

# Friday Times

ISSUE NO: 17535

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## Kuwait gets into the spirit of Ramadan

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## Local

## Palestine blues



IN MY VIEW

By Nejouad Al-Yagout

local@kuwaittimes.com

Many people claim that Arabs and Muslims only lament for Palestine because they are Arabs and Muslims. And yes, Arabs cry for Arabs, Muslims cry for Muslims, but many non-Arabs and non-Muslims are also crying for Palestine, because it is a humanitarian crisis and a disaster that affects us collectively. If it is considered legal for external governing bodies to take over land to solve the issue of minorities or ostracized ethnic groups, then every country on Earth is in danger of losing its sovereignty, especially if it is backed by a divine mandate.

When it becomes acceptable for young kids at a protest to be shot at when their weapons are stones, something is amiss. Seriously amiss. In extreme cases, certain scenarios can justify a nation's right to defend itself where adults are concerned. But when have children become a threat?

If Israel has a historical claim over Palestine, then the Khoisan have a claim over South Africa, Aborigines have a right to Australia, Native Indians have a right to America and so on and so forth. No country today has a claim to the land of their ancestors. So even if the Israelis claim it is their land, it no longer was in 1912. It no longer was in 1948. Nor was it their land in 1967.

And since it has been recognized as a nation today, it is cause for concern to witness such a powerful nation further harass Palestinians by taunting them with Jerusalem as its cap-

ital. Why the callousness? Is it necessary to flaunt one's dominance in such a flagrant manner? Jerusalem should be a neutral plot of land for all followers of the three Abrahamic faiths to coexist peacefully. Not one of the three can claim it without offending their brethren from the other two branches or without creating tension.

If Israel continues to expand its settlements without any regard for Palestinians while the world goes about its business without implementing decisive regulations, then something has to give. And it has to come from Israel itself since all supporters of Palestine are either helpless or have been swayed. It is now up to Israel to wake up and remember that only labels - mere labels - separate Israelis from Palestinians. Prayers for Palestine have not been working, so we now pray that Israel has a change of heart and that it realizes that the only way to peace is through peace. We pray this change of heart comes soon, for the sake of humanity, not just for Arabs and Muslims, but all of humanity.

Is it worth it to stage one apocalyptic battle after another to actualize a vision for a new world or a prophecy or to keep the arms industry in business or to displace one another to build pipelines or for whatever reason to start a war? Is it worth it to stage false flag operations and fund terrorists to galvanize hatred and gain support? When will expansionism and control no longer matter? When will governments and people work together to turn our planet into a Garden of Eden? When will all lives be as sacred as the lives of those who put plans into action?

People like to create a narrative of West vs East or Islam vs Judaism, stating that Arabs are polarizing Jews or accusing them of anti-Semitism or even vice versa. But if we leave out the labels and recognize our collective humanity, we can all work together so that none of this happens in an era almost begging for us to evolve.

## Ramadan and food



Local Spotlight

By Muna Al-Fuzai

muna@kuwaittimes.net

Every year, with the advent of the holy month of Ramadan, some questions come from non-Muslim expats about two things - the working hours during Ramadan and the law against eating publicly during the daytime period. The working hours are usually determined by each business institution, whether government or private, but there are many questions about eating in Ramadan.

During daytime, most restaurants are closed except supermarkets and grocery stores. I know some people complain about the closure of coffee shops, especially those who depend on their morning coffee to start their day, but the law of not eating in public was set in order to respect the atmosphere of the state and Muslims fasting. The closure during daylight hours will not kill anyone, especially since all markets and grocery stores are open and available to all. Any person can buy whatever they want from food and drink, but cannot consume it publicly in front of people. They should take into account that they are in a Muslim country that has its laws on fasting.

I do not see a lot of extremism in Kuwait towards the subject of forcing everyone to fast, and in some institutions, there are special rooms for employees who are not fasting to eat, provided it is not done publicly in front of visitors. It is important for non-fasting people to know that there is a law about eating or drinking in public during the daytime in Ramadan. The law stipulates a punishment of up to KD 100 and/or jail for up to one month. The law also punishes anyone who assists anyone to eat/drink in daytime during Ramadan too.

So, if you want to avoid this headache, I think eating in private or at your workplace would be safer, and again let's recall that this is only during the daytime and not the whole day, because at night everything will go back to its normal routine.

Now, working under the sun in this heat is very tough, especially for fasting workers like street cleaners. I really hope that we will not see any workers on the streets during daytime. I can't understand the necessity of forcing street cleaners to be out during daytime in Ramadan, as they might be fasting too and being exposed to the sun is difficult. I see no harm in reducing their working hours and to start working only after iftar. I think this should also be implemented when there is a dust or sand storm too.

Fasting is one of the five pillars of Islam, in which a Muslim refrains from eating and drinking and all sins from dawn to sunset. The fasting Muslim should also abstain from lying and obscenity, but this does not mean that everyone acts upon this code of ethic. There are some who do not do their work properly with the excuse of fasting, or delay people's businesses because they are not in a good mood as smokers and cannot work well during the day. There are others who commit immoral and inhuman acts, and those who grumble about the length of the daylight hours.

No one can deny that the weather is hot and fasting is tiring, but it is a spiritual worship practiced by Muslims and will not stop because there are those who do not like it. They should learn to take it easy and deal with it as a physical exercise to stop eating and drinking during specific hours and try to enjoy the evenings and go out to restaurants and cafes that remain open until dawn.

Ramadan Kareem!



## condolences

The Management and Staff of  
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wish to offer their heartfelt  
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**Mr. Sharfuddin Banakal Soofi**

Marketing - EMC Styrene Kuwait

On the sad demise of his

## Mother

May her soul rest in peace and may  
God grant comfort and strength to the  
bereaved family members during this time



## The perfect iftar broth

By Faten Omar

The Ramadan fast ends with the Maghrib azan, followed by a meal called iftar. The fast is usually broken with dates, a sip of water, and for many people, a simple lentil soup. Traditional versions of the soup use dry pulses and take an hour or more to make.

Red lentil soup is popular during Ramadan, as it is hearty and delicious and serves as the perfect starter to whet the appetite. The basic ingredients of the soup are red lentils and root vegetables like carrots and potatoes, which can be added along with onions. Serve it with croutons, a dash of lemon and flatbread.

NOTE: Kuwait Times celebrates Ramadan in Kuwait with 30 days of the Icons of Ramadan. We will highlight our favorite activities, events, symbols and foods that are popular during this holy month, along with Kuwait's Ramadan culture, history and traditions. Email us at local@kuwaittimes.com with your favorite symbols of Ramadan and Ramadan photos.



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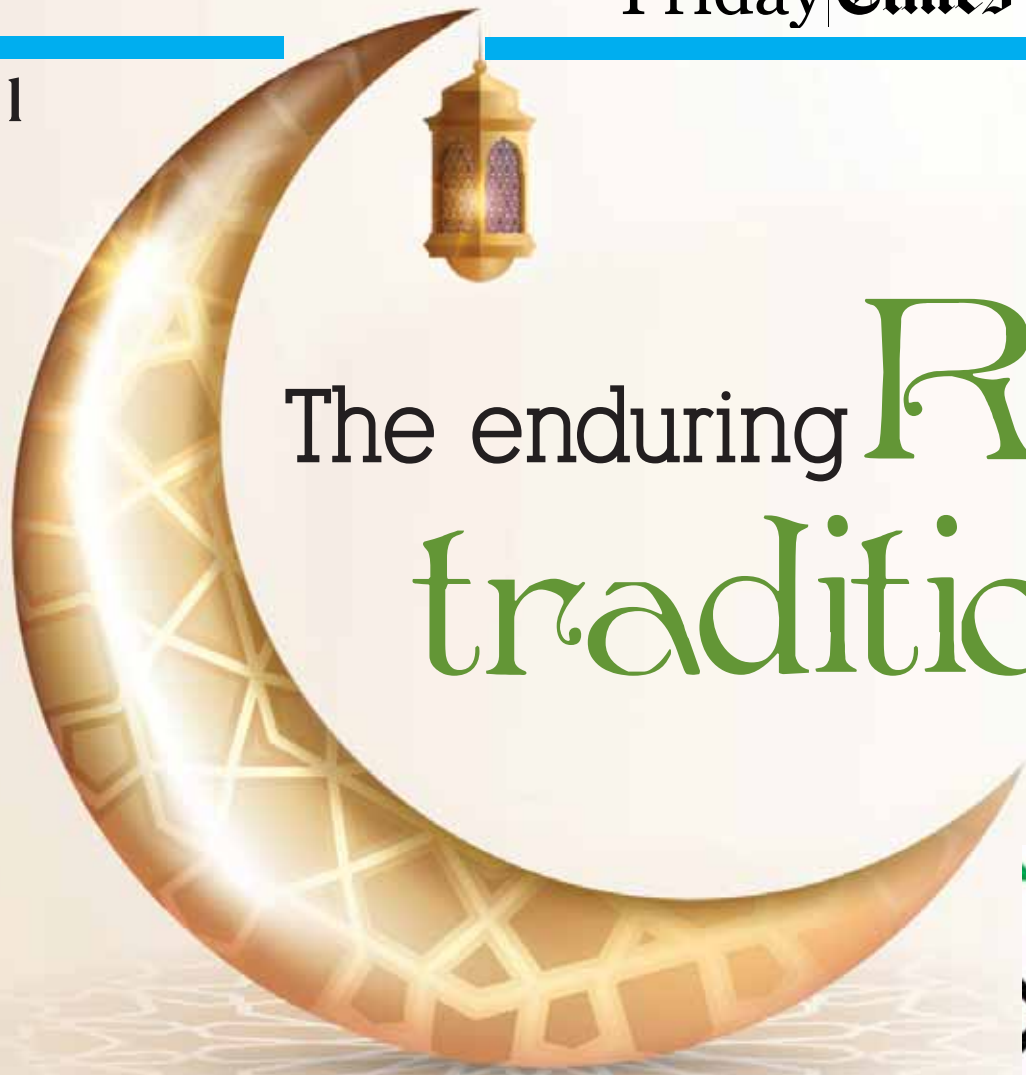


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# The enduring Ramadan traditions of Kuwait



By Shakir Reshamwala

Around the world, Ramadan is a time of piety and prayers, fasting and feasting, and spending time with family and friends. But as is often the case, every nation and community develops a set of traditions and customs over the ages that come to symbolize the culture of the land. Kuwait too has its own unique Ramadan traditions that have been observed by generations of locals and residents of this country, and are a source of comfort and belonging. But Kuwait's rapid transformation from a sleepy fishing and pearl diving backwater to an affluent, modern state also turned many local traditions on their head, while some quietly disappeared. Daq al-harees (crushing of wheat) was a pre-Ramadan tradition in old Kuwait, where a family bought large amounts of wheat that was crushed by skilled women accompanied by folk singing, but the custom now has waned. The Abu Tubailah no longer walks the streets of the neighborhood with his drum to wake people up for suhoor (predawn meal), and has retired to become a cultural figure. And after iftar (breaking of the fast), people nowadays prefer to spend their time watching big-budget soap operas on TV or head to malls and coffee shops rather than stay at home with the family. Nevertheless, a few of Kuwait's rich traditions of Ramadan have stood the passage of time, continuously evolving to reflect changing social, financial and familial developments.



## Graish

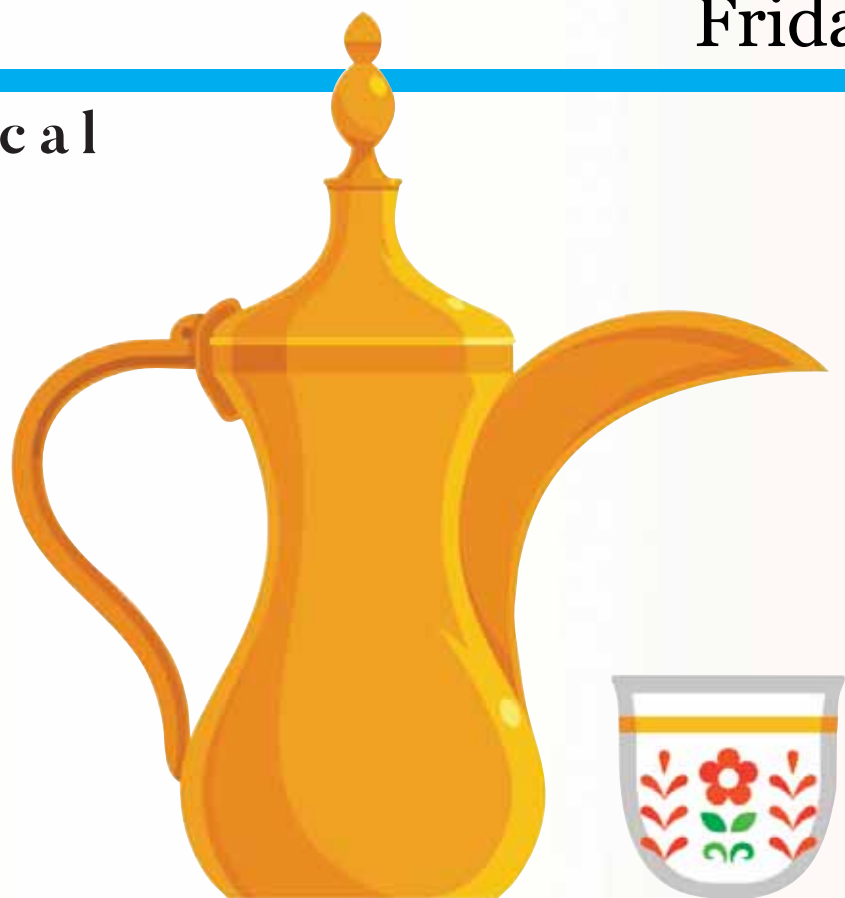
Graish is the traditional pre-Ramadan feast when family members and even neighbors gather before the onset of the fasting month. In the olden days, the women of the house would empty the larders of their homes of foods that are not usually eaten in Ramadan, and extended families would gather to partake in the potluck. These days the food is usually ordered from restaurants and the gatherings are smaller, but the tradition continues.

## Girgian

Among Kuwaiti Ramadan traditions, Girgian is one that is the most popular, and the most evolved. Girgian is marked on the 13th, 14th and 15th of Ramadan, when children go 'trick or treating' to collect candies and nuts door to door. There's a reason why Girgian is celebrated in the middle of the lunar month. In pre-oil - and pre-electricity Kuwait - the full moon would provide illumination for the children to trudge across the neighborhood.



Local



According to Kuwaiti historian and astronomer Saleh Al-Ojairi, the word Girgian is derived from the word gargaa, which refers to the loud clanging sound heard when a household pot made of metal is struck. Today, Girgian has become thoroughly commercialized, with the simple confectionery of yore replaced by gourmet chocolates and exotic nuts housed in brand-name bags and pouches that are often more expensive than their contents. Parents also make separate bags with the names of their children printed on them, and try to outdo other families in coming up with the most exclusive presentations.

**Ghabqa**

A ghabqa is a gathering of family and friends in the evenings of Ramadan. Like Girgian, ghabqas today are lavish corporate affairs where companies invite clients and employees along with their families for a night of fun and feasting, with the media in attendance too.

**Iftar cannon**

In this modern, technological era of precision timekeeping, astronomical calculations and even mobile apps, the iftar cannon is an unlikely survivor of the bygone era, when the sound of the blast signaled to the faithful it was time to break their fast. The 'midfa al iftar' takes place every day at the beautifully restored



Naif Palace in Kuwait City. The firing of the cannon attracts dozens of families and children daily, and is broadcast live on Kuwait TV and radio. The open yard in the palace where the ceremony takes place is set up to resemble pre-oil Kuwait, complete with vintage cars, artisans and children in traditional garb. The firing is conducted by three uniformed guards in red livery.

**Qiyam al-layl**

In line with the trend across the Arab and Islamic world, the Kuwaiti society has become more conservative and religious. Though not a social tradition, congregation tahajjud prayers during the last ten nights of Ramadan are observed in most mosques across the state. But the popularity of qiyam al-layl prayers has skyrocketed in the past decade, with the Grand Mosque leading the renaissance.

Thousands attend the nightly prayers daily, with well over 100,000 worshippers converging on Kuwait's largest mosque on the night of 27th Ramadan. The best reciters of the Holy Quran lead the prayers, headlined by Sheikh Meshari Al-Afasi, who has become famous across the Muslim world for his mellifluous recitation of the holy book.

As they say, the only thing constant in this world is change, and Ramadan traditions are no exception. Some customs may have died, but the spirit of this holy month is alive and thriving.





Seen at the souq

# Souq Mubarakiya a hive of activity in Ramadan



On the first day of Ramadan yesterday, Souq Mubarakiya was abuzz with shopkeepers, vegetable sellers, bakers, butchers, fishmongers and other traders welcoming shoppers. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat and Joseph Shagra



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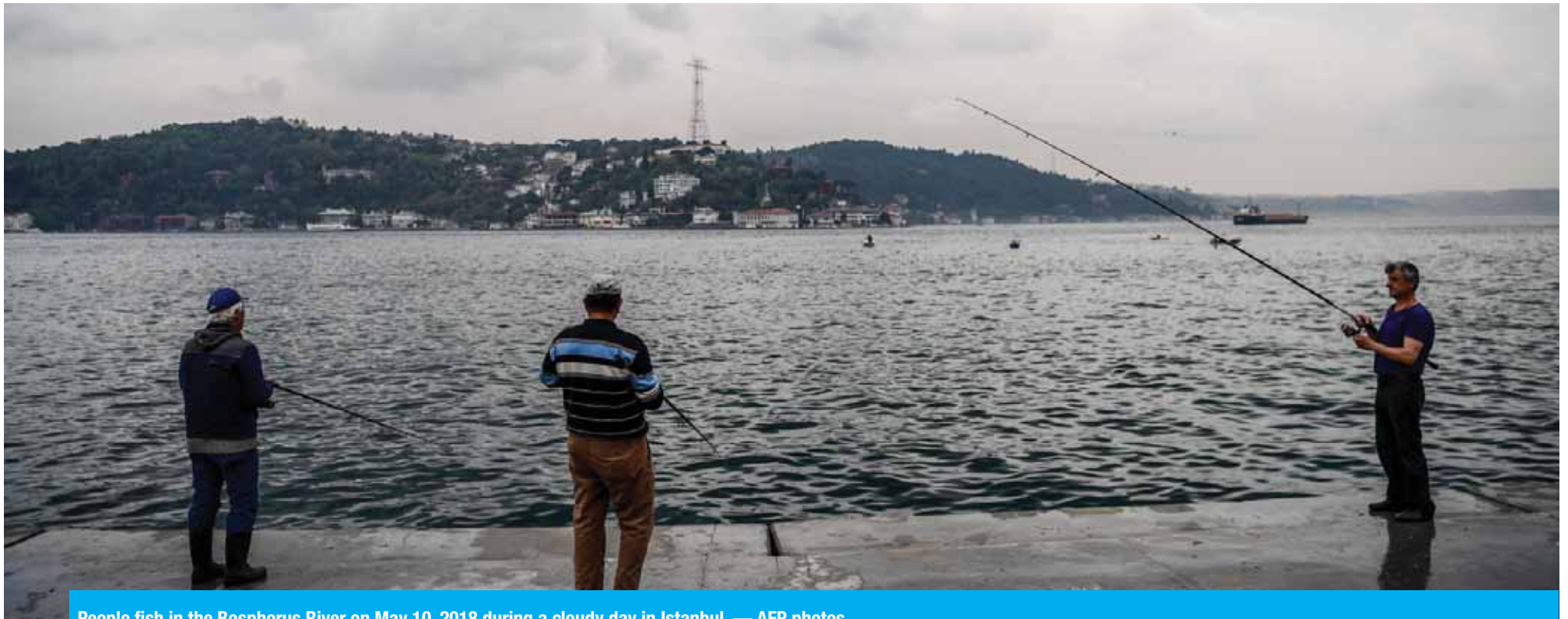


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# Tips from Kuwaitis on traveling to Turkey



People fish in the Bosphorus River on May 10, 2018 during a cloudy day in Istanbul. — AFP photos

By Jeri Al-Jeri

I recently traveled to the stunning metropolis of Istanbul, then headed to the lovely and cozy village of Yalava. However, I felt the need to ask three Kuwaitis who have more experience than me when it comes to answering questions of “how, when and where” to have the best touristic experience in Turkey, and comment on controversial issues that arise every now and then.

Iman Al-Salam is a very enthusiastic and energetic young woman who loves Turkey with all her heart and “brain”. She has taken all Turkish language courses and hopped on a plane to see Turkey before and after she learned Turkish. This trilingual Kuwaiti has a very valuable point of view she wants to share. Iman likes to be called “Eylül” in Turkish.

**Q: What is your advice for Kuwaitis who want to go to Turkey?**

**Eylül:** Don't stay in the cities - venture into the villages and enjoy the vastness of Turkey. We in Kuwait are bombarded enough with city life as it is.

**Q: Do you think the media has exaggerated the danger of crime in Turkey?**

**Eylül:** They have indeed exaggerated a lot! It's enough for you to just be a wholesome and polite individual to stay safe and satisfied - that's my point of view - the way it is anywhere in the world.

**Q: Was your experience in Turkey different after you learned Turkish?**

**Eylül:** One hundred percent! Turkish people adore whoever attempts to speak their language, because they are so proud of it. They will be extra friendly, and even give you bigger discounts at times.

Nowaf Al-Khattir is another young Kuwaiti who keeps going back and forth to Turkey. He has taken Turkish language courses as well.

**Q: What is your advice to Kuwaitis going**

**to Turkey?**

**Nowaf:** First of all, keep being inquisitive - everything changes quickly. And you have to get rid of any stereotypical views about Turkish people that unfortunately have found their way into people's conversations.

**Q: What are the best areas you recommend?**

**Nowaf:** They keep changing every season. Istanbul is the second most crowded city in the world, so right after Ramadan, head for the villages. Because we in Kuwait suffer a lot from the heat of our very generous sun and sandstorms, it will feel very refreshing when immersed in the soothing greenery of nature and not be stuck in a jam in the big city. The places that have more nature and less city “baggage” are Kusadas and Bodrum for young people, and Bursa and Trabzon for families.

Mashal Al-Diwali is a highly-educated man who cannot satiate his appetite to travel to Turkey. He has been to Turkey approximately 20 times, and is still booking more flights for himself and his family.

**Q: Have you perceived any sort of “targeted” treatment from sellers as a Khaleeji visitor?**

**Mashal:** Not at all. There are standard prices that are the same for everyone. I have booked a villa for August in Sapanca.

**Q: May we know why Sapanca?**

**Mashal:** For calmness. Everything is fresh and organic - honey, fruits and whatever you want. And if you want to go to Istanbul or Bursa, it will take you just an hour and a half to two hours.

**Q: Is Turkey best for honeymooners?**

**Mashal:** I had my honeymoon in Turkey in April during the tulip season, and it was amazingly romantic! I recommended it to my younger brother too, who is now on his honeymoon in Turkey!



A Turkish family breaks the fast on the first day of Ramadan in front of the Blue Mosque in Sultanahmet in Istanbul on Wednesday.



A man and a cat walk in Fatih Mosque's square during Friday prayers on May 11, 2018 in Istanbul.



## Local

# Kuwait, Gulf, US sanction leadership of Hezbollah

## 10 individuals, 4 others designated as terrorist entities

**KUWAIT:** As part of Kuwait's efforts in combating terrorism and drying out its funding, the committee in charge of implementing the UN Security Council's resolutions which were issued under the seventh article of the United Nations charter has designated four entities and 10 individuals as terrorist groups, a foreign ministry source said Wednesday. The source told KUNA the decision was made in partnership with the United States, the main partner of the Terrorist Financing Targeting Centre (TFTC), in addition to member states, namely Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, UAE, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman.

The source noted such procedures comes as part of the relentless efforts by TFTC to counter terrorism financing, along with Kuwait's keenness to strengthen partnership with the US to eliminate financing of terrorism groups, which threatens all member countries of the center. The source added that in implementation of Security Council resolution 1373 of 2001 under the 7th chapter of UN charter,

and decisions made by GCC leaders in their 37th session, which was held in Manama in 2016, measures will be taken in accordance with the Kuwaiti constitution and its laws and through the relevant bodies.

The TFTC said the sanctions were aimed at Hezbollah's Shura Council, the powerful Lebanese militia's decision-making council, led by the group's secretary-general Hassan Nasrallah. Nasrallah, Hezbollah Deputy Secretary General Naim Qasim, and three other Shura Council members were listed under the joint sanctions, which aim at freezing vulnerable assets of those named and blocking their access to global financial networks.

It was the second time the year-old TFTC came together to announce sanctions on groups they call threats to regional peace. Last October, the group announced joint sanctions on top Islamic State and Al-Qaeda figures in Yemen. "The TFTC again demonstrated its great value to international security by disrupting Iran and

Hezbollah's destabilizing influence in the region," said US Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin in a statement. "By targeting Hezbollah's Shura Council, our nations collectively rejected the false distinction between a so-called 'Political Wing' and Hezbollah's global terrorist plotting."

The move came 10 days after Hezbollah gave a strong showing in Lebanon's elections, garnering enough seats in parliament to block any attempt by its political foes to make it disarm its militia, which rivals the Lebanese army in size and firepower. The announcement followed two US moves in the past week to put pressure on Iran's financial networks, including sanctions announced Tuesday that aimed at an alleged financial pipeline that moved "hundreds of millions of dollars" from Iran's central bank through an Iraqi bank to Hezbollah.

Coming after the Trump administration withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal on May 8, the Treasury said Wednesday's actions are part of efforts to go after "the totality of Iran's



**KUWAIT:** Kuwaiti National Security Apparatus (NSA) Chief Sheikh Thamer Al-Ali Al-Sabah yesterday received in his office US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence R Silverman to discuss bilateral relations. The meeting focused on means of strengthening relations between Kuwait and the US, the NSA said in a press statement. The two sides also addressed regional and international issues of common concern, it added. — KUNA

malign activities and regionally destabilizing behavior, including that of Hezbollah".

### The designated individuals and entities are:

1. The military wing of Hezbollah
2. Naim Qasim
3. Mohammad Yazbik

4. Hussain Khalil
5. Hashim Safi Al-Deen
6. Talal Hamia
7. Adham Tabaja
8. Spectrum Al-Taif group
9. Hasan Ibrahim
10. Maher Trading
11. Al-Inmaa Engineering and Contracting
12. Ali Youssef Chararah
13. Ibrahim Ameen Al-Said
14. Husain Ibrahim — Agencies

## Kuwait's Cultural Office in US warns about fraudsters

**WASHINGTON:** Kuwait's cultural office in Washington DC called Wednesday on Kuwaiti students to be cautious when receiving telephone calls, emails, or Internet messages from fraudsters who claim to provide services for a fee. "We call upon students to be careful about receiving telephone calls or emails or WhatsApp messages, where the senders claim that they are from the cultural office in Washington or the embassy," the head of the Cultural Office Aseel Al-Awadhi told KUNA.

Awadhi warned the callers might claim to provide Kuwaiti students with the services they need to authenticate their academic degrees and "online materials" for a certain amount of money. She stressed that students should "be very careful as the contact person uses letters signed by former cultural attaches or from the head of the cultural office (through photocopies) to camouflage and formalize the contact or the message."

She appealed to students to pay attention to and not to deal with anyone who claims to be working with the Kuwaiti Cultural Office or the Embassy and offers paid services for authenticating certificates or carrying out any other transaction. Awadhi explained that the interaction between students and the cultural office "is done only through the academic supervisor, known by the students themselves when they arrive in the US, and the cultural attaché or the cultural counselor using email only, stressing that her "office does not in any way require any fee for the services it provides to students". Awadhi also called on students if they have received such calls or messages to "not hesitate to contact the Cultural Office by email and immediately inform them. — KUNA

## Mercury to rise at the weekend

**KUWAIT:** Weather conditions will remain steady in the country during the weekend, with the temperature starting to rise, Kuwait Meteorological Center forecast yesterday. All weather maps, satellite images and weather radars indicate improved weather conditions today and tomorrow, with clouds accumulating from today evening to tomorrow, an official at the center Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi told KUNA.

The weather yesterday was hot with light to moderate northwesterly winds be-

tween 10- 35 km/h. The highest temperature was between 37 and 39 degrees Celsius, while the lowest was between 23 and 25 degrees Celsius.

Today's weather will be hot with high clouds, while the lowest temperature will be between 24- 26 degrees, he added. As for tomorrow, Qarawi expected hot, partly cloudy weather with northwesterly variable wind speeds between 6-28 km/h. The highest temperature expected is 39-41 C and sea level between 2-5 feet. — KUNA

## The karraniya of yore

**KUWAIT:** In old Kuwait, a 'karani' was a person who worked as an accountant or bookkeeper for a certain merchant, ship owner or captain. In his book 'Old Crafts, Professions & Commercial Activities in Kuwait', Kuwaiti heritage researcher Mohammed Jamal said a karani used to keep a merchant's books and register all daily transactions. He added that by the end of the day, a karani would note down all transactions made on credit in a separate page for each client, and then visit the clients on Saturdays to collect a portion of the money they owed his boss. Jamal added that ship owners and captains also used to hire a karani to keep their books and register all

sales, purchases and expenditures and calculate sailors' dividends.

