

of Labor Statistics. "Overall, US auto employment was down slightly last year. Sales and production were also down, and employment is closely tied to output," said Kristin Dzielick, an expert at the Center for Automotive Research.

Under pressure from Trump, General Motors promised last March to add or retain 900 jobs in Michigan over 12 months. But even if the biggest US automaker made good on that pledge, its overall US hourly workforce dropped to 52,000 at the end of 2017 from 55,000 a year earlier. GM said the fall was due to shifting US consumer buying trends, which led to "actions we took at a few car plants in 2017 to adjust production as the market shifted from cars to crossovers/SUVs," said GM spokesman Patrick Morrissey.

"Consumer preferences have rapidly shifted from cars to crossovers and trucks," said

Dave Sullivan, an expert at AutoPacific.com, confirming GM's stance. Examples of GM factories hit by the company's austerity include Lordstown, Ohio, where the Chevrolet Cruze



Talks between US, Mexico and Canada on NAFTA unresolved

is produced and Grand River, Michigan, which manufactures the Cadillac CTS and ATS and the Chevrolet Camaro. Ford has reversed a promise to keep production of the Ford Focus in Grand River, Michigan and will shift the

manufacturing to China.

Trump's agenda includes tax reform, trade agreement rewrites, regulatory reform and workforce policy. With the exception of tax reform, "most of these issues have not yet been finalized," said Keith Belton, who directs the manufacturing policy initiative at Indiana University.

But "it is clear that the Trump administration has put manufacturing issues on its policy agenda," Belton added. Data show US car imports have risen from overseas manufacturing centers, including China, India and Mexico, which saw a 9.4 percent rise in car exports to the US in 2017 from a year earlier. But the enactment of US tax reform could change the picture, creating incentives for companies to produce in the US because of a lower tax rate.

Passage of the tax cut likely helped seal Toyota and Mazda's decision announced last

week to build a new factory in Alabama, said Cox Automotive economist Jonathan Smoke. "In and of itself it (lower taxes) probably wouldn't be the single factor, but it probably helps to probably be the tiebreaker if you're trying to make the decision," Smoke said. Still unresolved are talks between the US, Mexico and Canada on a revamped NAFTA. The great fear is that a US exit from NAFTA means vehicles now made in Mexico and exported to the US could face tariffs of 25 percent.

If a company decides that scenario is realistic, "then a decision to do something new in US vs Mexico suddenly becomes, 'Oh, the US is favorable because that takes that risk off the table,'" Smoke said. Many automakers say it is too soon to make any decisions because of NAFTA.

"We continue to evaluate our footprint on an ongoing basis," said Dan Ammann, president of GM, which exports trucks from Mexico to the US. — AFP

UK construction firm Carillion collapses

LONDON: British construction group Carillion announced its immediate liquidation yesterday after the heavily-indebted company failed to secure a financial rescue from the UK government and banks in last-ditch talks. Carillion, which employs 43,000 staff worldwide including 19,500 in Britain, said that the government would nevertheless provide some funding to allow current state projects to continue, following crunch talks over the weekend.

"This is a very sad day for Carillion, for our colleagues, suppliers and customers that we have been proud to serve over many years," company chairman Philip Green said in a statement.

"Over recent months huge efforts have been made to restructure Carillion to deliver its sustainable future... In recent days however we have been unable to secure the funding to support our business plan and it is therefore with the deepest regret that we have arrived at this decision." Carillion is a major UK government contractor involved in a wide range of projects from schools to the multi-billion-pound High Speed Two (HS2) railway.



The headquarters of the British construction group Carillion are pictured in Wolverhampton, West Midlands yesterday. — AFP

But it has been struggling for some time and in July last year issued the first of several profit warnings. Carillion yesterday said "it had no choice but to take steps to enter into compulsory liquidation with immediate effect". It added: "An application was made to the High Court for a compulsory liquidation of Carillion before opening of business today and an order has been granted to appoint the Official Receiver as the liquidator of Carillion."

Despite the red flags, the government continued to award the company major public contracts, including on the flagship HS2 project, leading to criticism. But the Conservative government of Prime Minister Theresa May said it wasn't its place to prop up the company. "This is a private sector company, it's regrettable that it's not been able to find a suitable refinancing option with its lenders," Cabinet Office minister David Lidington told BBC radio.

'No Brexit deal' to cost Scotland £12.7bn: Official

EDINBURGH: Scotland's economy would shrink by 8.5 percent if Britain leaves the EU without a deal, Scottish leader Nicola Sturgeon warned yesterday as she pushed for Britain to stay in the European single market.

"There is no option short of EU membership that is as good as being in the EU," First Minister Sturgeon said as she presented an analysis of the economic impact of possible future ties with the bloc.

"This is about degrees of what does the least damage to our economy," she told journalists in the Scottish capital Edinburgh. According to the new analysis, Scotland's GDP would plunge 8.5 percent by 2030 — or 12.7 billion pounds (\$17.5 billion, 14.3 billion euros) — if no deal is reached with Brussels and Britain has to fall back on World Trade Organization rules.

This compares to a 6.1 percent (9.0 billion) fall if a free trade accord is signed with the

bloc, and 2.7 percent (4.0 billion) drop if the UK joins the European Economic Area and therefore stays part of the single market. Sturgeon said the impact study served as "compelling" evidence that Britain should remain part of the single market, if it is not possible to stay an EU member as her Scottish National Party would like.

Scotland backed EU membership by 62 percent in the June 2016 referendum, compared to the overall British vote on 52 percent in favor of Brexit. The SNP has previously pushed for a second referendum on Scottish independence from Britain, as a result of Brexit, and Sturgeon said Sunday a decision on holding another vote would be taken when the shape of the EU deal becomes clearer.

Sturgeon predicted a majority of British lawmakers would support single market membership, despite Prime Minister Theresa May ruling it out largely owing to its condition of continuing free movement of people.

But the Scottish leader argued the EU migration which comes as part of the single market rules is "essential to our future economic prosperity". "Growing our population, and particularly our working age population, is perhaps the greatest national challenge that we face," she said. — AFP

Business

MOODY'S INVESTORS SERVICE RATING OUTLOOK

GCC's 2018 outlook for sovereign creditworthiness remains negative

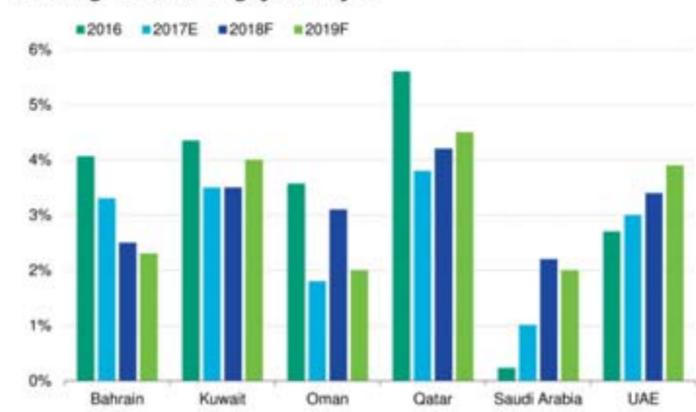
Muted growth, geopolitical tensions and structural challenges

KUWAIT: Our outlook for sovereign creditworthiness in 2018 in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is negative overall, reflecting our expectations for the fundamental credit conditions that will drive sovereign credit over the next 12-18 months. Unlike other regions of the world, higher and more stable global growth will not provide much uplift to the GCC's growth outlook. Although oil prices have risen significantly from their trough in early 2016, most sovereigns in the region will continue to run sizable fiscal deficits and record an increase in their debt burdens. Moreover, long-standing geopolitical event risks have come to the fore again and will play an important role in defining sovereign credit quality in 2018.

Three of the six GCC sovereigns hold negative rating outlooks, while the remaining three have stable outlooks. This marks a slight improvement compared to the start of 2017 when four of the six sovereigns carried negative outlooks, pointing to the likelihood of fewer downward rating adjustments in 2018 compared to 2017. To recap, in 2017, we took negative rating actions on Qatar, Oman and Bahrain. We stabilized the outlooks on Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

Slightly looser fiscal policy will support non-oil growth in GCC economies

Non-oil growth, % change year-on-year



"In late May 2017, we downgraded Qatar (Aa3 negative) by one notch to reflect its weakening external position and uncertainty over the sustainability of the country's growth model. In a follow-up rating action in early July, we changed the outlook to negative from stable in response to the ongoing diplomatic crisis involving Qatar, some of its GCC neighbors, and some other, mostly Arab, countries.

In late May, we stabilized the outlooks on the ratings of the United Arab Emirates (UAE, Aa2 stable) and Abu Dhabi (Aa2 stable), as well as Kuwait (Aa2 stable). This reflects our view that all three were able to withstand the oil price shock and have been able to maintain their credit profiles in a lower-for-longer oil price environment, largely because of their large reserve buffers, but also in light of their ability to effectively implement fiscal and economic reforms.

In late July 2017, we downgraded Oman (Baa2 negative) by one notch due to the country's weaker-than-expected progress towards addressing structural vulnerabilities to a lower oil price environment, reflecting institutional capacity constraints to address large fiscal and external imbalances.

We also downgraded Bahrain (B1 negative) by two notches given the absence of a clear and comprehensive consolidation strategy in light of the unabated sharp deterioration of the sovereign's balance sheet. In particular, we expect the government's debt burden and debt affordability

metrics to undergo a further significant weakening from already very weak levels. The negative outlook reflects continued downside risks related to heightened government and external liquidity risks.

GCC growth will remain muted

We forecast a slight pick-up in GDP growth of close to 2 percent in 2018 for the GCC as a whole. While this will mark an improvement from 2017 (0 percent), aggregate growth will remain well below the average 5 percent per year that had been recorded between 2010 and 2015 given flat production in the hydrocarbon sector and slow recovery in non-oil growth.

Extension of the OPEC+ crude oil production freeze will keep real growth in the hydrocarbon sector flat. In late November 2017, OPEC members and several non-OPEC countries agreed to extend until the end of 2018 a crude oil production freeze originally scheduled to end in March 2018. As a result, and assuming similarly strong compliance as in 2017, crude oil production in the GCC will remain flat throughout 2018 at around 17.4 million barrels per day (mbpd). While some countries in the region, such as Qatar and Oman, will see an up-tick in hydro-

carbon real GDP growth due to an expansion of gas production, the region as a whole will continue to record broadly flat production in the hydrocarbon sector in 2018.

Healthy global growth will have a very limited impact on output in the GCC, given the small share of tradable non-oil sectors in the regional economy overall. On a country-by-country basis, only Bahrain and the UAE have meaningful shares of nonhydrocarbon goods and services exports in relation to the overall size of the economy (averaging between 30 percent and 50 percent of GDP over the past five years for the UAE and more than 50 percent for Bahrain). By comparison, these shares are small for Kuwait and Saudi Arabia at less than 10 percent on average, while Oman and Qatar have shares of 25 percent and 17 percent of GDP, respectively.

Continued fiscal consolidation - albeit more gradual - will keep non-oil growth below historical averages. Growth performance in most GCC countries has been driven by domestic demand over the past few years, and has largely been linked, both directly and indirectly, to fiscal spending. While we believe that the pace of fiscal consolidation will likely slow somewhat, we see very limited potential for a rapid recovery in government consumption and public investment. Moreover, we expect that private consumption will be negatively affected by the introduction of the value-added tax (VAT) in some countries from early 2018.

Faster-than-expected monetary policy normalization in the rest of the world - especially in the US - poses a downside risk to growth. Given the US dollar pegs in all the GCC countries except Kuwait, central banks in the region will continue to follow interest rate moves by the Federal Reserve. A faster increase in borrowing costs than we currently assume would dampen already weak credit growth and limit private-sector growth prospects.

Real GDP growth in the UAE, Qatar and Oman will stay above the regional average, supported by public investment in mega-projects such as Expo 2020, the FIFA World Cup 2022, and stepped-up gas production at the Khazzan gas field, respectively. Bahrain will be the only GCC sovereign whose growth will slow in 2018, while Kuwait and Saudi Arabia will return to positive growth after contractions in 2017.

Growth in Saudi Arabia will recover only slowly. The 0.7 percent contraction in 2017 was mainly driven by reduced crude oil production, while low growth in the non-oil sector highlights the government's challenges in diversifying the Saudi economy.

We expect real GDP to grow by around 1 percent in 2018 and to gradually increase in the following years. The more gradual fiscal consolidation approach, as outlined in the government's 2018 budget, offers some upside to our growth forecasts. "Resilient non-oil-related growth offsets Kuwait's lower hydrocarbon production. Kuwait's average daily oil production fell to around 2.7 mbpd between January and November 2017, which is around 8.5 percent below the level recorded in the previous year. Similar to Saudi Arabia, we expect Kuwait's crude oil production to remain flat in 2018, and forecast that relatively robust non-hydrocarbon sector growth will lift total real GDP growth to 1.6 percent in 2018.

Qatar's economy has been affected by the blockade, but remains relatively resilient. Growth will pick up in 2018 to 2.5 percent from 2 percent in 2017, and will again be driven by the non-hydrocarbon sector. Construction will remain the largest contributor to nonoil growth on the back of the government's sizable investment program, mainly linked to the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Growth effects from the lifting of the self-imposed gas production moratorium in the North Field will only start to materialize from 2020.

Gas production increases and delayed VAT introduction will support Oman's growth in 2018. Although not an OPEC member, Oman is voluntarily participating in the production cuts. However, gas production in the Khazzan field, which started in late September 2017, will offset the negative effect of crude oil production cuts and support real GDP growth in 2018. We expect the Omani economy to expand by 2.7 percent in 2018, with somewhat stronger growth in the non-hydrocarbon sectors due to the delayed VAT implementation.

"Robust non-oil growth to slow in Bahrain. Despite Bahrain's severe fiscal pressures, real GDP growth remained relatively robust in 2017, at an estimated 2.6 percent. The non-hydrocarbon sector continued to be the main growth driver, whereas the hydrocarbon sector has been contracting. In 2018, we expect that the fiscal constraints will bind more clearly. We forecast that real GDP growth will slow to 2 percent in 2018.

Higher oil prices, domestic politics

A stabilization of oil prices at the upper end of our medium-term price range of \$40-\$60 per barrel (see box at the end of the report for more details) could slow the pace of proactive fiscal consolidation given that government revenues will be bolstered. For some GCC sovereigns, domestic political gridlock and social stability considerations are also likely to affect the reform outlook. "No further revenue measures beyond

those announced and implemented so far. GCC countries have introduced a mix of higher fees for government services, adjustments to expat levies, and excise taxes on certain products throughout 2017.

Some governments introduced new property taxation (for instance, Saudi Arabia on unused land). However, there are no plans to change the current structure of direct taxation of income and profits. 8 VAT is the only major non-oil revenue measure, but is too small to change the structural weakness in government revenues, which will remain dominated by oil and gas revenues for most of the GCC sovereigns.

"Revenue diversification will progress only slowly in the coming years. Revenues from

hydrocarbon sources will account for almost 60 percent of GCC-wide government revenues in 2018. While lower than the 80 percent on average between 2010 and 2015, the reduction in revenue dependency on oil and gas shows a mixed picture.

The UAE and Saudi Arabia report the largest decrease, with the share of oil and gas revenues in total government revenues projected to be approximately 30 percentage points lower by 2019 than its 2010-15 average. Bahrain and Qatar, on the other hand, are expected to show the smallest reduction, with shares of around 70 percent, which is only 10-15 percentage points lower than during the period of high oil prices.

Bayt.com Poll

The great majority of Middle East residents feel positive about 2018

DUBAI: With every new year comes a new outlook and a set of goals to be accomplished. A new poll by Bayt.com, the Middle East's leading job site, entitled 'New Year's Resolutions in the Middle East and North Africa,' illustrates a remarkably high morale and optimism amongst professionals in the region coming into 2018. More than four in five (83.9 percent) respondents say they are feeling 'positive' about 2018. 8.7 percent said they have a 'neutral' outlook and only 7.4 percent had a 'negative' one.

On top of that, many professionals in the Middle East are reportedly setting many new goals for the New Year. In fact, 84 percent said they will set New Year's resolutions aimed towards their careers, their relationships, as well as their personal goals.

New careers

Nine in ten (89.2 percent) MENA professionals say they set New Year's resolutions at least some of the time, with 72.2 percent saying they 'always' do. When it came to resolutions for 2018, a large majority (82.5 percent) of respondents are going after a 'career change'. In fact, three quarters (74.6 percent) of respondents said that 'finding a new job' is their main career resolution for the year.

Other career goals included 'learning new skills / pursuing higher education' (9.6 percent), 'getting a salary raise or a promotion' (5.3 percent), 'being more productive' (4.1 percent), 'starting own business' (3.1 percent), 'forming better relationships at work' (1.7 percent), and 'other' career goals (1.6 percent).

Moreover, most MENA professionals have a positive outlook on their job hunt for 2018, with more than nine in 10 of current job seekers saying they 'will find their ideal job' this year. In pursuing the job hunt in 2018, the most important job attribute for a far majority (61.7 percent) of respondents is 'career growth opportunities', followed by a 'competitive salary' (13 percent), 'work-life balance' (11.1 percent), 'learning and training' offerings (7.3 percent), and a 'reputable company brand' (6.9 percent).