In addition, Jamal said that some karraniya (plural) used to operate in harbors receiving ships carrying freshwater from the Shatt Al-Arab to count and register the number of goatskins filled with water sold, as well as to collect the amount of those sold in cash and hand it over to the ship owner or captain. Jamal added that some karraniya were very famous, such as Abdullah Omar Al-Yaqout, who used to get a monthly salary of 1,000 rupees in the 1940s, which made tutors (kuttab) in various old schools keen on teaching their students bookkeeping and preparing them to work as accountants. — KUNA

## Crimes

### Crime reenactment scrapped

**KUWAIT:** Following the case of a bedoon suspect arrested in Oyouin in Jahra for attempted murder after he attacked a citizen with a knife, and who then confessed that he had previously killed the victim's father but later denied killing him, security sources said that the suspect's denial prevented the reenactment of the crime, adding that the public prosecutor referred the case back to detectives for further investigations.

### Drug arrests

**KUWAIT:** Two citizens were arrested while under the influence of drugs, said security sources, noting that a police patrol suspected a vehicle driven at night in Salam without any lights on. However, on stopping the vehicle, the three passengers tried to flee on foot. Police chased them and arrested two of them, while the third is still at large. The arrested suspects confessed that they had been abusing drugs. Meanwhile, two citizens, a bedoon and young woman were arrested in Khaitan with and under the influence of drugs. Security sources said the suspects had some ready-to-use joints, meth and KD 300 in cash. Separately, a citizen in his twenties and a female citizen in her forties were arrested with drugs, said security sources.

— Translated by Kuwait Times





Search on for Rohingya babies born of rape

## Judging IS jihadists in Syrian Kurdistan: A political problem

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GAZA CITY: Palestinians hold posters bearing text in Arabic calling for the end of the killing of Palestinians during protests on the Gaza-Israel border during a demonstration next to the UNESCO headquarters. — AFP

# Israel hits Hamas but protests fade

## Hamas could resort to its weapons in response to violence

**GAZA CITY:** Israel hit a Hamas base in an air raid yesterday in response to gunfire from the Gaza Strip, but weeks of deadly mass protests and clashes along the border may be reaching an end as Ramadan begins. Tens of thousands have protested along Gaza's border with Israel since March 30 calling for Palestinian refugees to be able to return to their homes now inside Israel.

The largest demonstrations coincided with the move of the US embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem on Monday, which saw Israeli forces kill some 60 Palestinians. The death toll led to international condemnations of Israel and calls for an independent investigation. Israel rejects those calls, saying its actions are necessary to stop mass infiltrations from the blockaded Palestinian enclave controlled by Islamist movement Hamas.

On Wednesday, Israeli officials seized upon remarks by a senior Hamas member who said 50 of the 62 Palestinians killed this week were members of the group, arguing it showed the protests were not peaceful. But the Hamas official, Salah

Bardawil, did not give further details about whether they were members of the group's armed or political wing, or what they were doing at the time they were killed.

Another Hamas official did not confirm the number, but said those participating were demonstrating peacefully. The protests, which have seen unsuccessful attempts to break through the fence, have dwindled since Monday, and the start of fasting for the Muslim holy month of Ramadan on Thursday may further lessen interest.

Friday-when the protests usually peak-will be a key test over whether the current round of unrest will continue on any level. The demonstrations were initially meant to end on May 15, but Hamas officials have said they want them to continue. Some 116 Palestinians have been killed since the protests began. One Israeli soldier has been reported wounded.

The overnight raid by Israel came after it said gunfire from Gaza targeted its soldiers and damaged a house. No one was hurt by the gunfire.

"The Israeli army struck targets belonging to Hamas in the northern Gaza Strip, including terrorist infrastructure and weapons-making facilities," the military said in a statement. Palestinian security sources confirmed the target was a Hamas base, saying there were no reports of injuries. Hamas in a statement yesterday signaled it could resort to its weapons in response to this week's violence, but many analysts see the possibility as unlikely for now.

"We stress to the Zionist enemy and its leaders that the resistance movements whose people are participating in this peaceful movement with all awareness and concern for our people can respond with all force," it said.

### 'Bloodshed would stop'

Arab foreign ministers are to hold an extraordinary meeting Thursday in Cairo to discuss the border violence. The meeting comes after Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi on Wednesday said Cairo was in communication with both sides "so that this bloodshed would

stop". Hamas's leader in the Gaza Strip, Yahya Sinwar, told Al-Jazeera on Wednesday that the Egyptians "support the right of our people to struggle and the right of return, and stressed their keenness not to allow these marches to degenerate into an armed military confrontation."

Israel has sought to fend off international criticism over Monday's violence, with the United States strongly backing its close ally and blaming the deaths on Hamas.

There have been numerous calls for an independent investigation into the deaths, with Britain, Germany, Canada and Switzerland among those supporting such action. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and the European Union have also called for an independent probe. A bitter row over the deaths has erupted between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, a strong backer of the Palestinian cause. Israel accuses Hamas, with whom it has fought three wars since 2008, of seeking to use the demonstrations as cover to carry out violence. —AFP



International

# UN Palestinian refugee agency 'the problem': Swiss minister

'It provides ammunition to continue the conflict'

**GENEVA:** The UN agency for Palestinian refugees is fuelling "unrealistic" hopes of return after 70 years of exodus and is therefore helping keep the Mideast conflict alive, Switzerland's foreign minister said yesterday. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) was established after the war surrounding Israel's creation in 1948, when around 700,000 Palestinians fled or were expelled. But Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis pointed out that the number of Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, the West Bank and Gaza has swelled to more than five million.

"It is unrealistic that this dream (of return) will be fulfilled for all," he said in an interview given to several German-language papers owned by the Swiss NZZ group. "But UNRWA maintains this hope. For me, the question is whether UNRWA is part of the solution or part of the problem," he said, concluding that "it is both". The UN agency, he said, "worked as a solution for a long time, but today it has become part of the problem."

**Fuelling the conflict?**

"It provides ammunition to continue the conflict. For as long as Palestinians live in refugee camps, they will want to return to their homeland," he said. "By supporting UNRWA, we are keeping the conflict alive."

His comments came after a month and a half of mass protests and clashes along the Gaza border, calling for Palestinian refugees to be able to return to their homes now inside Israel.

The largest demonstrations coincided with the move of the US embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem on Monday, which saw Israeli forces kill some 60 Palestinians, pushing the overall toll well over 100. UNRWA is meanwhile struggling to cover a massive budget shortfall, after major donor Washington slashed its 2018 funding.

The administration of US President Donald Trump has opted to cut the \$360 million offered in 2017 to a commitment of just \$60 million this year, leaving UNRWA scrambling to raise nearly half a billion dollars to guarantee services until the end of the year. Switzerland is among a group of countries who together pledged about \$100 million in March to help fill the shortfall.

Despite his skepticism of the role UNRWA is playing in the Middle East, Cassis warned the sudden funding cut facing the agency posed "a big risk". "Millions of Palestinians could take to the streets," he said, cautioning that lacking funds could cause the breakdown of "machinery that provides stability". "This is a risk that Switzerland cannot afford," he said. Cassis said his country would continue funding UNRWA, but he also called for a heavier



BEIRUT: Children gather at the Palestinian refugee camp of Burj Al-Barajneh in the Lebanese capital. — AFP

focus on integrating Palestinian refugees into their host communities. He said for instance that "instead of supporting UNRWA schools

and hospitals, we could help the Jordanian institutions promote integration of Palestinian refugees." —AFP

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## International

# Judging IS jihadists in Syrian Kurdistan: A political problem

## So far only native hardliners have been sentenced

**QAMISHLI:** Shunned by both their Western governments and their Kurdish jailers, foreign men and women who joined the Islamic State group are lingering in detention in northern Syria. When IS's self-proclaimed caliphate crumbled in 2017, the Kurdish forces that govern swathes of Syria's north rounded up thousands of IS fighters from 40 different countries. It was up to local courts to try them, but so far only native hardliners have been sentenced.

Last year, judge Rasha Kanaan and his colleagues tried more than 800 alleged jihadists, all Syrian, in the Kurdish-run town of Qamishli. Sitting in his office in an unremarkable rectangular building, Kanaan says he is not keen to process the foreigners. "We already have plenty of other prisoners to manage," Kanaan tells AFP.

He says the legal system in northern Syria, which operates independently of regime institutions based in Damascus, "is made to judge locals, not foreigners".

The Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG), the military force that controls much of northern Syria, is more direct. "All these foreign prisoners are a burden for us," YPG spokesman Nuri Mahmud says. But the Kurds appear stuck with them.

With European public opinion hostile to repatriating homegrown jihadists, governments are not eager to reclaim radicalised citizens detained abroad. "Denmark, Canada and Switzerland say they are ready to take women and children. But on condition that it's not done publicly," says Nadim Houry, director of terrorism and counterterrorism for Human Rights Watch. The watchdog estimates there are thousands of foreigners in Kurdish detention, including around 800 women and 1,200 children.

According to the Kurds, only Russia and Indonesia have agreed to take back their detainees, mostly women and children.

### Prisoners 'not priority'

France insists any adults among the more than 40 French nationals held by Kurdish authorities should be tried where they are, so long as they face a "fair trial". Among them is Thomas Barnouin, an alleged IS fighter who was captured in December by Syrian Kurdish forces. The 36-year-old "was part of the most radical branch of IS", according to a source close to his case.

"Barnouin and several others are potential dangers and also mines of information on IS," the source adds. Kurdish forces also captured British citizens Alexandra Amon Kotey and El Shafee el-Sheikh, part of the infamous "Beatles" quartet accused of beheading around 20 hostages. But Kurdish officials say they would rather pass off the foreigners to their own countries so they can focus on defending their territory from their arch-enemy Ankara. "Our priority is not the prisoners—it's Turkey," says Mahmud.

They feel betrayed after Western powers, namely the US, failed to halt a Turkish-led offen-

sive on the Kurdish enclave of Afrin earlier this year. "Why continue to keep foreign prisoners, particularly Western ones, if their countries don't support us against the Turks?" asks another local official. Could the Kurds' frustration result in thousands of foreign jihadists being let loose? "Our position remains to investigate and process these files, in cooperation with the authorities" of prisoners' home countries, says Khaled Issa, a Kurdish representative in France.

### Reconciliation rules

The overwhelming number of both foreign and local suspects means that those that are tried do not get due process. The accused appear directly in front of judges without a local lawyer or an appeals process. If found guilty, they are generally sentenced to between five and seven years in prison, with the most extreme facing 20 years.

But HRW says the punishments are often reduced for good behavior or by amnesties. Sentences can also be cut short if the accused belongs to an influential Syrian Arab tribe which acts as a guarantor, promising the ex-jihadist will stay on the right side of the law. "The Kurds have to manage a mosaic of different communities on their territory," says HRW's Houry.

The guiding principle, he says, is reconciliation: "We must all live together—we therefore have no other choice." Finding proof of active IS membership is difficult, especially when it comes to the hundreds of female suspects, who include women from Russia, Tunisia and Turkey. While few have seen combat, some worked in police and religious units. Many married IS fighters and have two or three children, who are technically stateless.

"Last year, we judged 10 (Syrian women). We released half, the other half were sentenced to less than 10 years," says Kanaan. The rulings are in stark contrast to those in the West, where sentences for terror-linked offences are only getting tougher. As foreign fighters linger in detention, some have suggested using them as leverage.

"The Kurds can use this as a bargaining chip to get aid," says Fabrice Balanche, an academic expert on Syria. But time may be running out. With the fight against IS ending, Kurds worry their US ally will abandon them—a fear compounded by President Donald Trump's insistence on withdrawing from Syria.

"Without American support, the Kurds cannot hold back the Turks or another well-equipped army," says Balanche. If the Kurdish administration in northern Syria subsequently collapses, what could happen to foreign prisoners? Such questions were already being raised in the aftermath of Afrin's capture by Turkish-backed rebels. While experts believe there were few, if any, foreign jihadists held in Kurdish-run prisons there, local jihadist detainees seem to have vanished without a trace, with Kurdish officials saying they have no knowledge of their fate. —AFP



ARBIL: Iraqi Kurds wave flags as they attend an electoral rally for the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP). —AFP

## Marriage a distant dream for many in Iraq's Mosul

**MOSUL:** Khulud yearns to be swept away by a "prince charming", but like many young Iraqis in the former jihadist stronghold of Mosul she worries she may never marry. "I haven't found a husband or a job—my life consists of household chores," says the 24-year-old university graduate, who feels increasingly trapped in her parents' home.

"My older sister, who is 37, already has four children... I still perhaps have a chance to find a husband, but my 29-year-old sister has much less" hope, Khulud adds, a sad smile marking the corners of her mouth. Before the Islamic State group (IS) made Mosul its self-proclaimed capital in mid-2014, Iraq's second city was a bastion of traditionalism and conservatism. It was rare for women to hit their 20s before marrying or being engaged.

Back in government hands since July last year, the city is still scarred by nine months of brutal combat. Reconstruction is under way, but with 21,500 homes destroyed or badly damaged, the task is overwhelming, Iraqi authorities say. And the wait for young people to seal their nuptials is getting longer and longer. Suitors are finding it increasingly hard to save enough cash to fund a dowry and a wedding, never mind set up home with a spouse.

### Dashed hopes

Mumen Abdallah also dreams of marriage. "I have a degree in economics, but this hasn't helped me realize my dream," says the 38-year-old, one of

a crowd of men lounging on a cafe terrace. He still hasn't left the family home and the little cash he earns as a taxi driver is barely enough to help with the rent, in a cramped household of seven.

Manaf Khaled, a 32-year-old social worker, says a woman's marriage prospects can depend on her employment. "Many men prefer to marry a woman who works and contributes to household expenses," she says. Some couples are even relying on charity. At a function room in Mosul, hundreds of people—the guests from 10 wedding parties—tuck into a communal meal.

Mohammed Sami, a 27-year-old blacksmith who is among the grooms, tells AFP he is just happy to be here, despite not being able to afford a suit for himself or a wedding dress for his wife. During the three years IS was in control of Mosul, the city was cut off from the central government in Baghdad. Under the occupation, public sector workers went without wages. Some are still waiting to rejoin the payroll, as the security services carry out investigations in the former IS fiefdom. "Unemployment and the long interruption to salaries has prevented very many young people who want to start a family from marrying," Ashraf Ismail, who works in women's protection, tells AFP.

### Cash for marriage?

In a bid to unblock the bottleneck, lawmaker Jamila Al-Obeidi has been pushing a novel proposal in Iraq's parliament. She wants the government "to provide five million dinars (\$4,000, 3,300 euros) to every man wishing to marry, then a million dinars for each child born," she tells AFP. But there are strings attached. "The proposed wife must be older than the 'normal' marriage age, divorced, or a war widow," she says. —AFP



## International

# UK, Germany, four others taken to court for growing air pollution

## Hits Britain before it is due to leave the bloc

**BRUSSELS:** The European Commission said yesterday it is taking Germany, Britain, France and three other countries to the bloc's highest court for failing to comply with EU air quality standards. The decision by the commission, the 28-nation European Union's executive arm, hits Britain before it is due to leave the bloc in 2019 following the shock Brexit referendum two years ago.

The commission had given the six countries—which also includes Italy, Hungary and Romania—a last chance in January to take long-sought steps to improve air quality or be hauled before the European Court of Justice. However, EU Environment Commissioner Karmenu

Vella told a press conference in Brussels that the countries, part of what activists have dubbed a “toxic bloc”, had failed to act quickly enough.

“The commission had to conclude that... the additional measures proposed are not sufficient to comply with air quality standards as soon as possible,” Vella said. “Consequently, the commission has decided to refer these (six) member states to the Court of Justice of the EU,” the executive arm said. The Luxembourg-based court can impose heavy fines. Vella, who has called the pollution problem urgent and “life threatening,” said Brussels feared it may end up waiting several more years before the countries put the right measures in place. “We cannot wait any longer,” he added. The commission has been urging the

wayward countries to establish incentives for the transport, energy and agricultural sector as well as improve urban planning and building design to improve on pollution. Vella had also given Spain, the Czech Republic and Slovakia a last chance in January to start complying with EU standards, which he said they were now doing.

### ‘Continental scale’

But he warned the commission was keeping the three countries under review. In January, the nine countries were found to regularly exceed emissions limits set to protect Europeans against particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide

### Court can impose heavy fines

(NO<sub>2</sub>), both pollutants. Germany, Britain and France were targeted for failing to meet limits on NO<sub>2</sub> while Italy, Hungary and Romania exceeded limits on particulate matter.

The EU estimates that air pollution costs the bloc 20 billion euros (\$24.7 billion) a year in health costs, but says this could be reduced if member states comply with agreed emissions limits. Throughout the EU, fine particulates—small particles of pollution—were responsible for three out of four premature pollution deaths (399,000 out of 487,600) in 2014, according to EU figures.

The European Environmental Bureau, an umbrella grouping of activists who dubbed the nine countries summoned in January a “toxic bloc,” welcomed the commission's action. “Today's an-



**VOLGOGRAD, Russia:** A view taken on May 8, 2018 shows Volgograd's Krasny Oktyabr (Red October) steelworks. —AFP

nouncement should surprise no one, the countries being sent to court have had too many final warnings,” the EEB's Margherita Tolotto said. “European air quality laws are being broken on a continental scale,” Tolotto said.

But she added that the process behind legal action should be “far more transparent” to allow citizens to know why some countries are taken to court and others not. The problem is also broader across the bloc than just the nine countries. Twenty-three of the 28 EU member countries exceed air

quality norms, the European Commission said.

The problem affects more than 130 cities in Europe. Bulgaria and Poland, which have also failed to take action, have already been taken before the top court. In a separate action, the commission proposed the first-ever CO<sub>2</sub> emissions standards for new trucks travelling within the EU. Compared with anticipated 2019 levels, the emissions will have to be 15 percent lower in 2025 and at least 30 percent in 2030. —AFP

## Fog catchers conjure water out of the Moroccan mist

**SIDI IFNI:** Growing up on Mount Boutmezguida in southwest Morocco on the edge of the Sahara desert, Khadija Ghouate never imagined that the fog enveloping the nearby peaks would change her life. For hours every day and often before sunrise, Ghouate and other women from nearby villages would walk 5 km to fetch water from open wells, with girls pulled out of school to help and at risk of violence on the lonely treks.

But with groundwater levels dropping due to overuse, drought and climate change, the challenge to get enough water daily was becoming harder, and almost half of people in the local area sold up and quit rural life after generations for the city. As the future of the traditional Berber region by Mount Boutmezguida floundered, a mathematician whose family came from the area had a eureka moment

gleaned from living overseas - using fog to make water.

Now Ghouate's village is connected to the world's largest functioning fog collection project, alleviating the need to collect water that fell mainly on women, and with state-of-the-art equipment setting an example for other projects globally. “You always had to go to the wells, always be there, mornings, evenings,” said Ghouate, a mother-of-three, as she prepared lunch for her family, showing off the tap in her home. “But now water has arrived in our house. I like fog a lot.

The project, running since 2015 after nine years of surveys and tests, was founded by the Moroccan non-government organization Dar Si Hmad, which works to promote and preserve local culture, history, and heritage. It was the brainchild of mathematician and businessman Aissa Derhem whose parents were originally from Mount Boutmezguida where the slopes are covered in mist on average 130 days a year.

Derhem first came across fog collection when he learnt of one of the world's first projects - in Chile's Atacama Desert - while he living in Canada in the 1980s studying for his PhD. But it was not until visiting his parents' village years later that he realised the mountainous location, situated at the edge of the Sahara and about 35 km from the Atlantic Ocean, was perfect for fog.

### Ideal location

Mist accumulates in coastal areas where a cold sea current, an anticyclone and a land obstacle, such as a mountain range, combine. “When the sea water evaporates, the anticyclone ... stops it from becoming rain, and when it hits the mountain, that's where it can be gathered,” Derhem told the Thomson Reuters Foundation, looking out from the top of Mount Boutmezguida besides a small building used as a fog observatory and tool deposit.

“If we look at the planet, we see this happening in all tropical regions ... In Chile and Peru in Latin America. The Kalahari desert in Africa. In Western Australia. Around the Thar desert in India and in California,” he listed as examples. Developed in South America in the 1980s, fog collection projects have since spread globally to countries including Guatemala, Ghana, Eritrea, Nepal and the United States. In Morocco, Dar Si Hmad has built a system of nets stretching about 870 square metres - about 4.5 tennis courts.

These nets are hung between two poles and when wind pushes the fog through the mesh, water droplets are trapped, condense and fall into a container at the bottom of the unit with pipes connecting the water to reservoirs. Derhem hopes the success of the Mount Bout-

mezguida scheme can help other areas in West Africa and in North Africa - where the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) says fresh water resources are among the world's lowest. Studies show climate change impacting water patterns globally and Derhem said in Morocco levels have dropped to about 500 cubic meters a person a year from about 1,500 cubic metres a person in the 1960s on calculations based on government figures.

### Challenges too

The principles behind fog collection are simple, and throughout nature examples exist of creatures capturing moisture from the air in the most arid conditions, ranging from beetles in the Namib Desert to lizards in the Australian outback. But creating a water collection project on a large scale comes with challenges, as the research and development, as well as the infrastructure and technology involved in expanding and developing fog collection projects, can be costly.

The project at Mount Boutmezguida, however, has been a trailblazer for other projects due to its equipment, according to its founders. The original nets used were insufficiently resistant to the high winds and tore but a partnership with the German non-profit WaterFoundation allowed Dar Si Hmad to develop a stronger net. —Reuters



## International

# EU reaches out to Balkans as Trump's shadow looms

## EU leaders met their counterparts from six Balkan countries

**SOFIA:** European Union leaders anxious to counter Russian influence sought yesterday to reassure Balkan states about their long-promised membership prospects, but warned they would not be joining any time soon. EU leaders met their counterparts from six Balkan countries for summit talks in Sofia, a day after a dinner that sought to forge a united front in the face of US President Donald Trump's "capricious assertiveness" on the Iran nuclear deal and trade tariffs.

The bloc faces a dilemma over Albania, Bosnia, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Kosovo—wanting to offer them enough to keep them out of Moscow's orbit without rushing to let them join before they carry out important reforms. French President Emmanuel Macron said he wanted the countries, collectively referred to as the Western Balkans, to have a "supported dialogue, a perspective", but warned against hasty moves.

"I am not in favor of moving towards enlargement before we have all the required certainties and before genuine reform has been made," Macron told reporters as he arrived for the summit. EU Council President Donald Tusk said the bloc would invest in infrastructure connections with the Balkans to boost development and bring them up to EU standards.

The EU is increasingly looking to take its fate into its own hands as a transatlantic rift grows with Trump, who withdrew from the Iranian nu-

clear deal and wants to slap tariffs on European steel and aluminium. Tusk launched a stinging attack on Trump, while adding that he was helping Europe in a way because it had "got rid of all illusions" that it can rely on Washington. "Looking at the latest decisions of President Trump, someone could even think with friends like that who needs enemies," Tusk said on Wednesday.

### Macedonia, Greece name row

After suspending any enlargement four years ago, the European Commission recently unveiled a new strategy for the region which aims to give membership to some states by 2025 — the frontrunners to join are Montenegro and Serbia. In return Brussels wants reforms and a crackdown on corruption in the region.

But the six countries are growing increasingly impatient for a path to membership. Bulgaria's prime minister recently warned Russia and China will otherwise gain footholds in the region. In the summit declaration, the EU outlined the theme of "connectivity" with investments in transport and infrastructure. It restated the EU's "unequivocal support for the European perspective of the Western Balkans" but avoided the terms "adhesion" or "enlargement"—EU code words for the path to membership of the bloc.

A European diplomatic source said objections to Balkan enlargement had come on two grounds: the need for the would-be members to reform and also the fractious state of the EU it-

self. "Some pointed out that the EU is not working properly with 28 members and so future enlargement should only come after internal reform," the source said. Membership issues are to be discussed in June when leaders decide whether to approve accession negotiations with

### 'Right to fair trial'

Albania and Macedonia. Without a "European perspective", the Balkans risk falling back into the "misfortunes we saw in the 90s" when Yugoslavia was tearing itself apart, European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker warned last week. —AFP

ments were made, others were encouraged to discriminate against people of Moroccan origin". But they added there was "insufficient evidence" to find that his words amounted to incitement to hatred and acquitted him of hate speech. They also did not impose any sentence or fine. Prosecutors are also appealing and the judges have allocated 11 days for the appeal. The verdict is due to be handed down on July 6.

### Mohammed cartoon



**SOFIA:** European Council President Donald Tusk (C) speaks, next to European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker (R) and Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borisov during a joint press conference during an EU-Western Balkans Summit. — AFP

down, Wilders vowed he would never stay silent, and has remained true to his word. "Freedom of speech is under attack, especially for Islam critics. We may never accept that," he said in a tweet early yesterday.

He accompanied the tweet with a cartoon of himself standing outside a cell, watching an angry turban-wearing man inside, likely meant to represent the Prophet Mohammed. And in another inflammatory move, he announced he was planning to organize a "Mohammed-cartoon contest later this year in the Dutch parliament with the world famous cartoonist and ex-Muslim Bosch Fawstin". — AFP

## Far-right Dutch MP Wilders appeals his 'witch-hunt' trial

**SCHIPHOL:** Firebrand Dutch politician Geert Wilders was back in court yesterday appealing his 2016 conviction for discrimination, and unrepentant in the personal battle he is waging against Islam. The far-right MP listened intently in the high-security court building near Schiphol airport as his lawyer urged judges at the opening to postpone the case, which Wilders has dubbed his "appeal witch-hunt trial".

After a three-week trial, judges in December 2016 found Wilders guilty of discrimination against Moroccans during a 2014 election rally, when he asked supporters whether they wanted "fewer or more Moroccans in your city and in the Netherlands". When the crowd shouted back "Fewer! Fewer!" a smiling Wilders answered: "We're going to organize that."

Some 6,400 people, many of them Moroccan immigrants, complained about his comments to the prosecution. The judges ruled that due to "the inflammatory nature in which the state-



**SCHIPHOL:** Leader of Dutch far-right Freedom Party (PPV) Geert Wilders (C) sits between his lawyers Carry Knoops-Hamburger (L) and Geert-Jan Knoops at the beginning of the appeal in the hate speech trial in the high security court. — AFP

ments were made, others were encouraged to discriminate against people of Moroccan origin". But they added there was "insufficient evidence" to find that his words amounted to incitement to hatred and acquitted him of hate speech. They also did not impose any sentence or fine. Prosecutors are also appealing and the judges have allocated 11 days for the appeal. The verdict is due to be handed down on July 6.

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### Mohammed cartoon

He accompanied the tweet with a cartoon of



# Trump discloses payment to attorney who paid off Daniels

## Disclosure caps a series of contradictory statements

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump has formally disclosed that he reimbursed his personal attorney more than \$100,000 last year, apparently in connection with the payment of hush money to a porn star, government records show. The disclosure caps a series of contradictory statements from Trump and his representatives on the scandal swirling around lawyer Michael Cohen—which has widened to ensnare major corporations and a Russian oligarch.

The documents released Wednesday by a US government ethics body do not specify the reason for the payments to Cohen, who paid \$130,000 to adult film actress Stormy Daniels in the run-up to the 2016 election. Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford, claims she had a tryst with Trump in 2006 while he was married.

The president denies the affair, and initially denied all knowledge of the payment, which Cohen has acknowledged was intended to stop her from going public with the allegations.

Trump's claim began to unravel early this month, however, after Rudy Giuliani, a new member of the president's legal team, said Trump had reimbursed Cohen for the sum paid to Daniels—and the president himself subsequently acknowledged the repayment. A footnote to disclosures submitted Tuesday to the Office of Government Ethics said Cohen had incurred "expenses" on Trump's behalf in 2016 of between \$100,001 and \$250,000.

"Mr Cohen sought reimbursement of those

expenses and Mr. Trump fully reimbursed Mr. Cohen in 2017," it said. Trump's filing states that the president was not required to disclose Cohen's expenses, but was doing so in the interest of transparency. But an accompanying letter to the Justice Department from David Apol, the acting head of the Office of Government Ethics, said the payments by Cohen were indeed required to be reported, as also argued by an outside government ethics group which had lodged official complaints in March.

Apol told Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein that he was providing both Trump's 2017 and 2018 disclosures, as potentially "relevant to any inquiry" the Justice Department may be pursuing into the president's filings from last year.

“ Mr Cohen sought reimbursement ”

### Cashing in on access to Trump

Stormy Daniels is suing to be released from the hush agreement reached with Cohen, claiming it is invalid because Trump never signed it. The president's lawyer, meanwhile, finds himself under investigation by federal prosecutors who seized reams of evidence in raids on his home and office last month but have not revealed what crimes he may have committed.