"It is inspiring to see that MENA professionals have a very positive attitude towards reaching their goals in the upcoming year, especially in regards to their job search and career growth aspirations," said Suhail Masri,

VP Employer Solutions, Bayt.com. "With three-quarters of respondents searching for new jobs in 2018, we at Bayt.com are excited to help even more professionals fulfill their goals. In 2017, we've successfully posted over 140,000 jobs and facilitated over 1.7 million CV searches and over 1.5 million contacts between employers and job seekers. We look forward to extending our help to more job seekers and to make a greater number of jobs available in 2018 and the years to come."

Personal Growth in 2018

Aside from job-related aspirations, MENA professionals also have ambitious personal goals for 2018. More than half (56.1 percent) of respondents say they mostly want to improve their friendships and relationships, while another quarter (25.3 percent) say they want to improve their finances and spending habits. Improving hobbies and personal interests (6.6 percent), spiritual and religious life (6.5 percent), and health and wellness (5.5 percent) are also among respondents' personal priorities in 2018.

When it came to health and wellness specifically, 80.6 percent of respondents said they will eat healthy food and/or join a gym in 2018. The rest of respondents (19.4 percent) said they are 'already happy' with their health.

In terms of execution, four in five (80.4 percent) MENA professionals say they usually complete their New Year's resolutions with 'careful planning and hard work', while most of the remainder (15.9 percent) say they do so by 'going with the flow and trying different options' to achieve their goals. These approaches have reportedly been largely successful in past years: more than three quarters (78.3 percent) of respondents said they completed at least some of their 2017 New Year's resolutions, with 35.9 percent saying they completed all or most of them.

Data for the 2018 Bayt.com 'New Year's Resolutions in the Middle East and North Africa' poll was collected online from 3 December 2017 to 11 January 2018. Results are based on a sample of 8,849 respondents. Countries that participated include the UAE, Bahrain, Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Tunisia, Qatar, KSA, Yemen, and others.



Suhail Masri

EXCHANGE RATES

Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.724
Indian Rupees	4.761
Pakistani Rupees	2.728
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.960
Nepali Rupees	2.979
Singapore Dollar	229.230
Hongkong Dollar	38.540
Bangladesh Taka	3.621
Philippine Peso	6.005
Thai Baht	9.492

GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	80.047
Qatari Riyal	83.878
Omani Riyal	783.654
Bahraini Dinar	801.250
UAE Dirham	82.180

ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	18.350
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	17.020
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.211
Tunisian Dinar	123.310
Jordanian Dinar	425.320
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.010
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	33.065

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	301.550

Euro	370.760
Sterling Pound	416.140
Canadian dollar	243.680
Turkish lira	80.950
Swiss Franc	34.110
Australian Dollar	241.240
US Dollar Buying	303.350

GOLD

20 Gram	249.070
10 Gram	127.450
5 Gram	64.570

Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	302.100
Canadian Dollar	242.530
Sterling Pound	409.633
Euro	362.965
Swiss Frank	297.145
Bahrain Dinar	803.394
UAE Dirhams	82.651
Qatari Riyals	83.886
Saudi Riyals	81.454
Jordanian Dinar	427.373
Egyptian Pound	17.118
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.966
Indian Rupees	4.743
Pakistani Rupees	2.735
Bangladesh Taka	3.664
Philippines Peso	5.998
Cyprus pound	17.976

Japanese Yen	3.709
Syrian Pound	1.586
Nepalese Rupees	2.946
Malaysian Ringgit	76.278
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.859
Thai Bhat	10.405
Turkish Lira	80.548

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
British Pound	0.408669	0.416169
Czech Korune	0.006423	0.015723
Danish Krone	0.045405	0.050405
Euro	0.363090	0.370590
Georgian Lari	0.134308	0.13308
Hungarian O.001102	0.001292	
Norwegian Krone	0.034097	0.039297
Romanian Leu	0.062327	0.079177
Russian ruble	0.005315	0.005315
Slovakia	0.008967	0.018987
Swedish Krona	0.033746	0.038475
Swiss Franc	0.305849	0.316649

Australia	BUY	SELL
Australian Dollar	0.231567	0.243667
New Zealand Dollar	0.213034	0.222534

America	BUY	SELL
Canadian Dollar	0.236889	0.245899
US Dollars	0.297450	0.301870
US Dollars Mint	0.297950	0.301870

Asia	
Bangladesh Taka	0.003276
Chinese Yuan	0.045398
Hong Kong Dollar	0.038455
Indian Rupee	0.004202
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018
Japanese Yen	0.002640
Korean Won	0.000274
Malaysian Ringgit	0.072358
Nepalese Rupee	0.003009
Pakistan Rupee	0.002553
Philippine Peso	0.005952
Singapore Dollar	0.222830
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001729
Taiwan	0.010102
Thai Baht	0.009092

Arab	
Bahraini Dinar	0.793236
Egyptian Pound	0.014359
Iranian Riyal	0.000083
Iraqi Dinar	0.000197
Jordanian Dinar	0.420703
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000150
Moroccan Dirhams	0.021994
Omani Riyal	0.776929
Qatar Riyal	0.078538
Saudi Riyal	0.079327
Syrian Pound	0.001278
Tunisian Dinar	0.118299
Turkish Lira	0.075183
UAE Dirhams	0.080875
Yemeni Riyal	0.000980

Malabar Gold & Diamonds strengthens its global position as a leading jewellery retailer with 208 outlets; opens 11 showrooms in a day across 6 countries.



Announcement

- The company plans to add 50 more showrooms in 2018
- Malabar Gold & Diamonds plans to expand operations in the United States of America, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Brunei
- 198th showroom: Malabar Gold & Diamonds showroom in Warangal, Telangana, India was inaugurated by Indian film actor Vijay Deverakonda in the presence of Mr. Asher O, Managing Director – India of Malabar Gold & Diamonds, management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds, other dignitaries, well-wishers & guests.
- 199th showroom: MGD – Lifestyle Jewellery outlet in AMK Hub, Singapore was inaugurated by Mrs. Leo Lih Pyng, Lady of Excellence Award Winner 2015 & Mrs Singapore Asia Pacific Award Winner 2016, in the presence of management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds, other dignitaries, well-wishers & guests.
- 200th showroom: Malabar Gold & Diamonds showroom in Al Khail Mall, Dubai, UAE was inaugurated by Mr. MP Ahammed, Chairman of Malabar Group in the presence of management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds, other dignitaries, well-wishers & guests.
- 201st showroom: MGD – Lifestyle Jewellery outlet in Ampang Mall, Malaysia was inaugurated by YB Zuraida Bt Kamaruddin, Zone Parlimen – Ampang, in the presence of management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds, other dignitaries, well-wishers & guests.
- 202nd showroom: MGD – Lifestyle Jewellery outlet in Sahara Centre, Sharjah, UAE was jointly inaugurated by Mr Salish Mathew, Head – Branding and Marketing along with Mr Sakeer Parapurath, Regional Head, Malabar Gold & Diamonds in the presence of management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds, other dignitaries, well-wishers & guests.
- 203rd showroom: Malabar Gold & Diamonds showroom in Lulu Hypermarket, Al Buhairah, Sharjah ; UAE was inaugurated by Mr. Mayinkutty C, Senior Director – Malabar Group in the presence of management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds, other dignitaries, well-wishers & guests.
- 204th showroom: MGD – Lifestyle Jewellery outlet in Muscat City Centre, Oman was inaugurated by Ms. Hujajja Jaifer Al Said, Chairman - Association for the Welfare of the Handicapped Children, in the presence of management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds, other dignitaries, well-wishers & guests.
- 205th showroom: MGD – Lifestyle Jewellery outlet in Mall of Qatar was inaugurated by Sheikh Saleh Bin Abdullah Bin Al Thani in the



presence of management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds, other dignitaries, well-wishers & guests.

- 206th showroom: Malabar Gold & Diamonds showroom in Ajman City Centre, UAE was inaugurated by Mr. KP Abdul Salam, Group Executive Director – Malabar Group, in the presence of management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds, other dignitaries, well-wishers & guests.
- 207th showroom: MGD – Lifestyle Jewellery outlet in Lagoona Mall, Qatar was inaugurated by Sheikh Thani Ahamed Ali Al Thani in the presence of management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds, other dignitaries, well-wishers & guests.
- 208th showroom: Malabar Gold & Diamonds showroom in Lulu Hypermarket, Al Hazana, Sharjah, UAE was inaugurated by Bollywood actor Anil Kapoor in presence of Mr. MP Ahammed, Chairman – Malabar Group, Mr. Shamlal Ahamed MP, Managing Director - International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Mr. KP Abdul Salam, Group Executive Director – Malabar Group, Mr. Mayinkutty C, Senior Director – Malabar Group; Directors and management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds, other dignitaries, well-wishers & guests.

Dubai

Malabar Gold & Diamonds, one among the BIG 5 jewellery retailers globally, opened 11 new showrooms across six countries in one single day – Friday, January 12, 2018 taking the total number of outlets to 208 spread across nine countries. Bollywood actor Anil Kapoor inaugurated the outlet in Lulu Hazana, Sharjah,

UAE in presence of Mr. MP Ahammed, Chairman – Malabar Group, Mr. Shamlal Ahamed MP, Managing Director - International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Mr. KP Abdul Salam, Group Executive Director – Malabar Group, Mr. Mayinkutty C, Senior Director – Malabar Group; Directors and management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds, other dignitaries, well-wishers & guests. He also attended the event celebrating the successful journey of opening 200 showrooms worldwide.

This is for the first time that an Indian jewellery retailer has been opening such a large number of showrooms spread across six nations in a single day.

The new showrooms are located in Al Khail Mall, Sahara Centre, Al Buhaira Lulu, Ajman City Centre, Al Hazana Lulu in the UAE, Mall of Qatar, Lagoona Mall in Qatar, Muscat City Centre in Oman, AMK Hub in Singapore, Ampang Mall in Malaysia, and Warrangal in Telangana, India.

"We are getting wide acceptance in the global market place. Our core business values such as adherence to transparency, honesty, quality along with our value added services, product designs that suited to every class of customers' taste cutting across age group are the key factors that give us global acceptance. In 2018, we will be opening more showrooms as well as manufacturing units. This will fuel our vision to become the top jewellery retailer in the world." Said MP Ahammed, Chairman of Malabar Group.

The upcoming showrooms of the group are at Abbasiya (Kuwait), Mannarkad, Mall of

Travancore (Kerala), Forum Mall – Bangalore (Karnataka), Himayat Nagar - Hyderabad, Kondapur - Hyderabad, Karim Nagar (Telangana), Noida (UP), South Extension (Delhi), Vashi - Mumbai, Thane – Mumbai, Kolhapur (Maharashtra), Rajkot, Surat (Gujarat) and Ludhiana (Punjab).

Malabar Group believes that the most successful companies are those which integrate sustainability into their core business. The group is always proactive when it comes to CSR activities right from the inception. The key focus areas of the CSR initiatives of Malabar Group are in the areas of Health, Education, Women Empowerment, Housing and Environment. The organization has kept aside 5% of its profit for the CSR activities in all the regions that they operate. The group, which currently has showrooms across GCC, India, Malaysia and Singapore undertakes several welfare activities with the association of like-minded organizations in the respective regions. Editor's Note

Malabar Gold & Diamonds is the flagship company of Malabar Group, a leading diversified Indian business conglomerate.

Established in 1993 in the Indian state of Kerala, Malabar Gold & Diamonds today has a strong retail network of over 200 outlets spread across nine countries, 13 wholesale units in addition to offices, design centers and factories spread across India, Middle East & Far East. With an annual turnover of \$4.5 billion, the company currently ranks among the BIG 5 jewellery retailers globally.

With 11 cluster manufacturing units in India and GCC – the company currently has 9 jewellery brands to cater to the discerning needs of customers. With headquarters in Kerala and branches across India, Middle East & Far East, Malabar Group is best known for its activities in the field of gold, diamonds, silver and lifestyle articles.

The group also operates MGD – Lifestyle Jewellery, a retail concept offering trendy and light weight jewellery that represents the independent and the modern woman through its designs and collections.

The group, owned by over 1,700 shareholders excels in quality products and services, has more than 12,000 professionals working for its continued success.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds also features an online store – www.malabargoldanddiamonds.com providing customers the opportunity to purchase their favourite jewellery any time and on any day from the comfort of their home.

Business

Euro hits 3-year high as Europe leads optimism

LONDON: The euro shot to a three-year high yesterday as optimism around growth buoyed expectations of tighter monetary policy from European Central Bank, while the chance of a pro-European Union coalition in Germany also boosted confidence in the continent.

With the world in general and Europe in particular showing signs of sustained economic growth, global stock benchmarks jumped to new highs, even though investors are now pricing in the withdrawal of central banks' stimulus. That view was given further fuel last week by an account of ECB discussions that suggested policymakers may soon start preparing the ground for a reduction in support.

The single currency climbed as much as 0.8 percent to \$1.22965 at one stage yesterday, a price last seen in December 2014, just before the ECB first announced its government bond purchase program.

In addition, Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda offered a positive view on his nation's economy and inflation yesterday, sending the yen to a four-month high against the dollar.

"The latest leg up in the euro has clearly come from optimism that the German government is moving towards an agreement for a coalition government," said Investec economist Victoria Clarke.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel's CDU party and the Social Democrats (SPD) are moving towards formal coalition talks, soothing concerns around Europe's largest economy. The SPD's pro-European stance - leader Martin Schulz recently argued for a "United States of Europe" - also strengthens the case for investment in the euro.

"This follows an earlier move triggered by the crucial line in the ECB account which has got people thinking

about when the first move on rates will happen," said Clarke.

Euro zone money markets now price in a 70 percent chance of a 10-basis-point rate increase by the ECB by the end of the year, up from 50 percent a week before. The strength in the euro pushed European stocks a touch lower, as exporters were hit by the currency strength. An index of pan-European stocks was down 0.1 percent on the day, but still not far from multi-year high hit last week.

The slight decline comes in the wider context of boom for stocks so far in 2018, as investors bask in strong growth numbers from most of the world's largest economies.

MSCI's all-country index of world stocks soared to new records overnight and MSCI's Asia ex-Japan index breached its 2007 high for the first time to set a new all-time record.

Stocks in Hong Kong jumped 0.9 percent from Friday's record closing high. Investors were optimistic that Chinese gross domestic product data for the December quarter due on Thursday would show growth of at least 6.7 percent for the world's second-biggest economy.

The momentum of global economic growth through the closing months of last year is being underlined by the early stages of the fourth-quarter earnings season. Earnings for S&P 500 companies are expected to increase on average by 12.1 percent in the quarter, with profit for financial services companies likely to increase 13.2 percent, according to Thomson Reuters I/B/E/S.

Wall Street stocks set records on Friday and looked set to rise again, with US stock futures up 0.1 percent, but US markets will be mostly closed on Monday for the Martin Luther King Day holiday. —Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report						
Monday January 15, 2018						
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	Volume	Value (KWD)	Number of Trades
Price Index	▲ 19.66	6,626.60	6,606.94	155,063,210	17,223,719	5,263
Weighted Index	▲ 1.85	420.34	418.49			
KXSX 15	▲ 6.99	972.34	965.35			