The Washington Post reported that Cohen is under investigation for possible bank fraud, wire fraud and campaign finance violations. Giuliani, said Wednesday that the Cohen case is of no concern. "Not a lick. We're completely uninvolved in that. We've gotten assurances that



This combination of pictures shows US President Donald Trump speaking at The Generation Next event, a White House Forum featuring millennial voters and administration officials on March 22, 2018, at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building in Washington, DC, and actress Stephanie Clifford, who uses the stage name Stormy Daniels, arriving to perform at the Solid Gold Fort Lauderdale strip club on March 9, 2018 in Pompano Beach, Florida. — AFP

we're not involved in it," Giuliani told "The Ingraham Angle" on Fox News.

Cohen also stands accused of seeking to cash in on his proximity to the president, after it emerged he received millions of dollars from a Russian oligarch and major corporations seeking access to the administration. Swiss pharmaceutical giant Novartis Wednesday announced the retirement of its top legal expert over the \$1.2 million in payments to Cohen, while AT&T has said it made a "big mistake" by paying the lawyer some \$600,000.

The scandal engulfing Cohen has opened a new front in the legal challenges dogging Trump, grabbing headlines from Special Counsel Robert

Mueller's ominous investigation into possible collusion between the president's 2016 campaign and Russia.

The disclosure of Trump's payments to his lawyer came the same day a Senate intelligence panel released thousands of pages of testimony from its probe into a meeting between the president's eldest son, Donald Trump Jr, and a Russian lawyer who offered to provide damaging information about Hillary Clinton. In his testimony released Wednesday, Trump Jr said he did not tell his father ahead of time about the 2016 meeting at Trump Tower, also attended by the Republican candidate's campaign manager Paul Manafort and son-in-law Jared Kushner. — AFP

## Births plunge to record lows in United States

TAMPA: Births in the United States have plunged to record lows not seen in decades, marking a profound cultural shift that could have ramifications for the future economy, experts said yesterday. The overall fertility rate, which essentially shows how many babies women are having in their childbearing years, and indicates whether the population is replenishing itself, fell to 1.76 births per woman last year, down three percent from the rate of 1.82 in 2016.

That marks "the lowest total fertility rate since 1978," said the report by the National Center for Health Statistics, part of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Meanwhile, the US birth rate plunged to a 30-year low. The 3.85 million US births in 2017 were the fewest since 1987, as American women under 40 continued to delay childbearing.

About 77,000 fewer babies were born last year than in 2016 — about a two percent drop year-on-year. The latest downward trend began around the onset of the global finan-

cial crisis in 2007 and 2008, but has not abated even as US jobs rebounded and the economy has improved. "To me the biggest surprise is the continuing decline of fertility rates among young women," said William Frey, a demographer and senior fellow of the Metropolitan Policy Program at The Brookings Institution. "About 10 years since the Great Recession we still see this declining fertility among women in their 20s and that could be problematic if it continues for another three or four years."

### Positives and negatives

Fewer babies means fewer young workers in the coming years, cutting away at the size of the workforce, and possibly slashing productivity and tax revenue. Combine that with increasing numbers of elderly people entering retirement, and dollars for vital services can get very tight. "You've got both declining birth rates and an aging population and that is why demographers are concerned," said Donna Strobino, vice chair of education population, family and reproductive health at the Bloomberg School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University.

But other signs are positive, especially for teenagers aged 15-19. Among them, the birth rate fell seven percent in 2017 compared to a year earlier, marking "another record low for this age group," said the report. The teen birth rate has declined by 55 percent, or nearly eight percent per year, since

2007, according to the report. The only group that saw an increase in births were women aged 40-44, said the report.

### 'Panic button?'

Whether they can't afford children, or they have access to contraception and simply prefer to wait, women in their 20s and 30s continue to put off having children in America. This is a general trend that has been visible in the data—with a few ups and downs—since the 1970s. "Women are becoming more educated, they are in the workforce, they are pursuing their careers," Strobino said.

"And in the absence of policies that really help women who are working to really take some time off post-partum you are probably going to see a continuation of this delay." The United States may be sliding downward but still has a higher fertility rate than Italy (1.4), Germany (1.5) and Japan (1.4).

France is slightly higher, at two births per woman. The optimal fertility rate to sustain a population is 2.1. Ways to boost the birth rate include economic incentives, paid parental leave policies and allowing more immigrants to enter a country, experts say. For Frey, the findings offer a barometer of the nation, but are not a cause for alarm. "I don't if it is such a big issue that you need to push the panic button," he said. "The country isn't going to run out of people." Indeed, the total population in the United States in 2018 is more than 327,000, up from 325,000 in 2017, according to the US census. — AFP



## International

# Nine months on, the search for Rohingya babies born of rape

## 48,000 women will give birth in the camps this year

**COX'S BAZAR:** Aid workers are scouring the world's largest refugee camp for pregnant Rohingya rape victims, with a rush of births anticipated nine months after Myanmar forces unleashed "a frenzy of sexual violence" against women and girls from the Muslim minority. Specialists and Rohingya volunteers are racing against time to find women in the giant camp who are thought to be hiding their pregnancies out of shame, as fears grow that newborns could be abandoned and new mothers may die without care in coming weeks.



Tosminara, herself a Rohingya refugee, has spent months coaxing these women out of the shadows, promising discretion. "We tell them a password they can use when they arrive at the hospital or health post. The guard then sends the woman directly to the right spot," said Tosminara, who goes by one name. "They often are shy. Sometimes they are afraid to come forward."

The Myanmar army crackdown last August drove roughly 700,000 Rohingya into Bangladesh and the number of pregnancies resulting from rape is not known. But UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Andrew Gilmour said there would "inevitably" be a spike in births soon given the "frenzy of sexual violence in August and September last year". Marcella Kraay of Doctors Without Borders (MSF) also said "a fair number of pregnancies" were expected.

An estimated 48,000 women will give birth in the camps this year. Those who were raped

will be delivering imminently, mostly in secret and without medical care on the floors of bamboo shacks overlooking the Bangladesh-Myanmar border. Rohingya community leader Abdur Rahim said he knew two women personally who were raped by soldiers and due within the month. He had heard rumors of many others in a similar position, he added. "The Myanmar military raped them. These babies are... evidence of their crimes," he said.

**Volunteers are racing against time**

**Traumatized and alone**

Tosminara says she is trying her best to find these women in the heav-

ing camps. But volunteers must contend with a deep-rooted stigma that keeps many from revealing their ordeal. "Sometimes neighbors say 'don't do anything, it will humiliate you further'. So they don't want to come," said Nurjahan Mitu, a doctor who trains midwives through a UN Population Fund program.

Many have sought clinical help to terminate pregnancies—legal in Bangladesh up to 12 weeks. Others have resorted to underground options resulting in "complicated, incomplete abortions", said MSF midwife Daniela Sofia. The UN's Gilmour, who toured the camps in March, said girls as young as 14 were self-inducing abortions.

Sofia, the midwife, assisted a 16-year-old with an abortion after the teenager arrived at her clinic in secret, terrified that her family would find out. She said the girl was pregnant after being gang-raped by Myanmar soldiers, but had no one to support her through the trauma. "No-



This photograph taken on April 9, 2018, shows a Rohingya mother (L) sitting next to her sick child, who is treated at a Doctors Without Borders (MSF) clinic, at Kutupalong refugee camp in Bangladesh's Ukhia district. —AFP

body knew about the rape. Her family were not aware of it," Sofia said. More than half the Rohingya who have fled into Bangladesh are women and girls. Children are seen everywhere but adolescent girls are largely invisible, many kept indoors by families concerned for their welfare, experts say. Emu Roy, a Bangladeshi midwife, said a paucity of maternity professionals made it difficult to know how many women were suffering in silence in the camps. "It's not possible for us to go door-to-door," she said.

Experts are concerned that families could

forcibly marry off teenage girls to cover up a pregnancy. Others fear that newborns could be abandoned. "Not only are you dealing with a woman who has been... traumatized, also there could be a child that is basically unwanted as well," Kraay said. MSF alone treated 311 rape victims—women and girls aged between nine and 50 — between August and March but Kraay said this was "the tip of the iceberg".

The Myanmar army chief has denied allegations his forces used rape to terrorize the Muslim minority. —AFP

## Rescued Indian children sketch life in slavery

**CHENNAI:** Menacing dogs, violent bosses and a house left empty because its inhabitants are always working — these are the grim images of family life created by Indian children raised in bonded labor. A series of drawings by children rescued from forced labor in brick kilns, rice mills and wood cutting units has given social workers a unique insight into the intensity and extent of trauma they experience. As the government intensifies its efforts to account for child labor, campaigners say it is becoming increasingly important to document their experiences.

"Their pictures capture details that even their parents don't mention to officials during their rescue," Loretta Jhona, a social worker with the anti-trafficking charity International Justice Mission, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "A little boy drew an empty house and then told us that nobody ever lived in it because they were all working round the clock. He had noticed the relentless cycle of work."

India banned bonded labor in 1976. But the stark drawings reflect the reality of millions from marginalized communities still trapped in a cycle of debt bondage — the most prevalent form of slavery in India. Poverty and unemployment force men and women to take loans from moneylenders or employers. They then spend the next six months or more working to pay the debts back. In many cases, their young children accompany them and work to help pay back the debt.

"During rescues, children first tell you they don't work in the kilns or mills," said Jai Singh of Volunteers for Social Justice, a rights group that works in the brick kilns of northern Punjab state. "But when you ask them to show you what they do all day, they promptly go and start patting clay or turning bricks kept to dry. Nobody calls it work, but they are toiling." India has at least 100,000 working brick kilns in employing about 23 million workers, a 2017 report by rights groups Anti-Slavery International and

Volunteers for Social Justice found. One third of those living at the kilns are children, it stated.

### Despair to hope

Teacher Rajnikant Biswal is often asked to join teams on missions to rescue bonded laborers in the southern state of Tamil Nadu. The first thing he does is to set up a hat-making corner while the raids are conducted. "I do it for the children trapped with their parents," Biswal told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in a phone interview. "I give them a hat, do a little song and dance routine and then initiate a conversation. They hesitate but slowly tell me about their life and it is always heartbreaking."

In her first drawing after she was rescued in 2014, an eight-year-old girl drew her pet duck, taken away as punishment by her parents' boss. One boy drew big dogs that would be unleashed on his family if they didn't work, capturing the fear and violence that become part

of their life, counselors said. As time passes though, the images become more positive.

A teenager rescued from a rice mill with his family drew the helicopter he hopes to one day buy for his parents and a modest house with a car parked outside. These pictures are more colorful — bright skies, birds, flowers in bloom and a house full of people watching television. "When they draw life outside the mill, there is a burst of colors," said Jhona, adding that children often find it easier than their parents to imagine a better life.

Adults need more psychological help to become truly free as they are often too scared to admit to abuse for fear of retribution from their former owners, counselors say. While survivors of sex trafficking often receive help in shelter homes, rescued bonded laborers simply return to their villages and completely shut down. "But children are always hopeful," Biswal said. "It takes a while, but they eventually share their dreams and they are beautiful." — Reuters



## International

# Indonesia suicide bomber mum 'chatted to neighbors about schools, swapped recipes'

## The families all lived in ordinary middle-class districts

**SURABAYA:** The mother of an Indonesian family of six who launched suicide bomb attacks on three churches chatted to neighbors about schooling and swapped recipes, leading what appeared to be a regular middle-class life and eluding counter-terrorism forces.

The family killed at least 18 people, including themselves, by bombing the churches in Indonesia's second-biggest city of Surabaya on Sunday in the worst militant attacks in the world's biggest Muslim-majority country in more than a decade. Home was a quiet, relatively affluent neighborhood of Surabaya. Most houses in the area have hatchbacks and family cars parked outside and in front a small yard more often than not strewn with toys and children's bicycles.

"My wife talked to the mother all the time about the children's education, about recipes. They often met at the local market," said Wery

Trikusuma, who lives next door. "They were quite open and interactive. They contributed money to neighborhood repairs for example for roads. They often left their front gates open to receive guests, he said, adding it "seemed impossible that they could do this".

The day after the church bombings, six died, including four bombers, in another suicide attack. Another family of five blew themselves up,

but the eight-year-old daughter survived. In another blast in an apartment near Surabaya on Sunday night, three members of a family believed to have been making bombs were killed when one device went off by accident. Three children survived.

Police also later shot dead four people with suspected links to the attacks. Police suspect the attacks were carried out by a cell of the Islamic State-inspired Jemaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD), an umbrella organization on a US State Department terrorist list that is reckoned to have drawn hundreds of Indonesian sympathizers of the extremist group.

### Raw intelligence

The families all lived in ordinary middle-class districts where neighbors say they saw few things to mark them out. "We had received very raw intelligence that there may be an attack in the week before Ramadan but not

about when exactly or where," said a senior government official, referring to the Muslim fasting month that started on Thursday in Indonesia. "But there was never any report about an entire family being used, or that that was even possible."

Police say the father in the family that attacked the churches, Dita Oepriarto, was head of the local JAD cell and likely radicalized decades earlier. Indonesia set up a counter-ter-

Liu said content on his run posted on Weibo, China's version of Twitter, had disappeared. "Yesterday, our event already was forwarded and read lots of times, then suddenly lots of Weibo posts disappeared, lots of content was deleted. We were very disappointed." Beijing LGBT Center, an advocacy group, organised an event in the capital's high-tech district of Zhongguancun, where blindfolded volunteers wearing handpainted t-shirts saying "I am gay" stood with arms wide, hoping for hugs from passersby.

Hu Mianlin, a Beijing university student, told Reuters she took part because she thought it would be a more effective way to raise awareness than just writing articles online. "Even though there are a lot of LGBT people in China, we still don't have rights to get married and don't have official approval," she said. "Official newspapers won't do reports on LGBT issues."

Last week, popular state-backed broadcaster Mango TV was stripped of its licence to air the Eurovision Song Contest by the event's organizers after censoring a semi-final performance that had what Chinese state media described as "LGBT elements". The channel's decision to cut the song, as well as to pixelate rainbow flags in the audience, was considered particularly shocking to LGBT advocates, as it had previously aired shows touching on LGBT issues. Award-winning gay romance "Call Me By Your Name" was pulled from the Beijing film festival in March, while a blacklist of banned audiovisual online content last year also controversially included homosexuality. —Reuters

## China's LGBTs treads cautiously

**BEIJING:** China's LGBT advocates cautiously organized awareness-raising events across the country to celebrate International Anti-Homophobia Day yesterday amid concern of growing intolerance towards LGBT causes. One of the events was a 5.17 km run to raise awareness and celebrate the May 17 anniversary of the day in 1990 when the World Health Organization removed homosexuality from a list of diseases. But organizers told participants to run on their own and not en masse.

An organizer of the runs held in Beijing, Liu Yifu, told Reuters that they did not dare to stage any mass events in the capital this year for fear that proceedings might be interrupted by the authorities. Many event organizers and volunteers spoken to by Reuters said they had to be wary. Large gatherings and protests without approval are technically illegal in China.

On Sunday, two women handing out rainbow flag stickers during an event in Beijing's famous 798 art district were hit by security guards, with one woman falling to the floor during the scuffle, according to videos that circulated online. The incident sparked widespread outrage amongst China's LGBT community, with many casting it as just the latest in a series of measures tightening the space for LGBT content to be aired on television and discussed online.



BANDUNG: Police stand guard as Christian devotees attend a Sunday mass at the Saint Petrus church. —AFP

rorism unit, Detachment, or "Densus", 88, in 2003 which is credited with thwarting hundreds of plots, but the Surabaya attacks mark the squad's biggest challenge in decades. In all, around 30 people have been killed since Sunday in the attacks, including 13 of the suspected suicide bombers.

According to the senior government official, President Joko Widodo decided not to fire top security personnel when he learnt of the shocking nature of the attacks and instead called for action to dismantle the networks and said he

would use executive powers to force through a strengthened anti-terrorism law if parliament did not act. The presidential palace did not respond to requests for comment. "This attack demonstrates that entire communities and families can be radicalised," Rohan Gunaratna, a Singapore based terrorism expert, said. "This means that a catch and kill response alone will not work. The government must engage more with community leaders, schools, religious leaders in addition to expanding counter-terrorism capabilities," he said. —Reuters

## Japanese monk sues temple for overwork

**TOKYO:** A Japanese monk is suing his temple, claiming he was forced to work non-stop catering to visiting tourists and that the heavy workload gave him depression, his lawyer said yesterday. The monk in his forties is seeking 8.6 million yen (\$78,000) from his temple on Mount Koya, a World Heritage Site also known as Koyasan that regarded as one of the most sacred Buddhist sites in Japan.

The plaintiff began working at a temple there in 2008 and became depressed around December 2015, according to his lawyer Noritake Shirakura. "If you work as a monk, too often you work without work-hour management," Shirakura told AFP. "You provide labor, but you are told it's part of religious training. And if it's training, you must endure even it causes you significant hardship."

"Through this case, we will argue that such a notion is outdated," he said. Shirakura declined to name his client or the temple being sued, saying the man wanted to preserve his anonymity so he could eventually return to his job or find a position elsewhere

in the small community of Buddhist monks. The case argues that the monk was forced to perform paid labour far beyond his spiritual duties, and at times worked for more than two months straight.

In 2015, when the Koyasan area celebrated its 1,200th anniversary, he was forced to work for up to 64 days in a row to handle a surge of tourists to the site, Shirakura said. Some days, he worked 17 hours straight, performing various temple functions including attending to visitors, the lawyer said. The monk has already won the backing of a local labor bureau, which acknowledged that the long stretch of work days without holiday met the definition of overwork.

In 2017, Kyoto's renowned Higashi Honganji temple was forced to publicly apologize for failing to pay overtime compensation and engaging in work-place harassment. Overwork is a major problem in Japan, and death by overwork is a recognized phenomenon that even has its own word in Japanese—"karoshi." A government report released last year found there had been 191 cases of "karoshi" in the 12 months to March 2017, and that more than seven percent of Japanese employees logged over 20 hours of overtime a week. —AFP



## International

# Denuclearization, sanctions, peace: Issues facing Trump-Kim summit

The price each one is willing to pay to get there.

**WASHINGTON:** If it actually takes place, the historic summit between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump—currently slated for June 12—will focus on the “denuclearization” of the Korean peninsula. But what that phrase actually means to both sides may differ widely, as will the price each one is willing to pay to get there.

“That means they get rid of their bombs”

**‘A nuclear-free peninsula’**

The North Korean leader surprised the world in early March when he said he was ready to discuss with the United States—his sworn enemy—a “denuclearization” after months of rising tensions swirling around his nuclear ambitions and long-range missile tests. It is difficult to know what he meant, all the more so since his words were mostly conveyed through foreign intermediaries.

But in a joint declaration with South Korea’s President Moon Jae-in in April, the two leaders set out a “common goal of realizing, through complete denuclearization, a nuclear-free Korean peninsula.” North Korea also pledged to dismantle its only known nuclear test site later in May, even if several experts have downplayed the significance of the move. Plenty of gray areas remain. Kim has justified the end of the nuclear tests by saying that the development of the North’s nuclear force is complete and that it had no further need for the site. Does that mean he will agree to scrap his nuclear arsenal, developed at great cost to ward off any potential foreign threat to his regime? He has not clearly promised to do so yet.

Yet Washington is demanding a “complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of North Korea.” Trump said it is very simple: “That means they get rid of their bombs.” It would also

entail revealing where their nuclear arms are stored and opening up their facilities to extremely strict inspections and possibly transporting their weapons to the United States to be disposed of. It would further mean getting rid of uranium enrichment plants and their stockpile of strategic and intercontinental missiles. Washington also wants to see an end to North Korea’s inventory of chemical and biological weapons.

”

**Sanctions**

That process, if North Korea does agree to comply, will take some time, possibly even years. How then to lead them back into the international fold without delay, as the United States has said it wants to do? The Americans want at all costs to avoid a step-by-step process where every North Korean concession is reciprocated with an easing of the international pressure that Washington says brought the North to the bargaining table in the first place.

Yet Pyongyang is refusing unilateral nuclear disarmament. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is dangling the opportunity of international private investment in the North and the future prospect of a lifting of crippling international sanctions. But that can only come after the process of denuclearization has passed the point of no return, something which will be difficult to assess. “The only realistic approach today is one of sequencing, which would mean a freeze followed by a progressive destruction of installations in return for a lightening of sanctions and progressive confidence-building measures, including a peace treaty,” said Boris Toucas, a visiting researcher at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. But he warned that there is “nothing at this stage to indicate that North Korea isn’t simply buying itself

## Malaysia’s Anwar: Najib likely heading to jail

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Newly released Malaysian political heavyweight Anwar Ibrahim said yesterday he expects ex-premier Najib Razak to be jailed over multi-billion-dollar graft claims. In an interview with AFP a day after he walked free from custody—where he had languished since 2015—on what supporters say were trumped-up charges leveled at Najib’s be-

hest—Anwar also said he would be back in parliament very soon.

“Give me a few months, I should be back as an MP. It is the correct thing to do,” he said. Anwar’s release on Wednesday capped an astonishing week in Malaysian politics that saw Najib’s long-ruling Barisan Nasional coalition booted from power in a revolution at the ballot box. The election dramatically reversed Anwar’s fortunes, from prisoner to presumptive successor to 92-year-old Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad. It also imperiled Najib, who Anwar said now faces an “arduous” legal battle—without the protection of high office.

Accused of overseeing the plundering of state fund IMDB, Najib’s position has looked increasingly precarious. Police carried out extensive searches of his home

overnight. Anwar predicted that Najib would likely take up the spot he had just vacated in prison. “He will certainly be charged,” he said. Anwar, 70, declined to say how he thought Najib’s case would play out, as it depended on “how he can defend himself in court”. But Anwar added: “It will be very difficult for him to escape (going to) prison.” Najib and IMDB deny any wrongdoing. Mahathir, who came out of retirement to lead the revolt against Najib, has signalled he will hand power to Anwar within two years. The younger man’s return to politics has been the subject of much speculation and he confirmed he would be seeking to return as an MP soon—but would not seek a position on the front benches just yet. “I am not intending to join the cabinet,” he said he had told Mahathir.—AFP



A US Air Force F-22 Raptor lands at Gwangju Air Base in the southwestern city of Gwangju. — AFP

some time.”

In the meantime, both sides have made some gestures: the liberation of three Americans who had been detained in North Korea, and the mere fact that Trump has promised to even hold a summit, which grants some international recognition to the pariah state.

**Peace and security**

The only known demand of the North Koreans is to do with security. “The prior condition for denuclearization is putting an end to any hostile policy towards North Korea” and to “nuclear threats,” said a senior regime official. There too, tensions could arise in talks. The Trump administration has promised not to seek to bring about regime change and Pompeo has even floated the possibility of issuing security guarantees to the North.

Pyongyang most likely wants a peace treaty

with the South and with the United States to formally end the Korean War that finished in an armistice in 1953. That could include guarantees, yet to be specified, for the survival of the North Korean regime. But the question comes back to the issue of “denuclearization of the Korean peninsula,” and whether the North includes in that the withdrawal of 30,000 US troops deployed in the South, as it has stated in the past.

Trump has said troop withdrawal will not be on the agenda at the forthcoming talks but has not ruled it out in the longer term. Another issue is joint maneuvers between US and South Korean forces, which Kim has long denounced as a provocation. Rising tensions over the past week may mean that their future, too, may be discussed at the summit. “The wind can change very quickly in response to the needs of the moment and the desire to squeeze out concessions from the other side,” said Toucas. — AFP



KUALA LUMPUR: Newly released Malaysian politician Anwar Ibrahim gestures during an interview with AFP at his house. — AFP



# Lifestyle

Friday Times

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[www.kuwaittimes.net](http://www.kuwaittimes.net)



An Afghani fisherman weaves a cage used for fishing in the United Arab Emirates in eastern coastal town of Kalba.— AFP

**Afghans, Pakistanis weave a livelihood on Emirati coast**

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(From left) French-Portuguese actress Sara Martins, French actress Firmine Richard, French-Cameroonian Marie-Philomene Nga, French actress Sabine Pakora, French actress and producer France Zobda, French director Magaajyia Silberfeld, French actress Aissa Maiga, French actress Nadege Beausson-Diagne, French writer Rachel Khan, French actress Karidja Toure, French actress Assa Sylla, French actress Maimouna Gueye and French actress and writer Mata Gabin, (front) French comedian and humorist Shirley Souagnon, French actress and Miss France 2000 Sonia Rolland and French actress Eye Haidara, a group of 16 black women who fight for equality and inclusion of black women in the French film industry pose on May 16, 2018 as they arrive for the screening of the film 'Burning' at the 71st edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

## Tragic star Whitney Houston abused as child - documentary



(From Left) US actress Rayah Houston, British producer Vanessa Tovell, US executive producer Pat Houston, US producer Lisa Erspamer, British producer Jonathan Chinn, British producer Simon Chinn, British director Kevin MacDonald, US producer Nicole David and British editor Sam Rice-Edwards pose during a photocall for the film "Whitney" at the 71st edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

A new documentary about the life of Whitney Houston claims that the tragic singer was sexually abused as a child by her cousin, soul musician Dee Dee Warwick. The revelation in "Whitney", which was made with the co-operation of the singer's family, comes late in the film by Oscar-winning Scottish director Kevin Macdonald, which was premiered Thursday at the Cannes film festival. Houston's assistant, Mary Jones, who Whitney called "Aunt Mary", discovered her face down in a Beverly Hills bath the night she died, told the filmmakers that she was abused as a child and was later unable to come to terms with her sexuality.

It may help to shine a new light on the singer's descent into drug addiction and

early death at 48 in 2012. Houston's destructive relationship with the rapper Bobby Brown is also tackled in the documentary, by the maker of "One Day in September" about Black September hostage taking at the 1972 Munich Olympics. Brown tells the film that drugs had nothing to do with Houston's death, although the coroner said it was a contributing factor.

Dee Dee Warwick was the younger sister of the soul legend Dionne Warwick. She also struggled with drug addiction and died aged 63 in 2008. Macdonald told AFP that he always wondered what was at the root of Houston's unhappiness. "For a long time I had looked at her on screen and thought there's something about this woman that feels so uncomfortable. "She

doesn't enjoy her own body in some way. She's very beautiful but not sexual, she feels uncomfortable in her skin. I began to wonder whether it was abuse.

"Then somebody told me that they had spoken to Whitney about it and that's what she had said had happened to her, and she felt that that was the origins of her unhappiness." Whitney Houston's soaring gospel voice made her one of the biggest pop stars of the 1990s, selling 170 million albums and starring in the smash hit Hollywood love story, "The Bodyguard". "Whitney" is the second film about the tragic singer in less than a year. Another British documentary maker, Nick Broomfield, released his "Whitney: Can I Be Me" late last year. — AFP

## Surreal footballer comedy wins prize at Cannes film festival

A wacky comedy that features a superstar footballer bearing a striking resemblance to Cristiano Ronaldo has won the best film prize in the Critics' Week section at Cannes. "Diamantino" follows a preening Portuguese hero whose life falls apart when he misses a penalty in a World Cup final. Critics at the world's top film festival had cheered the debut feature by Portuguese-American duo Gabriel Abrantes and Daniel Schmidt, which has subplots about the Panama Papers and gay adoption. A hilarious cross between John Waters, Pedro Almodovar and Monty Python films, the Ronaldo character is tormented by images of gigantic pink Pekingese lapdogs as he bears down on goal.

Critics' Week, where directors' first and second film are screened, is one of the three main selections at Cannes. The movies chosen this year were seen as particularly strong. A frank yet haunting portrait of a French male prostitute, "Sauvage", won its director Camille Vidal-Naquet the section's rising star award. "Woman at War", a crowd-pleasing Icelandic tale of a female eco action hero, won Benedikt Erlingsson and Olafur Egill Egilsson the best script prize. The movie, about an middle-aged choir director who sabotages the island's electricity network to save its pristine highlands, has been called the most feminist film at the festival even though it was written by men. Cannes' top prize, the Palme d'Or, will be announced on Saturday. — AFP

## Cumberbatch Cold War thriller is snapped up at Cannes

A Cold War spy thriller starring "Sherlock" star Benedict Cumberbatch has been one of the big sellers at the Cannes film festival, reports said yesterday. "Ironbark" is based on the story of British spy and businessman Greville Wynne, who handled the double agent Oleg Penkovsky, a Russian military intelligence officer who tipped off Britain and the US about Soviet missiles in Cuba. The information he fed through Wynne—who was arrested in Budapest and sentenced to eight years in prison in 1963 — was among the most important of the Cold War.

Rights to the film were sold out across the world, according to Variety, with distributors FilmNation later posting on Facebook that it "has been a pretty good Cannes". The US company has also sold out the rights to the starry all-female big-budget spy caper "355" starring Jessica Chastain, Penelope Cruz, Marion Cotillard and Fan Bingbing, which was unveiled at Cannes. Another Soviet era movie, "Gareth Jones", about the



In this file photo British actor and ceremony host Benedict Cumberbatch poses on the red carpet before the 2018 Laureus World Sports Awards ceremony at the Sporting Monte-Carlo complex in Monaco. — AFP

Welsh writer of the same name, has also sparked a lot of interest at the festival. The journalist, played by James Norton of "McMafia" fame, helped expose the Holodomor, the man-made famine that many blame on Stalin in early 1930s Ukraine in which millions died. Polish director Agnieszka Holland has wrapped shooting in Poland and Ukraine, with finals scenes due to be filmed in Scotland later this month. — AFP





Owner Edmund Fry (left) attends to guests seated for traditional English afternoon tea at the Rose Tree Cottage in Pasadena, north of Los Angeles, California, where Meghan Markle has been a guest and owner Edmund Fry has offered her tips on how to correctly partake in afternoon tea. — AFP photos



Edmund Fry (right) leads guests past a cardboard cutout of Meghan Markle to their table for traditional English afternoon tea at The Rose Tree Cottage.