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KWD)	Trades	Last	Change
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	480	▲ 0.0
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	795	▲ 0.0
ENERGYH	29.5	29.0	5,100	148	3	29.5	▼ -1.5
GPI	32.8	31.9	2,607,359	84,092	87	32.5	▲ 0.7
ABAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	70	▲ 0.0
Oil & Gas			2,612,459	84,240	90	1000.02	▼ -0.0
KFOUC	228	212	30,304	6,876	11	228	▼ -1.0
BPCO	773	745	221,875	165,378	18	764	▼ -11.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	630	▲ 0.0
ALQURAN	360	361	748,083	266,577	77	369	▲ 8.0
Basic Materials			1,500,262	438,831	106	1335.11	▲ 4.70
KCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	472	▲ 0.0
CABLE	457	450	57,190	25,945	12	451	▼ -7.0
SHIP	208	205	194,350	40,162	26	208	▲ 0.0
PCEM	985	985	2,000	1,970	2	985	▲ 0.0
PAPER	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250	▲ 0.0
MRC	70	70	2,000	140	4	70	▼ -5.0
ACICO	250	250	20,000	5,000	1	250	▼ -8.0
HCC	153	125	18,010	2,252	2	153	▼ -3.0
NCBM	195	188	10,742	2,092	5	188	▼ -7.0
EQUIPMENT	42.0	40.0	728,140	29,681	24	40.8	▼ -0.2
NOCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	▲ 0.0
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	▲ 0.0
SALBOOH	58	53	3,242	173	5	57	▲ 3.5
ADLY	878	862	257,168	223,360	57	871	▼ -1.0
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	300	▲ 0.0
CLEANING	89	60	1,422,243	88,744	85	62	▼ -2.1
KDL	90	87	7,120,017	643,510	108	90	▲ 15.0
KCPK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	143	▲ 0.0
HUMANISOFT	3,900	3,850	109,375	425,167	11	3,900	▲ 101.0
NAFAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	880	▲ 0.0
GFC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	71	▲ 0.0
SHOOTING	23.1	19.5	237,859	4,848	21	21.4	▼ -2.5
CGC	474	470	898	422	2	470	▲ 0.0
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56	▲ 0.0
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	612	▲ 0.0
ALAFKO	377	374	123,265	46,221	15	376	▲ 0.0
MUBARRAD	73	70	404,817	28,749	28	72	▲ 1.4
LOGISTICS	70	62	24,988,784	1,630,289	754	65	▲ 8.2
SCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	▲ 0.0
GCEM	85	85	550	47	2	85	▼ -0.1
OIC	70	70	3	0	1	70	▼ -1.9
FCEM	78	78	80,000	6,240	2	78	▼ -2.0
RWCV	85	72	18,589	1,455	8	74	▲ 1.8
SPEC	72	70	99,300	7,001	25	72	▲ 1.0
Industrials			35,899,822	3,213,467	1,200	1894.91	▲ 18.60
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	84	▲ 0.0
CATL	227	228	13,607	3,076	8	226	▼ -1.0
DANAH	72	67	520,728	35,814	27	69	▼ -2.7
FOOD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,055	▲ 0.0
Consumer Goods			534,338	38,890	36	813.37	▼ -8.50
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,100	▲ 0.0
YACO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	175	▲ 0.0
Health Care			0	0	0	1910.51	▲ 0.00
KCIN	1,130	1,050	32	36	4	1,130	▲ 30
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	246	▲ 0
SULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	67	▲ 0
CABLETV	22.0	18.0	1,001	18	2	22.0	▲ 4
IFHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	204	▲ 0
OUAFUEL	115	113	115,857	13,154	20	113	▼ -2
MUNTAZAHAT	75	72	210	16	3	75	▲ 0
JAZEERA	660	650	38,245	25,029	9	660	▲ 0
SOOR	114	114	26,973	3,075	10	114	▲ 0
FUTUREKID	111	111	12,000	1,332	1	111	▲ 0
ALRAI	115	115	20,000	2,300	1	115	▼ -2
Jyad	100	93	2,340,681	229,032	186	100	▲ 2
Mazzan	793	790	117,250	92,673	27	790	▼ -3
Consumer Services			2,872,249	368,664	265	920.52	▲ 2.79
ZAIN	502	487	6,842,589	3,495,504	314	500	▲ 13
OOREDOO	1,130	1,080	7,434	8,064	16	1,126	▲ 11
AAN	30.5	30.0	1,380,425	41,651	39	30.5	▲ 0
VIVA	780	778	66,297	51,630	30	780	▲ 1
Telecommunications			8,296,745	2,507,868	399	879.78	▲ 5.40
NBK	781	772	1,945,492	1,513,387	167	780	▲ 7
GBK	240	237	1,313,970	313,497	37	239	▲ 1
CBK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400	▲ 0
ABK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	319	▲ 0
ALMUTAHED	358	349	266,515	93,511	29	352	▼ -3
KIB	238	236	1,122,100	269,309	48	237	▲ 1
BURG	325	322	471,368	152,602	24	323	▼ -1
KFIN	609	605	2,093,171	1,268,959	158	607	▲ 3
BOUBYAN	454	458	522,983	241,115	42	460	▼ -3
AUB	210	208	795,850	166,225	41	210	▲ 1
ITMHR	55	49.5	21,297,100	1,114,549	390	52	▲ 3
WARSABANK	228	226	1,584,376	360,587	95	227	▲ 0
Banks			31,413,925	5,490,931	1,051	961.78	▲ 6.60
KINS	267	267	15,000	4,005	2	267	▲ 7
GINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	650	▲ 0.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	425	▲ 0.0
WINS	65	62	34,175	2,150	12	65	▲ 1.0
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	192	▲ 0.0
FTI	64	64	500	32	1	64	▼ -2.0
WETHAQ	41.0	40.0	35,000	1,410	2	40.0	▼ -1.5
BKQWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	▲ 0.0
Insurance			84,675	7,587	17	1013.31	▼ -4.70

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KWD)	Trades	Last	Change
SOKOUK	53	51	4377458	227,167	94	53	▲ 1.5
KRE	60	58	2,821,561	153,909	58	60	▲ 0.3
URC	77	70	31,131	2,227	12	73	▼ -1.0
NRE	125	118	90,579	11,003	12	124	▲ 4.0
SRE	340	340	31,590	10,741	5	340	▼ -8.0
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400	▲ 0.0
AREEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	176	▲ 0.0
MASSALEH	41.0	41.0	100	4	1	41.0	▲ 1.0
ARABREC	34.0	32.8	1,615,099	53,539	51	33.8	▼ -0.4
ERESCO	37.5	36.4	1,043,092	38,509	21	37.2	▲ 0.4
MABANEE	740	737	301,960	223,136	36	739	▼ -1.0
INJAZZAT	82	78	10,601	829	6	82	▲ 2.4
INVESTORS	18.5	18.0	10,760,300	195,303	138	18.2	▲ 0.2
IRC	31.0	29.0	71,600	2,085	7	29.1	▼ -1.8
ALTUARIA	93	93	155,616	14,472	8	93	▼ -1.0
SANAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	35.0	▲ 0.0
AAYANRE	74	73	95,000	7,000	7	73	▼ -0.9
AQAR	70	70	23,220	1,625	1	70	▲ 0.0
ALADARIA	34.0	32.0	13,400	431	4	34.0	▼ -3.0
MAZAYA	114	112	1,077,055	121,757	19	114	▲ 0.0
TUARA	54	50	22,107	1,105	3	50	▼ -3.0
TAAEER	33.3	31.5	46,100	1,480	5	33.3	▼ -1.1
ARKAN	83	83	64,539	5,344	3	83	▼ -1.0
ARFAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	181	▲ 0.0
ABYAR	23.8	22.9	5,507,980	127,696	112	23.3	▲ 0.4
MUNSHAAT	80	75	694,000	50,731	27	79	▲ 4.8
FIRSTDUBAI	47.9	44.0	492,700	22,131	18	45.0	▲ 0.0
KBT	46.4	45.2	922,529	42,057	51	46.2	▲ 0.2
REAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	590	▲ 0.0
MENA	22.3	20.6	3,698,149	80,009	111	21.3	

Business

Turkish Airlines performed well beyond expectations in 2017

Turkish Airlines achieves highest load factor in December with 79.7%

KUWAIT: Turkish Airlines has completed the year 2017 with a great success. The number of passengers in 2017 compared to previous year was increased of 9.3 percent and the flag carrier carried 68.6 million passengers. Compared to the previous year the load factor reached 79.1 percent by increasing 4.7 points. The flag carrier has reached highest December load factor rate with 79.5 percent in the last month of 2017 in its history.

Chairman of the Board and the Executive Committee of Turkish Airlines M Ilker Ayci had gave the first signal of the global carrier's proven success at the end of 2017, in January 2017 and Ilker Ayci had stated that: "We believe that 2017 year will be much better year than 2016. We made our plans and savings accordingly. We are analyzing the conditions of our home country, our region, our industry, the developments and trends in aviation and tourism sector. I believe that we will complete 2017 successfully and Turkish Airlines will complete the year with increased power, brand value and market share once again".

Announced by Turkish Airlines; Evaluation of December 2017 Traffic Results:

* Total Load Factor improved by 5.1 points to 79.7 percent with an increase of 8.9 percent in Available Seat Kilometer, while international L.F increased by 5 points to 79.2 percent. Domestic and International flights have reached the highest L.F of Turkish Airlines history.



* Double-digit growth in demand (revenue per kilometer) that commenced in July, kept on with 16.3 percent demand growth.

* Total number of passengers carried went up by 21.4 percent reaching 5.5 million passengers. Compared to December 2015, number of passengers carried and demand increased by 17 percent.

* Excluding international-to-international

transfer passengers (transit passengers), number of international passengers went up by 39 percent.

* In December, cargo/mail volume increased by 18.4 percent, compared to December 2016. Main contributors to the growth in cargo/mail volume, are Middle East with 28.7 percent increase and Europe with 24 percent increase.

* In December, Load Factor increased for all regions. Middle East, North America and Africa showed visible growth among other regions with 7.1 points, 6.8 points and 5.6 points increase, respectively.

Evaluation of January-December 2017 Traffic Results:

* During January-December, increase in demand and total number of passengers was 7.9 percent and 9.3 percent, respectively, over the same period of last year. Total number of passengers reached to 68.6 million.

* During January-December, total Load Factor improved by 4.7 points up to 79.1 percent, while international Load Factor increased by 5 points, up to 78.4 percent.



Gulf Bank announces winners of Al-Danah daily draws

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held its Al-Danah daily draws on 14 January 2018 announcing the names of its winners for the week of 7 January - 11 January 2018. The Al-Danah daily draws include draws every working day for two prizes of KD 1,000 per winner.



The winners are:
(Sunday 07/01): Mohammed Hamid Mohammed Al-Maqseed, Sharif Loutfi Al-Seba'i Shahata
(Monday 08/01): Abdullah Ali Abdulredha Bakhs, Lulwa Nasser Ghaleb Ali
(Tuesday 09/01): Ayman Khaled Najem Ali, Nabeel Mohammed Roudhan Al-Roudhan
(Wednesday 10/01): Amna Mohammed Abdullah Al-Awadhi, Adnan Abdulkareem Hussain Al-Yahya
(Thursday 11/01): Dana Khaled Ahmad Akasha, Tamer Al-Sayed Abdulazzeem Shabaan
Gulf Bank's Al-Danah 2018 draw lineup includes daily draws (2 winners per working

day each receive KD1000). Al-Danah's 1st quarterly draw for the prize of KD 200,000 will be held on 28 March, the 2nd Quarterly draw for the prize of KD 250,000 will be held on 27 June and the 3rd quarterly draw for the prize of KD 500,000 will be held on 26 September. The final Al-Danah draw for KD 1 million will be held on 10 January, 2019 where-by the Al-Danah millionaire will be announced.

Gulf Bank encourages you to increase your chances by depositing more into your Al-Danah account, immediately from any local bank, using the new ePay (Self-Pay) service, which is available on Gulf Bank's Online and Mobile Banking.

Five reasons why the Al-Danah account is the best:

- 1) Kuwait's single biggest yearly cash prize of KD 1 million and the largest international bank prize according to Guinness World Records
- 2) Kuwait's biggest quarterly cash prizes, up to KD500,000
- 3) Two winners of KD1,000 every working day
- 4) The most chances to win
- 5) Only Bank that transfers your chances to win from the previous year to the current year

Only Al-Danah makes millionaires. Al-Danah also offers a number of unique services including: the Al-Danah Deposit Only ATM card which helps account holders deposit their money at their convenience; as well as the Al-Danah calculator to help customers calculate their chances of becoming an Al-Danah winner.

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account is open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. Customers require a minimum of KD 200 to open an account and the same amount must be maintained as for customers to be eligible for the upcoming Al-Danah draws. If the customer's account balance falls below KD200 at any given time, a KD2 charge will be made on a monthly basis to the account until the minimum balance is met. Customers who open an account and/ or deposit more will enter the daily draw within two days.

Lufthansa offers new and improved services for their lounge guests

FRANKFURT: With a large number of new and improved service offerings, Lufthansa wants to make the stay in the lounges as pleasant and entertaining as possible for their guests. Adaptable to content of the respective lounge location, LoungeNet is a free of charge platform exclusively accessible for guests providing general information on the forthcoming trip, such as airport information and current flight status. In addition, the website also updates its discerning guests on special offers from the airline and partners for a tailored experience. For example, Lufthansa guests can download eJournals at no charge or view information on collecting and redeeming miles at Miles & More. In the "LoungeNet News" section, guests are informed about new products and offers in the lounges, such as the opening of new lounges or offerings in the spa facilities.

Lufthansa LoungeNet has also collaborated with TINTYOGA.com, a multilingual yoga website that brings together the world's leading teachers on a single platform. All lounge guests have access to yoga relaxation exercises via the LoungeNet, which are adapted to the conditions in the lounge. Through a link the guests can watch practical application videos for neck and back pain as well as exercises to prevent jetlag which can easily be replicated in an armchair of the lounge.

In cooperation with Konica Minolta, Lufthansa has been offering a free print and copy service in all lounges in Frankfurt and Munich for several months now. Lounge guests can send their documents to print@lh-lounge.de and in return receive a PIN code with which they can initiate printing on the respective printer in the lounge. This service has been available in all lounges in Germany since last November which is soon to be available in the Middle East and other markets.

Furthermore, business travelers with a lay-over in Frankfurt will have access to the spa service in the Senator- and First-Class-Lounge in the departure area B. The spa, run by the CHIMAS Institute provides special offers on treatments such as manicure, pedicure, facials and various massages including hot stone, sports, head and the traditional Thai massage for travelers who want to relax and need a little "break".



KFH honors Golden Club members for service excellence

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House Group CEO, Mazin Al-Nahedh has honored members of the Golden Service Excellence Club in recognition of their outstanding performance and achievement in obtaining the full mark for all-year-round service excellence appraisal.

He expressed his thanks to employees for their efforts and performance throughout a full year, during which they succeeded in maintaining their outstanding performance

level in service excellence, thus obtaining highest appraisals. Their recognition confirms their high professionalism and endeavor to provide their best performance in the interest of KFH and its customers, nevertheless, it proves their continued perseverance to develop and enhance their performance based on the highest service excellence standards.

Al-Nahedh also urged the honorees to set an example to their colleagues and provide

them with all the support they need to strengthen KFH's positive standing and upgrade collaboration amongst staff to develop the one team spirit. He affirmed KFH's emphasis on customer service by extending needed support to human resources and their roles despite the great technological strides in various fields.

The honoring ceremony was attended by Group Chief Strategy Officer Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem, Group Chief Retail and Private Banking Officer Waleed Mandani, Group General Manager Retail Banking Fadi Chalouhi, Executive Manager Group Service Excellence and Innovation Houssam Al-Khatib, in addition to team members of the executive management for branches and showrooms.



KUWAIT: Al-Nahedh and Executive Management with Golden Club members.

New Ram pickup notches win for steel in US truck market

DETROIT: Fiat Chrysler Automobiles NV yesterday unveiled a redesigned Ram large pickup that along with General Motors Co's new Chevrolet Silverado, which debuted on Saturday, sealed a double victory for the steel industry's fight to remain the dominant metal in the auto market.

The 2019 Ram is made mostly of "real steel." Michael Manley, head of the global Ram and Jeep brands for Fiat Chrysler, told reporters at a briefing ahead of the official debut of the truck at the Detroit Auto Show. The new Silverado also is made mostly of steel, including a high-strength steel cargo box, unlike the top-selling US pickup truck, Ford Motor Co's F-150, which has a body and cargo box made of aluminum.

Ford jolted the industry in December 2014 when it launched the current generation F-150 with an all-aluminum body. Ford's F-series trucks represented the largest-scale use of aluminum in a high-volume vehicle, and required technological risk-taking at a level rarely seen among the Detroit automakers. The aluminum F-150 was up to 700 pounds (318 kg) lighter than the previous steel model, and delivered an 11-percent improvement in combined city and highway fuel economy - a substantial boost for Ford's effort to meet escalating federal fuel efficiency targets.

However, it came at a cost. Rolled steel costs around \$800 per ton, while aluminum is more than \$2,000 per ton, estimated metals industry analyst Charles Bradford of Bradford Research. The high-strength steels used in the new Ram and Silverado cost more than standard steel alloys, but still have the price edge over aluminum, he said.

The auto show, officially called the North American International Auto Show, opened to media on Sunday and runs until Jan. 28.

Low gas prices

Since the aluminum F-150's launch, U.S. auto executives have come to a consensus that U.S. gasoline prices will be stable for the long haul. In that environment, Ford's rivals

chose to stick with steel, and aim for higher profit margins. The automakers are lobbying the Trump administration for changes to federal Corporate Average Fuel Economy, or CAFE, targets that would make it easier for trucks to comply.

"CAFE standards have been driving much of the shift to aluminum and the Trump administration has really backed off those," Bill Hickey, president of Chicago-based Latham-Hickey Steel, which has seven steel processing plants in the Midwest and Northeast.

Fiat Chrysler is taking steps to improve the fuel efficiency of the 2019 Ram over the current model, which is rated at 20 miles per gallon in combined city and highway driving. The new Ram is more aerodynamic than its predecessor, and will offer a 48-volt hybrid system on most gasoline versions, one of the highest-volume uses of such technology yet. When accelerating from a stop, the hybrid system will use electricity to launch the vehicle before the gasoline engine kicks in.

The 2019 Ram is wider than the current model and has a 4-inch longer wheelbase. Passengers get more leg room and Fiat Chrysler benefits from federal fuel economy rules that set lower mileage targets for wider, longer vehicles, company officials said. GM's new Silverado's wheelbase is also stretched by four inches compared to the current model, and can carry more in the back. GM executives on Saturday said it will nonetheless it is 450 pounds lighter, and will be more efficient.

GM is taking between 200 and 500 pounds out of all its new models using a mix

of materials, including high strength steel, and redesigning parts to reduce weight, said Mark Reuss, head of the automaker's global product development. "That's a great formula without charging all kinds of money for materials that people don't care about," he said after the official debut of the 2019 Silverado in Detroit on Saturday.

GM and Fiat Chrysler together sold about 1.3 million large pickup trucks in 2017, and the Silverado and Ram are respectively the second- and third best-selling model lines in the United States. Fiat Chrysler identified its steel suppliers as AK Steel, Nucor Corp and Arcelor Mittal. The auto industry accounts for about two-thirds of sales for AK Steel, and trucks and sport utility vehicles accounted for about three-fourths of those automotive sales, spokeswoman Lisa Jester wrote in an email. She declined to comment on specific customers.