## THE LA COTTAGE WHERE MEGHAN LEARNED HOW TO TAKE TEA WITH THE QUEEN

Months before meeting the Queen for the first time and having a “cuppa” with her Majesty, Meghan Markle brushed up on tea drinking etiquette at a cottage near Los Angeles—where she was apparently a natural. “Well, she learned it all here,” Edmund Fry, the British-born owner of Rose Tree Cottage in Pasadena, told AFP in an interview this week. “On a scale of one to 10, by the time she finished coming to us, I would say she would probably be a 9.5. “But I have to say that because I want her to come back for the other half point.”

Fry said the California-born actress, who will marry Prince Harry this weekend, on several occasions visited the picturesque tea room—decked out with all things British—where she was given the inside track on tea drinking. “She

came with friends and was very relaxed and very much in control,” he recalled. He said he shared some tips on the quintessential tea experience with the soon-to-be new member of the royal family, as she munched on traditional finger sandwiches and scones.

### No slurping or dribbling

“I do believe that I mentioned, as I always do, that the handle of the cup is always left at three o’clock of course ... and the spoon always needs to be left at six o’clock and 12 o’clock,” said the 77-year-old, who dresses in tails and white gloves while serving and educating his customers. He added that Markle seemed like a natural on her repeated visits and was unlikely to make any faux pas—like slurping or using her napkin to blow her nose or wipe her glasses —

while sipping tea with the Queen. “I remember telling her one of the habits in this country is people tend to get much more palsy walsy with their cup ... and they move it in front of them,” Fry said, raising his eyebrows in despair.

“Maybe it’s because they have a tendency to dribble, I’m not sure,” he added. “But this is not a good thing to do.” Another no-no he shared with Markle, he said, was changing the table setting. “If you were at the palace, you wouldn’t dream of moving the cutlery and the silver or the china away from the place where it should be,” he said. Traditional English scones served with tea should also be sliced sideways and topped with jam and clotted cream before each half is eaten separately, pleaded Fry, who looks like a character straight out of “Downton Abbey.” “You don’t want to put the two

halves together because it ends up looking like a quarter pound hamburger, and the last thing you want is people having cream come down their jowls,” he said in his cut-glass British accent.

And please, when drinking tea, refrain from slurping or clinking the cup with the spoon when stirring, he added. As for crooking the little finger while holding the cup and saucer, Fry said that was optional. “It’s not wrong to have your finger in, but ladies tend to leave the pinky slightly crooked,” he said. Fry said he will be celebrating Harry and Meghan’s nuptials on Saturday with a wedding party, and will always keep a table open for the newlyweds. “She will always have a table here, and Harry of course,” he said. “There will be the time when he wants real bacon and he’ll come here for it.” — AFP



Tea is served at The Rose Tree Cottage.

## ARAB CINEMA BACK WITH A BANG, LEPERS, LUST AND CLASS CONFLICT

A boy who takes his parents to court for having him is one of a wave of Arab films making people sit up and take notice at the Cannes film festival. Not since 1970 have two Arab films been in the running for the Palme d’Or top prize and female Arab directors are particularly making a splash this year. Lebanese film-maker Nadine Labaki’s highly-anticipated third film “Capernaum”—about a 12-year-old boy with an axe to grind about being born into a miserable, loveless existence—has racked up a string of distribution deals ahead of its premiere last night.

And two first-time female directors made impressive debuts with films about suffocating social conventions in Syria and Morocco. But while the #MeToo movement continued to make waves, with several Hollywood actresses ditching frilly frocks for pants for their photo shoots, Arab film-makers appeared more concerned with social alienation. Labaki, who set her first film “Caramel” in a Beirut beauty parlor, zooms in on neglected children and

migrants in “Capernaum”, which has drawn comparisons with Charlie Chaplin’s story of a street boy, “The Kid”. Labaki said she found the idea staring her in the face one night when she was driving home from a party.

### Stars born in the gutter.

“I stopped at a traffic light and saw a child half-asleep in the arms of his mother, who was sitting on the tarmac begging.” The encounter spurred her to use a mostly hard-up, amateur cast including a Syrian refugee child for the lead role. Going toe-to-toe with her and the likes of Spike Lee for the Palme d’Or—won only twice in 70 years by Arab directors—is A.B. Shawky, with his feel-good first feature about an Egyptian leper and his orphan friend, also played by amateurs. A year after the award-winning “The Nile Hilton Incident”, a noirish tale of murder and corruption set during the 2011 revolution in Cairo, “Yomeddine” serves up less political fare. “What I really want to do is highlight marginalized groups. I wanted to give a voice to people who don’t neces-



Egyptian director AB Shawky (left) and producer Dina Emam pose as they arrive for the screening of the film “Yomeddine” at the 71st edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

sarily have anybody to speak for them,” said Austrian-Egyptian writer-director Shakwy.

Similarly, the Moroccan entry about an unmar-

ried woman threatened with jail for falling pregnant is actually more preoccupied with class divisions. The film shows a middle-class, 20-year-old from a Casablanca family scrambling to avoid bringing shame on her family after an unwanted pregnancy. The real victim in the affair, however, is not the one left holding the baby. “I found that the debate about the condition of women in the Arab world was being reduced to the issue of patriarchy and chauvinism, which to me falls short of the mark,” director Meryem Benm’Barek told AFP. “Whether you are a man or a woman, what determines whether or not you are a victim is your social status,” she said.

Tunisia director Mohamed Ben Attia’s “Dear Son”, about a father trying to trace his son who has run away to join the Islamic State group, is also more family drama than a political broadside. The birthplace of the Arab Spring, which has been mired in economic crisis ever since, is estimated to have supplied more jihadists in Syria than any other country. — AFP



## Lifestyle | Feature

# In Lagos, the 'Venice of Africa' fights for survival

Its nickname is the "Venice of Africa" but, other than its maze of narrow waterways where wooden boats glide, Makoko offers little similarity with the fabled canal city of Europe. Makoko, to be blunt, is an environmental eyesore. It is a vast slum of wooden shacks built on stilts in the brackish, blackish, thickly-polluted lagoon in the heart of Lagos, Africa's biggest megapolis. The sprawling community began in the 19th century as a fishing village for immigrants, who settled on the water's edge.

As more arrived and land became rare, people started to move out onto the water. Over time, Makoko became a floating realm of perhaps a quarter of a million people, although the real number is anyone's guess. Here, a famously vibrant city has taken root, defying the lack of sanitation, the compacted rubbish and the reeking, greasy water, where impromptu churches and clinics have also found a home. Today, though, Makoko and other lagoon shantytowns face a threat: urban regeneration in a city of some 20 million people that is starved of land.

In 2016, the governor of the state of Lagos, Akinwunmi Ambode, vowed to evacuate all waterfront

shantytowns—a population totaling about 300,000, according to the Nigerian Slum/Informal Settlement Association. A few months later, 30,000 people lost their homes when one of the slums, Otodo Gbame, a poor fishing community close to the upmarket southeastern district of Lekki, was razed. Over three days, the district was set alight then bulldozed, reducing tens of thousands of homes to piles of smoldering wood and corrugated iron. At least three people died when armed police moved in with bulldozers, setting fire to the area and chasing some residents into the nearby lagoon, locals said. On Tuesday, about a hundred gathered to mark their eviction. Former residents say they have yet to receive the relief or resettlement that the authorities promised. Mostly from the ethnic Egun tribe, they trace their roots to Benin but say they have been living in Lagos for over a century. But like the vast majority of the city's poor, they do not have title deeds to prove it. "My father used to be a fisherman, I used to be a fisherman, but they destroyed my boat," said Isaac Azin, aged 36. "I live in Oreta now (another community), but people they don't want us there. They have their own issues."



Evictees of Otodo Gbame, a Lagos shanty town, and members of other communities hold banners on a flotilla of boats in protest against their forced eviction. — AFP photos



A second-hand clothes salesman waves from his boat in Makoko waterfront community in Lagos.

### 'Don't want the poor'

In the shoreline neighborhood of Ebute Metta, local people are incensed by what happened on December 28 last year. Informal sawmills were destroyed, they say, by police and so-called "area boys"—gangs of toughs paid to clear out the area. "Mr James," a man in his fifties laments the loss of his fine workshop and the generator that he used to provide power for it. "The big men, they don't want poor people to exist in Nigeria", he said. In communities who live around the lagoon, life is hard. People tease out a living from fishing, from working on the shipments of wood floated downriver and from dredging—using buckets to haul sand from the sea bed off the Lagos coast, which is then sold to the construction industry. — AFP



People navigate the waterways of Makoko waterfront community in Lagos.

## 'PEOPLE'S FOREST' MARKS 100 YEARS, SEEKS NEW CONNECTIONS

New Hampshire's most iconic attraction had been decimated by forest fires and logging when President Woodrow Wilson established it as a national forest a century ago. Now, the White Mountain National Forest stretches over 800,000 acres in the northern part of the state and part of Maine. The forest is home to several ski lodges, campgrounds and has over 1,200 miles of non-motorized hiking trails. It attracts millions of visitors each year and has become part of the state's economic engine, contributing to the nearly \$9 billion outdoor recreation industry that supports almost 80,000 jobs. Beyond that, it is a source of pride among New Englanders.

"There's a reason why it's called 'the people's forest', it belongs to us all," said Cynthia Robinson, director of the Museum of the White Mountains at Plymouth State University. The US Forest Service is kicking off the centennial celebration with an exhibition Wednesday that illustrates the forest's history through art, artifacts and interactive experiences. Visitors will be immersed in sound bites from different parts of the forest - bird calls, babbling brooks, leaf-crunching - and will also be able to comment on what they envision the next 100 years to be for the federally protected land. The exhibit will run through mid-September.

A timeline of the 100 years runs along the walls of the two-floor exhibit, marking important events in the forest's history, like in 1959 when the Kancamagus Highway was completed and designated as a national scenic byway. It also tracks the amount of acreage purchased by the federal government through the years. "I hope peo-



In this file photo leaves begin to change color along the Presidential Range in the White Mountain National Forest, visible from Hart's Location, NH. — AP

ple who come to the exhibit learn things about the forest they had no idea existed," Robinson said. "The goal is to get people excited enough to participate and show good stewardship."

Good stewardship was mostly a dream more than 100 years ago in the forest. Mostly in private hands, 10 percent of the region had burned in a series of forest fires, according to forester David Govatski. Hillsides were denuded by logging and streams and creeks had become polluted. It was those dirty waterways that prompted the Weeks Act of 1911, which led to the creation of national forests

in the eastern US. "Looking at the history of it, it's an incredible conservation success story," said Evan Burks, public affairs officer for the White Mountain National Forest.

### Wildlife and fisheries

"We have this diverse forested landscape that provides clean water and unsurpassed recreation activities, and it's become this symbol for not just New Hampshire, but all of New England." When the forest service took charge of preservation efforts in the early 20th century, its original intent was to regrow those forests and restore polluted streams. Govatski, a retired US Forest Service worker, said much has been done to return the forest to its natural state - though it remains a work in progress. "It took a long time to get to where the forest is now, but restoring wildlife and fisheries is still a continued effort to this day," Govatski said. "My impression is that they want to take a look back and reflect on its successes, but also look forward on how we're going to preserve these resources for future generations."

The forest service hopes the events planned this summer, including field trips and lectures, renew the call to action from over a century ago that set the environmental legislation in motion. The forest service seeks to inspire younger generations to volunteer to help maintain the land. "This has been a huge history lesson on a place that I spent a lot of time in growing up," said 19-year-old Liam Colby, a junior at Plymouth State and the museum's receptionist. "It makes me want to be part of something bigger than myself." — AP



# REBELS WITH A CAUSE - THE WOMEN BIKERS SAVING LIVES IN NIGERIA

Whenever the all-female Nigerian biker group D'Angels hit the streets, people would stare in amazement at the sight of women on motorbikes. So they made up their minds to use the attention for a good cause. Enter the Female Bikers Initiative (FBI), which has already provided free breast and cervical cancer screening to 500 women in Nigeria's commercial capital Lagos. This August, D'Angels and another female biker group in Lagos, Amazon Motorcycle Club, plan to provide free screening to 5,000 women - a significant undertaking in a country where many lack access to proper healthcare.

"What touched us most was the women," D'Angels co-founder Nnenna Samuila, 39, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation by phone from Lagos. "Some asked if the bikes really belonged to us. Some asked if they could sit on our bikes. We decided to use the opportunity to do something to touch women's lives." Breast and cervical cancer are huge killers in Nigeria, accounting for half the 100,000 cancer deaths each year, according to the World Health Organization. Screening and early detection can dramatically reduce the mortality rate for cervical cancer in particular.

But oncologist Omolola Salako, whose Lagos charity partnered with the FBI last year, says

there is not enough awareness of the need for screening. "Among the 600-plus women we have screened since October, about 60 percent were being screened for the first time," said Dr Salako, executive director of Sebecly Cancer Care. "It was the first time they were hearing about it." Even if women do know they should be screened, affordability is a barrier, said Salako, whose charity provides the service for free and also raises funds to treat cancer patients.

## Raising awareness

This year the bikers will put on a week of awareness-raising and mobile screening, after which free screenings will be available at Sebecly every Thursday for the rest of the year. Members of the two clubs and any other female bikers who want to join in will ride through the streets, to schools, malls and other public places, distributing fliers and talking to women about the importance of screening. "All the bikers turn up," said Samuila, one of five women on the FBI's board of trustees. "We just need to tell them, this is the location for the activity, and this is what we need you to do." Last year their funds, from private and corporate donors, could only stretch to two mastectomies, and they hope they will be able to sponsor more treatments this year.

"We encourage this person to come, and then



Kelly Jumbo, Jeminat Olumegbon, Kene Okafor, Jo Isiorho; members of the Female Bikers Initiative (FBI), during an awareness ride in Lagos, Nigeria in 2017. — Reuters

she finds out that something is wrong and you abandon her," said Samuila, a former telecoms executive who now runs her own confectionery and coffee company. "We would love to be able to follow up with whatever comes out of the testing." This is just the latest in a number of projects the bikers have organized. In 2016 they

launched Beyond Limits, a scheme to encourage young girls to fulfil their potential beyond societal expectations of marriage and babies. They travel to schools to give talks and invite senior women working in science, technology and innovation to take part. — Reuters

## New Rembrandt found after being bought at London auction

A Dutch art expert revealed Tuesday that he has discovered a previously unknown portrait by Rembrandt, which he bought 18 months ago at a London auction for around £130,000 (148,000 euros). Dating from about 1634, "Portrait of a Young Gentleman" is the first unknown painting by the Dutch master to turn up in more than four decades and is likely worth millions. It was bought in late 2016 by Dutch art dealer and expert Jan Six at a Christie's auction in London. "He knew instantly when he looked at it that it was a Rembrandt," his spokeswoman Ronit Palache told AFP. "He has a huge knowledge about Rembrandt, and has spent years and years researching him. So he was unbelievably excited and also afraid that everyone would see how excited he was."

The painting has now been authenticated by other art historians, including another leading Dutch expert on Rembrandt, Ernst van der Wetering, she added. It is undated and unsigned. And nothing is known about the painting's history and provenance other than that before being auctioned it had belonged to a British noble family for about six generations. The compelling portrait, which shows a young man dressed in a black cloak with a distinctive white lace ruffle staring out of the painting, will go on display for a month at the Hermitage Museum in Amsterdam from Wednesday.

The lace collar closely resembles others by Rembrandt, such as in the portraits



Art dealer Jan Six reacts as a painting attributed to famous Dutch Master Rembrandt is put on display at the Hermitage museum in Amsterdam, Netherlands. — AP

of newly married couple Marten Soolmans, and Oopjen Coppit bought in 2015 for 160 million euros by France and the Netherlands in a joint purchase from the wealthy Rothschild family. Art dealer Six, who has also written a book about his discovery, intends to sell the newly-found painting after it has been on display in Amsterdam. But his spokeswoman refused to be drawn on how much it could fetch at auction, merely saying: "It will be more than £130,000." It is believed the painting is also part of a double portrait, but further investigation about the canvas's history will be needed to solve the mystery, said Palache. — AFP

## Miss America taps women for leadership spots

The Miss America Organization is putting women in its three top leadership positions following an email scandal involving former male leaders of the scholarship group. The organization tells The Associated Press it is appointing Regina Hopper as president and CEO of the Miss America Organization, and Marjorie Vincent-Tripp as chairwoman of the board of the Miss America Foundation.

Coupled with Gretchen Carlson leading the Miss America Organization's board of trustees, the group is moving on from the email scandal with women firmly in charge. "By putting female leadership in place, we hope to send a strong signal," Hopper told the AP. "We want young women to see Miss America as a place where they can come and benefit and be empowered." Hopper, a former Miss Arkansas, attorney and TV journalist, replaces Sam Haskell, whose emails about the intellect, appearance and sex lives of former Miss Americas led to his departure and a revamping of the group's top leadership in December. She is a former correspondent for CBS News, where she won an Emmy for her work on the show "48 Hours."

The scandal began when the Huffington Post published leaked



Photo contestants attend a welcoming ceremony for the Miss America competition on the Atlantic City, NJ, Boardwalk. — AP

emails showing pageant officials ridiculing past Miss Americas, including crass and sometimes vulgar comments about them. The emails included one that used a vulgar term for female genitalia to refer to past Miss America winners, one that wished that a particular former Miss America had died and others that speculated about how many sex partners one former Miss America has had. Haskell declined to comment on the new leadership. Vincent-Tripp, who was Miss America 1991, formerly served on the Miss America Board of Trustees. She is an assistant attorney general in Florida, and formerly worked as a TV journalist.

As chair of the Miss America Foundation, she is responsible for educating the public about the foundation's values and building public support. Carlson, Miss America 1989, was named chairwoman of the Miss America board in January after the email scandal rocked the organization. Her sexual harassment lawsuit against Fox News Chairman Roger Ailes led to his departure. Hopper said she hopes young women will realize that Miss America is now being led by women who have been through the program and have been helped by it, and that they will seek the same benefits from it. — AP





# Afghans, Pakistanis weave a livelihood on Emirati coast



**F**ar from his home in Afghanistan, Nour rises each morning before the sun's rays touch the coastal Emirati town of Kalba for a new day weaving fishing cages. The 50-year-old takes his place alongside fellow laborers, praying toward the holy city of Mecca. Then he sips on his first cup of tea, a moment of serenity before work begins. Kalba is located on the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates.

Unlike the capital Abu Dhabi 200 kilometers (124 miles) west, which faces the Arab Gulf states, Kalba is perched on the Gulf of Oman, looking out toward Pakistan and India beyond. The town has become a hub for the craft of weaving fishing cages, attracting dozens of Afghans and Pakistanis seeking to earn a living in the calm and oil-rich Gulf nation.

## No days off

The fishing cage, or wire net, used in the Gulf of Oman is shaped like an igloo, with an oval-shaped inlet. The popular Shaeeri and Zoubedi fish can swim in through the narrowing passage, but cannot find their way out. "Each cage takes about seven or eight hours of non-stop work," Nour explains. The Afghan father of three is a long way from his family and his landlocked hometown of Khost,

located near the Pakistan border. "I've been working here for nine years," he says. Nour says he earns 25 dirhams (about \$7, six euros) per fishing net, of which he makes one or two each day.

Despite the long tedious hours, sometimes oppressive heat, and relatively low financial returns, Nour stays. "I'm happy because I can make money to send to my family at the end of each month," he says. He is not alone. For decades, the UAE has attracted hundreds of thousands of Afghans, Pakistanis, Filipinos and other Asian nationalities willing to do manual labor that the wealthy local population is not. The industrial zone in Kalba is home to about 50 small enterprises, Emirati-owned and employing about a dozen weavers each.

The employers provide shared living quarters for the men, food and tea. The weavers, aged 18 to 60, work in their own open spaces with thatched roofs to shield them from the sun. There are no days off. Instead, every two years, workers are given a ticket home for a six-month unpaid break. For many, it is too long a time to go without work, but it is a requirement tied to local labour laws. Making the traps is a craft, as the worker must simultaneously grip and tie fine wires together evenly and very quickly to prevent the entire structure from collapsing before it is finished. To avoid injury, the men tie pieces of cloth or fine aluminum around their fingers.





## Lifestyle | Feature

**'Jump every day'**

The only sound in this sleepy weaving community is the sound of Afghan or Pakistani news bulletins on small TV sets, or music played on mobile phones. Herat, 30, sits on a chair listening to music from his native Afghanistan under the straw awning. He faces a mirror to keep an extra eye on his net progress. "This small fan gets me through the heat of the summer," said Herat, deftly manipulating the thin wires. He says the temperature can rise to 50 degrees Celsius (122 degrees Fahrenheit). "The heat doesn't stop us from working," says Herat, who has lived in Kalba for three years.

Akbar, a 55-year-old father, says he arrived in Kalba three decades ago from his native city of Peshawar in Pakistan. As he nears completion of his trap, Akbar says he plans to stay a few more years before returning to his country. "It is true that my hair is going grey, but I still feel like a young man," he says. "In any case, there is no work in Pakistan." Suddenly, Akbar stands up, grabbing a blue rope tied to the ceiling. He takes two steps back and leaps over the meter-high cage-making a perfect landing in the unfinished trap. "It's been 30 years and I still do this jump every day," grins Akbar, to the applause of nearby workers.

As the sun goes down, the sandy path through this small laborers' community is lined with the day's finished cages. But Nour doesn't stop working until just before midnight. He sips a final cup of tea as he checks his net-making progress for the month, finally retiring for the night in the adjoining sleeping quarters. Nour, his dark beard peppered with grey, says he will only leave Kalba if he finds a job in his troubled home country. "I will leave when I am old," he says. — AFP



Afghani fishermen weave a cage used for fishing in the United Arab Emirates in eastern coastal town of Kalba. — AFP photos





## Film review

## ISLE OF DOGS

By Aakash Bakaya

In my second year of college, one of my assignments was to make a one minute stop-motion animation with at least a semblance of structure. It was college so of course I left it to the last minute but I knew what I wanted to do. I wanted to recreate the Mexican standoff sequence from 'The Good, The Bad and The Ugly' replacing the three main characters with three different country coins (a US cent, a Kuwaiti 100 fil and 5 Rupee coin). I shot it on the floor of my room and clued the bottom of each coin to the floor to make them stand on their own. It was nothing but constant back-and-forth cuts mixed in with the occasional close-up (just like the movie itself) while Ennio Morricone's theme song blared in the background. It took me three days to finish editing the 160+ pictures together but it earned me an A (the execution I was told was too straightforward). It was the most amateur a stop-motion film can get but that assignment really gave me a new found appreciation for the art of stop-motion and the pain-staking process the creators go through to make them.

'Isle of Dogs', Wes Anderson's second stop-motion feature, may not break any new ground for popular auteur but that never stopped it from being an absolute treat. Opening with Anderson's quintessential voice over narration detailing the story's background and following it with an opening credit sequence booming with drums and Japanese laden texts, Anderson proves that no matter the material, he still hasn't lost his touch of propelling you into a strange, unique world. And what a truly unique place it is.

## What happened to 'man's best friend'?

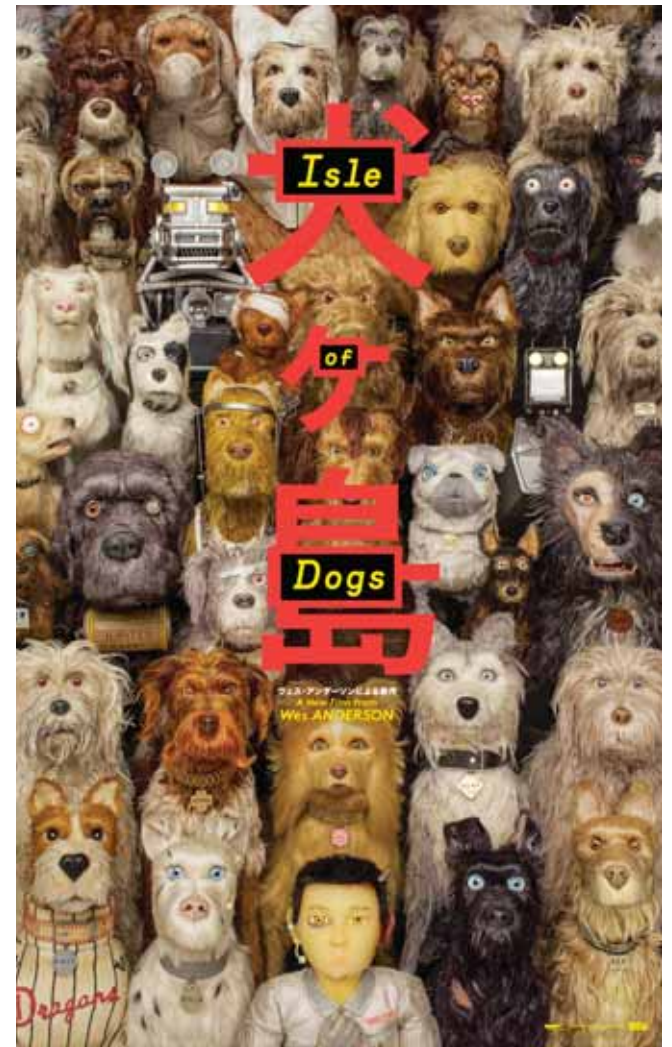
The last 75 years of cinema has shown Japan in a multitude of ways. Akira Kurosawa's most popular works were based around rural, historic legends, Yasujiro Ozu's 'Tokyo Story' is probably the greatest film on the struggles of city living ever made and even eccentric mad men like Gaspar Noe gave us 'Enter The Void' which was a drug-infused four hour trip through the streets of Japan. Anderson's take is more of an infusion of the legendary Japanese cine-

matic figures of the 50's mixed with the director's own stylistic framing that has made him so popular both among mainstream and artistic circles.

The story is set in and around the fictional Japanese city of Megasaki City which is currently governed by the tyrannical hand of Mayor Kobayashi. It is some time in the future and Japan is forced to resort to a Trash Island for their waste management needs. Alongside this, a mysterious fever is spreading among the local canine population and citizens fear they too will soon be infected with the disease. Drastic measures are sort and a decree is made that banishes all dogs, pets and strays alike, to Trash Island. It is all set to a symphonic-like rhythm that pulsates along to create an immensely memorable film filled with all the quirky, strange and admirable characters you will only find in a Wes Anderson feature.

Chief (Bryan Cranston) a weary abandoned stray has trust issues and leads a pack that consists of four other domesticated pets named Rex, King, Boss and Duke. Nutmeg (Scarlett Johansson) is one of island's most desirable female dogs but she doesn't want to bring a litter into this new filthy world. There's also Jupiter and Oracle, an odd pair we meet only later in the film but they still leave their paw prints on the plot. There's a bunch of human characters as well. Atari Kobayashi, the Mayor's son and hero of our story, crash lands into Trash Island to find his dog Spots; Tracy Walker (Greta Gerwig) an American foreign exchange student leads a rebellion against the Mayor and his dictatorial policies and of course Interpreter Nelson (Francis McDormand) whom without which we wouldn't understand much of what is being said.

That is because there are no subtitles for the Japanese. As stated before the opening credits "all Japanese dialect in this film will be either be spoken by an interpreter or made understandable through dog-related tech". It is a strange decision especially with some scenes having two or more characters conversing in Japanese for a little too long. It is meant to help you relate with our doggie characters as they too don't understand Japanese and if you're observant enough, nothing truly gets lost in these exchanges. However, I wished they incorporated some way of translation without the in-



terpreter as the slightly lengthy tirades in Japanese may hinder the overall enjoyment of a few scenes for some.

## Stop-motion at its best

This point is the only actual criticism I had of the film because the overall result is nothing short of incredible. So many sequences left me awed at the sheer mastery of stop-motion animation on display. This is Anderson's second rodeo in this department after 2009 'Fantastic Mr Fox' and it is clear he's learned much since then. 'Fox' was a great feature of course but 'Isle of Dogs' could very well be the best, most creative take on this animation technique ever put on film (sorry Henry Selick fans). There are shots here that would be jaw-dropping even if they weren't captured in stop-motion. So much so that even Anderson shows restraints with his usual camera-panning movements and lets the amazing set-production and details remain in focus. One example of this was a 30 second long sequence of a chef preparing a traditional Japanese meal. I won't spoil the details of it here because it truly must be seen to be believed.