Fiat Chrysler engineers said using high-strength steel in the new Ram's frame and body helped cut a total of 225 pounds (102 kg) from the vehicle's weight, or about a 4 percent reduction compared with the outgoing model. The new Ram has some aluminum parts, including the tailgate and certain components such as engine mounts and elements of the suspension.

Cutting weight makes more room to boost payload, and add luxury features to increase revenue per truck, such as an optional 12-inch touch screen to control entertainment and other features, and optional "barnwood" accents in the interior of the Western-themed Longhorn model. — Reuters

CBK upgrades security at all its ATMs

KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) updated all its ATMs using the most sophisticated security standards to ward off possible fraud and theft of clients' information. The bank has become the first bank in Kuwait to use this new security technology.

In this regard, CBK's assistant manager for individual banking services, Hameed Ibrahim Salman said that the new update was part of CBK's policy in using the latest technologies and highest security standards on all the

bank's ATMs and e-channels.

He added that that update process was executed in collaboration with NCR International which uses the Skimming Protection Solution, which is a feature that jams data theft devices, the Hard Desk Encryption technology and the Remote Bios Update to update the ATMs software and prevent hacking.

Salman added that the new technologies were used in response to the Central Bank's instructions to all banks to apply strict security measures on all ATMs within a stipulated time-schedule.



Hameed Ibrahim Salman

Technology

Man's best friend goes high tech at gadget fest

Devices that can improve the lives of animals

LAS VEGAS: Technology is going to the dogs. And to cats and horses, for that matter, as high-end gadgetry showcased at this week's Consumer Electronics Show offered ways that smart devices can improve the lives of animals and their human friends—starting with a good night's rest. US-based Petrics was at the show with what it billed as the first pet smart bed, capable of keeping tabs on their weight and time spent lounging.

The soon-to-be-released bed cools or warms to provide comfy temperatures for naps, and synchronizes to activity trackers that monitor how much exercise they are getting so that owners get a complete daily report. An array of firms meanwhile showed off wearable devices to monitor pets on the move, aiming to consign neighborhood "lost" posters to history.

Among them was Whistle, which is up to a third-generation device equipped with GPS and mobile network capabilities. Custom "safe zones" can be set up around a home and if pets wander out-of-bounds their humans will get smartphone messages allowing them to pinpoint where their pooch, or kitty, is on the map. "If your pet gets out they can be missing for hours or days," said Whistle spokesperson Heather Wajer. "You can put up posters around the neighborhood and search for them, or you can just look at your phone and see where they are."

Fido calls home

Leaving your pet behind at home can cause anxiety both for humans and their animals. While home cameras that can stream feeds via the internet have been around for some time, Petcube has improved on the basic concept by introducing "smart" elements. With the help of artificial intelligence, pets movements in front of its camera will trigger a video call to their human's phone as well as a preview "pet selfie" clip. Its device also comes with laser pointers allowing people to remotely play with their furry

friends if they're getting bored, and even reward good behavior by firing off treats during calls.

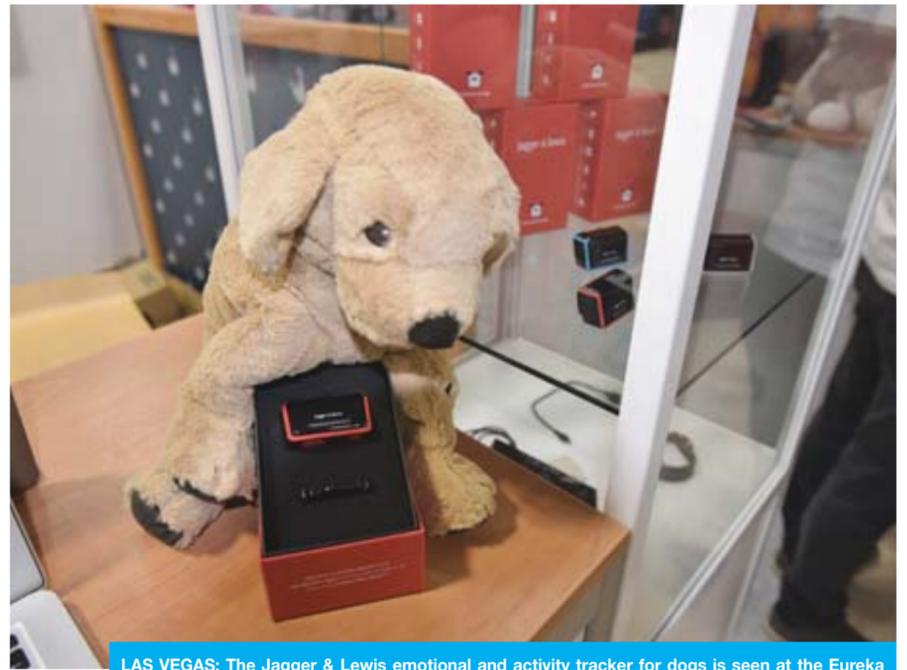
Petcube co-founder and chief executive Yaroslav Azhnyuk estimated that 40 million households will use connected pet devices by the year 2022. Meanwhile, start-up Pebby is working on a "smart robotic ball" with built-in camera, wi-fi, Bluetooth and laser pointer capabilities, affording more opportunities to play remotely.

Taking care of kitty's business

Cleaning your feline friend's litter box is an unpleasant but necessary task, unless you (and house guests) are prepared to stomach a strong stench. Now, though, automated boxes are at hand that use sensors to detect when the animal enters and leaves the unit, before giving the litter time to clump, then sifting through it and depositing the waste into a carbon-filtered drawer. Litter-Robot sales hit new highs on Black Friday and Cyber Monday due to the release of a smartphone application that gets data about kitty's daily visits to the feline loo, according to founder Brad Baxter.

When animals left home alone need to get outside to take care of business, they can now do so through PetWALK pet doors—sturdy barriers that are more secure and airtight than flaps, and are automatically triggered by RFID pendants. French saddle maker CWD meanwhile was at CES with what it billed as the first smart saddle tailored for the equestrian sport of jumping.

Technology in saddles gathers data about stride, approach, recovery and more, then sends it to smartphones and pairs it with video so riders can improve performance, research and development engineer Camille Hebert told AFP. CWD has partnered with French start-up Arioneo to weave in an "iPulse" strap that adds data about a horse's heart rate. "Everything in our lives is smart," said Whistle's Wajer. "If technology can help make our pets lives better, than that is fantastic." —AFP



LAS VEGAS: The Jagger & Lewis emotional and activity tracker for dogs is seen at the Eureka Park startups area during CES 2018. —AFP

Facebook news feed update makes your friends a priority

LAS VEGAS: Facebook on Thursday announced a major update that will put friends and family above pages or celebrities in a user's news feed—and likely result in people spending less time on the leading social network. The change to the way Facebook ranks posts will put more weight on social interactions and relationships, according to News Feed product manager John Hegeman. "This is a big change," Hegeman told AFP. "People will actually spend less time on Facebook, but we feel good about that because it will make the time they do spend more valuable, and be good for our business in the end."

For example, a family video clip posted by a spouse will be deemed more worthy of attention than a snippet from a star or favorite restaurant. "We think people interaction is more important than passively consuming content," Hegeman said. "This will be one of the more important updates that we have made." Facebook co-founder and chief Mark Zuckerberg has said that bringing people together and strengthening communities in the real world are priorities. The news feed ranking update, which is set to roll out globally in the coming weeks, is expected to support that goal.

"As we roll this out, you'll see less public content like posts from businesses, brands, and media," Zuckerberg said in a post at his Facebook page. "And the public content you see more will be held to the same standard—it should encourage meaningful interactions between people." Google, Twitter and Facebook have come under fire for allowing the spread of bogus news—some of which was directed by Russia—ahead of the 2016 US election and in other countries. Facebook has introduced a series of changes intended to address the problem.

"We are doing a ton of work to reduce the frequency of bad content on Facebook," Hegeman said. "This update is more about amplifying the things people value." He cited academic research indicating that interacting with loved ones is crucial to a person's wellbeing, while reading news articles or watching shared videos may not be. "There is really no silver bullet here to determine what is most meaningful, but we are trying to mine the signals to get the best representation that we can," Hegeman said.

Known for setting annual personal goals ranging from killing his own food to learning Mandarin, Zuckerberg's stated mission for this year is to "fix" the social network, including by targeting abuse and hate, and making sure visiting Facebook is time well spent. "I'm changing the goal I give our product teams from focusing on helping you find relevant content to helping you have more meaningful social interactions," Zuckerberg said Thursday. —AFP

Why the HUAWEI Mate 10 Series are the best phones for your business

Your smartphone is your window to the world. It can do a lot for you: it helps you connect with your clients, check your emails, do your work, check your social media channels, and a lot more! As you kick start the year 2018, all you need is a strong drive and a powerful phone, and nothing will stand in your way! Here are 10 reasons why the HUAWEI Mate 10 Series smartphones are the best devices for your business!

1. They think like humans!

No need for a PA anymore! The HUAWEI Mate 10 Series smartphones are powered by Huawei's powerful Kirin 970, the first-of-its-kind processor in the world supported by artificial intelligence. The smartphones also boast a dedicated NPU. The NPU is the new brain of the smartphones, enabling them to think more like human beings: it also allows the devices to run 25 times better than a standard CPU. Besides the exciting artificial intelligence capabilities, the NPU is constantly working in the background to keep everything on the Mate 10 Series smartphones working smoothly. This makes the phones super-efficient and incredibly fast - setting out a new standard of what business users should expect from a smartphone.

2. A visual experience like no other!

The HUAWEI Mate 10 Series feature a large display with minimal bezels, which makes your visual experience amazing! Easy on the eyes, they allow you to check documents, read long emails and watch videos as they provide high-quality imagery. Despite their glass design, the Mate 10 Series smartphones feel secure in the hand and are less slippery than other smartphones; they can survive rain and water thanks to their IP67 rating!

3. They won't let you down on battery!

There's nothing worse than having to start an important phone call with "Sorry, I will call you later, my battery is dying on me!" When you're on the move all day long with a smartphone in your hand, poor battery life is more than just an inconvenience. The HUAWEI Mate 10 Series smartphones come with a massive 4,000 mAh battery and the innovative Huawei Super Charge technology, which supports heavy usage: in just 30 minutes, you can power up your phone for two days of productivity!

4. The smartphones get to know you with time!

Equipped with Huawei's EMUI 8.0, the HUAWEI Mate 10 Series smartphones stay fast a year or two down the line when you first bought them. Boasting the intuitive EMUI 8.0, they are fast and responsive; with time, they learn your behavior and can predict the apps you use the most, which helps you save time and do your tasks more quickly and efficiently.

5. They can replace your laptop!

When you're on the move, you can easily use your HUAWEI Mate 10 Series smartphones as a full-fledged



desktop. By plugging them into an HDMI adapter, you can rotate the screen in landscape mode (HUAWEI Mate 10 Pro only) and start working; apps will automatically move to column-split mode, and you can multitask and shift between different accounts and apps without your smartphone freezing or dying on you.

6. One smartphone, two lines!

When you're on a business trip, you surely need a local line to do your calls and send texts. The HUAWEI Mate 10 Series smartphones are dual-SIM devices that make it easier for you to use your personal line and the local line without having to use two phones.

7. A strong connectivity wherever you are!

The HUAWEI Mate 10 Series smartphones offer you a fast and stable connectivity wherever you are. If you're in a business meeting, you can receive phone calls and your interlocutor will hear you very clearly even when you're whispering as the smartphones use artificial intelligence to enhance volume and cancel noise.

8. Language is not a business obstacle anymore!

You can have meetings with business partners from around the world without having to worry about communication. The HUAWEI Mate 10 Series smartphones offer a real-time accelerated translation feature supported by



artificial intelligence. Whoever you're dealing with, this feature helps you understand conversations and texts in more than 50 languages; 300% faster with artificial intelligence acceleration, the feature instantly translates for you so you can understand very clearly what your business partners are saying.

9. Private space and Huawei Share

Even when doing business, you can keep things personal! With this feature, you can setup a section of storage with a different password to keep your personal files and documents in a private space. Huawei Share is a unique feature provided by HUAWEI Mate 10 Series smartphone that allows you to share documents, files and videos quickly and easily; 100 times faster than Bluetooth, it pairs automatically with other devices without the need to have a wireless connection.

10. International endorsement by recognized institutions

As a testament to the excellent performance of the HUAWEI Mate 10 Series smartphones, the HUAWEI Mate 10 Pro has won several awards, notably the "phone of the Year" award by Android Authority, proving that excellence isn't just about standout features but rather consistent quality across the board. Gear up for 2018, knowing that a powerful smartphone is within your hands to help you boost your productivity and achieve excellence!



LAS VEGAS: The Yamaha MOTOROiD concept motorcycle is displayed at the Yamaha booth during CES 2018 at the Las Vegas Convention Center. —AFP

Yamaha motorcycle comes on command at CES event

LAS VEGAS: With a wave, Kinji Asamura summoned a riderless motorcycle to his side in the Yamaha booth at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas this week. The concept electric motorcycle, called 'Motoroid', then balanced in position, holding its place even when Asamura tried gently to push it over. Nearby, a robot that might seem suited for a futuristic action film was

astride a production model Yamaha superbike that it had ridden at speeds topping 200 kilometers per hour on a test track.

"The motor bike is the recent past, and the Motoroid is the future," Yamaha spokesman John Boreland told AFP as he glanced from one two-wheeled creation to the other. "The object is to see what lessons can be learned to connect machine to human more effectively." The robot-ridden Yamaha motorcycle, called 'Motobot', is fast but blind, relying on pre-programmed routes, according to Yamaha. Lessons learned so far from the research model include that "human beings react a hell of a lot quicker," according to Boreland.

Flesh-and-blood riders have also proven

better at grasping the counter-intuitive notion of counter-steering and leaning through turns, he added. The Motoroid model boasted autonomous features such as balancing on its own, recognizing riders, and being summoned with a wave.

Wings on the back of the seat were designed with the help of a psychologist to gently squeeze a rider's lower back in a sort of reassuring caress at potentially perilous high speeds, Boreland said. "Somewhere along the line, this will all meld together so you'll be part of the bike and it will figure things out for you," Boreland said of insights and advances resulting from the concept motorcycles, which are not for sale. —AFP

Health

1.5 C climate goal very unlikely but doable: Draft UN report

Earth's thermometer will cross that threshold in the 2040s

PARIS: The Paris Agreement goal of capping global warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius will slip beyond reach unless nations act now to slash carbon pollution, curb energy demand, and suck CO2 from the air, according to a draft UN report. Without such efforts, "holding warming to 1.5 C (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) by the end of the 21st century [is] extremely unlikely," said the 1,000-page report, prepared by hundreds of scientists. "There is a very high risk that under current emissions trajectories, and current national pledges, global warming will exceed 1.5 C above preindustrial levels."

On current trends, Earth's thermometer will cross that threshold in the 2040s, said the report. The greenhouse gas emissions guaranteeing that outcome will have been released within 10 to 15 years. Under any scenario, there is no model that projects a 66-percent-or-better chance of holding global warming below 1.5 C, the synthesis of recent scientific studies concluded. With only a single degree Celsius of warming so far, our planet is already coping with a

crecendo of climate impacts including deadly droughts, erratic rainfall, and storm surges engorged by rising seas. The landmark, 197-nation climate treaty, inked in 2015, calls for limiting global warming to "well under" 2 C, and "pursuing efforts" for the 1.5 C cap. All countries made voluntary carbon-cutting pledges, running out to 2030. At the same time, the UN's Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) was mandated to prepare a special 1.5 C report covering impacts and feasibility. The final version, vetted by governments, will be unveiled in October.

Moral hazard

Pressure for the lower temperature target and the report came from nations whose fate could turn on the half-degree difference between a 1.5 C and 2 C world. Rising seas, for example, threaten the existence of small island states and could displace tens of millions in Bangladesh, Vietnam and other counties with densely populated river deltas.

"There is a tipping point on sea level rise"-driven mainly

by melting ice sheets on Greenland and Antarctica—"somewhere between 1.5 C and 2 C," said Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research. "With 2C, according to our models, sea level will just keep on rising," he told AFP. The pathways that do exist for stabilizing at 1.5 C would require breaching that threshold and then dialing down Earth's surface temperature by drawing CO2 out of the atmosphere and then using it for fuel or storing it underground. None of technologies that do this exist today on an industrial scale, and some experts fear the long-shot 1.5 C target could pose problems of its own.

"Any scenario for 1.5 C stabilization likely requires a dubious dependence on 'negative emissions' technologies, whereas 2 C stabilization is still possible without that," said Michael Mann, director of the Earth System Science Center at Pennsylvania State University. The lure of silver-bullet fixes, he and others point out, could weaken resolve to reduce greenhouse emissions at their source—an unintended side-effect known as "moral hazard". Ensuring even a 50/50

chance of a 1.5 C world would require the equivalent of a climate change Marshall Plan, the study concluded.

Lifestyle changes

By 2050, carbon dioxide emissions would need to fall to "net" zero, meaning that any CO2 released into the air would have to be offset. Renewable energy sources—mainly solar and wind—would by then be the dominant energy source, and burning coal a distant memory. Other planet-warming gases such as methane and HFCs would also have to be drastically reduced.

"Rapid and large-scale behavior and lifestyle changes," such as a shift away from eating meat, will also be essential, the report said. "We don't have any margin for less than total commitment," said Chris Field, Director of the Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment in California and a former co-chair of the IPCC's Working Group II. "Tackling climate is making serious investments more than making exactly the right mix of investments." —AFP

Kuwaiti child given a new lease on life after childhood hypoglycaemia

KUWAIT: Young Kuwaiti child, Saad, has been given a new lease of life after being treated for a severe form of childhood hypoglycaemia using an alternativenon-surgical procedure at Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children in London (GOSH).

When Saad was just two years old, his mother noticed his legs and arms were moving erratically. Saad's mother instantly knew that something was wrong. Although tests showed he had low blood sugar without diabetes, Saad's medical diagnosis was still uncertain and he spent a further two months in hospital in Kuwait. Saad was then referred to a specialist in the UK, Dr Shah, who specializes in Paediatric Endocrinology.

After visiting Dr Shah, Saad was diagnosed with

Congenital Hyperinsulinism (CHI), a very complex condition that causes severe hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar) in the neonatal, infancy and childhood period. Discussing the severity of the condition, Dr Shah said, "Hypoglycaemia, due to CHI, is a relatively rare but serious condition occurring soon after birth. Symptoms of hypoglycaemia can include floppiness, shakiness, poor feeding and sleepiness, all of which are due to the low blood glucose levels. Seizures (fits or convulsions) can also occur, again due to low blood glucose levels. If the child's blood glucose level is not corrected, it can lead to loss of consciousness, seizures (convulsions), potential brain injury and very rarely death."

From May to September 2017, Saad stayed as an inpatient at GOSH. Saad underwent a PET scan which confirmed he has a diffuse form of CHI which means he would not respond to standard medical treatment to stop insulin production and would likely need a major operation to remove 95 percent of the pancreas. However, instead of undergoing a near-total pancreatectomy, an invasive operation with potential long-life complications, Dr Shah suggested newer forms

of medication which aim to stabilize blood glucose levels.

"After discussing various management options with the family, they were keen to try injections before proceeding with a near-total pancreatectomy. This medication, which is given once every 4 weeks, has allowed him to keep his blood glucose stable on bolus feeds with significant improvement in quality of life as parents give one injection every 4 weeks instead of 4 injections a day," adds Dr Shah. Saad, who has now had his care moved back to Kuwait, will need regular monitoring in terms of his blood glucose as well as for side effects of the medication. Some cases become milder overtime and children eventually come off medications.

On the care Saad received in London, Saad's mother commented that, "Dr Shah was the perfect doctor and gave us all the information we needed. He listens to the family and completely understood my son's needs. Saad enjoyed his time on the Bumblebee ward and the nurses at GOSH were also very caring with a personal touch." Saad is currently doing well and will return to GOSH in six months' time for a routine check-up.



Dr Pratik Shah

Pentagon stays mum on fate of secret satellite

WASHINGTON: The mystery surrounding the fate of a secret military satellite deepened Thursday when the Pentagon refused to answer even simple questions about whether the mission to launch it had gone awry. On Sunday, private space firm SpaceX blasted a Falcon 9 rocket from Cape Canaveral, Florida carrying the secret government satellite, known as Zuma.

US media this week reported that the billion-dollar payload did not make it into orbit and was presumed to have been lost. SpaceX said last Tuesday that the rocket worked fine, but its statement left open the possibility that something could have gone wrong after the launch. When asked at a press briefing if the Pentagon considered the launch a success or a failure, two officials declined to provide any information whatsoever because of the classified nature of the mission. "I would have to refer you to SpaceX, who conducted the launch," Pentagon spokeswoman Dana White said.—AFP

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What's On

Symphony Style Hotel named 'Best Luxury Family Hotel' at World Luxury Hotel Awards

Symphony Style Hotel, Quorvus Collection's flagship hotel in Kuwait, is celebrating further global recognition after being named 2017 Best Luxury Family Hotel - Kuwait, at the recent World Luxury Hotel Awards. Judges on the World Luxury Hotel Awards panel selected Symphony Style Hotel Kuwait for the high-profile award based on its commitment to outstanding hoteliering and outstanding achievements in the luxury hospitality industry.

The award follows the concerted efforts of the hotel to enhance its offering

to cater for all ages and ensure a memorable stay for the entire family. In 2017, the third & fourth floors of the hotel were turned into a designated Kids Floor. The Kids Club features a 500 sqm multipurpose play room, a dedicated cinema and a library, providing younger guests with access to a fun, educational and interactive space, under the supervision of highly-trained staff. The Kids Club also features a dining area for the little ones, and their own sleeping area.

Older children are also firmly in focus thanks to the Teens Hub, an interactive

zone aimed at older children and teens, featuring the latest video games and electronic entertainment. With the children engaged and in safe hands, parents can relax and rejuvenate with a soothing treatment at Symphony Style Hotel's state-of-the-art Six Senses Spa or unwind on the suspended swimming pool deck on the hotel's second floor, which offers picture-perfect views over the Arabian Gulf. The hotel's ideal location offers the whole family easy access to world-class shopping and lifestyle options at the adjacent Symphony Mall.



English Language Program at ACK achieves EAQUALS Accreditation



The Evaluation and Accreditation of Quality Language Services (EAQUALS) has awarded the Australian College of Kuwait an international accreditation for the English Language Program for four years. EAQUALS is a professional leading association for language education worldwide and aims to foster excellence in language education, who inspected the English Language Program at ACK in 2017 and met the highest standards required for the accreditation. Following the inspection visit the teaching, course programs, course organization, learning resources, testing and evaluation were all judged to be of high quality. The Inspectors identified points of excellence in the categories of management and administration, teaching & learning, assessment & certification, academic resources, learning environment, client services, quality assurance, staff profile & development, staff employment terms and internal communications.

EAQUALS Accredited Members have achieved highest international standards verified by EAQUALS demanding inspection scheme and are committed to continuous improvement. Accreditation is only awarded after a comprehensive and rigorous quality assurance process, including an on-site inspection, repeated every four years. Only institutions that fully comply with the demanding EAQUALS Quality Standards can be accredited. EAQUALS Accreditation helps ACK to ensure that every aspect of the language learning experience meets student and labor market highest expectations.

69th Republic Day of India

The 69th Republic Day of India will be celebrated in Embassy premises on Friday, 26 January 2018 with the hoisting of Indian Tricolor at 9 AM by the Ambassador. This will be followed by the reading of President's Message to the Nation, patriotic songs by school children and an Open House Reception. All Indian nationals and friends of India in Kuwait are most cordially invited to attend the function.

TIES talks

Join a monthly public speaking club to develop your communication skills and share information related to life in Kuwait. Get public speaking tips, hear and evaluate a 15-minute speech, and pluck your courage for a two-minute, impromptu speech. The topic for January's session is Food in Kuwait. The meet-up will be held on Wednesday, January 24 and will start at 7pm.

Bhavans Kuwait 9th Annual Athletic meet

"Tue champions weren't born but trained." The fortunate spectators at Kaifan stadium were again favoured by fortune as they could witness in awe the scintillating performance of the young sportsmen of Bhavans, Kuwait celebrating their ninth Annual Sports Meet at Kaifan Stadium, Kuwait City on January 12, 2018, graced by the esteemed presence of the Chief Guest, Ambassador of Guyana to Kuwait, His Excellency Dr Shamir Ally and the Guest of Honor Dr Maryann Beebe Ally.

The Annual Athletic Meet began with the recitation of the Holy Quran followed by the Kuwait National Anthem. After the rendition of the beautiful prayer song by the school choir, the Head Boy of IES, Ketan Maheshwari welcomed the guests. The elite league that adorned the embellished pavilion were the Chief Guest, Ambassador of Guyana to Kuwait, His Excellency Dr. Shamir Ally and Guest of Honour D. Maryann Beebe Ally along with NK Ramachandran Menon, the Chairman, Bhavans Middle East, T Premkumar (Principal, IES) and Mahesh Iyer, (Principal SIS), Rathi Ravindran, Vice Principals of IES, Suresh V Balakrishnan, Lalitha Premkumar and Meenakshi Nayyar, Shaimaa Zaki (Administrative Manager, SIS) and Mohammad Khamis (Manager owner's office).

The BSS (Bhavans Service Scheme) Cadets, the

Awareness of climate change at Kuwait National English School



Climate change poses a major threat to humanity. Researchers and communities have shown us that climate change affects where people can live, grow food, maintain infrastructure, and be healthy. Climate change is connected with many other global issues. For example, climate change is linked to inequality and ethics because developing countries are the least responsible for climate change, yet they are the most at risk from its effects.

While concerted international action is crucial to reduce climate change - through stronger international legal mechanisms, greater financial resources and support to green technologies - responses to climate change start with each of us, with the ways by which we think and act, with our attitudes and behaviours.

Kuwait National English School is undertaking a whole school approach, whereby students' are learning about climate change through the reinforcement of formal and informal messages promoted by the school's values and actions. In other words, students - girls and boys alike - and other members of the school community live what they learn, and learn what they live. The whole-school approach benefits our school and our surrounding community through the following ways:

- Students and staff have a greater sense of belonging in the school
- Students have more meaningful and hands-on learning opportunities
- Schools achieve significant ecological footprint reductions
- Schools save money through efficient resource use
- School campuses are greener and more beautiful

A school culture of sustainability is one in which students, staff and families hold shared values and beliefs



about the importance of taking action for a more sustainable society. Taking care of the environment and contributing to reducing climate change is an integral part of this. The students of Kuwait National English

School have participated in the promoting an awareness of climate change by planting a range of plants and seeds. This will benefit our school as students become aware of the importance of plants in the environment.



office bearers of the School Supreme Council, along with the House Captains, Vice-captains, blossoms, and the senior students of the four houses of Bhavans paraded elegantly with the drumbeats. The Chief Guest, Ambassador of Guyana to Kuwait, His Excellency Dr Shamir Ally and Guest of Honour Dr Maryann Beebe Ally along with the other dignitaries received the reverential salute from the marching contingent.

The 15 sports champions who represented Bhavans at the national level in swimming and badminton, were the privileged torchbearers of Bhavans. They escorted the Vice Sports Captains, Vignesh Sivakumar and Kiara Czarina Reaven of IES in the ceremonial torch run. The torch of perennial flames was then lit by the Sports Captain Karthik Sivakumar amid thunderous applause encasing the stadium. The deputy Sports Captain



Anupama Nair administered the oath. Sanskriti House won the overall championship trophy. The second place was secured by Satya House and the third place was



bagged by Seva House. The euphoric winners of the three houses conjointly received the trophy from the Chief Guest.

TV



01:30 Flight World War II
02:55 The Veil
04:25 Rumble
06:00 The Huntsman: Winter's War
08:00 Hunting The Phantom
10:05 The Veil
11:35 Misfire
13:10 The Huntsman: Winter's War
15:10 American Ninja
16:50 The Call Up
18:25 I Am Number Four
20:15 Rise Of The Planet Of The Apes
22:05 Check Point
23:45 Rob The Mob

20:35 Friends
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
21:30 The Opposition With Jordan Klepper
22:00 Broad City
22:25 Another Period
22:50 Another Period
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 Finding Bigfoot
02:10 Somebody's Gotta Do It
03:00 Ecopolis
03:50 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
04:40 Tanked
05:30 How It's Made
05:55 How It's Made
06:20 Kids Do The Craziest Things
06:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things
07:00 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
07:50 How It's Made
08:15 How It's Made
08:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things
09:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things
10:20 Ecopolis
11:10 Now That's Funny
12:40 Now That's Funny
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 Ecopolis
17:00 Now That's Funny
17:50 Now That's Funny
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 Now That's Funny
22:00 Now That's Funny
22:50 Ecopolis
23:40 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor

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
09:00 Handy Manny
09:15 PJ Masks
09:30 Puppy Dog Pals
10:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
10:25 Mickey And The Roadster Racers

10:55 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
11:20 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
11:50 The Lion Guard
12:15 The Lion Guard
12:45 Sofia The First
13:10 Sofia The First
13:35 PJ Masks
14:00 PJ Masks
14:30 Doc McStuffins
14:55 P-King Duckling
15:20 Vampirina
15:45 Sofia The First
16:10 Puppy Dog Pals
16:35 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
17:05 Jake's Never Land Rescue
17:15 PJ Masks
18:25 Puppy Dog Pals
18:50 Sofia The First
19:20 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
19:50 Doc McStuffins
20:10 The Lion Guard
20:35 P-King Duckling
21:00 Vampirina
21:30 PJ Masks
22:00 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 Finding Escobar's Millions
01:50 Treasure Quest: Snake Island
02:35 The Wheel: Survival Games
03:20 Street Outlaws
04:05 Alaska: The Last Frontier
04:50 Deadliest Catch
05:35 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Auction Kings
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 Auction Kings
08:45 Container Wars
09:10 Deadliest Catch
09:55 Finding Escobar's Millions
10:45 Treasure Quest: Snake Island
11:30 The Wheel: Survival Games
12:20 Auction Kings
12:43 Container Wars
13:05 How Do They Do It?
13:30 How Do They Do It?
13:55 Deadliest Catch
14:40 Yukon Men
15:30 Finding Escobar's Millions
16:15 Treasure Quest: Snake Island
17:05 The Wheel: Survival Games
18:40 Deadliest Catch
19:25 Yukon Men
20:15 Street Outlaws
21:00 Madiba
21:50 Deadliest Job Interview
22:40 Sean Conway: On The Edge
23:30 Alaska: The Last Frontier



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



00:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
01:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
01:50 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
02:50 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
03:40 WAGS
04:35 WAGS
05:30 Celebrity Style Story
06:00 So Cosmo
06:55 El News
07:10 So Cosmo

08:10 WAGS LA
09:10 WAGS LA
10:10 WAGS LA
11:05 WAGS Atlanta
12:00 El News
12:15 The Platinum Life
13:10 The Platinum Life
14:05 The Platinum Life
15:00 El News
15:15 My Fabulous Me
15:45 My Fabulous Me
16:15 My Fabulous Me
16:40 Celebrity Style Story
17:10 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
18:05 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
19:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
20:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
21:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
22:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
23:00 El News
23:15 WAGS LA



00:00 Restaurant Impossible
01:00 Mystery Diners
01:30 Mystery Diners
02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
02:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
03:00 Man Fire Food
03:30 Man Fire Food
04:00 Chopped
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
08:55 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
12:35 The Pioneer Woman
13:00 Siba's Table
13:30 Siba's Table
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
15:00 Chopped
16:00 The Kitchen
17:00 Cooking For Real
17:30 Cooking For Real
18:00 Chopped
19:00 Guy's Grocery Games
20:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
20:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
21:00 Man Fire Food
21:30 Man Fire Food
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
22:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
23:00 Chopped



00:10 Chopping Block
01:00 Emmerdale
01:30 Coronation Street
02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 Cash Trapped
03:25 The Voice UK 2018
04:40 Royal Stories
05:15 Surprise Surprise
06:10 Chopping Block
07:05 Cash Trapped
08:00 The Voice UK 2018
09:30 Royal Stories
10:00 Surprise Surprise
10:55 Chopping Block
11:50 Cash Trapped
12:45 Emmerdale
13:15 Coronation Street
13:45 Coronation Street
14:15 Chopping Block
15:10 Cash Trapped
16:00 Vera
17:50 Surprise Surprise
18:45 Emmerdale
19:15 Coronation Street
19:45 Coronation Street
20:10 Cash Trapped
21:00 Vera
22:50 Emmerdale
23:15 Coronation Street
23:40 Coronation Street



00:00 Ancient Discoveries
01:00 Ancient Top 10
02:00 Command Decisions
02:30 Command Decisions
03:00 In Search Of Aliens
03:50 Ancient Aliens
04:40 10 Things You Don't Know About...
05:30 Ancient Discoveries
06:20 Ancient Top 10
07:10 The Universe
08:00 Command Decisions
08:30 Command Decisions
09:00 In Search Of Aliens
10:00 Ancient Aliens
11:00 10 Things You Don't Know About...
12:00 Ancient Discoveries
13:00 Ancient Top 10
14:00 Command Decisions
14:30 Command Decisions
15:00 In Search Of Aliens
16:00 Ancient Aliens
17:00 10 Things You Don't Know About...
18:00 The Universe
19:00 Ancient Top 10
20:00 Command Decisions
20:30 Command Decisions
21:00 In Search Of Aliens
22:00 Ancient Aliens
23:00 How 2 Win History HD
00:20 Swamp People
01:10 Swamp People
02:00 Secret War On Drugs
03:40 The Warfighters
04:30 Swamp People



05:15 Swamp People
06:00 Mountain Men
06:50 Mountain Men
07:40 How The World Made America
09:20 American Pickers
10:10 Ax Men
11:00 Forged In Fire
11:50 How The World Made America
13:30 Swamp People
14:20 Swamp People
15:10 Mountain Men
16:00 Forged In Fire
16:50 How The World Made America
18:30 Mountain Men
19:20 Forged In Fire
20:10 American Restoration

21:00 Ice Road Truckers
21:50 Road Hawks
22:40 Forged In Fire
23:30 Mountain Men
Nat Geo People HD
00:45 John Torode's Asia
01:10 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
01:40 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
02:35 Cruise Ship Diaries