Stellar animation alone cannot carry any film but here thankfully all the voice actors bring a remarkable amount of depth to their performances -Cranston in particular. There's a point in the movie where Chief's pack is reminiscing about the favorite meal they ever had. It is fairly ordinary until they get to Chief. Everything stops and Cranston details a short but emotional tale of what turned out to be his best and last actual meal. It is so oddly captivating you'll forget the actor is talking through a toy-size dog puppet. So much of the voice acting has this affect. Young Japanese actor Koyu Rankin who plays Atari also gives a fine performance that will make you believe you're watching a live-action feature.

'Isle of Dogs' is a greater sum of all its moving parts. It effortlessly pulls you in and Anderson's world-building capabilities have never been better. I couldn't help but draw comparisons to his earlier feature 'The Darjeeling Express' which was also set in a foreign country. He incorporated so much of the local dialect, culture and atmosphere into that film - something he does even better here. Alexandre Desplat returns to provide a stellar soundtrack and the inclusion of Japanese writer Kunichi Nomura helps flesh out the world even further. The ending was maybe a missed opportunity to do something different but "doing something different" isn't really highlighted in this director's playbook. For as original as his creations turn out to be, they still are unashamedly 'a Wes Anderson film' and sometimes, that's all you need.





# During Ramadan, fattoush is a perfect light meal or side salad

By Katie Workman

During the month of Ramadan, which begins on May 16 this year, observant Muslims perform daily fasts from dawn to dusk, only breaking the fast with a meal (usually a light one) after the sun sets. Fasting is intended to cleanse the soul, allowing Muslims to turn their attention inward, toward charity work and prayer, and away from material things.

One of the dishes on many tables in Levantine countries during Ramadan is fattoush. It may be served during the evening break fasts, and is often part of the celebratory spread that marks the end of the month of abstinence.

Many countries have a version of fattoush. As with many cross-cultural dishes, researching the different varieties is both fun and slightly exhausting. There's always some type of flatbread, such as pita, and tomatoes and cucumbers. But then ... lettuce or no lettuce? Vegetables sliced or diced? Radishes? Peppers? Lemon or lime juice? A bit of sweetener? Sumac? Choices to be made.

Mince your garlic as much as you can so that it really blends into the dressing. A way to get it super-fine is to chop it quite a bit, then sprinkle on a bit of salt and drag the flat side of the knife blade across the garlic several times, pressing down as you go to create a paste. Chop some more, drag the knife over it once again, repeat, and soon you will have a fine garlic paste.

I used a little pomegranate syrup in my dressing because I had a bottle lying around (which I realize is not normal for

most American cooks). Use honey if you are not as ingredient-nerdy as I am (or you can find the syrup online or in a specialty foods store).

Sumac is a spice made from berries that grow wild on bushes in Lebanon and other countries in the region; it's a classic fattoush seasoning. The flavor is tart and tangy. You could use that instead of the za'atar, which is a lovely, tangy and earthy combination of sumac, thyme, sesame and marjoram (sometimes cumin), and is often easier to find in supermarkets.

#### Ingredients:

Serves 6

Start to finish: 30 minutes

Pita Crisps:

- 2 pieces pita bread
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon za'atar

#### Salad:

- 1 heart of romaine, thinly sliced crosswise
- 4 Persian cucumbers, sliced, or 1 seedless or hothouse cucumber, halved lengthwise, seeds removed, and thinly sliced
- 1 pint cherry or grape tomatoes, halved
- 1/2 cup finely diced red onion
- 4 scallions trimmed and thinly sliced (white and green parts)

- 6 radishes, trimmed and thinly sliced
- 1 cup fresh parsley leaves

#### Vinaigrette:

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 3 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1 teaspoon pomegranate syrup or honey
- 1 teaspoon very finely minced garlic (almost a paste)
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
- 1/2 teaspoon za'atar
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

#### Preparation:

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Make the Pita Crisps. Brush the tops of the pitas with the tablespoon of olive oil, sprinkle with salt and za'atar. Place on a baking sheet and bake for 4 to 5 minutes, until toasted and crisp. Remove and let cool.

Make the Salad: In a large bowl combine the lettuce, cucumbers, tomatoes, onions, scallions, radishes and parsley.

Make the Vinaigrette: In a small bowl, combine the 1/4 cup olive oil, lime juice, pomegranate syrup or honey, garlic, mint, za'atar, and salt and pepper. Pour the dressing over the salad and toss well.

Break the cooled pita into pieces about 1-inch large (they will be uneven) and add them to the salad just before serving. Give a final toss, let sit for 5 minutes so the pita starts to soften just slightly in the dressing, and serve.





# A tangy, tomatoey, sauce is the star of barbecued chicken

The brick-hued sauce should be mopped on as the chicken cooks, resulting in a beautifully browned (not charred) exterior surrounding moist, evenly cooked meat. Our Classic Barbecue Sauce gave simple chicken parts all the intense, multidimensional flavor we craved, but the real secret to this recipe was the method: A two-level grill fire allowed us to cook the chicken most of the way through on the cooler side of the grill, rendering the fat without causing flare-ups, and then we moved the chicken to the hotter side to get a lacquered layer of sauce.

Applying the sauce in coats and turning the chicken as it cooked encouraged the sauce to thicken and caramelize, perfectly glazing the chicken. Don't try to grill more than 10 pieces of chicken at a time; you won't be able to line them up. You can use a mix of chicken breasts, thighs, and drumsticks, making sure they add up to about 10 pieces.



## CLASSIC BARBECUED CHICKEN

### Ingredients

Servings: 4 to 6  
 Start to finish: 1 hour and 45 minutes (plus 30 minutes to prepare barbecue sauce)  
 1 teaspoon salt  
 1 teaspoon pepper  
 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
 3 1/2 pounds bone-in chicken pieces (split breasts cut in half, drumsticks, and/or thighs), trimmed  
 1 (13 by 9-inch) disposable aluminum roasting pan (if using charcoal)

### Classic Barbecue Sauce:

1 tablespoon vegetable oil  
 1 onion, chopped fine  
 Salt and pepper  
 1 garlic clove, minced  
 1 teaspoon chili powder  
 1 1/4 cups ketchup  
 6 tablespoons molasses  
 3 tablespoons cider vinegar  
 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce  
 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard

### Preparation

Heat oil in medium saucepan over medium heat until shimmering. Add onion and pinch salt and cook until onion is softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in garlic and chili powder and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Whisk in ketchup, molasses, vinegar, Worcestershire, and mustard. Bring sauce to simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened and reduced to about 2 cups, about 25 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. (Sauce can be refrigerated for up to 4 days.)

Combine salt, pepper, and cayenne in bowl. Pat chicken dry with paper towels and rub with seasoning mixture. For a charcoal grill, open bottom vent completely and place disposable pan on one side of grill. Light large chimney starter filled with charcoal briquettes (6 quarts). When top coals are partially covered with ash, pour evenly over other side of grill. Set cooking grate in place, cover, and open lid vent completely. Heat grill until hot, about 5 minutes.

For a gas grill, turn all burners to high, cover, and heat grill until hot, about 15 minutes. Leave primary burner on high and turn off other burner(s). (Adjust primary burner as needed to maintain grill temperature around 350 F.) Clean and oil cooking grate. Place chicken, skin side down, on cooler side of grill. Cover and cook until chicken begins to brown, 30 to 35 minutes.

Slide chicken into single line between hotter and cooler sides of grill. Cook uncovered, flipping chicken and brushing every 5 minutes with some of sauce, until sticky, about 20 minutes. Slide chicken to hotter side of grill and cook, uncovered, flipping and brushing with remaining sauce, until well glazed, breasts register 160 degrees, and drumsticks/thighs register 175 degrees, about 5 minutes. (Smaller pieces may cook faster than larger pieces. Remove pieces from grill as they reach correct temperature.) Transfer chicken to serving dish, tent with aluminum foil, and let rest for 5 to 10 minutes. Serve.



COOKING ON DEADLINE:

# Salmon Panzanella

By Katie Workman

In the most perfect of all worlds, things look as good as they taste. That's true with this dish. Pink salmon, bright tomatoes (grab multicolored ones if that's an option), flecks of purple onion, pale chunks of toasty bread and a drizzle of bright green basil oil - a virtual rainbow.

And matching the array of colors is a variety of textures: soft and tender (salmon), juicy and firm (tomatoes), crispy-chewy (chunks of toasted bread). There is nothing ho-hum about this salad. While we're talking about the most perfect of worlds, if you can serve this dish slightly warm, with the salmon recently emerged from the oven, you will be in for another level of sensory happiness. This is the kind of one-bowl lunch or dinner that is pure summertime happiness. If you can figure out a way to enjoy it outside, all the better.

Make the basil oil up to a couple of days ahead and store it in a container in the fridge. You'll have some extra from this recipe: Drizzle it over sliced tomatoes and fresh mozzarella later in the week. And if the basil oil is one step too many, skip it - add an extra drizzle of plain olive oil at the end, and some slivered fresh basil leaves. Still beautiful, still delicious.

## SALMON PANZANELLA

### Ingredients

Servings: 4  
 Start to finish: 40 minutes  
 8 ounces ciabatta bread  
 5 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided  
 Salt to taste  
 2 tablespoons white vinegar  
 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard  
 Freshly ground black pepper to taste  
 1 pound skinless salmon filets (any number of pieces to equal 1 pound)  
 1 pint cherry or grape tomatoes, halved (mixed colors look especially pretty)  
 1/4 cup minced red onion  
 2 tablespoons basil oil

### Preparation

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F. Tear the ciabatta into large chunks, about 1 1/2-inches big. Place them on a rimmed baking sheet and drizzle with about 2 tablespoons of the olive oil. Toss them to combine, then spread them out on the baking sheet and sprinkle with salt. Bake for 5 to 7 minutes, until the bread starts to brown at the edges. Remove the bread from the oven, transfer to a large bowl, and keep the oven on.

Meanwhile combine the remaining 3 tablespoons olive oil, the vinegar, mustard, and salt and pepper in a small bowl and stir to blend well. Spray the same rimmed baking sheet you used to toast the bread with nonstick spray, or line with parchment paper. Place the salmon filets on the baking sheet and drizzle about half of the oil mixture over them, using a brush to distribute it evenly. Roast for 10 to 12 minutes until cooked through. Remove and let cool slightly.

Use your fingers or a fork to pull the salmon apart into large chunks. Add the halved tomatoes, onions and the warm salmon chunks to the toasted bread in the bowl, drizzle the rest of the dressing over them, and gently toss to combine. Transfer to a serving platter. Drizzle the basil oil over the salad and serve slightly warm or at room temperature.

Note: To make basil oil, place 1/2 cup fresh basil, 2 tablespoons flat-leaf parsley leaves, 1/4 teaspoon minced garlic, 1/2 teaspoon lemon juice, and salt and pepper to taste in a food processor, and pulse several times to roughly chop. With the motor running, add 1/4 cup olive oil through the top of the processor. When the oil is added, scrape down the sides of the food processor and process again.





# COCONUT MILK AND CURRY PASTE TAKE CHICKEN TO NEW HEIGHTS

By Melissa D'arabian

**B**oneless skinless chicken breasts save the day for so many busy folks who want to get a lean, protein-filled, affordable dinner on the table in a hurry. I always have a package or two in my freezer - I buy them when they are on super-sale (which they are once every 4-6 weeks in my experience) and freeze them, a strategy even more helpful if you seek out the pricier organic or free-range versions.

Even if I forget to pop the frozen chicken in the fridge to thaw the night before I need it, I can always do a quick-thaw in a big bowl of cold water, and still get dinner on the table quickly. This ubiquitous cut of meat is chock-full of lean protein - a 4-ounce serving is only 125 calories, and has about 26 grams of protein, plus a smattering of minerals and B vitamins, and only a gram or two of fat. The downside to the boneless skinless chicken breast is that the flavor is a little lack-

luster. But what some call bland, I call a blank slate! And with so little fat in the meat, you have a little wiggle room to indulge a bit with other ingredients.

In my Weeknight Thai Curry Chicken recipe, for instance, I use full-fat coconut milk - a mere half cup for six servings of chicken is enough to create a luxurious mouth-feel without adding more than a few grams of fat per serving. In this quick weeknight-friendly recipe, I use fragrant Thai curry paste as a rub right on thin chicken cutlets, infusing them with a ton of flavor, and I serve the sauce as an accompaniment, rather than having the chicken swim in it.

A quick saute gives the chicken just the right amount of char (don't overcook), and the coconut sauce is made flavorful with fresh basil, green onion, and garlic and quick - just a few pulses in a blender and a few minutes stovetop. Dinner in about 20 minutes will prove that weeknight cooking need never be boring.



## WEEKNIGHT THAI CHICKEN CURRY

### Ingredients

Servings: 6

Start to finish: 20 minutes

6 chicken breast cutlets, about 4 ounces each

2 tablespoons red Thai curry paste

1 teaspoon neutral oil

Sauce:

1/2 cup coconut milk (canned)

1/2 cup chicken broth

2/3 cup fresh basil leaves, loosely packed (about 10 large or 20 small leaves)

3 cloves garlic, chopped or passed through a garlic press

3 green onions, chopped

1/2 teaspoon salt

3 cups of cooked brown rice, for serving

### Preparation

Lightly pound or press the chicken breasts so that they are no thicker than 3/4 of an inch. Coat each cutlet with a teaspoon of the curry paste. Heat the oil in a large nonstick pan over medium-high heat, brush the oil to coat the whole pan. Place the chicken cutlets in the pan, smooth side of the cutlet down. Turn the heat slightly down to medium, and cover the pan. Cook for 5 minutes, uncover, and flip the chicken using a spatula. (If the chicken is stuck to the pan, let it cook for another minute or two and then flip.)

Let the chicken cook on the second side, uncovered, for another 5 minutes, or until the internal temperature is 160 F. Remove from heat and set on cooked brown rice on plate or platter to serve. Meanwhile, place all the sauce ingredients in a blender and pulse just enough to mix, leaving some of the basil in flecks. Pour the sauce into a small saucepan and bring to a gentle simmer over medium heat. Spoon a few tablespoons of sauce over the chicken and rice.

**Chef's Note:** I used full fat coconut milk for unctuous texture since the quantity is relatively low, but you may substitute low-fat version.



## Comic

### WORD SEARCH

#### Movies: Musicals

Find and circle all of the Movie Musicals that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the title of an additional Movie Musical.

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

- |               |            |                |                 |
|---------------|------------|----------------|-----------------|
| A CHORUS LINE | CHICAGO    | HELLO, DOLLY!  | PAL JOEY        |
| ALL THAT JAZZ | EVITA      | HIGH SOCIETY   | SHOW BOAT       |
| ANNIE         | FAME       | HOLIDAY INN    | SILK STOCKINGS  |
| BLUE HAWAII   | FANTASIA   | JAILHOUSE ROCK | SOUTH PACIFIC   |
| BRIGADOON     | FUNNY FACE | LA TRAVIATA    | STATE FAIR      |
| BUGSY MALONE  | FUNNY GIRL | MARY POPPINS   | SWEET CHARITY   |
| CABARET       | GIGI       | MOULIN ROUGE   | SWING TIME      |
| CALAMITY JANE | GODSPELL   | MY FAIR LADY   | THE MUSIC MAN   |
| CAMELOT       | GREASE     | NEWSIES        | TOMMY           |
| CARMEN        | GYPSY      | OKLAHOMA!      | TOP HAT         |
| CAROUSEL      | HAIR       | OLIVER!        | WEST SIDE STORY |

### Yesterday's Solution

#### Movie Actors 3

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

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

The hidden movie title is: THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND

### CROSSWORD 1912

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
15			16								17			
18			19			20					21			
22				23	24		25				26			
		27		28			29							
30	31		32			33			34		35	36	37	
38		39			40		41		42					
43				44		45		46			47			
48				49				50			51			
52			53		54			55			56			
57			58		59	60	61					62		
			63						64		65			
66	67	68				69		70			71	72	73	74
75					76	77				78		79		
80					81							82		
83					84								85	

#### ACROSS

- The smallest multiple that is exactly divisible by every member of a set of numbers.
- (computer science) A computer that is running software that allows users to leave messages and access information of general interest.
- Extinct order of jawless vertebrates.
- (computer science) A computer that is running software that allows users to leave messages and access information of general interest.
- A flat wing-shaped process or wing-like part of an organism.
- Of or relating to or designating narcotics.
- Resinlike substance secreted by certain lac insects.
- A high-kicking dance of French origin performed by a female chorus line.
- (sometimes followed by 'of) Having or showing realization or perception.
- Leaf or strip from a leaf of the talipot palm used in India for writing paper.
- Tropical starchy tuberous root.
- A bachelor's degree in theology.
- An antibiotic (a semisynthetic oral penicillin (trade names Amoxil and Larotid and Polymox and Trimox and Augmentin)) used to treat bacterial infections.
- A church associated with a monastery or convent.
- Any tropical gymnosperm of the order Cycadales.
- A unit of magnetic flux equal to 100,000,000 maxwells.
- A city in northwestern Switzerland.
- Formerly included in genus Cedrela.
- (Old Testament) The minister of the Persian emperor who hated the Jews and was hanged for plotting to massacre them.
- A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.

- A material effigy that is worshipped as a god.
- A neutral middle vowel.
- City in southwestern Colombia in a rich agricultural area.
- Fairly small terrestrial ferns of tropical America.
- The branch of computer science that deal with writing computer programs that can solve problems creatively.
- Any of several related languages of the Celts in Ireland and Scotland.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- A compartment in front of a motor vehicle where driver sits.
- Loud and clear.
- Relating to the deepest parts of the ocean (below 6000 meters).
- The United Nations agency concerned with civil aviation.
- (prefix) Opposite or opposing or neutralizing.
- A motley assortment of things.
- The ermine in its brown summer coat with black-tipped tail.
- Plant with an elongated head of broad stalked leaves resembling celery.
- Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.
- Chevrotaian somewhat larger than the kanchil.
- An associate degree in applied science.
- An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
- A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
- Government agency created in 1974 to license and regulate nuclear power plants.

- Offering fun and gaiety.
- The great hall in ancient Persian palaces.
- A doctor's degree in preventive medicine.

#### DOWN

- A cord that is drawn through eyelets or around hooks in order to draw together two edges (as of a shoe or garment).
- Wearing or provided with clothing.
- A Dravidian language spoken in south central India.
- (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
- A port city in western France on the Loire estuary.
- A colorless and odorless inert gas.
- Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
- A person who surrenders to (or is taken by) the enemy in time of war.
- A republic in southern Europe on the Italian Peninsula.
- English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
- Narrow and long and pointed.
- A blemish made by dirt.
- An island in Indonesia east of Java.
- Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
- An esoteric or occult matter that is traditionally secret.
- Type genus of the Hylidae.
- Germanic barbarian leader who ended the western Roman Empire in 476 and became the first barbarian ruler of Italy (434-493).
- A decree that prohibits something.
- A member of an agricultural people of southern India.
- Freedom from difficulty or hardship or effort.

- Type genus of the Otariidae.
- English admiral who defeated the French fleets of Napoleon but was mortally wounded at Trafalgar (1758-1805).
- (psychology) Characterized by acceptance or approach.
- An atom having a valence of one.
- A blood group antigen possessed by Rh-positive people.
- Precipitation of ice pellets when there are strong rising air currents.
- The cry made by sheep.
- A city in east central Texas.
- Enthusiastic approval.
- Top part of an apron.
- A public promotion of some product or service.
- A river that rises in northern Colombia and flows generally eastward to the Orinoco in central Venezuela.
- A nation in northern North America.
- A lizard of the family Agamidae.
- A formal expression of praise.
- The syllable naming the fourth (subdominant) note of the diatonic scale in solmization.
- Thin fibrous bark of the paper mulberry and Pipturus albidus.
- German industrialist who was the first in Germany to use an assembly line in manufacturing automobiles (1871-1948).
- Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
- Relating to or characteristic of or occurring on land.
- The lean flesh of a fish that is often farmed.
- United States writer (born in Poland) who wrote in Yiddish (1880-1957).
- An accountant certified by the state.
- (informal) Informed about the latest trends.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

### Yesterday's Solution

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

### Daily SuDoku

7								4
6				8			3	9
	2		1	5				
	3		7	6				
1		8				6		7
				1	5		3	
				4	1		2	
	6	9		3				1
4								3

### Yesterday's Solution

8	6	9	2	7	3	5	4	1
4	7	5	9	6	1	8	3	2
2	1	3	4	8	5	7	6	9
9	8	2	5	4	6	1	7	3
3	4	7	1	2	8	9	5	6
6	5	1	3	9	7	4	2	8
7	9	4	8	3	2	6	1	5
5	2	8	6	1	4	3	9	7
1	3	6	7	5	9	2	8	4



## TV Listings



00:20 The Reckoning  
02:05 The Core  
04:30 Street  
06:10 Jack Reacher: Never Go Back  
08:20 Hunting The Phantom  
10:00 The Core  
12:20 Abducted  
14:00 Jack Reacher: Never Go Back  
16:05 One Good Cop  
18:10 Inception  
20:40 Mechanic: Resurrection  
22:25 Tiger House



00:45 Rugged Justice  
01:40 Bad Dog  
02:35 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner  
03:00 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner  
03:25 Whale Wars  
04:15 North Woods Law  
05:02 Wildest Indochina  
05:49 Lone Star Law  
06:36 Swamp Brothers  
07:00 Swamp Brothers  
07:25 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner  
07:50 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner  
08:15 Rugged Justice  
09:10 Bad Dog  
10:05 Wildest Indochina  
11:00 Racing Extinction  
12:50 Amba The Russian Tiger  
13:45 Saving A Species: Gorillas On The Brink With...  
14:40 Extinct Or Alive: The Tasmanian Tiger  
15:35 Lone Star Law  
16:30 Rugged Justice  
17:25 The Vet Life  
18:20 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet  
19:15 Bad Dog  
20:10 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner  
20:38 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner  
21:05 The Vet Life  
22:00 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet  
22:55 Wildest Indochina  
23:50 Lone Star Law



00:20 The Detectivists  
00:50 New Tricks  
01:45 Holby City  
02:40 The Level  
03:25 The Level  
04:15 Mum  
04:40 The Detectivists  
05:15 Agatha Raisin  
06:00 Doctors  
06:30 EastEnders  
07:00 Holby City  
08:00 Doctors  
08:30 Doctors  
09:00 EastEnders  
09:30 Hold The Sunset  
10:00 Carters Get Rich  
10:25 New Tricks  
11:20 Death In Paradise  
12:15 Holby City  
13:10 Doctors  
13:45 EastEnders  
14:15 Agatha Raisin  
15:05 Hold The Sunset  
15:35 Carters Get Rich  
16:00 Doctors  
16:30 Doctors  
17:00 Doctors  
17:30 Doctors  
18:30 Carters Get Rich  
19:00 New Tricks  
20:00 Sherlock  
21:35 Shakespeare And Hathaway: Private Investigators  
22:25 New Tricks  
23:20 Doctors  
23:50 Carters Get Rich

00:05 Important Things With Demitri Martin  
00:30 Friends  
00:55 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
01:20 The Opposition With Jordan Klepper  
01:45 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagef  
02:13 Disaster Date  
02:35 Important Things With Demitri Martin  
03:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
03:25 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol  
04:15 Catch A Contractor  
05:05 Snack Off  
05:30 Snack Off  
05:55 Disaster Date  
06:20 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagef  
06:50 I Used To Be Fat  
07:40 Impractical Jokers  
08:05 Impractical Jokers  
08:30 Disaster Date  
08:55 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagef  
09:20 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol  
10:10 I Used To Be Fat  
11:00 Impractical Jokers  
11:25 Impractical Jokers  
11:50 Ridiculousness Arabia  
12:15 House Of Food  
13:05 Framework  
13:55 Ridiculousness Arabia  
14:20 Ridiculousness Arabia  
14:45 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol  
15:35 Ridiculousness Arabia  
16:00 House Of Food  
16:55 Martha And Snoop Potluck Dinner Party  
17:45 Ridiculousness Arabia  
18:10 Ridiculousness Arabia  
18:35 Takeshis Castle Thailand  
19:00 Friends  
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
21:30 The Opposition With Jordan Klepper  
22:00 Pete Holmes: Nice Try, The Devil  
22:50 Friends  
23:13 Friends  
23:35 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagef



00:30 Destroyed In Seconds  
01:20 How It's Made  
02:10 America's Cutest...  
03:00 Tanked  
03:50 Ultimate Survival  
04:40 How The Universe Works  
05:30 Weather Top Tens  
06:20 How It's Made  
07:00 Destroyed In Seconds  
07:50 America's Cutest...  
08:40 How It's Made  
09:30 Tanked  
10:20 Ultimate Survival  
11:10 Destroyed In Seconds  
11:35 Destroyed In Seconds  
12:00 How It's Made  
12:50 React To That  
13:15 React To That  
13:40 The Carbonaro Effect  
14:05 The Carbonaro Effect  
14:30 America's Cutest...  
15:20 How It's Made  
15:45 How It's Made  
16:10 Ultimate Survival  
17:00 America's Cutest...  
17:50 Tanked  
18:40 Destroyed In Seconds  
19:05 Destroyed In Seconds  
19:30 React To That  
19:55 React To That  
20:20 The Carbonaro Effect  
20:45 The Carbonaro Effect  
21:10 How It's Made  
21:35 How It's Made  
22:00 Ultimate Survival  
22:50 React To That  
23:15 React To That  
23:40 The Carbonaro Effect

00:45 Village Of The Damned  
01:40 Betrayed  
02:35 Blood Relatives  
03:30 Deadly Sins  
04:25 Nightmare Next Door  
05:20 I Almost Got Away With It  
06:10 Disappeared  
07:00 Who On Earth Did I Marry?  
07:25 Murder Chose Me  
08:15 Nightmare Next Door  
09:10 Disappeared  
10:05 Evil Online  
11:00 Deadly Affairs  
11:55 Murder Chose Me  
12:50 I Almost Got Away With It  
13:45 Disappeared  
14:40 Evil Online  
15:35 Killer Confessions  
16:30 Murder Chose Me  
17:25 Nightmare Next Door  
18:20 I Almost Got Away With It  
19:15 Disappeared  
20:10 Evil Online  
21:05 Guilty Rich  
21:00 Death On A Submarine  
22:55 Death On A Submarine  
23:50 James Patterson's Murder Is Forever



00:00 Hank Zipzer  
00:25 Alex & Co.  
00:45 Disney Mickey Mouse  
00:50 Evermoor Chronicles  
01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
01:40 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
02:05 Binny And The Ghost  
02:30 Binny And The Ghost  
02:55 Hank Zipzer  
03:15 Disney Mickey Mouse  
03:20 Hank Zipzer  
03:45 Alex & Co.  
04:10 Alex & Co.  
04:35 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
05:00 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
05:25 Binny And The Ghost  
05:45 Disney Mickey Mouse  
05:50 Rolling With The Ronks  
06:00 Kitty Is Not A Cat  
06:25 Hotel Transylvania: The Series  
06:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts  
06:55 Tangled: The Series  
07:20 Stuck In The Middle  
07:45 K.C. Undercover  
08:10 Bunk'd  
08:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
09:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
09:25 Lolirock  
09:50 Lolirock  
10:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
10:40 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
11:05 Hank Zipzer  
11:30 Alex & Co.  
11:55 Alex & Co.  
12:20 Lolirock  
12:45 Lolirock  
13:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
13:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
14:00 Hotel Transylvania: The Series  
14:15 Bunk'd  
14:40 K.C. Undercover  
15:05 Disney Mickey Mouse  
15:10 Kitty Is Not A Cat  
15:35 Elena Of Avalor  
16:00 Tangled: The Series  
16:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
16:50 Bizaardvark  
17:15 Stuck In The Middle  
17:40 Hotel Transylvania: The Series  
18:05 K.C. Undercover  
18:30 Bunk'd

18:55 Descendants Wicked World  
19:00 Raven's Home  
19:25 Liv And Maddie  
19:50 Jessie  
20:15 Disney Mickey Mouse  
20:20 Tangled: The Series  
20:45 Bizaardvark  
21:10 Hotel Transylvania: The Series  
21:35 Stuck In The Middle  
22:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
22:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
22:50 Lolirock  
23:10 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
23:35 Binny And The Ghost



00:00 Trulli Tales  
00:30 PJ Masks  
00:55 Trulli Tales  
01:20 Henry Hugglemonster  
01:35 Calimero  
01:50 Henry Hugglemonster  
02:05 Art Attack  
02:30 The Hive  
02:40 Loopdidoo  
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster  
03:10 Art Attack  
03:35 Loopdidoo  
03:50 Calimero  
04:05 Art Attack  
04:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
04:45 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:00 Art Attack  
05:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:45 Loopdidoo  
06:00 Henry Hugglemonster  
06:15 Calimero  
06:30 PJ Masks  
07:00 Trulli Tales  
07:30 Jungle Junction  
07:50 Handy Manny  
08:10 PJ Masks  
08:30 Vampirina  
09:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
09:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers  
10:00 Trulli Tales  
10:30 Puppy Dog Pals  
11:00 Doc McStuffins  
11:30 The Lion Guard  
12:00 Sofia The First  
12:30 Sofia The First  
13:00 PJ Masks  
13:30 PJ Masks  
14:00 Vampirina  
14:15 Vampirina  
14:30 Vampirina  
14:45 Vampirina  
15:00 Vampirina  
15:15 Vampirina  
15:30 Sofia The First  
16:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
16:30 Trulli Tales  
17:00 Vampirina  
17:30 PJ Masks  
18:00 Sofia The First  
18:30 Puppy Dog Pals  
19:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers  
19:30 The Lion Guard  
20:00 Vampirina  
20:30 PJ Masks  
21:00 Trulli Tales  
21:30 Sofia The First  
22:00 P-King Duckling  
22:30 Puppy Dog Pals  
23:00 Miles From Tomorrow  
23:30 PJ Masks