03:00 Cruise Ship Diaries
03:30 Cradle Of Mandopop
04:25 Andy And Ben Eat The World
04:50 Andy And Ben Eat The World
05:20 Fish Of The Day
05:45 Fish Of The Day
06:15 Carnivale Eats
06:40 Carnivale Eats
07:10 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
08:05 Cruise Ship Diaries
08:30 Cruise Ship Diaries
09:00 Cradle Of Mandopop
09:55 Andy And Ben Eat The World
10:20 Andy And Ben Eat The World
10:50 Fish Of The Day
11:15 Fish Of The Day
11:45 Carnivale Eats
12:10 Carnivale Eats
12:40 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
13:35 Cruise Ship Diaries
14:00 Cradle Of Mandopop
14:30 Cesar Millan's Dog Nation
15:25 Building Wild
16:20 Fish Of The Day
16:45 Fish Of The Day
17:15 Carnivale Eats
17:40 Carnivale Eats
18:10 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
19:05 Cruise Ship Diaries
19:30 Cruise Ship Diaries
20:00 Cesar Millan's Dog Nation
21:00 Building Wild
22:00 Fish Of The Day
22:25 Fish Of The Day
22:55 Carnivale Eats
23:20 Carnivale Eats
23:50 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
Nat Geo HD
00:10 The Story Of Us With Morgan Freeman
01:00 Lawless Island Alaska
02:00 Nazi Megastructures
03:00 Supercar Megabuild
04:00 The Story Of Us With Morgan Freeman
05:00 Shark Men



06:00 Fish Tank Kings
07:00 Brave New World
08:00 Science Of Stupid Compilations
08:30 Science Of Stupid Compilations
09:00 Shark Men
10:00 Yukon Gold
11:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
12:00 Air Crash Investigation
13:00 Brave New World
14:00 Science Of Stupid Compilations
14:30 Science Of Stupid Compilations
15:00 Fish Tank Kings
16:00 Yukon Gold
17:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
18:00 Air Crash Investigation
19:00 Seconds From Disaster
20:00 Yukon Gold
20:50 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
21:40 Air Crash Investigation
22:30 Seconds From Disaster
23:20 Science Of Stupid Compilations
23:45 Science Of Stupid Compilations
Nat Geo Wild HD
00:20 Secrets Of The King Cobra
01:10 World's Deadliest
02:00 Monster Croc Hunt



02:50 Monster Fish
03:45 Wild Case Files
04:40 Animal Fight Club
05:35 Monster Croc Hunt
06:30 Monster Fish
07:25 Wild Case Files
08:20 Animal Fight Club
09:15 World's Deadliest Animals
10:10 Zoo Confidential
11:05 Secret Life Of Predators - 2016
12:00 Wild Dolphins
12:55 Queen Of The Chase
13:50 Monster Fish
14:45 Wild Case Files
15:40 Animal Fight Club
16:35 World's Deadliest Animals
17:30 Zoo Confidential
18:25 Nordic Wild
19:20 Wild Case Files
20:10 Animal Fight Club
21:00 World's Deadliest Animals
21:50 Zoo Confidential
22:40 Nordic Wild
23:30 Wild Dolphins

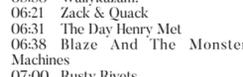


00:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
00:36 Rabbids Invasion
01:00 Rabbids Invasion
01:24 Sanjay And Craig
01:48 Sanjay And Craig
02:12 Winx Club
02:36 Winx Club
03:00 Harvey Beaks
03:24 Harvey Beaks
03:48 The Loud House
04:12 The Loud House
04:36 Breadwinners
05:00 Breadwinners
05:24 Get Blake
05:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:24 Rabbids Invasion
07:48 Get Blake
08:12 Harvey Beaks
08:36 Sanjay And Craig
09:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
09:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
09:48 Henry Danger
10:12 Game Shakers
10:36 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 Massive Monster Mayhem
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 Massive Monster Mayhem
17:24 I Am Frankie
17:48 Hunter Street
18:12 Henry Danger
18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky And Dawn
19:00 School Of Rock
19:24 Game Shakers
19:48 The Thundermans
20:12 Ride
20:36 SpongeBob SquarePants
21:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
21:24 Sanjay And Craig
21:48 Rabbids Invasion
22:12 Breadwinners
22:36 Harvey Beaks
23:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
23:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
23:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles



00:16 Shimmer And Shine
00:39 Shimmer And Shine
01:01 Max & Ruby
01:24 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
01:35 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
01:45 The Day Henry Met
01:50 The Day Henry Met
01:56 Blaze And The Monster Machines
02:19 Blaze And The Monster Machines
02:41 Zack & Quack
02:52 Kid-E-Cats
02:57 Kid-E-Cats
03:03 Shimmer And Shine
03:25 Nella The Princess Knight
03:36 Paw Patrol
03:59 Little Charmers
04:11 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
04:23 Dora The Explorer
04:45 Max & Ruby
05:07 The Day Henry Met
05:12 Nella And The Princess Knight
05:23 Nella And The Princess Knight
05:35 Shimmer And Shine
05:58 Wallykazam!
06:21 Zack & Quack
06:31 The Day Henry Met
06:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
07:00 Rusty Rivets
07:13 Paw Patrol
07:37 Dora The Explorer
08:00 Nella The Princess Knight
08:12 Kid-E-Cats
08:17 Kid-E-Cats
08:21 Bubble Guppies
08:45 Blaze And The Monster Machines
09:06 Paw Patrol
09:29 Shimmer And Shine
09:51 Nella And The Princess Knight
10:02 Nella And The Princess Knight
10:14 The Day Henry Met
10:20 Paw Patrol
10:44 Rusty Rivets
10:55 Rusty Rivets
11:06 Wallykazam!
11:29 Bubble Guppies
11:52 Team Umizoomi
12:16 Shimmer And Shine
12:38 Shimmer And Shine
13:01 Max & Ruby
13:24 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
13:35 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
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22:02 Nella And The Princess Knight
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22:44 Rusty Rivets
22:55 Rusty Rivets
23:06 Wallykazam!
23:29 Bubble Guppies
23:53 Team Umizoomi



01:15 Love And Other Impossible Pursuits
03:00 Committed
04:30 Henry's Crime
06:15 Into The Woods
08:15 The Illusionist
10:05 Ginger & Rosa
11:30 Gracie
13:15 Snow Angels
15:00 Love And Other Impossible Pursuits
16:45 Boys And Girls
18:15 02:22
20:00 The Mothman Prophecies
22:00 Jindabyne
STAR WORLD HD
00:00 Devious Maids
01:00 Devious Maids
02:00 Mistresses
03:00 Fashion Star
04:00 MAFS: The First Year
05:00 Project Runway
06:00 Devious Maids
07:00 Devious Maids
08:00 Mistresses
09:00 Fashion Star
10:00 MAFS: The First Year
11:00 Project Runway
12:00 Devious Maids
13:00 Devious Maids
14:00 Mistresses
15:00 Fashion Star
16:00 MAFS: The First Year
17:00 Project Runway
18:00 Grey's Anatomy
19:00 Grey's Anatomy
20:00 Mistresses
21:00 Fashion Star
22:00 MAFS: The First Year
23:00 Project Runway



00:20 Hodges Half Dozen
01:05 Married By Mum And Dad
01:50 Return To Amish
02:35 The Spouse Hour
03:20 Outdaughtered: Busby Quints
04:05 Toddlers & Tiaras
04:50 Randy To The Rescue
05:35 Say Yes To The Dress
06:00 Extreme Cheapskates
06:22 Extreme Cheapskates
06:45 Say Yes To The Dress UK
07:07 Say Yes To The Dress UK
07:30 This Is Life With Carissa Cupido
08:15 Outdaughtered: Busby Quints
09:00 Cake Boss
09:25 Toddlers & Tiaras
10:10 Extreme Cheapskates
10:32 Extreme Cheapskates
10:55 Meet The Putmans
11:40 Say Yes To The Dress UK
12:02 Say Yes To The Dress UK
12:25 Outdaughtered: Busby Quints
13:10 Hodges Half Dozen
13:55 Toddlers & Tiaras
14:40 Outdaughtered: Busby Quints



01:20 Hit By Lightning
03:00 Peggoland
04:55 Fan Girl
06:35 Article 99
08:25 Holiday Joy
10:05 A Date With Miss Fortune
11:50 Big
13:40 Article 99
15:30 Stop! Or My Mom Will Shoot
17:05 Are We Done Yet?
18:45 Improptu
20:40 Pitch Perfect 2
22:40 Get A Job



00:15 Girl On The Edge
02:15 To Kill A Mockingbird
04:35 Far From Men
06:30 All The Wilderness
08:40 To Kill A Mockingbird
10:15 Far From Men
12:05 All The Wilderness
13:35 Operation Avalanche
15:20 Forsaken
17:00 James White
18:35 Pele: Birth Of A Legend
20:35 A Mighty Heart
22:35 The Survivor



00:25 Space Dogs 2: Adventure To The Moon
01:55 Twigson Ties The Knot
03:25 Back To The Sea
05:05 Phantom Boy
06:40 Dinofrog The Origin
08:10 Rock Dog
09:50 The Happy Cricket
11:20 Bark Ranger
12:50 Papelucho & The Martian
14:15 Twigson Ties The Knot
15:45 Back To The Sea
17:25 The Fairy Tales Tree
18:50 Bark Ranger
20:20 Felix All Around The World
21:50 Teo: The Intergalactic Hunter
23:15 The Fairy Tales Tree



00:20 Havana
02:45 Leatherheads
04:40 Oleanna
06:15 Rocky II
08:15 Baby's Day Out
09:55 Loch Ness
11:45 Die Hard
14:00 Brooklyn
15:55 Rocky III
17:40 Seven Years In Tibet
20:00 Reality Bites
21:40 Brooklyn
23:30 Troy



00:40 Mythbusters
01:30 How Do They Do It?
01:55 Food Factory USA
02:20 Invent It Rich
03:10 How The Earth Works
04:40 Da Vinci's Machines
04:48 Mythbusters
05:36 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Food Factory USA
06:24 Invent It Rich
07:12 How The Earth Works
08:00 How Do They Do It?
08:26 Da Vinci's Machines
09:14 Mythbusters
10:02 How The Earth Works
10:50 How Do They Do It?
11:14 Food Factory USA
11:38 Invent It Rich
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15:38 Da Vinci's Machines
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22:00 Jindabyne



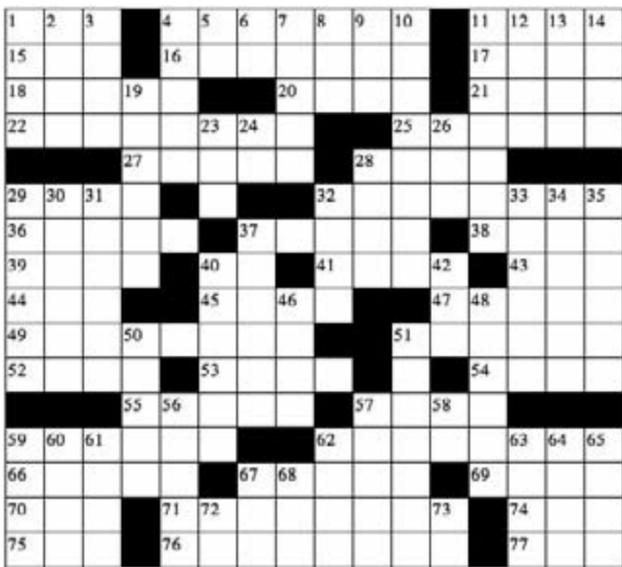
00:00 Devious Maids
01:00 Devious Maids
02:00 Mistresses
03:00 Fashion Star
04:00 MAFS: The First Year
05:00 Project Runway
06:00 Devious Maids
07:00 Devious Maids
08:00 Mistresses
09:00 Fashion Star
10:00 MAFS: The First Year
11:00 Project Runway
12:00 Devious Maids
13:00 Devious Maids
14:00 Mistresses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



00:20 Hodges Half Dozen
01:05 Married By Mum And Dad
01:50 Return To Amish
02:35 The Spouse Hour
03:20 Outdaughtered: Busby Quints
04:05 Toddlers & Tiaras
04:50 Randy To The Rescue
05:35 Say Yes To The Dress
06:00 Extreme Cheapskates
06:22 Extreme Cheapskates
06:45 Say Yes To The Dress UK
07:07 Say Yes To The Dress UK
07:30 This Is Life With Carissa Cupido
08:15 Outdaughtered: Busby Quints
09:00 Cake Boss
09:25 Toddlers & Tiaras
10:10 Extreme Cheapskates
10:32 Extreme Cheapskates
10:55 Meet The Putmans
11:40 Say Yes To The Dress UK
12:02 Say Yes To The Dress UK
12:25 Outdaughtered: Busby Quints
13:10 Hodges Half Dozen
13:55 Toddlers & Tiaras
14:40 Outdaughtered: Busby Quints

Stars

CROSSWORD 1810



ACROSS

1. Someone who engages in arbitrage (who purchases securities in one market for immediate resale in another in the hope of profiting from the price differential).
4. Free from error.
11. At a previous time.
15. A person active in party politics.
16. Beautiful daughter of Minos and Pasiphae.
17. An independent group of closely related Chadic languages spoken in the area between the Biu-Mandara and East Chadic languages.
18. (Old Testament) The second patriarch.
20. A Chinese god worshipped in the form of an idol.
21. Cause a floating log to rotate by treading.
22. Any of various plants of the genus *Sabbatia* having usually pink cymose flowers.
25. A Formosan language.
27. Attractiveness to the opposite sex.
29. (old-fashioned) At or from or to a great distance.
36. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
38. A island in the Netherlands Antilles that is the top of an extinct volcano.
39. A doctor's degree in music.
41. (Old Testament) In Judeo-Christian mythology.
43. A container.
44. A lyric poem with complex stanza forms.
45. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
47. Metal or plastic sheath over the end of a shoelace or ribbon.
49. Small translucent lancet-shaped burrowing marine animal.
52. Of or being the lowest female voice.
53. A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
54. Make amends for.
55. A member of the Mongolian people of central Asia who invaded Russia in the 13th century.
59. An esoteric or occult matter that is traditionally secret.
66. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
69. God of love and erotic desire.
70. Extremely pleasing.
71. Inject into the vein.
74. The network in the reticular formation that serves an alerting or arousal function.
75. A federal agency established to regulate the release of new foods and health-related products.
76. Paper that has been made translucent and waterproof by soaking in oil.
77. A syndrome that occurs in many women from 2 to 14 days before the onset of menstruation.

DOWN

1. Type genus of the Apidae.
2. Large genus of erect or climbing prickly shrubs including roses.
3. Divulge information or secrets.
4. Tropical American tree producing cacao beans.
5. A state in northwestern United States on the Pacific.
6. A state in New England.
7. A Hindu prince or king in India.
8. The capital and largest city of Japan.
9. The portion of the vertebrate nervous system consisting of the brain and spinal cord.
10. Testacean rhizopods.
11. An abnormal particle (e.g. an air bubble or part of a clot) circulating in the blood.
12. Radioactive iodine test that measures the amount of radioactive iodine taken up by the thyroid gland.
13. An antidepressant drug that acts by blocking the reuptake of serotonin so that more serotonin is available to act on receptors in the brain.
14. A fine grained mineral having a soft soapy feel and consisting of hydrated magnesium silicate.
19. Away from the mouth or oral region.
23. The widely studied plant virus that causes tobacco mosaic.
24. The sciences concerned with gathering and manipulating and storing and retrieving and classifying recorded information.
26. An enclosed space.
28. With no effort to conceal.
30. Of or relating to or characteristic of feudalism.
31. Not in a specified place physically or mentally.
32. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
33. I species.
34. The state of existing and being localized in space.
35. A member of the eastern branch of the Sioux.
37. An internal representation of the world.
40. When dried yields a hard substance used e.g. in golf balls.
42. A diagrammatic representation of the earth's surface (or part of it).
46. Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
48. A city of northern Poland near the mouth of the Vistula River on a gulf of the Baltic Sea.
50. Ratio of the adjacent to the opposite side.
51. A republic in southeastern Europe.
56. The mission in San Antonio where in 1836 Mexican forces under Santa Anna besieged and massacred American rebels who were fighting to make Texas independent of Mexico.
57. Tropical American tree bearing a small edible fruit with green leathery skin and sweet juicy translucent pulp.
58. A public promotion of some product or service.
60. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
61. A small cake leavened with yeast.
62. A Polynesian rain dance performed by a woman.
63. An association of people to promote the welfare of senior citizens.
64. (Islam) The man who leads prayers in a mosque.
65. A girl or young woman who is unmarried.
68. Former measure of the US economy.
72. The branch of computer science that deal with writing computer programs that can solve problems creatively.
73. A trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Aries, for now your principles could clash with people around you, an inexperienced person does not reach the level of expertise you require. Clarity of mind may be difficult; there may be confusion about what is right or wrong and you could be misled. It will seem hard to get your nerves to settle down. Disagreements are likely with a boss or an elderly person; count to ten before you answer! Your environment could feel dissatisfying and claustrophobic during this cycle. Widen your search for new hobbies and workout systems that could promote and support your physical and spiritual healing. Tonight you could hear from someone you least expect; remember old friends and what they added or took away from your life, aries.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Taurus, you desire the nicer things in life and could find yourself focused on attaining them. Time spent alone could be quite helpful now; concentrating on your energies could uncover solutions than you think. You may need to step back for a better view; observing is a much better tactic for understanding. You will come closer to seeing the concerns of those around you. Work to find patience when dealing with a youthful challenger; this is someone who looks up to you. Someone is watching you closely; it will take much determination and effort to stay on your good side. Going along with the wishes of others will make things easier for everyone involved; you are capable of this now. This evening brings good times with good people, taurus.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Gemini, there is strong potential for conflict when certain people dispute your strategies and methods. You may need to re-assess your personal or professional positions; circumstances may force a new direction. You will be clear on what you are saying but others could have problems following along. You should focus on giving yourself council but not others. You could feel separated from the crowd and find yourself seeking seclusion and inward development. Your intimate relationships play an important role in your life with assurance of your being loved and completely indispensable. Time spent with loved ones this evening will fit the bill; a beloved pet could remind you of just how important and dear pure, true love is, gemini.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Cancer, this is perfect timing for taking a good, long look in the mirror when deciding how to handle a situation with someone you care for. Come to an honest conclusion about yourself, where you've been and where you're going. This is the time to go after what you want. You think about fixing something in your immediate surroundings; this could mean something around the house, office or even a relationship. You may stumble over your words, take your time and think about what you want to say. Words could fly out of your mouth that would cause harm. Spend extra time listening to your inner voice in meditation. You are better prepared for challenges when you are centered within yourself, cancer.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Leo, this cycle focuses upon the personal energy that creates love, home and security. Someone will fill your whole heart. Enjoy being loved and cared for; don't break it down and overanalyze. You could take on a difficult project that you will be able to convince others to help with. A perfect opportunity for a job will become known this month; this position would utilize your best talents. Your thoughts will wander to the heavens and what comes next; remember you can pull to you anything you need or desire. Someone could join forces with another to challenge or upset you over something petty; remember some souls are not as evolved as you. Go out on a limb and do something different today that takes you to a new and interesting place, leo.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Virgo, your stars are aligned today to create an energy of quick wit and sharp tongue; your mood will tend toward irritated and passionate. An unexpected issue will demand your immediate attention. Reign in your spending and that of either your business partner or mate. Take time when finishing intricate details that are the most important, and last, of the project. Issues that blocked or slowed your efforts will seem to vaporize; this could be regarding something you are working with in a newly emerging field of business. You will catch the ball and run with it today when no one else will and you will be very glad you did. Rewards are sweet when they come from hard work and commitment. Pause for calm reflection and relaxation this evening, virgo.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Libra, the stars seem to have aligned to form perfect conditions for you to progress with ease. You could look back on this time as one of your favorites because of the positive energy touching all you do. Making things happen and seeing them through is your trademark; this will continue to help you climb the career ladder. You will be glad you bought something new to wear to a meeting when you are complimented on your polished image and professionalism. Never let your daydreams interfere with real world obligations. You may need some time away from the old routine. If you feel someone or some event has let you down remember we are all only human and life brings all kinds of situations; you choose who to allow into your inner circle, libra.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Scorpio, instead of work, you think of traveling to new places in search of new experiences. You've always had wanderlust and exploring in your blood and the older you get this seems to increase; such is the new cycle you have entered with the new year. You may hear from spiritual or volunteer connections you've made through the years and share a nice meal. This will recharge your attitude. The stars are aligned for smooth sailing through any obstacles or pauses you may encounter. An invitation this evening might be better declined as accepting it could lead to trouble. You seek to be in the driver's seat when it comes to a certain relationship; be careful with this. Someone could be annoyed with your lifestyle; to thine own self be true, scorpio.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Sagittarius, this cycle brings with it opening for new job offers; one of these offers a position that looks as though a dream has come true. You could find yourself involved with earning a living helping people. Make a point of taking care of specifics regarding a certain unfinished project that is near deadline. Certain blockages and pauses will end when you reach a point where you can see the cause. You could want to do something you shouldn't such as make a purchase you know isn't prudent now. You know how to reach across and pull answers from the abyss when no one else will even approach it. You should be focused on dealing with someone who could be in trouble. A loved one picks the entertainment tonight much to your surprise, sagittarius.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Capricorn, you could have especially warm feelings for someone close to you. A new acquaintance gets you and your quirky way of thinking. Your talent for group leadership bring compliments from the boss or work associates today. Your stylistic and fashion energies are running high today and you enjoy the confidence this creates. Be thankful for your looks and where you've placed yourself in life. You have made your plan and worked it; way to go! There could be a confrontational person to cross your path today; you may find yourself philosophizing and overthinking. You can sometimes come across as very intimidating which spurs some people to be confrontational. No worries tonight, capricorn, you know who you are.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Aquarius, there could be contention between you and another regarding a very touchy area for you both. Bickering and ill feelings are likely. You will go inward to reevaluate yourself and your opinions; don't stay there too long. Clear your mental state by relaxing with a good book or film that will transport you to an enjoyable place. Seeds from new projects are planted now by the places you go and the people you see; pay attention to everyone you encounter today and this evening. You express yourself with ease and most effectively at this time; people have no problem getting your point. This evening is perfect for family and close friends for dinner; you are respected and loved for your unique qualities, aquarius.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Pisces, the stars configure to create a feeling of helping others; you also want to be recognized for your efforts. You could sometimes feel needy and unappreciated. A compelling opportunity might appear seemingly out of thin air. You have a strong sense of providing a secure financial foundation for your future with the help of an inheritance or windfall. A medium size audience will welcome your words this afternoon or early evening. Your winning, welcoming personality will gain new admirers. Suspicion may be thrown on someone you love for being dishonorable. These instances can be expected if there has been a lack of communication. Take some time and healing could happen; remember we all have faults. Listen to your head this evening, pisces.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Hip-Hop Artists

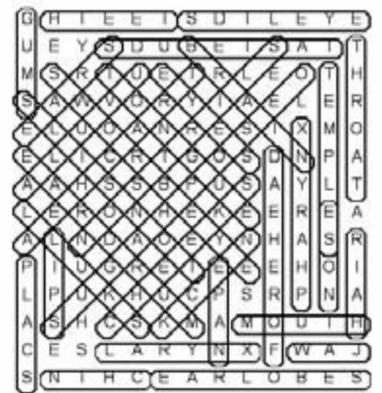
Find and circle all of the Hip-Hop Artists that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the title of a Lauryn Hill song.



- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------|
| AFRKA BAMBATA | FOXY BROWN | MISSY ELLIOTT | THE ALCHEMIST |
| BRAND NUBIAN | GANG STARR | MUGGS | THE FAT BOYS |
| BUSTA RHYMES | GRANDMASTER FLASH | NATURE | THE FUGEES |
| COOL J | HEAVY D | NOTORIOUS B.I.G. | THE PHARCYDE |
| CORMEGA | KANYE WEST | ONYX | THE ROOTS |
| CRAIG MACK | KILLARMY | QUEEN LATIFAH | TLC |
| DE LA SOUL | KURTIS BLOW | REDMAN | WILL SMITH |
| DJ SHADOW | LAURYN HILL | SALT N PEPA | WU-TANG CLAN |
| ERICK SERMON | LL COOL J | SPOONIE GEE | WYCLEF JEAN |
| FAT JOE | MASTER P | STETSASONIC | |

Yesterday's Solution

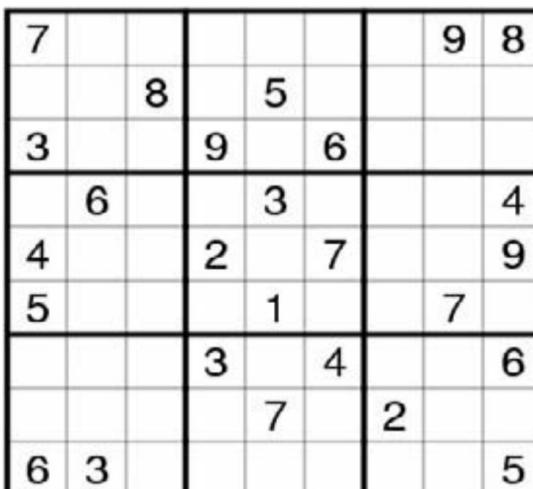
Head & Neck



- | | | |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
| BRAIN | HAIR | SCALP |
| CHEEKS | JAW | SKULL |
| CHIN | LARYNX | TASTE BUDS |
| EAR LOBES | LIPS | TEETH |
| EARDRUM | MOUTH | TEMPLES |
| EARS | NAPE | THROAT |
| EYEBROWS | NECK | TONGUE |
| EYELIDS | NOSE | TONSILS |
| EYES | NOSTRILS | TRACHEA |
| FOREHEAD | ESOPHAGUS | UVULA |
| GUMS | PHARYNX | |

The hidden word is: EYELASHES

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



Information

STATE OF KUWAIT
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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



Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Warm with light to moderate freshening at times north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 40 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear with a chance for haze.

BY NIGHT: Cold with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 35 km/h.

WEATHER WARNING	No Current Warnings
-----------------	---------------------

STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART	15/01/2018 0000 UTC
KUWAIT CITY	25 °C	14 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	24 °C	08 °C		
ABDALY	27 °C	10 °C		
BUBYAN	00 °C	00 °C		
JAHRA	27 °C	14 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	22 °C	12 °C		
SALMIYAH	19 °C	15 °C		
AHMADI	19 °C	15 °C		
NUWAISIB	28 °C	09 °C		
WAFRA	27 °C	08 °C		
SALMY	26 °C	09 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Tuesday	01/16	Fair	21 °C	05 °C	NW	12 - 35 km/h
Wednesday	01/17	Partly cloudy	19 °C	05 °C	VRB	06 - 24 km/h
Thursday	01/18	Fair	21 °C	03 °C	VRB-SE	06 - 30 km/h
Friday	01/19	Fair and Clouds will increase gradually causing rising dust with a chance for scattered rain later	25 °C	08 °C	SE-NW	25 - 60 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	05:20
Sunrise	06:44
Zuhr	11:57
Asr	14:52
Sunset	17:11
Isha	18:33

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	27 °C
MIN. Temp.	05 °C
MAX. RH	98 %
MIN. RH	07 %
MAX. Wind	S 50 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

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

Hospitals	
Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics	
Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401

Automated enquiry
about the
Civil ID card is
1889988

EMERGENCY
112



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

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Tuesday 16/1/2018				Departure Flights on Tuesday 16/1/2018			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
JAI	572	Mumbai	00:05	AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	JZR	528	Asyut	00:15
JZR	539	Cairo	00:50	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:30
PGT	858	Istanbul	00:55	MSC	406	Sohag	00:30
THY	772	Istanbul	00:55	FDB	072	Dubai	00:35
WAN	416	Beirut	01:05	MSC	412	Asyut	01:00
KAC	102	London	01:20	JAI	571	Mumbai	01:05
DLH	625	Bahrain	01:45	JZR	142	Doha	01:45
UAE	853	Dubai	01:45	KAC	677	Dubai	01:50
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50	KAC	285	Dhaka	01:55
AXB	395	Kozhikode	02:00	KAC	363	Colombo	02:00
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	KAC	417	Manila	02:00
QTR	1086	Doha	02:20	THY	773	Istanbul	02:30
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:30
KLM	446	Bahrain	02:30	DLH	625	Frankfurt	02:45
WAN	548	KTM	02:40	AXB	396	Kozhikode	02:55
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:55	UAE	854	Dubai	03:40
RJA	644	Amman	03:05	QTR	1087	Doha	03:40
MSR	606	Luxor	03:05	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:55
KAC	414	Bangkok	03:05	KKK	1269	Istanbul	03:55
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10	OMA	644	Muscat	03:55
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	THY	765	Istanbul	04:00
QTR	1076	Doha	03:50	MSR	607	Luxor	04:05
LMU	5510	Cairo	04:00	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:05
QTR	1090	Doha	04:05	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
KAC	382	Delhi	04:15	LMU	5511	Cairo	05:00
KAC	1544	Cairo	04:25	QTR	1091	Doha	05:05
KAC	418	Manila	04:25	KAC	205	Islamabad	05:20
RSB	7861	Sharjah	04:30	RSB	7862	IQA	05:30
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:35	QTR	1077	Doha	05:30
KAC	284	Dhaka	04:50	FDB	070	Dubai	05:45
FDB	069	Dubai	04:55	KAC	303	Mumbai	06:05
THY	6376	Istanbul	05:10	JZR	786	Riyadh	06:25
JZR	609	Hyderabad	05:10	JZR	560	Doha	06:25
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:20	THY	771	Istanbul	06:50
THY	770	Istanbul	05:25	JZR	164	Dubai	06:55
JZR	143	Doha	05:25	RJA	645	Amman	07:05
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	05:30	GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
KAC	358	Kochi	05:40	KAC	167	Paris	07:35
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	KAC	501	Beirut	08:00
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:10	KAC	171	Frankfurt	08:00
KAC	678	Dubai	06:30	THY	6376	Dubai/Istanbul	08:10
WAN	338	Alexandria	06:40	KAC	165	Rome	08:15
JZR	529	Asyut	06:50	FDB	054	Dubai	08:35
BAW	157	London	07:15	KAC	787	Jeddah	08:40
FDB	053	Dubai	07:35	KAC	787	Jeddah	08:40
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:35	BAW	156	London	08:55
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00	KAC	117	New York	09:00
UAE	855	Dubai	08:35	JZR	534	Cairo	09:10
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	KAC	691	Muscat	09:10
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	KAC	561	Amman	09:40
QTR	1070	Doha	09:10	KAC	671	Dubai	09:45
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	101	London	09:45
JZR	787	Riyadh	09:50	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	KAC	515	Tehran	10:00
WAN	342	Sohag	10:15	KAC	541	Cairo	10:00
RSB	7863	IQA	10:30	UAE	856	Dubai	10:00
IRA	675	Lar	10:40	KAC	773	Riyadh	10:10
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:10
MSC	403	Asyut	11:15	KAC	617	Doha	10:15
QTR	1074	Doha	11:20	QTR	1071	Doha	10:20
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	KAC	155	Istanbul	10:25
WAN	134	Doha	11:55	FDB	056	Dubai	10:35
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	JZR	778	Jeddah	10:40
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	ZAV	4101	IQA	11:00
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45	SVA	513	Riyadh	11:00
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:25
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	RSB	7864	IQA	11:30
AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:15	IRA	674	Lar	11:40
KAC	774	Riyadh	13:40	JZR	776	Jeddah	12:00
QTR	8511	Doha	13:55	MSC	404	Asyut	12:15
PAL	668	Manila	14:00	QTR	1075	Doha	12:30
KAC	618	Doha	14:15	MEA	405	Beirut	12:55
QTR	1078	Doha	14:20	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
				JZR	176	Dubai	13:40

Lebanon bans Spielberg film and Israeli adventurer biopic



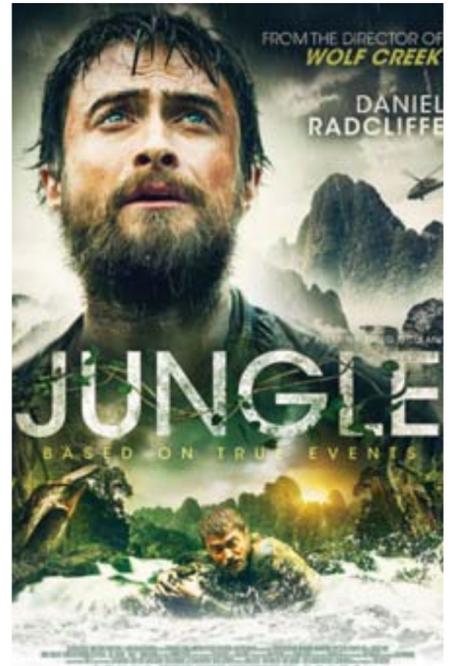
File photo shows US film director Steven Spielberg (left), US actress Meryl Streep (center) and US actor Tom Hanks pose on the red carpet on arrival for the European Premiere of The Post in London. — AFP

Lebanon's intelligence agency has banned Steven Spielberg's latest film, political thriller "The Post", and Australian drama "Jungle" to comply with a boycott of Israel, an official told AFP yesterday. "Screening of the film 'The Post' has been banned," said the official from Lebanon's General Security authority, speaking on condition of anonymity. In addition to controlling borders, Lebanon's General Security is responsible for censorship of films, plays, and books. Spielberg "is blacklisted by the Arab League's boycott office, which Lebanon complies with", the official explained.

The Hollywood giant was blacklisted by the Cairo-based pan-Arab body after he donated \$1 million to Israel during the 2006 war between the Jewish state and Lebanon. The two countries are still officially at war. "The Post" is an acclaimed production starring Meryl Streep and

Tom Hanks on the behind-the-scenes story of the 1971 publication by The Washington Post of the Pentagon Papers, which exposed the lies behind US involvement in the Vietnam War. The other film that got the censorship axe was "Jungle", a survival drama about Israeli adventurer Yossi Ghinsberg, who got lost in an uncharted part of the Bolivian Amazon in 1981.