00:15 Deadliest Catch  
01:05 Mosquito  
02:35 Invisible Killers  
03:20 Street Outlaws  
04:05 Alaskan Bush People  
04:50 Kindig Customs  
05:35 Storage Hunters  
06:00 The Liquidator  
06:23 Property Wars  
06:45 Storage Hunters  
07:10 Storage Wars Canada  
07:35 Alaskan Bush People  
08:20 The Liquidator  
08:45 Property Wars

09:10 Kindig Customs  
09:55 Alaskan Bush People  
10:45 Kindig Customs  
11:30 Deadliest Catch  
12:20 The Liquidator  
12:43 Property Wars  
13:05 Storage Hunters  
13:30 Storage Wars Canada  
13:55 Kindig Customs  
14:40 Mosquito  
16:15 Invisible Killers  
17:05 What On Earth?  
17:50 Impossible Engineering  
18:40 Flipping Ships  
19:25 Deadliest Catch  
20:15 Street Outlaws  
21:00 Fast N' Loud  
21:50 Gear Dogs  
22:40 Shifting Gears With Aaron Kaufman  
23:30 Jungle Gold



06:00 Marvel's Spider-Man  
06:25 Lab Rats  
06:50 Phineas & Ferb  
07:05 DuckTales  
07:32 Phineas And Ferb  
08:00 Milo Murphy's Law  
08:25 Disney Mickey Mouse  
08:30 Phineas And Ferb  
08:55 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
09:20 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
09:45 Phineas And Ferb  
10:00 Kid vs. Kat  
10:25 Kid vs. Kat  
10:50 Marvel's Rocket And Groot  
10:55 Marvel's Ant-Man  
11:00 Counterfeit Cat  
11:15 Counterfeit Cat  
11:30 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
11:55 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
12:20 Gravity Falls  
12:45 Milo Murphy's Law  
13:00 Lab Rats  
13:25 Lab Rats  
13:50 Mech-X4  
14:15 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
14:40 Milo Murphy's Law  
15:05 Supa Strikas  
15:32 Lab Rats  
16:00 DuckTales  
16:25 Disney Mickey Mouse  
16:32 Big Hero 6 The Series  
16:55 DuckTales  
17:00 Milo Murphy's Law  
17:25 Big Hero 6 The Series: Shorts  
17:32 Gravity Falls  
18:00 Mech-X4  
18:25 Lab Rats Elite Force  
18:50 Lab Rats Elite Force  
19:15 Walk The Prank  
19:40 Phineas And Ferb  
19:55 Disney Mickey Mouse  
20:00 DuckTales  
20:32 Big Hero 6 The Series  
21:00 Marvel's Spider-Man  
21:25 Star Wars Rebels  
21:50 Disney Mickey Mouse  
21:55 Two More Eggs  
22:00 Phineas And Ferb  
22:25 Phineas And Ferb  
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am



00:05 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian  
00:55 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian  
01:50 E! News  
02:50 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills  
03:40 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills  
04:35 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills  
05:30 Celebrity Style Story  
06:00 Rob & Chyna  
06:55 E! News Middle East  
07:10 Rob & Chyna  
08:10 E! News: Daily Pop  
09:10 Botched  
10:05 Botched  
11:00 Botched  
12:00 E! News Middle East  
12:15 WAGs LA  
13:10 WAGs LA  
14:05 WAGs LA  
15:00 E! News Middle East

15:15 E! News: Daily Pop  
16:15 Botched  
17:10 Botched  
18:05 The Real Princess Diaries: From Diana To Meghan  
19:00 E! News  
20:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian  
21:00 Citizen Rose  
23:00 E! News Middle East  
23:15 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry



00:10 Broadchurch  
01:00 Emmerdale  
01:30 Coronation Street  
02:00 Coronation Street  
02:30 The Chase  
03:25 Harry And Meghan: A Very Modern Romance  
04:20 Change Your Tune  
05:15 Broadchurch  
06:15 Guess This House  
07:10 The Chase  
08:05 Harry And Meghan: A Very Modern Romance  
09:00 Change Your Tune  
09:55 Broadchurch  
11:00 Guess This House  
11:50 The Chase  
12:45 Emmerdale  
13:15 Emmerdale  
13:45 Coronation Street  
14:15 Guess This House  
15:10 The Chase  
16:00 Harry And Meghan: A Very Modern Romance  
16:55 Diana And The Paparazzi  
17:50 Broadchurch  
18:50 Emmerdale  
19:15 Emmerdale  
19:45 Coronation Street  
20:10 The Chase  
21:00 Harry And Meghan: A Very Modern Romance  
21:55 Diana And The Paparazzi  
22:50 Emmerdale  
23:15 Emmerdale  
23:40 Coronation Street



00:00 Cowboys & Outlaws  
01:00 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved  
02:00 UFO Hunters  
02:50 Ancient Aliens  
03:40 Ancient Impossible  
04:30 The Colour Of War  
05:20 America's Book Of Secrets  
06:10 America's Book Of Secrets  
07:00 Cowboys & Outlaws  
08:00 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved  
09:00 UFO Hunters  
10:00 Ancient Aliens  
11:00 Ancient Impossible  
12:00 The Colour Of War  
13:00 Cowboys & Outlaws  
14:00 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved  
15:00 UFO Hunters  
16:00 Ancient Aliens  
17:00 Ancient Impossible  
18:00 Cowboys & Outlaws  
19:00 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved  
20:00 UFO Hunters  
21:00 Ancient Aliens  
22:00 Missing In Alaska  
23:00 The Colour Of War



00:15 David Rocco's Dolce India  
00:45 Fish Of The Day  
01:10 The Food Files  
01:40 Hotel India  
02:35 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces  
03:30 A Is For Apple  
03:55 A Is For Apple  
04:25 Dog Whisperer  
06:15 Places We Go  
06:40 Places We Go  
07:10 Hotel India



## TV Listings

08:05 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces  
 09:00 A Is For Apple  
 09:25 A Is For Apple  
 09:55 Dog Whisperer  
 10:50 Dog Whisperer  
 11:45 Places We Go  
 12:10 Places We Go  
 12:40 David Rocco's Dolce India  
 13:05 David Rocco's Dolce Vita  
 13:35 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces  
 14:30 A Is For Apple  
 14:55 A Is For Apple  
 15:25 Dog Whisperer  
 16:20 Dog Whisperer  
 17:15 Places We Go  
 17:40 Places We Go  
 18:10 Eat Street  
 18:35 David Rocco's Dolce India  
 19:05 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces  
 20:00 A Is For Apple  
 20:30 A Is For Apple  
 21:00 Dog Whisperer  
 22:00 Dog Whisperer  
 22:55 Places We Go  
 23:20 Places We Go  
 23:50 Eat Street


17:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
 19:24 Game Shakers  
 19:48 The Thundermans  
 20:12 SpongeBob SquarePants  
 20:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
 21:00 Harvey Beaks  
 21:24 Breadwinners  
 21:48 Breadwinners  
 22:12 Sanjay And Craig  
 22:36 Rabbids Invasion  
 23:00 The Loud House  
 23:24 Regal Academy  
 23:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles

  
 00:04 Max & Ruby  
 00:27 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
 00:38 Kiva Can Do!  
 00:48 The Day Henry Met  
 00:54 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
 01:16 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
 01:39 Paw Patrol  
 01:51 Kid-E-Cats  
 01:55 Kid-E-Cats  
 02:00 Shimmer And Shine  
 02:22 Nella The Princess Knight  
 02:33 Paw Patrol  
 02:57 Max & Ruby  
 03:19 Dora The Explorer  
 03:42 Sunny Day  
 04:03 The Day Henry Met  
 04:09 Nella And The Princess Knight  
 04:20 Nella And The Princess Knight  
 04:31 Shimmer And Shine  
 04:54 Wallykazam!  
 05:17 Zack & Quack  
 05:28 The Day Henry Met  
 05:33 The Day Henry Met  
 05:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
 06:00 Rusty Rivets  
 06:13 Paw Patrol  
 06:37 Dora The Explorer  
 07:00 Nella The Princess Knight  
 07:22 Kiva Can Do!  
 07:33 Kiva Can Do!  
 07:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
 08:06 Paw Patrol  
 08:28 Shimmer And Shine  
 08:50 Nella And The Princess Knight  
 09:01 Nella And The Princess Knight  
 09:13 Paw Patrol  
 09:37 Rusty Rivets  
 10:00 Wallykazam!  
 10:22 The Day Henry Met  
 10:28 Bubble Guppies  
 10:52 Team Umizoomi  
 11:15 Kid-E-Cats  
 11:21 Shimmer And Shine  
 11:44 Sunny Day  
 12:06 Max & Ruby  
 12:29 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
 12:40 Kiva Can Do!  
 12:51 The Day Henry Met  
 12:57 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
 13:42 Paw Patrol  
 13:53 Kid-E-Cats  
 13:58 Kid-E-Cats  
 14:04 Shimmer And Shine  
 14:25 Nella The Princess Knight  
 14:37 Paw Patrol  
 15:01 Max & Ruby  
 15:23 Dora The Explorer  
 15:47 Sunny Day  
 16:09 Nella And The Princess Knight  
 16:20 Nella And The Princess Knight  
 16:31 Shimmer And Shine  
 16:54 Wallykazam!  
 17:17 Zack & Quack  
 17:28 The Day Henry Met  
 17:33 The Day Henry Met  
 17:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
 18:00 Rusty Rivets  
 18:13 Paw Patrol  
 18:37 Dora The Explorer  
 19:00 Nella The Princess Knight  
 19:22 Kiva Can Do!  
 19:33 Kiva Can Do!  
 19:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines

20:06 Paw Patrol  
 20:29 Shimmer And Shine  
 20:52 Nella The Princess Knight  
 21:15 Paw Patrol  
 21:39 Rusty Rivets  
 22:02 Wallykazam!  
 22:25 The Day Henry Met  
 22:30 Bubble Guppies  
 22:54 Team Umizoomi  
 23:16 Kid-E-Cats  
 23:22 Shimmer And Shine  
 23:45 Sunny Day

  
 00:15 How I Met Your Mother  
 00:40 How I Met Your Mother  
 01:05 Seinfeld  
 01:30 Seinfeld  
 01:55 Til Death  
 02:20 Us And Them  
 02:45 Us And Them  
 03:10 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
 04:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
 04:50 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
 05:40 Us And Them  
 06:05 Til Death  
 06:30 The Mick  
 06:55 The Mindy Project  
 07:20 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
 08:10 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
 09:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
 09:50 The Simpsons  
 10:15 Trial & Error  
 10:40 Us And Them  
 11:05 Til Death  
 11:30 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
 12:20 The Mick  
 12:45 The Mindy Project  
 13:10 How I Met Your Mother  
 13:35 How I Met Your Mother  
 14:00 Seinfeld  
 14:25 Seinfeld  
 14:50 Us And Them  
 15:15 The Simpsons  
 15:40 Trial & Error  
 16:05 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
 17:00 The Mick  
 17:30 The Mindy Project  
 18:00 How I Met Your Mother  
 19:00 How I Met Your Mother  
 19:30 Seinfeld  
 20:00 Ghosted  
 20:30 Trial & Error  
 21:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
 22:00 Better Late Than Never  
 23:00 Alone Together  
 23:25 Late Night With Seth Meyers

  
 00:30 Alice Through The Looking Glass  
 02:30 Brother Bear 2  
 04:15 Hannah Montana Movie  
 06:15 Alice Through The Looking Glass  
 08:15 Pocahontas  
 09:45 The Little Mermaid: Ariel's Beginning  
 11:30 Hannah Montana Movie  
 13:30 Moana  
 15:30 Up  
 17:30 The Sorcerer's Apprentice  
 19:30 The Princess Diaries  
 21:45 Moana  
 23:45 Up

  
 00:00 The Americans  
 01:00 Famous In Love  
 01:50 Suits  
 02:40 Time After Time  
 03:30 S.W.A.T.  
 04:20 The Americans  
 05:20 Supergirl  
 06:10 DC's Legends Of Tomorrow  
 07:00 Good Morning America  
 09:00 The View  
 10:00 S.W.A.T.  
 11:00 Suits  
 12:00 DC's Legends Of Tomorrow  
 13:00 Scandal  
 14:00 Time After Time  
 15:00 The View  
 16:00 Live Good Morning America

  
 00:15 How I Met Your Mother  
 00:40 How I Met Your Mother  
 01:05 Seinfeld  
 01:30 Seinfeld  
 01:55 Til Death  
 02:20 Us And Them  
 02:45 Us And Them  
 03:10 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
 04:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
 04:50 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
 05:40 Us And Them  
 06:05 Til Death  
 06:30 The Mick  
 06:55 The Mindy Project  
 07:20 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
 08:10 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
 09:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
 09:50 The Simpsons  
 10:15 Trial & Error  
 10:40 Us And Them  
 11:05 Til Death  
 11:30 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
 12:20 The Mick  
 12:45 The Mindy Project  
 13:10 How I Met Your Mother  
 13:35 How I Met Your Mother  
 14:00 Seinfeld  
 14:25 Seinfeld  
 14:50 Us And Them  
 15:15 The Simpsons  
 15:40 Trial & Error  
 16:05 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
 17:00 The Mick  
 17:30 The Mindy Project  
 18:00 How I Met Your Mother  
 19:00 How I Met Your Mother  
 19:30 Seinfeld  
 20:00 Ghosted  
 20:30 Trial & Error  
 21:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
 22:00 Better Late Than Never  
 23:00 Alone Together  
 23:25 Late Night With Seth Meyers

18:00 DC's Legends Of Tomorrow  
 19:00 Suits  
 20:00 Scandal  
 21:00 Survivor: Ghost Island  
 22:00 Once Upon A Time  
 23:00 WWE Experience

  
 00:45 There's Always Woodstock  
 02:30 Mystery Date  
 04:15 Planes, Trains And Automobiles  
 06:00 A Date With Miss Fortune  
 08:00 UHF  
 09:45 Planes, Trains And Automobiles  
 11:30 A Date With Miss Fortune  
 13:15 Aquamarine  
 15:00 UHF  
 16:45 Down With Love  
 18:30 The Brady Bunch  
 20:15 Family Weekend  
 22:05 Two-Bit Waltz  
 23:30 What An Idiot

  
 00:55 The Lennon Report  
 02:35 Buena Vista Social Club:  
 Adios  
 04:35 Noble  
 06:25 Convicts  
 08:10 The Lennon Report  
 09:50 Buena Vista Social Club:  
 Adios  
 11:50 Lawrence Of Arabia  
 15:30 Dalida  
 17:40 The Challenger  
 19:30 Things We Lost In The Fire  
 21:30 Roman Holiday  
 23:30 Frankie And Johnny

  
 00:55 Legend Of The Sea  
 02:20 Emilie Jolie  
 03:45 Simba The King Lion  
 06:00 Papelucho & The Martian  
 07:25 The Happy Cricket  
 08:55 A Doggone Adventure  
 10:40 Swan Princess: Royally Undercover  
 12:10 Quest For A Heart  
 13:40 Papelucho & The Martian  
 15:05 Simba The King Lion  
 17:15 The Wheelers  
 18:40 Swan Princess: Royally Undercover  
 20:10 Dinofroz Return To The Past World  
 21:50 Last Wizard  
 23:15 The Wheelers

  
 01:30 The Guilt Trip  
 03:15 The Accountant  
 05:30 Spotlight  
 06:00 Despicable Me 3  
 07:40 Last Chance Harvey  
 09:20 The Last Witch Hunter  
 11:10 The Accountant  
 13:25 Madagascar 2  
 15:00 Pirates Of The Caribbean: Salazar's Revenge  
 17:15 Guess Who  
 19:05 A Few Good Men  
 21:25 Alive  
 23:35 Knight And Day

  
 01:30 The Guilt Trip  
 03:15 The Accountant  
 05:30 Spotlight  
 06:00 Despicable Me 3  
 07:40 Last Chance Harvey  
 09:20 The Last Witch Hunter  
 11:10 The Accountant  
 13:25 Madagascar 2  
 15:00 Pirates Of The Caribbean: Salazar's Revenge  
 17:15 Guess Who  
 19:05 A Few Good Men  
 21:25 Alive  
 23:35 Knight And Day

  
 00:30 How It's Made  
 00:55 Food Factory USA  
 01:20 Strangest Weather On Earth  
 02:10 Secrets Of The Underground  
 03:00 Kings Of Construction  
 03:48 Mythbusters: The Search  
 04:36 How It's Made  
 05:00 Food Factory USA  
 05:24 Strangest Weather On Earth  
 06:12 Secrets Of The Underground

07:00 How It's Made  
 07:26 Kings Of Construction  
 08:14 Mythbusters: The Search  
 09:02 Secrets Of The Underground  
 09:50 How It's Made  
 10:14 Food Factory USA  
 10:38 Strangest Weather On Earth  
 11:26 Kings Of Construction  
 12:14 Mythbusters: The Search  
 13:02 How It's Made  
 13:26 Food Factory USA  
 13:50 Secrets Of The Underground  
 14:38 Kings Of Construction  
 15:26 Strangest Weather On Earth  
 16:14 Mythbusters: The Search  
 17:02 Secrets Of The Underground  
 17:50 Kings Of Construction  
 18:40 Mythbusters: The Search  
 19:30 How The Universe Works  
 20:20 How It's Made  
 20:45 Food Factory USA  
 21:10 Mythbusters: The Search  
 22:00 How The Universe Works  
 22:50 Kings Of Construction  
 23:40 Mythbusters: The Search

  
 01:10 Bodyguard  
 03:00 Bodyguard  
 03:35 The Front Row  
 04:05 Koffee With Karan  
 05:00 Koffee With Karan  
 06:05 Bindiya Chamkegi  
 08:45 Andaz  
 11:35 Mangal Pandey: The Rising  
 14:30 Taarzan: The Wonder Car  
 17:30 Jatt James Bond  
 20:00 Akira  
 22:35 31st October

  
 01:30 The Animal  
 03:00 What Women Want  
 05:00 Nine  
 07:00 When Love Came To Town  
 08:45 Valkyrie  
 10:45 The Wedding Planner  
 12:30 The Blair Witch Project  
 14:00 Waking Up In Reno  
 15:30 The Animal  
 16:45 The Quiet American  
 18:30 Butterfly On A Wheel  
 20:00 Tomorrowland  
 22:15 An Ideal Husband


  
 00:00 Mistresses  
 01:00 Mistresses  
 02:00 Project Accessory  
 03:00 Married At First Sight  
 04:00 Project Runway  
 05:00 Mom vs. Matchmaker  
 05:30 Mom vs. Matchmaker  
 06:00 Mistresses  
 07:00 Mistresses  
 08:00 Project Accessory  
 09:00 Married At First Sight  
 10:00 Project Runway  
 11:00 Mom vs. Matchmaker  
 11:30 Mom vs. Matchmaker  
 12:00 Mistresses  
 13:00 Mistresses  
 14:00 Project Accessory  
 15:00 Married At First Sight  
 16:00 Project Runway  
 17:00 Grey's Anatomy  
 18:00 Fashion StartUp  
 19:00 Fashion StartUp  
 20:00 Project Runway All Stars  
 21:00 The Fashion Fund  
 22:00 The Fashion Fund  
 23:00 Project Accessory

  
 00:20 Say Yes To The Dress UK  
 00:42 Say Yes To The Dress UK  
 01:05 90 Days To Wed  
 01:50 90 Days To Wed: Before The 90 Days  
 02:35 Dr Christian Will See You Now

03:20 7 Little Johnstons  
 04:05 Toddlers & Tiaras  
 04:50 My 600lb Life  
 05:35 Say Yes To The Dress UK  
 06:00 7 Little Johnstons  
 06:45 7 Little Johnstons  
 07:30 7 Little Johnstons  
 08:15 Say Yes To The Dress UK  
 08:37 Say Yes To The Dress UK  
 09:00 Cake Boss  
 09:25 Say Yes To The Dress: Bridesmaids  
 09:47 Say Yes To The Dress: Bridesmaids  
 10:10 Say Yes To The Dress: Bridesmaids  
 10:32 Say Yes To The Dress: Bridesmaids  
 10:55 Cake Boss  
 11:17 Cake Boss  
 11:40 Cake Boss  
 12:02 Cake Boss  
 12:25 Cake Boss  
 12:47 Cake Boss  
 13:10 7 Little Johnstons  
 13:55 Say Yes To The Dress UK  
 14:17 Say Yes To The Dress UK  
 14:40 Cake Boss  
 15:02 Cake Boss  
 15:25 Cake Boss  
 15:47 Cake Boss  
 16:10 Cake Boss  
 16:35 Cake Boss  
 17:00 Little People, Big World  
 17:50 Diva Brides  
 18:50 Sister Wives  
 19:40 Cake Boss  
 20:10 Say Yes To The Dress: Bridesmaids  
 20:35 Say Yes To The Dress: Bridesmaids  
 21:00 Sister Wives  
 21:50 Little People, Big World  
 22:40 My Extreme Excess Skin  
 23:30 Return To Amish

  
 00:00 Fred Dineage: Murder Case-book  
 01:00 Cold Case Files  
 01:55 Crimes That Shook Australia  
 02:50 It Takes A Killer  
 03:20 It Takes A Killer  
 03:45 Fred Dineage: Murder Case-book  
 04:30 Cold Case Files  
 05:15 The First 48  
 06:00 Crimes That Shook Australia  
 07:00 It Takes A Killer  
 07:20 Cold Case Files  
 08:05 Homicide Hunter  
 08:50 The First 48  
 09:35 Crimes That Shook Australia  
 10:30 Evil Up Close  
 11:25 Leah Remini: Scientology And The Aftermath  
 12:20 Crimes That Shook Britain  
 13:15 Cold Case Files  
 14:10 Homicide Hunter  
 15:05 The First 48  
 16:00 Crimes That Shook Australia  
 17:00 The Eleven  
 20:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
 21:00 Evil Up Close  
 22:00 Escaping Polygamy: After The Escape  
 23:00 The First 48

  
 00:00 Mistresses  
 01:00 Mistresses  
 02:00 Project Accessory  
 03:00 Married At First Sight  
 04:00 Project Runway  
 05:00 Mom vs. Matchmaker  
 05:30 Mom vs. Matchmaker  
 06:00 Mistresses  
 07:00 Mistresses  
 08:00 Project Accessory  
 09:00 Married At First Sight  
 10:00 Project Runway  
 11:00 Mom vs. Matchmaker  
 11:30 Mom vs. Matchmaker  
 12:00 Mistresses  
 13:00 Mistresses  
 14:00 Project Accessory  
 15:00 Married At First Sight  
 16:00 Project Runway  
 17:00 Grey's Anatomy  
 18:00 Fashion StartUp  
 19:00 Fashion StartUp  
 20:00 Project Runway All Stars  
 21:00 The Fashion Fund  
 22:00 The Fashion Fund  
 23:00 Project Accessory

  
 00:20 Storage Wars  
 00:45 Pawn Stars  
 01:10 American Pickers  
 02:00 Ax Men  
 02:50 Mountain Men  
 03:40 Ronnie O'Sullivan's American Hustle  
 04:30 Storage Wars  
 04:55 Pawn Stars  
 05:20 American Pickers  
 06:00 Time Team  
 10:10 Swamp People  
 13:30 Ax Men  
 14:20 American Pickers  
 18:30How The World Made America  
 20:10 Counting Cars  
 20:35 Car Hunters  
 21:00 Counting Cars  
 21:25 Car Hunters



## Stars

**Aries (March 21-April 19)**

Your confidence is boundless; you long for a new romantic involvement or reigniting an established one. Restless energy runs rampant even as you search for something to satisfy it; happiness could very likely be found in your own backyard! You could walk a risky path as you seek investment opportunities or perhaps this indicates a romantic encounter. You save the day when a friend or neighbor has an unexpected situation and you are called to help; this could refer to plumbing or wiring. You see a way to spend less money maintaining your home or office; have you been looking into solar or wind energy you keep your thoughts and ideas to yourself this evening as you give serious thought to making changes at home and possibly work.

**Taurus (April 20-May 20)**

You go inside for an honest look at the workings of your life and how your choices affect this. Your desire to help could be viewed as intrusive and you could be regarded as a busybody; remember that you should take control of your life, not the life of others. You take time out of the rush and figure out how to breathe new life into your work situation. Working with a group brings success. Your leadership skills are required on a special project no one else knows how to accomplish. A movie entertains and takes you away from reality for a bit. As you clean out drawers and closets you rediscover something you thought lost; this could indicate an heirloom. You examine something closely in order to figure out what makes it work and how.

**Gemini (May 21-June 20)**

Getting your thoughts across to others is easy and productive. Confidence levels are high just now and others notice this as you complete a certain difficult task. You set your goals higher as you come to realize anything is possible if you believe and work. Your new positive attitude takes you a long way today and into the month. Information you uncover could start some emotional reactions for the better if presented in the right way; think before you share this with the people involved. You become connected to a neighbor in a new way through someone who is ill or in dire need of help. Tonight brings an opportunity to create a new, exotic meal for family or friends; you use a special ingredient that adds some unusual flavor for all.

**Cancer (June 21-July 22)**

The new cycle you have entered emphasizes confidence, positivity and belief. You may be willing to take chances on a deep emotional level. This could indicate a new romance or another type of serious relationship. Someone younger watches and follows your example. You experience a sort of restlessness that demands your attention. Your input on a new project is required by someone in charge; smooth progress is indicated for some time to come. You discover an item that's been missing for a long time. A good deed you did a while ago comes back in the form of an invitation to lunch or dinner. The day ends with your unique and enjoyable qualities being highlighted as you entertain a small group of friends at home.

**Leo (July 23-August 22)**

Someone younger could push a challenge to the point of bitter confrontation. Your intentions are good, but be certain they are clear. Guard against yours, or the feelings of others, being hurt when unnecessary; good results are possible when handled with care. Time spent with jovial, like-minded people raises your spirits; compliments on your clothes or other accessories make your day much better. Abundance is possible when you discover a new means of making extra money that's a good match for your interests. You could be misled if you're reckless in making decisions without researching the facts. A mentor suggests a meeting this evening over delicious food and desert in a place filled with encouragement and positive vibrations.

**Virgo (August 23-September 22)**

Your quirks and unique ways of going through life are at the fore; you're in the process of accepting who you are and figuring out where to go from here. You enjoy a sense of being comfortable in your own skin. A new circumstance requires your specific talents and ideas; this could indicate a new job or hobby that becomes valuable. Loved ones come together to discuss an important issue; you feel humbled by enjoying the life and family you have been blessed with. Confidence levels rise as you approach a new assignment or project you're challenged by; chin up, you know you can do this! You enjoy stretching the bounds of your emotions as you consider entering a new romantic relationship; if a current relationship is indicated, it's firing up!

**Libra (September 23-October 22)**

You have high hopes and high confidence levels; you're required to take a project from zero to hero mode in a short period of time. Teamwork is key; you seem to be the chosen one to lead, and this gives you an opportunity to try something new. Someone asks your opinion and actually listens and follows your good advice. Communication skills are high and your message is clearly received; a challenge arises from this but passes quickly. You're in the mood for a new love or to rekindle a current flame; it's up to you to make this happen. Your imagination runs wild later when you have to tend to a few details; if anyone can fix this, you can! The urge to see a newly released movie or read a best seller gets your attention and tonight's the night.

**Scorpio (October 23-November 21)**

A difficult project at work grows more complicated; you figure this out, but not without great effort and team work. Your skills grow more proficient as you learn about new machinery or methods. This is a phase in which cleaning out closets, drawers and dark corners is important; this could indicate material or emotional cleansing. A friend is having a hard time and there's nothing you can do but sympathize; just being there could mean more than you know. Your taste is expensive, but you feel you're worth it. Personal friction is strongly indicated; this could be repaired if you let go of your pride. An opportunity for continuing education on something work related becomes known. Be mindful of your spending as it could get way out of hand.

**Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)**

Standing up for the rights of friends or loved ones takes on an important meaning. Your connections to people in positions of authority are useful in your attempts at facilitating justice. Social issues could cause a stir among friends. You feel more positive about yourself after working hard to change. You don't shy away from using new tactics to get what you want; amazing new high-tech gadgets could be a big help. You may long for excitement and perhaps even some mystery to solve! Decisions or choices relating to work, job, career should be put on pause until your concentration approves in this area. You could experience a lack of interest in work or domestic duties. Take your mind off the events of the day and rest later.