The film, starring Daniel Radcliffe, had been screening for two weeks in Lebanon but is now being pulled, the same official told AFP, explaining that the decision followed a number of complaints. He did not specify their origin but a few days earlier the Lebanese branch of the Campaign to Boycott the Supporters of Israel issued a statement against "Jungle" because its main character is an Israeli, as is one of its producers. — AFP

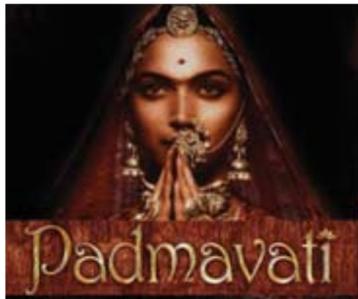


Controversial Indian film gets release date

A Bollywood epic about a legendary Hindu queen will finally be released next week despite months of violent protests, Indian filmmakers have confirmed. "Padmaavat" was initially due to hit screens in December. But producers Viacom18 Motion Pictures delayed the release following protests sparked by speculation that it would depict a romantic liaison between the queen and the 13th and 14th century Muslim ruler Alauddin Khilji. Politicians had threatened to ban the film for distorting historical facts, even though historians say the queen, Padmavati, is a mythical character.

It will hit screens on January 25 after censors cleared it for release subject to five changes, the producers announced late Sunday. Full-page advertisements appeared in Indian newspapers yesterday saying the film portrayed the legendary queen "with utmost respect". Film-makers say the movie is based on a work of fiction by a 16th-century Sufi poet, the epic entitled "Padmaavat". The movie's title has been changed from "Padmavati" to "Padmaavat", possibly to reflect the fact it is based on the work.

The film first ran into opposition in January 2017 when protesters attacked director Sanjay Leela Bhansali and vandalized the set during filming in Rajasthan. Protesters attacked another set near Mumbai in March, burning costumes and other props. They stepped up



demonstrations in November last year, including making a death threat against the lead actress Deepika Padukone and against the director Bhansali. India's Hindi film industry churns out hundreds of movies every year but filmmakers often face intimidation from fringe groups. Critics say the censorship board acts in an overzealous way, fuelling fears over creative freedom in the country. Ministers in Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh have said the film will not be shown in those states. The movie stars Shahid Kapoor as Maharawal Ratan Singh, the husband of Padmavati, and Ranveer Singh as Khilji who leads an invasion to try to capture the queen. — AFP

'Feminist' Deneuve apologizes to sex assault victims

French film star Catherine Deneuve who touched off a worldwide feminist backlash over an open letter she had signed bashing the #MeToo movement apologized to victims of sexual assault, and said there was "nothing good" about harassment. "I warmly greet all the victims of these hideous acts who might have felt offended by that letter which appeared in Le Monde (Tuesday). It is to them and them alone that I offer my apologies," the actress said in a letter published Sunday on the website of French daily Liberation.

Deneuve also said that there was "nothing in the letter" to Le Monde that said "anything good about harassment, otherwise I wouldn't have signed it." France's most revered actress was among 100 prominent women to sign the open letter defending a man's right to "bother" women, complaining that the campaign against harassment had become "puritanical". They deplored the wave of "denunciations" which has followed claims that Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein sexually assaulted and harassed women over decades.

They branded it a "witch-hunt" that they claim threatens sexual freedom. "I love freedom," Deneuve wrote in the letter to Liberation. "I don't like this characteristic of our era where everyone feels they have the right... to condemn. An era where simple denunciations on social networks



French actress Catherine Deneuve

cause punishment, resignation, and... often media lynching," she wrote. She also protested not being considered a feminist. She recalled that she had been among the women who had signed a manifesto "I had an abortion" in defense of abortion rights written by French feminist icon Simone de Beauvoir. As an actress since she was 17, Deneuve admitted that during her career she had been "a witness to indelicate situations" between men and women.

'A free woman'

But that Le Monde letter triggered a wave of protest from feminists and victims of harassment and assault worldwide, including one of the women who has accused Weinstein of rape. Italian actress Asia Argento, who was among the first to denounce Weinstein, said in a tweet: "Deneuve and other French women tell

the world how their interiorized misogyny has lobotomized them to the point of no return." A group of leading French feminists also excoriated Deneuve in a counterblast letter to French radio, branding her and the other signatories as "apologists for rape".

"Their letter is like a tired old uncle who doesn't understand what is happening," the feminists said. The letter's assertions that being "fondled on a metro... was a non-event" to some women, and a man's right to hit on a woman was fundamental to sexual freedom, sparked particular fury. "Catherine Deneuve might have very different opinions about harassment if she weren't an extraordinarily beautiful, very rich white woman living in a bubble of heightened privilege. And had some empathy," tweeted New York Times cartoonist Colleen Doran. Against this chorus of opposition, Deneuve wrote the letter to the leftist newspaper Liberation which had invited her to write to clarify her position. "I am a free woman and I will remain so," she wrote. The solution to sexual harassment "will come with the upbringing of our boys and girls," she said, adding that businesses must also set guidelines so that "if there is harassment, legal action will be immediately taken." "I believe in justice," she said. — AFP

OMEGA celebrates the two-year countdown to the Winter Youth Olympic Games Lausanne 2020



Raynald Aeschlimann

As the official timekeeper of the Olympic Games and the Youth Olympic Games, OMEGA yesterday celebrated the two-year countdown to the Winter Youth Olympic Games Lausanne 2020, together with the event's organizing committee. When the opening ceremony takes place on the 10th of January 2020, Lausanne 2020 will mark the third edition of the Winter Youth Olympic Games. Around 1,880 young athletes from over 70 nations will compete in 81 events around the Swiss city of Lausanne, on the shores of Lake Geneva, St Moritz, and in the nearby Vaud Alps and French Jura mountains. Lausanne 2020 will be particularly notable for having the same number of male and female athletes competing, as well as being the first time that ski mountaineering appears on the Olympic Games program.

To start the clock for the two year countdown, Raynald Aeschlimann, President and CEO of OMEGA, was joined by Danka Bartekova, Chair of the Olympic Coordination Commission for Lausanne 2020; Alain Zobrist, CEO of OMEGA Timing; Patrick Baumann, President of Lausanne 2020 and Ian Logan, CEO of Lausanne 2020.

During the official unveiling, Aeschlimann said: "OMEGA is truly looking forward to Lausanne 2020. To be in this special location to serve the best young athletes in the world will be a great privilege. Of course, Switzerland is OMEGA's home, so we'll have an extra feeling of pride when we welcome the world here."

Bartekova also commented on the event, saying: "We are privileged to share this moment together with our friends from OMEGA, a long-standing partner of the Olympic Games. OMEGA will not only provide the timekeeping for all sports at Lausanne 2020, but also the countdown clock we are unveiling today. Thanks to OMEGA's cutting-edge technology, the times and results will be transmitted to spectators and fans across the globe. So, let me thank everyone at OMEGA for their great support for Lausanne 2020."

Baumann added his thoughts by saying: "Lausanne 2020, the biggest winter multi-sport sporting event after the Olympic Games, innovates and involves the whole country and neighboring France, and promotes the Olympic values and the commitment to youth on a daily basis. We look forward to continuing this momentum for

the next two years and are pleased to celebrate 'Two Years To Go' today alongside OMEGA, a partner who shares these same values with us and confirms its support to the Olympic movement in all its facets."

Known as the 'Olympic Capital', Lausanne has been the home of the modern Olympic Movement for more than 100 years and houses both the IOC Headquarters and the Olympic Museum. Certainly, Lausanne 2020 will represent a truly memorable homecoming for the multi-sport event and will represent the first Olympic Games to be held in Switzerland since the Olympic Winter Games St Moritz 1948 an event that OMEGA also timed.

For OMEGA, the Winter Youth Olympic Games Lausanne 2020 will be a 'local' occasion too, as the brand's own watchmaking headquarters in Biel are situated just over 100km from the host city. The event will add even more experience to OMEGA's already incredible legacy of Olympic Games timekeeping.



(From left) Photo shows Raynald Aeschlimann, Patrick Baumann, Danka Bartekova, Grégoire Junod, Philippe Leuba, Ian Logan and Alain Zobrist.



Raynald Aeschlimann



Alain Zobrist



Patrick Baumann



NO FUR DURING MILAN FASHION WEEK



Animal rights activists made their presence known during Milan Fashion Week, with several dozen attempting to block access to the Marni preview. The show went on, running late as the fashion world is wont with or without protests. One fur-wearing fashionista endured a shower of verbal abuse as he ducked into the show at the last minute, but no violence was reported.



Animal rights activists have claimed victories recently, with Armani and Gucci being among the latest to commit to not using animal furs in future collections. Brands like Marni, which was born out of a family fur business, have a tougher line to tread. Still, the runway show by Francesco Risso, in his second year, included only one obvious animal skin reference, and that was a shearing coat. Here are some highlights from the first day of Milan Fashion Week, which also included fall-winter menswear shows by Emporio Armani, newcomer Isabel Benenato, Marni and Dolce & Gabbana:

Marni's travel journal

Entering the Marni showroom is to enter designer Francesco Risso's world, immediately. Rather than conventional seating, he offered objects to sit upon. A child's stuffed giraffe. A hose-less vacuum cleaner. Stacks of disused videocassettes. Sacks of flour, whole wheat. These are the details that fill Risso's travel journal. And the traveler's wardrobe embrace a naive, awe-struck sense of the world, with oversized jackets and trousers hand-painted with arm chairs, monkeys or musical instruments.

Suits, puffer coats, nylon jumpsuits and anoraks round out the collection. Overcoats, in salmon pink, or blue, look slept in. Blankets do the same tricks. Men, spanning generations, not just youthful, wear talisman around their necks: a string of found trinkets, or a plasticized bear. The rule, Risso said back stage, "is that there are no rules."



Models present creations for fashion house Marni during the Men's Fall/Winter 2019 fashion shows in Milan. —AFP photos





Dolce & Gabbana's king of angels

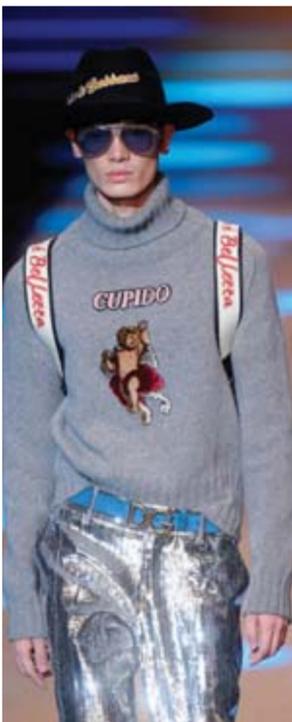
It was a bling call at Dolce & Gabbana. The designing duo of Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana constructed a Baroque Sicilian church facade as the background for their "King of Angels" collection. The show opened with a tableau of young stars in formalwear, including elaborately embroidered military-style jackets and floral suits, walking beneath a pair of cherubs. The colorful knitwear that featured cherubic putti in oval frames looked inspired by church ceilings, and angelic visages also graced motorcycle jackets.

Dolce & Gabbana, as usual, offered a range of looks - with suits styled formally, layered with furry jackets and coming pajama-inspired with robe overcoats. The designers employed light-heartedness and humor with heart-shaped backpacks, as well as one that looked like a golden puppet peeking over the wearer's shoulder. The designers also emblazoned slogans such as "Time of Change" and "Love is Love" across beanies, waistbands and backsides. Nothing on the runway made the slogans' meanings explicit, although both could be interpreted as calls for new attitudes. Colombian singer Maluma closed out the show in a glittering silver suit to match his stage presence.

Unexpected Dolce&Gabbana

Dancers busted a move in Dolce&Gabbana active-wear at an exclusive late-night "unexpected show" for a smaller fashion crowd. While active wear has long been part of the designers' repertoire, they are putting new emphasis on the hot category. Their Millennial models showed off the collection, ranging from baseball shirts emblazoned with "King of My Life," to soft bear-head hoodies, eliciting cheers and cat-calls from admiring on-lookers.

Models present creations for fashion house Dolce & Gabbana during the Men's Fall/Winter 2019 fashion shows in Milan.





Emporio Armani's
Arching zippers, tufts of fur and smooth velvet gave zest to Emporio Armani's youthful tailoring for next winter and fall. While silhouettes mostly were relaxed, the palette was dark, albeit geared toward the fun end of deep with black, navy and slate giving way to mauve, other blues and shades tinged with purple. Floral patterns and hypnotic repeating graphics complemented the flowing silhouette of open jackets and easy trousers. Swirls of color also burst forth on alpaca knitwear in soothing blues and icy greens. Designer Giorgio Armani has forsworn using real animal fur in all his lines, winning praise from animal rights activists. The fur accents on the boots and detachable dyed collars therefore were surely faux.

A series of furry black coats were rendered from curly-haired sheepskin, according to the press release, and there were only pony-effect goatskin jackets. Zippers were deployed with frivolity across knitwear, inviting the playful to detach, or along sleeves, giving a cape-like feel when opened. Trousers were tapered, most elaborately so with a button cuff. Pants were mostly relaxed for daytime leisure and evening events, but tight for the sleek business suits worn tieless. Velvet worked for day or evening, as casual wear in bomber jackets or elegant suits. Gloves were the accessories of the choice, but the 83-year-old Armani is not abiding the smartphone-driven trend of returning to the fingerless gloves of the 1980s. All of the designer's gloves were perfectly winter-proof. — AP



Italian designer Giorgio Armani (center) poses with models after the show during the Men's Fall/Winter 2019 fashion shows in Milan yesterday.



Lifestyle

TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2018



One of the participants displays fruits during the Horeca Expo yesterday in Mishref, Kuwait. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

DUTCH MILLERS GET FRESH WIND IN THEIR SAILS



Dolman helped lead the fight for UNESCO to recognize 'the craft of the miller operating windmills and watermills' as among 'the intangible cultural heritage of humanity'.

An icy wind blows the windmill's soaring sails, turning them quickly and cranking the large stone wheels inside in a time-honored method of grinding grain. "I live from the wind," says Dutch miller Maarten Dolman, one of only about 40 people in the Netherlands to still earn a living from making flour in a way that has changed little down the centuries. "It's been my engine for the past 30 years," he smiles, as jute sacks quickly fill with powdery white granules. After making his early morning deliveries to local bakeries, Dolman starts on his daily production of up to 1,000 kilos (2,200 pounds) of flour aided solely by the power of the bone-achingly cold wind, which moans across the low-lying northern European country.

But the 56-year-old has renewed pride in his work at his windmill the "Windotter", which stands tall above the small central town of IJsselstein, population 35,000. Last month "the craft of the miller operating windmills and watermills" was officially included on UNESCO's list of "the intangible cultural heritage of humanity". "Our craft is now protected. It is very important as well for the next generation coming after us to conserve and learn this job," says Dolman.

From father to son

The father of two, whose overalls and cap, and even his round glasses, seem permanently covered in a light dusting of white, says he was "born in flour." His own father, who bought his first mill in 1960, taught him the trade as a boy, and now one of Dolman's two sons is learning the necessary skills from him to carry on the business. Passing on his craft is a valuable mission in a country where, at their peak in the 19th century, there were once 9,000 windmills. Now professionals and volunteers help maintain and operate about 1,200 remaining windmills to grind flour or regulate water levels—an important defense, with some 70 percent of the Netherlands lying below sea level.

Dolman, chairman of the Guild of Traditional Flour Mill Millers, helped lead the fight to win UNESCO recognition, and said it meant "a lot" to be added alongside other cultural treasures, such as the art of the dough-twirling pizza makers of Naples. The application, backed by the Dutch ministry of culture, said in its submission that "wind and water are in plentiful supply in the Netherlands, and mills have therefore always been an integral part of the Dutch landscape," adding the "first descriptions of Dutch windmills date from around 1200". "With a declining number of people earning their livelihood from the craft, millers today also play a key role in transmitting the cultural history of the practice," the UNESCO site says.

In demand

Inside the Windotter, time seems to have stood still. An ancient telephone hangs on the wall, old tools lay scattered about with tattered accounts books, all lightly covered in flour. As the 26-metre (86-foot) long majestic sails creak away in the wind, Dolman's wooden clogs tap up and down the steep stairways. It's a scene far removed from the more polished line of some 19 windmills at the southwestern tourist attraction of Kinderdijk, which were included on UNESCO's list of cultural heritage in 1997. With its brick tower stretching up five floors, the Windotter is one of the country's biggest windmills. Built in 1732, it was completely restored in 1987.

Since then it has been at work fulltime, five days a week. Bags of flour sell like hot cakes in the shop at its base, white or brown, or flour milled from rye, barley or oats. "Local residents but also people from further away come here to buy their flour for bread or pancakes, sometimes even arriving by bike in lousy weather," said one of the saleswomen. She is among a dozen volunteers, who help to run the shop.

Ensuring the craft survives

Recognition means the UN's educational, scientific and cultural organization has committed to financing certain activities to safeguard the millers' craft, including training, internships and educational activities. Since 1972



Dutch miller Maarten Dolman is one of only about 40 people in the Netherlands to still earn a living from making flour in the time-honored way of grinding grain through the power of wind in his windmill in the small central town of IJsselstein. — AFP photos

when it was founded with the help of Dolman's father, the Guild of Volunteer Millers has offered courses in theory and practice. For example, "aspiring millers learn to operate a mill safely" and have to spend a minimum of 150 hours doing practical work at different mills and in every season. The courses include learning how to read the wind, or how many sails are needed, and are given by 105 instructors and 11 master millers. Almost 2,000 people have been awarded qualifications since the guild's courses began. Dutch millers "must pass this on to young people, who don't have their roots in this field, so that the craft survives," insists Dolman. — AFP



In 1997 UNESCO listed the 19 windmills at the southwestern tourist attraction of Kinderdijk in the Netherlands on its list of cultural heritage.