**Capricorn (December 22-January 19)**

You're in tune with those around you and they know it. Be prepared to be called upon for advice regarding something extremely personal and sensitive in nature. Your environment is overall supportive and encouraging. Convincing people to go your way on a project is easy but one person could present a challenge. If tempers flare, you do your very best to avoid any confrontations. Watch for instigators! The energy of ambition is strong and you're able to by-pass anyone or anything that could cause blockage; be careful, someone's watching closely. You could let someone in emotionally you might not ordinarily accept. Some consider you far too independent for their purposes. A book you love helps end your day with optimism.

**Aquarius (January 20-February 18)**

Your suggestions could be rejected by a boss or supervisor. Pick yourself up and continue looking for solutions this person will approve of; the cycle you have entered supports this. It could seem you encounter opposition at work and home; be patient and watch this vibration disappear. The plans you present are directly opposite of what the team wants; slow down and let this unfold. If you're able, exercise helps your mind and body; a walk, yoga or dancing could make a huge difference for you now. Decisions may seem elusive and foggy today but this could change tomorrow or the next day. If you feel disconnect, relax and gather your thoughts over a nice dinner and a game of cards this evening with a loved one.

**Pisces (February 19-March 20)**

You're surrounded by those you love and enjoy. There's acceptance of your thoughts and ideas; you feel satisfaction and accomplishment. Although it's hard, you may actually feel that it's okay to have the opinions you have; you have entered a phase of being realistic. There could be a reconciliation between you someone you love. You take an emotional trip down memory lane; this could indicate the family you grew up with or the family you have raised. This isn't a time to make serious choices involving a change of job or educational plans. You could suspect someone of doing something that's shady or unjust. You may be experiencing thoughts that are less than appropriate; this could turn into a dangerous, negative preoccupation if you aren't careful.

## COUNTRY CODES

Afghanistan	0093	Jordan	00962
Albania	00355	Kazakhstan	007
Algeria	00213	Kenya	00254
Andorra	00376	Kiribati	00686
Angola	00244	Kuwait	00965
Anguilla	001264	Kyrgyzstan	00996
Antigua	001268	Laos	00856
Argentina	0054	Latvia	00371
Armenia	00374	Lebanon	00961
Australia	0061	Liberia	00231
Austria	0043	Libya	00218
Bahamas	001242	Lithuania	00370
Bahrain	00973	Luxembourg	00352
Bangladesh	00880	Macau	00853
Barbados	001246	Macedonia	00389
Belarus	00375	Madagascar	00261
Belgium	0032	Majorca	0034
Belize	00501	Malawi	00265
Benin	00229	Malaysia	0060
Bermuda	001441	Maldives	00960
Bhutan	00975	Mali	00223
Bolivia	00591	Malta	00356
Bosnia	00387	Marshall Islands	00692
Botswana	00267	Martinique	00596
Brazil	0055	Mauritania	00222
Brunei	00673	Mauritius	00230
Bulgaria	00359	Mayotte	00269
Burkina Faso	00226	Mexico	0052
Burundi	00257	Micronesia	00691
Cambodia	00855	Moldova	00373
Cameroon	00237	Monaco	00377
Canada	001	Mongolia	00976
Cape Verde	00238	Montserrat	001664
Cayman Islands	001345	Morocco	00212
Central African Republic	00236	Mozambique	00258
Chad	00235	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Chile	0056	Namibia	00264
China	0086	Nepal	00977
Colombia	0057	Netherlands (Holland)	0031
Comoros	00269	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Congo	00242	New Caledonia	00687
Cook Islands	00682	New Zealand	0064
Costa Rica	00506	Nicaragua	00505
Croatia	00385	Niger	00227
Cuba	0053	Nigeria	00234
Cyprus	00357	Niue	00683
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Norfolk Island	00672
Czech Republic	00420	Northern Ireland (UK)	0044
Denmark	0045	North Korea	00850
Diego Garcia	00246	Norway	0047
Djibouti	00253	Oman	00968
Dominica	001767	Pakistan	0092
Dominican Republic	001809	Palau	00680
Ecuador	00593	Panama	00507
Egypt	0020	Papua New Guinea	00675
El Salvador	00503	Paraguay	00595
England (UK)	0044	Peru	0051
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Philippines	0063
Eritrea	00291	Poland	0048
Estonia	00372	Portugal	00351
Ethiopia	00251	Puerto Rico	001787
Falkland Islands	00500	Qatar	00974
Faroe Islands	00298	Romania	0040
Fiji	00679	Russian Federation	007
Finland	00358	Rwanda	00250
France	0033	Saint Helena	00290
French Guiana	00594	Saint Kitts	001869
French Polynesia	00689	Saint Lucia	001758
Gabon	00241	Saint Pierre	00508
Gambia	00220	Saint Vincent	001784
Georgia	00995	Samoa	00684
Germany	0049	Samoa West	00685
Ghana	00233	San Marino	00378
Gibraltar	00350	Sao Tome	00239
Greece	0030	Saudi Arabia	00966
Greenland	00299	Scotland (UK)	0044
Grenada	001473	Senegal	00221
Guadeloupe	00590	Seychelles	00284
Guam	001671	Sierra Leone	00232
Guatemala	00502	Singapore	0065
Guinea	00224	Slovakia	00421
Guyana	00592	Slovenia	00386
Haiti	00509	Solomon Islands	00677
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Somalia	00252
Honduras	00504	South Africa	0027
Hong Kong	00852	South Korea	0082
Hungary	0036	Spain	0034
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Sri Lanka	0094
Iceland	00354	Sudan	00249
India	0091	Suriname	00597
Indian Ocean	00873	Swaziland	00268
Indonesia	0062	Sweden	0046
Iran	0098	Switzerland	0041
Iraq	00964	Syria	00963
Ireland	00353	Taiwan	00886
Italy	0039	Tanzania	00255
Ivory Coast	00225	Thailand	0066
Jamaica	001876	Toga	00228
Japan	0081	Tonga	00676



Health

# WHO calls crisis meeting on Congo's Ebola outbreak

**GENEVA:** The UN World Health Organization will convene an Emergency Committee meeting today to consider the international risks of an Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo, WHO spokesman Christian Lindmeier said yesterday. The expert committee will decide whether to declare a "public health emergency of international concern", which would trigger more international involvement, mobilizing research and resources, Lindmeier said.

Emergency Committees have been set up to advise on past outbreaks such as the 2016 Zika epidemic in Latin America and the huge West African Ebola outbreak that killed at least 11,300

people in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia from 2014 to 2016.

The committee can advise WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus on actions to be taken by Congo and other countries to try to halt the international spread of disease without unduly interfering with trade or transport. Tedros will host health ministers for the WHO's annual assembly in Geneva next week and is likely to use it to coordinate an international response to the outbreak.

Unlike in the big West African outbreak, when it took months to convene an Emergency Committee, the WHO is moving fast to try to nip

Congo's latest outbreak, its ninth, in the bud.

The Kinshasa government reported the outbreak on May 8, one day after two samples tested positive for the deadly virus, and within days the WHO was sending experts, preparing a helicopter "air bridge" to the site, and planning a vaccination campaign. There have already been 44 suspected, probable or confirmed cases of Ebola, and 23 people have died. Potentially most worrying is a confirmed case in the city of Mbandaka, which has a population of about 1 million.

The other cases were spread across sites in remote areas where the disease might not travel

quickly. "The arrival of Ebola in an urban area is very concerning and WHO and partners are working together to rapidly scale up the search for all contacts of the confirmed case in the Mbandaka area," said WHO Regional Director for Africa Matshidiso Moeti said in a statement.

**First vaccine batch**

The first batch of over 4,000 Ebola vaccines was sent by the WHO to Kinshasa on Wednesday. The Health Ministry said vaccinations would start by early next week, the first time the vaccine would come into use since it was developed two years ago. —Agencies

CLINIC

PAGE





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**Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours**

**BY DAY:** Hot with light to moderate north westerly to variable wind, with speed of 10 - 30 km/h .

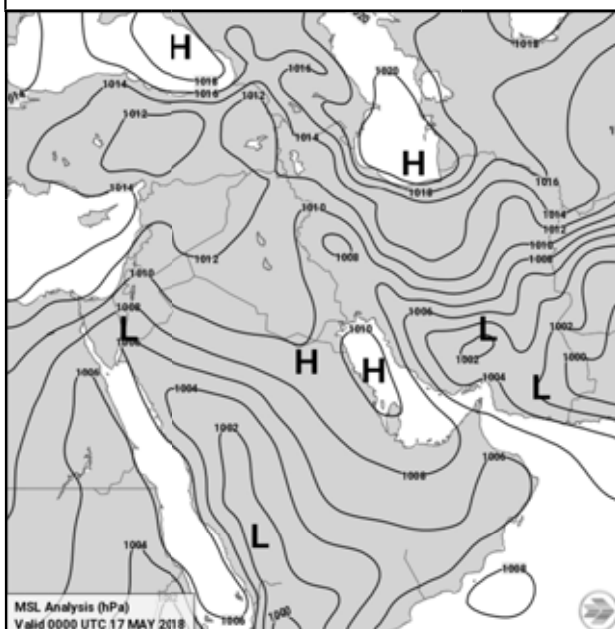
**BY NIGHT:** Fair with light variable wind to light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 28 km/h .

**WEATHER WARNING**

No Current Warnings

STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	37 °C	28 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	38 °C	23 °C
ABDALY	37 °C	22 °C
BUBYAN	35 °C	00 °C
JAHRA	37 °C	24 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	36 °C	24 °C
SALMIYAH	34 °C	29 °C
AHMADI	33 °C	28 °C
NUWAISIB	34 °C	25 °C
WAFRA	36 °C	23 °C
SALMY	36 °C	22 °C

**SFC. CHART 17/05/2018 0000 UTC**



**4 DAYS FORECAST**

DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Friday	05/18	Hot and some high clouds will appear	39 °C	23 °C	NW-VRB	08 - 28 km/h
Saturday	05/19	Hot and Partly cloudy	39 °C	25 °C	VRB-NW	06 - 30 km/h
Sunday	05/20	Hot	41 °C	24 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 32 km/h
Monday	05/21	Hot and Partly cloudy	40 °C	24 °C	VRB-NW	12 - 40 km/h

**PRAYER TIMES**

Fajr	03:25
Sunrise	04:55
Zuhr	11:44
Asr	15:20
Sunset	18:34
Isha	20:01

**RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT**

MAX. Temp.	37 °C
MIN. Temp.	23 °C
MAX. RH	47 %
MIN. RH	14 %
MAX. Wind	N 43 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is

**1889988**

**EMERGENCY ☎ 112**

**AIRLINES**

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



# Business

FRIDAY, MAY 18, 2018

**38** Dubai Aerospace in talks to place big order for 400 jets



**40** Volkswagen's biggest brand to by-pass Paris auto show



**41** EU firms will make their own call on Iran business: Macron



View of an oil refinery in the Maracaibo lake in Maracaibo, Venezuela. Benchmark oil contract Brent North Sea surged above \$80 a barrel yesterday, hitting the highest level since late 2014. — AFP

## Brent crude oil surges above \$80

### Asia oil thirst tab \$1tn a year; crude prices up by 20% this year

**SINGAPORE/MUMBAI/MANILA:** Benchmark oil contract Brent North Sea surged above \$80 a barrel yesterday, hitting the highest level since late 2014 and extending a recent run higher fuelled by tight supply concerns. Shortly before 1000 GMT, Brent North Sea crude for delivery in July jumped to \$80.18 a barrel—the highest level since November 2014 — after a gain of more than one percent compared with Wednesday's close.

Around 1100 GMT, it pulled back to \$79.90, still 62 cents higher from Wednesday. Oil prices have gained 20 percent since January to just shy of \$80 per barrel, a level not seen since 2014. With the US dollar - in which virtually all oil is traded - also growing stronger, concerns are rising that economies will take a hit, especially in import-reliant Asia. Surging costs could have an inflationary effect that will hurt both consumers

and companies.

"Asia is most vulnerable to an oil price spike," Canadian investment bank RBC Capital Markets warned in a note this month, after oil prices hit their highest since November 2014. Asia-Pacific consumes more than 35 percent of the 100 million barrels of oil the world uses each day, according to industry data, with the region's global share steadily rising. Asia is also the world's smallest oil producing region, accounting for less than 10 percent of output.

#### Inflation, rising costs

US bank Morgan Stanley said this week that diesel use contributes 10-20 percent to cash costs for miners, while oil contributes from 4 percent to 50 percent to the cost of power generation, depending on a company's or country's fuel

mix. "A rising oil price therefore shifts the entire cost curve higher," it said. China is by far Asia's - and the world's - biggest importer of oil, ordering 9.6 million barrels per day in April. That's almost 10 percent of global consumption.

At current prices, this amounts to a Chinese oil import bill of \$768 million per day, \$23 billion per month - a whopping \$280 billion a year. Other Asian countries are even more exposed to rising oil prices. Most damage will be done to countries like India and Vietnam, which not only rely heavily on imports, but also where national wealth is not yet large enough to absorb sudden increases in fuel costs. "Poorer countries with limited borrowing capacity may face financing difficulty amid higher import bills," RBC said. Unless fuel is heavily subsidized, households and businesses in poorer countries are also more vulnerable to ris-

ing oil prices than they are in wealthier nations.

In developing economies like India, Vietnam or the Philippines, fuel costs eat up around 8-9 percent of an average person's salary, according to Reuters research and figures from statistics portal Numbeo. That compares to just 1-2 percent in wealthy countries like Japan or Australia.

#### Diesel and logistics

The surge in oil prices has a particularly big impact on transport and logistics companies. One such firm in Asia is courier LBC Express Holdings in the Philippines. "LBC has been intently watching the movement of crude oil prices ... What we, at LBC, are preparing for are the effects an oil price increase may have on our carriers: airlines, shipping lines, trucking companies," its Chief Financial Officer Enrique V. Rey Jr said. — Agencies



## Business

# Dubai Aerospace in talks to place big order for 400 jets

## DAE to expand its fleet through acquisition

**DUBAI:** Dubai Aerospace Enterprise (DAE), one of the world's largest aircraft lessors, is in talks to buy 400 jetliners from Airbus and Boeing and is prepared to expand its fleet through acquisition if talks fall through, its CEO told Reuters.

The move comes months after a leading US airline investor orchestrated a record deal last November for a group of airlines to buy more than 400 planes from Airbus as economists project strong growth for air travel. Government-controlled DAE is interested in buying single-aisle Airbus A320neo-family and Boeing 737 MAX planes after its acquisition last year of Dublin-based lessor AWAS, DAE Chief Executive Firoz Tarapore said yesterday.

Any deal would not necessarily be evenly split between the two planemakers, Tarapore said, adding that DAE was "nowhere near where we thought we would be" in finalizing an order.

"We are not happy with the price," he said in an interview at DAE's offices in Dubai's financial district. An order for 400 single-aisle jets would

be worth more than \$40 billion at list prices, though discounts are common for large orders.

Boeing declined to comment and Airbus did not immediately respond to an emailed request for comment. A huge deal would give DAE a long-term pipeline of directly ordered aircraft on par with its rivals, though it may have to wait several years for deliveries to start because manufactures are heavily sold out.

Tarapore told Reuters last June that DAE was considering a "large order" for more than 23 new aircraft, with deliveries to start from 2019. DAE would look at other options to acquire new aircraft if it does not reach an agreement with Airbus or Boeing, which Tarapore said could include acquiring a rival to gain access to

its order book for aircraft.

DAE jetted into the top tier of aircraft lessors last year when it acquired Dublin-based AWAS, the industry's tenth-biggest firm at the time. The acquisition tripled DAE's portfolio to about 400 owned and managed aircraft worth over \$14 billion. DAE is "operating very smoothly", Tarapore

said, adding that the integration of AWAS was completed in February. In the meantime, DAE is considering issuing a \$500 million sukuk this year or in 2019 and a conventional dollar bond in the fourth quarter of this year, Tarapore said. The bond issues are not dependent on finalising an aircraft order, he added. DAE intends

to be a repeat, benchmark issuer in the US debt market, he told Reuters in October 2017. A benchmark issue conventionally means upwards of \$500 million.

DAE raised \$2.3 billion in the United States through a senior bond issue in 2017 to finance the AWAS deal. — Reuters

## Italian bonds wilt as investors fret about new govt

**LONDON:** The yield premium investors demand for holding Italian bonds over top-rated German peers jumped yesterday to its highest since January as investors fretted about a confrontation between a new government and the ECB over debt forgiveness.

Italy's two anti-establishment parties met yesterday to finalize a governing accord that would slash taxes, ramp up welfare spending and pose the biggest challenge to the European Union since Britain voted to leave the bloc two years ago. On Wednesday, markets were jolted after details of draft coalition document showed plans to ask the European Central Bank to forgive the 250 billion euros (\$294.70 billion) in debt. While few investors see that as either a realistic proposal or one that would remain in the coalition's agenda, the tone toward euro zone rules was seen as confrontational and spooked some investors.

"The focus has clearly shifted for investors towards the kind of policies the new coalition government will come up with but despite the surge in Italian yields, we are still a long way from the kind of swings at the height of the euro

zone debt crisis," said Marc-Henri Thoumin, a rates strategist at Societe Generale in London. Borrowing costs in Italy jumped for a second consecutive day, pushing the gap between Italian and German 10-year bond yields to 156 basis points, its widest since early January. It stood at around 130 bps earlier this week.

### Spanish appetite

Benchmark yields on 10-year Italian government debt rose 8 basis points to a near three-month high at 2.18 percent. On a two-day basis, it was the biggest rise since March 2017. "BTPs should remain under pressure in the near term burdened by the political situation with the overall market sentiment remaining cautious as investors are moderately long" said Orlando Green, interest rate strategist at Credit Agricole CIB in London referring to Italian government debt. The spike in Italian debt rippled over to other peripheral bonds at a time when concerns of a pull back in policy accommodation by the world's major central banks and rich valuations have weighed on investors' minds. Yields on benchmark 10-year Portuguese debt rising to a two-month high at 1.82 percent.

But contagion effects was largely limited as an auction from Spain received healthy demand from investors with Spain selling 4.4 billion euros (\$5.20 billion) with a bid-to-cover ratio of 1.8 times, broadly in line with previous auctions.

David Zahn, head of European fixed income at Franklin Templeton, said this week that he remained positive on the outlook for Spanish debt because of improving fundamentals.—Reuters

“Boeing, Airbus decline to respond”



**DUBAI:** Dubai Aerospace Enterprise (DAE) is planning to buy 400 jetliners from Airbus and Boeing and is prepared to expand its fleet through acquisition if talks fall through.

to or at full employment, with the jobless rate near a 17-1/2-year low of 3.9 percent. The unemployment rate is within striking distance of the Fed's forecast of 3.8 percent by the end of this year. The US central bank raised rates in March and forecast at least two more hikes for this year. US Treasury yields were little changed after the data. US stock index futures were trading lower while the dollar was slightly higher against a basket of currencies.

The four-week moving average of initial claims, viewed as a better measure of labor market trends as it irons out week-to-week volatility, fell 2,750 to 213,250 last week, the lowest level since December 1969. The claims data covered the survey period for the nonfarm payrolls portion of May's employment report.

**Shrinking labor market slack**

The four-week average of claims fell 18,250 between the April and May survey periods, suggesting solid job growth. Nonfarm payrolls increased by 164,000 jobs in April after rising by 135,000 in March. Job gains are slowing as employers struggle to find skilled workers. There were a record 6.6 million unfilled jobs in March, according to government data published last week. The claims report also showed the number of people receiving benefits after an initial week of aid declined 87,000 to 1.71 million in the week ended May 5, the lowest level since December 1973.—Reuters

## US weekly jobless claims rise; factory activity picks up

**WASHINGTON:** New applications for US jobless benefits increased more than expected last week, but the number of Americans on unemployment rolls fell to its lowest level since 1973, pointing to diminishing labor market slack. Other data yesterday showed a pickup in factory activity in the mid-Atlantic region this month, with manufacturers saying they were asking for higher prices for their products. Tightening labor market conditions and firming inflation bolster expectations the Federal Reserve will raise interest rates next month.

Initial claims for state unemployment benefits rose 11,000 to a seasonally adjusted 222,000 for the week ended May 12, the Labor Department said. Claims data for the prior week was unrevised. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast claims rising to 215,000 in the latest week.

The labor market is viewed as being close

to or at full employment, with the jobless rate near a 17-1/2-year low of 3.9 percent. The unemployment rate is within striking distance of the Fed's forecast of 3.8 percent by the end of this year. The US central bank raised rates in March and forecast at least two more hikes for this year. US Treasury yields were little changed after the data. US stock index futures were trading lower while the dollar was slightly higher against a basket of currencies.

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## Business

# Mnuchin to lead trade talks in China with an eye on trade deal

## Talks to focus on rebalancing US-China economic relationship

**WASHINGTON:** US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin will lead trade talks with China due to take place today as the countries try to head off a trade war.

"These meetings are a continuation of the talks held in Beijing two weeks ago and will focus on rebalancing the United States-China bilateral economic relationship," the White House said in a statement. The US has threatened to impose 25 percent punitive duties on up to \$150 billion in Chinese goods while China has targeted \$50 billion in American exports.

China's Vice Premier Liu He leads the trade delegation from Beijing. US Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer will also participate. In Beijing, the commerce ministry said China hoped the two sides could resolve the trade frictions during the talks.

"But of course we've prepared a response for various possibilities," said commerce spokesman Gao Feng at a Thursday press briefing. The talks, part of a busy week of trade negotiations and tight deadlines in Washington, have become enmeshed in political intrigue after an adviser to President Donald Trump who is considered a hardliner on China was left out.

Peter Navarro, who was seen as having a more dominant role following the departure of White House economic advisor Gary Cohn over trade issues, was left off the list, although the

statement said: "Additional senior Administration Officials will also participate." According to press reports, Navarro sparred with Mnuchin over his handling of the China talks and was barred from attending the meetings this week.

### ZTE and Indonesia

Meanwhile, Trump earlier on Wednesday denied caving to China over US sanctions on the telecoms equipment maker ZTE. The comments followed Trump's surprise announcement on Sunday that the administration was exploring ways to soften the blow from a ban on exporting crucial US technology to the company, which Washington says violated sanctions and misled US officials.

"Nothing has happened with ZTE except as it pertains to the larger trade deal," Trump said on Twitter. "China has seen our demands. There has been no folding as the media would love people to believe. The meetings haven't even started yet!"

Beijing said it had taken note of the positive words in Washington on lessening sanctions on ZTE. "We hope the related departments quickly take real action," said Gao, while relaying some of China's other demands such as fair and equitable treatment for Chinese products and investment. "We hope the US gets rid of economic and trade restrictions it should not have," Gao said. Commerce Secretary Ross has said twice in the



This file picture shows a PetroChina logo at a petrol station in Shanghai. US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin will lead trade talks with China due to take place today as the countries try to head off a trade war. —AFP

past week that the two sides had exchanged detailed lists of demands. Trump's remarks followed an AFP report last week that a Chinese state enterprise was pumping hundreds of millions of dollars into an Indonesian real estate development linked to the American president's business empire, prompting questions of possible quid-pro-quo for ZTE.

ZTE was fined \$1.2 billion in March 2017 but last month it was prohibited from buying cru-

cial US parts after the commerce department found the company had lied multiple times and failed to take actions against employees responsible for sanctions violations on Iran and North Korea.

The company faced collapse as a result and Trump said Sunday he and Chinese President Xi Jinping were exploring ways to get the company "back into business fast," as he ordered the commerce department to take action. —AFP

## Britain slashes maximum stake on gambling machines

**LONDON:** Britain will slash the maximum stake on controversial gambling machines to £2 (\$2.7, 2.3 euros) per spin, the government said yesterday, as it vowed "to protect the most vulnerable in society" from harmful losses. The biggest wager for popular fixed-odds betting terminals (FOBTs), which allow gamblers to bet every 20 seconds, will be cut sharply from £100, the department for digital, culture, media and sport announced.

The new rules for the popular electronic casino-style games, like roulette and bingo, followed a government review. The machines-dubbed the crack cocaine of the gambling world by campaigners owing to their addictive nature and escalating cost-have long faced fierce criticism from opposition MPs and religious leaders with many calling for the maximum £2 bet. "When faced with the choice of halfway measures or doing everything we can to protect vulnerable people, we have chosen to take a stand," said culture minister Matt Hancock in Thursday's statement.

### 'Social blight'

"These machines are a social blight and prey

on some of the most vulnerable in society, and we are determined to put a stop to it and build a fairer society for all," Hancock added. The government also announced measures to tighten online betting protections and television advertising and raise awareness about potential harm, and will launch a probe into the public health impact of betting.

"Problem gambling can devastate individuals' lives, families and communities," said sports minister Tracey Crouch. "It is right that we take decisive action now to ensure a responsible gambling industry that protects the most vulnerable in our society."

Campaigners celebrated the announcement following a long-running protest. Tom Watson, deputy leader of the opposition Labor party, told BBC radio that he was "absolutely delighted", adding it would "help alleviate some of the terrible misery caused by problem gambling in Britain". Bishop of St Albans Alan Smith-who campaigned on behalf of the Church of England over the issue-said it was the "right" decision.

"Fixed-odds betting terminals are a scourge on high streets that have taken advantage of the vulnerable for too long," he said. Britain's Gambling Commission regulator had already recommended in March for the maximum stake for the terminals to be set at or below £30. The sector has warned for some time that high-street betting shops could close as a result of such a move. Bookmaker William Hill added yesterday that it could close about 900 branches-or 38 percent of its estate. —AFP

## Economic crisis cuts swathe through Venezuela society

**MARACAIBO, Venezuela:** On an avenue in Maracaibo, the once-thriving heart of Venezuela's oil industry, the buses no longer run. Instead, people squeeze onto a dinky tourist train to take them home. Maracaibo's crippled transportation system is symptomatic of Venezuela's deterioration, locked in a deep economic and political crisis despite sitting on the world's largest oil reserves.

Transportation decay, creaking power and water grids, endless supermarket lines, rising crime: in a country ruined by falling oil prices, mismanagement and political turmoil, the crippled economy has cut a swathe through every stratum of society. In Venezuela's second city, 52-year-old Victor Colina drives the jaded little tourist train which he has pressed into service as public transport. "I'm going to see how I get on with it," said the former appliance repairman.

About 20 people board its single carriage. The other two no longer run, because Colina has no tires for them. In the capital Caracas, shop assistant Alida Huzz has a modest dream: to eat a nutritious meal with protein sometime soon.

"I've been dreaming of chicken, rice and potatoes for a long time," she said. "I have rice and potatoes, but no chicken. You work and work for

nothing. Before we could eat what we wanted, but not now." Her neighbor, Reina Rojas, receives a government food parcel every six weeks at subsidized prices, but it is too little to live on.

"There are only three kilos of rice! Three packets of spaghetti and oil! Who can live on that?" asked Rojas. It's the kind of pressure-cooker despair that, in most countries, jolts rulers from their perch come election time. However, crisis-weary Venezuelans believe Sunday's vote-in which President Nicolas Maduro seems set for a second term despite presiding over a ruined economy-will change nothing.

Journalist Federico Pereney, 41, quit his job in September, after realizing that he had just blown his entire salary on a pizza with his girlfriend. It's possible in Venezuela-inflation is running at more than 13,000 percent and the minimum wage of around \$36 will buy you no more than a kilogram (two pounds) of meat. He believes elections will provide no respite for Venezuelans' suffering.

"Maybe there has to be an internal change in the government, because there is no opposition," he said. Now Pereney works for himself, even if he struggles to make ends meet with what he earns on top of his girlfriend's salary. —AFP



## Business

# Volkswagen's biggest brand to by-pass Paris auto show

## Audi, Porsche, Skoda, Seat still due to attend

**BERLIN:** Volkswagen will not display its core brand at the Paris motor show this year, the latest and most prominent carmaker to swerve the biennial industry gathering. Europe's largest automotive group has scaled back brand presentations at traditional car shows, including Detroit and Frankfurt, since the VW emissions scandal erupted in 2015.

This has partly been as a cost-cutting measure for VW which has been reducing spending to counter the multi-billion dollar costs of dealing with the fallout of cheating diesel emissions tests, but it also mirrors a wider sector trend.

Many of the traditional industry gatherings have registered a drop in visitor numbers since 2000, forcing carmakers to rethink how they spend their marketing budgets. "The Volkswagen brand is continually reviewing its participation in international motor shows," it said on Thursday, adding it could instead host "various communications activities" in the French capital, including test drives. Other brands staying away from the Oct. 2-3 Paris show include Ford, PSA Group's Opel and Volvo Cars, owned by China's Zhejiang Geely Holding Group, spokespeople for the three carmakers said. VW's luxury division Audi gave up its own pavilion in Frankfurt, which hosts Europe's largest auto show in alternate years, for the first time in many years in 2017.

### "Excessive costs"

Audi will also skip the 2019 Detroit show, which the VW group attended with a significantly reduced line-up this year, underlining the wider shift away from such gatherings. "Excessive costs and very poor benefits for customer ties and image building simply don't justify the effort," said Ferdinand Dudenhofer, director of the Center for Automotive Research at the University of Duisburg-Essen. "Car shows are doomed unless they find a new approach."

Dudenhofer, a former marketing chief at Porsche, said VW group probably spends up to 50 million euros on its Paris show presence. VW declined comment. Among the reasons for the decline of the shows is the emergence of technology as the main battleground for connected, autonomous cars, which has drawn exhibitors to competing events such as the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas and the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona.

But carmakers cannot afford to skip China's annual event, alternating between Beijing and Shanghai, as it showcases the latest tech and trends in the world's largest vehicle market which experts view as a leader in electric and self-driving cars, Stefan Bratzel, head of the Centre of Automotive Management think-tank near Cologne, said. A spokesman for VW's



**PARIS:** In this file photo a visitor takes pictures of the Polo GTI at the Volkswagen stand at the Paris Auto Show on the first of the two press days. The German Volkswagen brand announced yesterday it was giving up its stand at the Paris Motor Show, which will be held from October 4 to 14. — AFP

French operations said other Volkswagen brands including Audi, sports car maker Porsche, Czech division Skoda and Spanish unit Seat are still due to attend Paris. VW's head-

quarters in Wolfsburg, Germany, said the decision to skip the 2018 event does not mean the VW brand will also stay away from the next Paris show in 2020. — Reuters

## SEC launches phony cryptocurrency 'sale' to educate about scams

**WASHINGTON:** Boy, do US financial regulators have a deal for you: buy digital coins, travel to luxurious resorts...and learn how not to get scammed out of your life savings.

The Securities and Exchange Commission on Wednesday launched the howey-coins.com website, which looks just like one of the investments that have flourished in the Bitcoin era, complete with celebrity endorsements, research, and pictures of tropical destinations.

But all the links for the initial coin offering take you to education sites that warn against giving money to dubious investments and without doing thorough research. "It's just so ripe for fraud," said Lori Schock, director of the SEC's Office of Investor Education and Advocacy.

Just four years ago her office fielded fewer than 10 complaints about dubious cryptocurrency investments. Last year there were well over 120 and "this year it continues to grow," Schock told AFP.

People put money in and then find they cannot get it back out and no longer get a response from the company, many of which are located overseas. The SEC has taken action and shut down several fraudulent schemes that amounted to tens of millions of dollars but the scope prompted her office

and SEC Chair Jay Clayton to ramp up their public outreach.

### Red flags

"We're never going to be able to litigate our way out of investment fraud," Schock said. "It comes down to investor education so they will recognize the red flags." The Howey Coins site, which was developed in just a few weeks with SEC staff doing the design and content, with suggestions from other state and national regulators, features a host of those red flags.

It has a countdown clock to drum up excitement, and various investment levels offering special discounts, and promises it is registered with the US government, all accompanied by a series of attractive stock pictures of luxury resorts, palm trees and sparkling wine.

It has photos of the company's staff but no biographies—actually SEC employees, several of whom seem to be wearing the same glasses—and fake celebrity endorsements. "The rapid growth of the 'ICO' market, and its widespread promotion as a new investment opportunity, has provided fertile ground for bad actors to take advantage of our Main Street investors," Clayton said in a statement. —AFP

## India's state power plants resume coal imports amid domestic shortages

**NEW DELHI:** State-run thermal power plants in India's coastal states have again begun buying overseas coal due to domestic coal shortages, government and utility officials said, in a setback for the country's long-term plans to eliminate imports.

After no significant imports in 2017, government utilities in the states of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh have ordered several cargoes of coal since the beginning of this year, two officials said.

Andhra Pradesh, a state on India's east coast, has imported 200,000 ton of coal so far this year and could import as much as 1 million tons in 2018, said Ajay Jain, a senior official in the state energy department. "Coal has been a real problem. If we had depended only on coal, it would have been a disaster," Jain said.

Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corp, a government utility in the southwestern India state, has imported about 1.4 million tons of coal this year, after going a year without imports starting at the end of 2016, according to Vikram Kapoor, the chairman of the utility.

An increase in coal imports by state-owned power utilities undermines a pledge by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government to cut thermal coal imports to zero by March 2018.

But state-owned Coal India Ltd, the world's sec-

ond-biggest coal miner by production, is grappling with a shortage of trains to carry the fuel from its mines to the country's power plants.

Both Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu are waiting for the wind energy season to start in June, when they expect dependence on coal to ease, Jain and Kapoor both said. Domestic logistic bottlenecks, regulatory changes and surging power demand will likely increase 2018 thermal coal imports after two years of declines, Reuters reported in February. Imports rose over 15 percent in the first quarter of 2018. State-run utilities could add up to 5 million tons to India's coal imports in 2018 because of the Coal India shortages, a senior executive from Adani Enterprises, India's biggest coal trader told Reuters in February.

India imported 144.5 million tons of coal in 2017, according to data provided by American Fuels & Natural Resources, a Dubai-based coal trader. Imports would be a boost for international miners such as Indonesia's Adaro Energy, Australia's Whitehaven Coal or global commodity merchant Glencore.

Maharashtra, a western coastal state, has floated a tender for procuring 1 million tons of coal to augment its existing stock and meet growing power demand, a senior official at Maharashtra State Power Generation Co, the state utility, said on Tuesday.

Gujarat, Maharashtra's northwestern neighbor, plans to ramp up imports by 400,000 tons this year, according to a senior state government official. Karnataka, another southern state, has resisted imports so far. But that might change, according to Kumar Naik, the managing director of state utility Karnataka Power Corp. Two of Karnataka's three major thermal power plants had almost run out of coal stockpiles, according to government data on May 14. —AFP



## Business

# EU firms will make their own call on Iran business: Macron

## Top shipping firm signals Iran pullout

**SOFIA:** French President Emmanuel Macron said yesterday Europe would try to protect its companies doing business with Iran from US sanctions, reimposed over Tehran's nuclear program, but said giants like Total would make their own choices.

Macron's spoke as the world's largest container shipping firm, A.P. Moller-Maersk, followed the French oil major in saying it would quit Iran, denting EU efforts to save the nuclear accord with Tehran and protect European companies doing business with the Islamic Republic.

"International companies with interests in many countries make their own choices according to their own interests. They should continue to have this freedom," he said on arriving for a second day of EU leaders' talks in the Bulgarian capital.

"But what is important is that companies, and especially medium-sized companies which are perhaps less exposed to other markets, American or others, can make this choice freely."

The EU wants to salvage the Iran nuclear deal, which offers the Islamic Republic relief from economic sanctions in exchange for curbs on its nuclear program and Europe sees as an important element of international security.



### EU struggling to respond to US sanctions move

However, EU officials say there is no easy way to protect EU firms from US sanctions and that it will take time for the bloc to devise what will likely be a complex mix of national and EU-level measures.

Ignoring European support for the nuclear pact, US President Donald Trump branded the agreement as "the worst deal ever" and announced on May 8 the United States was pulling out.

#### Shipping firm to weigh anchor in Iran

Total on Wednesday said it might quit a multi-billion-dollar gas project unless it secured a waiver from US sanctions. Tehran had repeatedly hailed the project as a symbol of the nuclear accord's success.

CEO Soren Skou told Reuters yesterday that A.P. Moller-Maersk was following suit. "With the sanctions the Americans are to impose, you can't do business in Iran if you also have business in the U.S., and we have that on a large scale," Skou told Reuters in an interview following the firm's first-quarter report.

"I don't know the exact timing details, but I am certain that we're also going to shut down (in Iran)," Skou said. Finnish mining technology

Iran under which it agreed to study the development of the Changuleh oilfield in western Iran. Shell signed a provisional deal in December 2016 to develop Iranian oil and gas fields South Azadegan, Yadavaran and Kish. But its annual report published in 2017 showed it had bought only three cargoes of Iranian oil since the easing of sanctions, in a sign of the legal difficulties hampering trade.

South Korea's Daewoo Engineering and Construction (Daewoo E&C) signed a MoU in 2015 to carry out construction of an oil refinery in Bandar Jask on the southern coast of Iran.

- Norway's Aker Solutions signed a MoU in May 2016 to modernize the Iranian oil industry.

- Austria's OMV signed a MoU in May 2016 for projects in the Zagros area of western Iran and the Fars field in the south. In June 2017, OMV and Russia's Gazprom Neft announced a MoU to work in Iran's oil sector.

- Italy's Saipem signed MoUs in 2016 to cooperate on Iranian pipeline projects, upgrading of refineries and development of the Tous gas field in the northeastern province of Khorasan Razavi.

- BASF's Wintershall oil and gas exploration arm signed a MoU with the National Iranian Oil Company in April 2016. In February 2017, it said it was in talks about a possible investment in Iran, but no decision was on the cards because of uncertainty over the status of economic sanctions. —Reuters



A picture taken on December 12, 2012 shows a container vessel operated by Danish shipping group Maersk Tankers near Copenhagen. Danish shipping group Maersk Tankers yesterday said it would cease its activities in Iran due to the US's decision to leave a landmark nuclear deal and reimpose sanctions against Tehran. —AFP

company Outotec said US sanctions would slow down and complicate its ties with Iran but it was too early to say if it would leave.

Macron, voicing understanding for big companies anxious to protect their US sales, said France backed proposals by the European Commission to protect and compensate European companies that might be hit by US sanc-

tions for trading with Iran. They are all but certain to fall short of the type of firm guarantees that the Iranian authorities have been seeking.

President Hassan Rouhani has said Iran would remain committed to the deal, which China, Russia, Britain, France and Germany also signed, provided those powers ensured Iran was protected from sanctions. —Reuters

## Company deals at risk from US sanctions on Iran

**NEW YORK:** A P Moller-Maersk, the world's biggest container shipper, said yesterday it planned to shut down operations in Iran. Following is a list of companies that could be affected by US President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw from an international nuclear deal with Iran and impose sanctions on Tehran:

#### Oil and Gas

Total said yesterday it would pull out of the South Pars project and unwind all related operations by Nov 4 "unless Total is granted a specific project waiver by US authorities with the support of the French and European authorities." The company had signed the South Pars deal in November 2016, becoming the first oil major to agree a big transaction with Tehran in the wake of the 2015 international nuclear agreement.

Industry sources said in October 2017 that China's top oil and gas company CNPC would consider taking over Total's stake in the project if the French company left.

Norwegian oil and gas company DNO said in November 2016 it was the second Western energy company after Total to sign a deal with

## Walmart's e-commerce growth rebounds in US, shares rise

**NEW YORK:** Walmart Inc, the world's biggest retailer, posted a rebound in its US e-commerce business yesterday and beat profit and revenue expectations, lifting its shares in premarket trade.

Walmart's e-commerce sales grew 33 percent during the first quarter ended April 30, above the 23-percent growth in the previous three months. The retailer said it is on track to increase US e-commerce sales by 40 percent for the full year. The e-commerce rebound comes after a sharp slowdown during the crucial holiday quarter, which sent its shares down over 10 percent and wiped out \$31 billion from its market capitalization. Investors worried the retailer would not be able to keep pace with rival Amazon.com Inc.

"Online grocery continued to accelerate and we also have new brands in e-commerce including the partnership with Lord and Taylor, so there are a lot of different things driving growth there," Chief Financial Officer Brett

Biggs said in an interview. He said the Walmart.com site redesign helped although it came late in the quarter.

The retailer recently revamped its website and has said it will offer more premium products through a partnership with department store chain Lord & Taylor. Walmart also recently said it will acquire a 77-percent stake in Indian e-commerce firm Flipkart for \$16 billion, its largest deal ever, to compete with Amazon.com Inc in an important growth market. It also plans to sell a majority stake in its UK grocery chain Asda Group Ltd to J Sainsbury PLC.

Excluding special items, adjusted earnings were \$1.14 per share. The average analyst estimate was \$1.12 per share, according to Thomson Reuters I/B/E/S.

Sales at US stores open at least a year rose 2.1 percent excluding fuel, in line with analyst forecasts, according to Consensus Metrix. Walmart has recorded nearly four straight years of US growth, unmatched by any other retailer. Total revenue increased 4.4 percent to \$122.7 billion, beating analysts' estimates of \$120.5 billion.

Walmart's shares were up 1.17 percent at \$87.14 in premarket trade. The company's stock has fallen around 20 percent since reaching an all-time high of \$109.98 in late January. —Reuters



## Sports

# Houston Astros down Los Angeles Angels 2-0

## Blue Jays overpower Mets 12-1

**CALIFORNIA:** Justin Verlander threw a five-hit shutout Wednesday night, leading the Houston Astros to a 2-0 victory over the Los Angeles Angels in Anaheim, Calif. It was Verlander's first shutout since August 2015, when he was with the Detroit Tigers and he blanked the Angels. He notched his first complete game since 2016. Verlander struck out seven and walked one while making 118 pitches as the Astros took two of three in the series. Evan Gattis' two-run homer off Angels starter Garrett Richards in the second inning accounted for all of the game's offense. Richards (4-2) yielded two unearned runs on four hits and one walk in seven innings.

### Rangers 5, Mariners 1

Bartolo Colon pitched 7 2/3 scoreless innings as Texas won at Seattle. Delino DeShields Jr broke a scoreless tie with a two-out double in the top of the eighth inning as the Rangers earned a split of the two-game series. Colon (2-1), a right-hander who turns 45 on May 24, earned his 242nd career victory, one behind former San Francisco Giants great Juan Marichal for the most by a Dominican-born pitcher. Colon also improved to 14-1 at Safeco Field, the best winning percentage for any pitcher with 10 or more starts at the stadium. The scariest moment for Colon came in the fourth inning, when Seattle's Jean Segura hit a 102 mph liner back to the mound. The portly Colon couldn't get his glove on the ball, which hit him in the stomach. Colon picked the ball up and threw out Segura, then laughed it off when manager Jeff Banister and the training staff came out to the field to check on him.

### Phillies 4, Orioles 1

Cesar Hernandez homered to start a three-run sixth-inning rally, and Nick Pivetta struck out 11 in seven innings as visiting Philadelphia defeated Baltimore. Pivetta (3-2) allowed just one run on two hits in his seven innings. He walked just one and threw 67 strikes on 99 pitches. Tommy Hunter, Luis Garcia, Edubray Ramos and Hector Neris complete the Phillies' four-hitter. Adam Jones hit a solo homer for Baltimore.

### Pirates 3, White Sox 2

Josh Bell hit a pinch-hit, go-ahead single in the seventh inning, and Pittsburgh held on for a win over visiting Chicago. The Pirates swept the four-game season series with a pair of victories in each team's ballpark. Pittsburgh has won seven of its past eight games and boasts a 14-6 record at home. The White Sox have lost nine of 10 games. Sean Rodriguez drove in a pair of runs for the Pirates, who won despite tallying only four hits. Leury Garcia and Yolmer Sanchez each hit a solo home run for Chicago.

### Blue Jays 12, Mets 1

JA Happ struck out 10 in seven scoreless innings and reached base three times in as

many plate appearances as Toronto routed host New York and snapped a three-game losing streak. Happ (5-3) allowed just two hits and didn't walk a batter. He retired the final 11 men he faced. Happ also made a bit of Blue Jays history by hitting two singles, drawing a walk and scoring two runs. He is the first Toronto pitcher to ever reach base three times in a single game. Justin Smoak homered in the first for the Blue Jays, who went up 3-0 on Teoscar Hernandez's two-run homer in the fourth and chased Mets starter Zack Wheeler during a three-run fifth in which Josh Donaldson (single) and Smoak (two-run double) had RBI hits.

### Indians 6, Tigers 0

Trevor Bauer bounced back from his worst outing of the season by tossing eight scoreless innings, and Cleveland salvaged the finale of a three-game series by blanking host Detroit. Bauer (3-3) gave up season highs in runs (five) and hits (11) while lasting a season-low 4 2/3 innings against Kansas City in a 10-9 loss on Friday. On Wednesday, he gave up just four hits and didn't issue a walk while striking out 10. Cody Allen recorded three strikeouts in the ninth inning. Michael Brantley led the Cleveland offense with three hits, including a solo homer, and two runs. Erik Gonzalez added two hits, a run and an RBI.

### Cardinals 7, Twins 5

Tommy Pham homered and Dexter Fowler knocked in two runs as St. Louis salvaged a split of its interleague series against Minnesota in Minneapolis. Matt Carpenter added three hits, including a pair of doubles, and an RBI for St. Louis, which was outscored 17-2 this year in its first three meetings with the Twins. Minnesota's Lance Lynn (1-4) needed a whopping 82 pitches to negotiate three innings. Lynn, making his first start against the Cardinals after pitching for them the last seven years, allowed four hits and three runs with four walks and five strikeouts.

### Rays 5, Royals 3

CJ Cron hit a home run, and Adeiny Hechavarria had two RBIs as Tampa Bay completed a three-game sweep at Kansas City. The struggling Royals have lost five in a row and seven of the last eight. Tampa Bay has won four of five. Matt Andriese (1-1) threw three scoreless innings for the win. Alex Colome pitched the ninth for his ninth save.

### Brewers 8, Diamondbacks 2

Milwaukee got homers from Travis Shaw, Domingo Santana, Christian Yelich and Tyler Saladino in Phoenix, and the Brewers became the second team this season to win a series against Arizona. Shaw and Santana hit back-to-back homers in a three-run first inning, and Yelich hit a two-run homer in the second as



**CALIFORNIA:** Justin Verlander #35 of the Houston Astros pitches during the ninth inning of a game against the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim at Angel Stadium on May 16, 2018 in Anaheim, California. —AFP

the Brewers won for the fifth time in seven games. Daniel Descalso's two-run homer in the first inning was one of four hits for the Diamondbacks, who have lost seven of eight and 10 of 14. The Brewers took two of three in the series after Washington swept a four-game series in Arizona last weekend.

### Marlins 6, Dodgers 5

JT Realmuto hit a tiebreaking homer in the sixth inning, and Justin Bour drilled a two-run shot as Miami defeated visiting Los Angeles. Starlin Castro also had an impact for the Marlins, going 4-for-5 with a double and an RBI. The Dodgers took their sixth consecutive loss. Los Angeles' Yasmani Grandal went 2-for-4 with a homer, two RBIs and two runs.

### Reds 6, Giants 3

Adam Duvall capped a four-run first inning with a three-run home run, and Cincinnati won for the second straight time in a Matt Harvey start, holding off host San Francisco. Duvall, Jose Peraza, Scooter Gennett and Alex Blandino had two hits apiece as the Reds, who began a seven-game Western swing with a four-game sweep against the Dodgers, salvaged a single win in three games in San Francisco to complete a successful 5-2 trip. Pitching for the second time since being acquired from the New York Mets last week, Harvey went four innings, allowing three runs and seven hits. He struck out five and did not walk a batter.

### Red Sox 6, A's 4

A quick burst of offense made for smooth

sailing for Chris Sale as Boston avoided a three-game sweep with a win over visiting Oakland in the series finale. J.D. Martinez hit a two-run homer and Hanley Ramirez had an RBI in the first inning, and Xander Bogaerts added a three-run homer in the sixth. Sale (4-1) allowed two runs on two hits and struck out nine over five innings. Marcus Semien launched a two-run homer, and Matt Joyce and Matt Olson had solo shots for the Athletics.

### Braves 4, Cubs 1

Atlanta rallied for three runs in the eighth inning, scoring twice on bases-loaded walks, to beat visiting Chicago. The Braves took the lead when Ozzie Albies tripled against Carl Edwards Jr (2-1) and scored on a single by Ronald Acuna Jr. After a single by Freddie Freeman and an intentional walk to Nick Markakis, the Braves got walks from Tyler Flowers and Johan Camargo to push across the insurance runs. Atlanta closer Aroldys Vizcaino, who blew a save and took a loss against Chicago on Tuesday, worked a perfect ninth inning and recorded his eighth save. AJ Minter (2-0) pitched a scoreless eighth inning and earned the victory. Yankees-Nationals, ppd. The scheduled doubleheader between New York and Washington was postponed due to inclement weather at Nationals Park. The first game, which was suspended Tuesday night due to rain with the score tied 3-3 in the sixth inning, was scheduled to resume Wednesday. The teams then were to play a regularly scheduled game. The pair of games will be made up June 18. —Reuters



## Sports

# Furious Pliskova smashes hole in umpire's chair; Halep cruises

## Halep thrashes Osaka; Enraged Pliskova loses cool over line call

ROME: World number five Karolina Pliskova lost her cool over a line call and bashed a hole into the umpire's chair with her racket after suffering a 3-6 6-3 7-5 defeat by Maria Sakkari in the Italian Open second round on Wednesday. Pliskova had argued heatedly with umpire Marta Mrozinska after her smash was called out when serving at 30-30 and 5-5 in the final set, and her Greek opponent won the game before serving out the match.

The Czech exchanged a brief word with Sakkari at the net before approaching Mrozinska with an outstretched hand before withdrawing it and repeatedly smashing the chair with her racquet. Pliskova's twin sister Kristyna, who also ranks in the world's top 100, slammed Mrozinska on social media. "The worst i have ever seen @wta and i hope this lady Marta Mrozinska will never ever judge any match of me or Karolina again #blacklistforever," the 26-year-old wrote on Twitter.

Earlier in the day, top seed Simona Halep produced a ruthless display to see off Japan's Naomi Osaka 6-1 6-0. The Romanian was forced to save four break points in her opening service game but went on to claim 12 consecutive games to avenge her Indian Wells loss to eventual champion Osaka in March. The 20-year-old Osaka failed to convert any of her six break points before conceding the match in just under an hour.

"I just tried to build my points, to build a little bit of space and open the court, and tried to make winners," Halep said.

"It's tough to make winners on this court, for me, but it's good when I can build the point. I just want to play like today." Halep will next meet American Madison Keys, who clinched a 7-6(2) 7-6(0) win over Croatian qualifier Donna Vekic. World number two Caroline Wozniacki began her campaign with a comfortable 6-1 6-4 victory over Belgian Alison van Uytvanck. The 27-year-old Dane, chasing her first claycourt title since 2011, will face 15th seed Anastasija Sevastova for a place in the quarter-finals. A decade after they last met in Rome, Maria Sharapova once again did enough to secure a victory over Dominika Cibulkova in three sets.

Former world number one Sharapova struck 41 winners as she rallied back from a set down to edge her Slovakian opponent 3-6 6-4 6-2 in a thrilling 2-1/2 hour contest. The 31-year-old Russian will next face Australia's Daria Gavrilova for a place in the quarter-finals. Gavrilova recovered from 4-0 down in the third set to beat world number three Muguruza 5-7 6-2 7-6(6) in just over three hours. The victory means the 24-year-old Gavrilova recorded her first top 10 victory of the year, and her first back-to-back match wins since Acapulco in February. —Agencies

## Ledecky smashes her own record

LOS ANGELES: Five-time Olympic swimming champion Katie Ledecky smashed her own 1,500m freestyle world record by five seconds on Wednesday in her first race as a professional. The 21-year-old American star touched the wall in 15min 20.48sec at the Pro Swim event in Indianapolis, obliterating her previous best of 15:25.48 set at the World Championships in Kazan in 2015. This week's meet in Indianapolis is Ledecky's first since turning professional following the NCAA collegiate championships in March. Ledecky won gold in the 800m at the 2012 Olympics and followed it up with four golds and a silver at the Rio Olympics two years ago. The 1,500m free will be introduced as an Olympic event for women at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo. —AFP

## Rockets romp to level NBA series with Warriors

LOS ANGELES: The Houston Rockets ramped up the intensity on Wednesday, powering past the NBA champion Golden State Warriors 127-105 to level their Western Conference finals series at one game apiece. Houston's Most Valuable Player candidate James Harden scored 27 points and pulled down 10 rebounds. Eric Gordon added 27 off the bench as five players scored in double figures for a Rockets team chastened by a 119-106 series-opening defeat on their home floor on Monday. "Total team effort," Harden said. "We played harder and smarter than game one. That was the only difference."

The Rockets signaled their intentions early. Their seven fast-break points in the opening quarter more than doubled the three they mustered in all of game one. Houston connected on three-of-10 from three-point range in the first period while the Warriors were zero-for-seven and coughed up seven turnovers. Up 26-21 after one quarter, the Rockets wouldn't trail from there. They led 64-50 by halftime, with four players already in double figures as they stepped up the pace and tightened the defensive screws.

"Everything was fueled off our defense," Gordon said. "We hit the open man at the right time and guys were knocking down shots and when we play that way it's just a

fun game." Rockets coach Mike D'Antoni said there was no major change in strategy—just more intensity and better execution from a Houston team that led the league with 65 regular-season wins. "I don't want to be cantankerous," D'Antoni said. "You have one of the best offenses of all time, at least, with Golden State and we're trying to prove we're up there with them. You're not going to come in and change the way you play."

"We are who we are. We just did it better and longer." Warriors coach Steve Kerr said the Rockets' energy made all the difference. "I just think this game was a matter of the Rockets bringing the force that's necessary to win a game and we didn't," Kerr said. "We had seven turnovers in the first quarter. We set the tone early with our own play and allowed them to get some confidence and some easy buckets in transition. "But give them the credit they came out and played a great game. They got everybody going."

"We got what we deserved. They kicked our butts, no other way to say it." Kevin Durant led the Warriors with 38 points, but Stephen Curry was the only other Golden State player in double figures with 16. Klay Thompson scored just eight points, Draymond Green six and Andre Iguodala five. Curry connected on seven of 19 shots from the floor, making just one of eight three-point attempts in what he called a "frustrating night." Overall the Warriors were just nine of 30 from three-point range. They finished the game with 15 turnovers — 11 of those coming before halftime, by when most of the damage was done.

### Ready for Game 3

PJ Tucker, who scored just one point in game one, scored 14 of his 22 points in the



HOUSTON: Kevin Durant No 35 of the Golden State Warriors drives against Eric Gordon No 10 of the Houston Rockets in the second half of Game Two of the Western Conference Finals of the 2018 NBA Playoffs at Toyota Center on May 16, 2018. —AFP

first half for Houston. Trevor Ariza, another who struggled in game one, added 19 points and Chris Paul scored 16 for the Rockets. "Defensively we were more aggressive. We were smarter," said Harden, whose Rockets travel to Oakland for game three on Sunday with renewed confidence. "We still made some mistakes that we can get better at," Harden said. "We know how tough it is to

win (at Golden State) but we're ready for it." The winners of the series will face either the Cleveland Cavaliers or Boston Celtics in the NBA Finals. The Celtics lead the Eastern Conference finals 2-0. "For us right now the most important game is game three," Paul said. "That's a tough environment to play in there. But we are who we are and we'll be ready." —AFP



## Sports

# Mourinho, Conte feud adds spice to the final showdown

## Man United, Chelsea coaches trading insults

**LONDON:** Jose Mourinho's relationship with Antonio Conte has been acrimonious since they took the hot seats at Manchester United and Chelsea respectively but the Portuguese can have the last laugh at Wembley tomorrow. Few FA Cup finals have been as eagerly awaited as this season's with both managers desperate to avoid the ignominy of ending the campaign without any silverware.

Mourinho did at least steer United to runners-up spot behind a peerless Manchester City in the Premier League but Conte's Chelsea trailed in fifth and defeat in what is expected to be his final game in charge would be a bitter pill for the Italian. Ever since Mourinho, Chelsea's most successful manager, criticized Conte for his wild celebrations during Chelsea's 4-0 rout of United in the early weeks of the 2016-17 season, the two have been trading insults, some more veiled than others. Conte has criticized Mourinho's spending at United and accused him of being obsessed with events at Stamford Bridge.

Mourinho upped the ante by labeling Conte's touchline manner as clown-like and alluding to a match-fixing allegation Conte was eventually cleared of in Italy. Conte in turn described Mourinho as a "little man" and "a fake". While things have cooled of late, there will be no love lost going into the climax of the domestic season tomorrow when United hope to join record-holders Arsenal with 13 FA Cup triumphs to their name. Chelsea have not won the Cup since 2012 when Conte's compatriot Roberto di Matteo was

in charge. Last season they were favorites going into the final having already won the Premier League in Conte's first season in charge but fell flat, losing 2-1 to Arsenal.

### Disappointing season

No matter who is in charge of Chelsea next season, Spanish midfielder Cesc Fabregas said the only thing that counts now is to make sure the club ends a disappointing season on a high. "We don't have to think about next season, we need to win now," he said. "We can't make (the season right) because the Champions League (qualification) is gone. "But to finish on a high would be nice."

Mourinho has not won the FA Cup since his first spell at Chelsea in 2007 - his only success in the competition. While he would like nothing more than to lead United to victory against his old club, several of his players could also rub salt into Chelsea's wounds too. United's Belgian striker Romelu Lukaku was deemed surplus to requirements by Chelsea but has flourished at United while midfielder Nemanja Matic was surprisingly allowed to join Mourinho at Old Trafford last season—a departure that seriously undermined Conte's squad. Lukaku is battling to shake off an ankle injury but is expected to be available for the final. United's progress under Mourinho has been impressive this season and they garnered 12 more points in the Premier League than they did in his first season.

However, last season Mourinho added the

outfit and they retained the lead until half-time. But V Club were a transformed team in the second half with Emmanuel Ngudikama scoring twice before a Glody Muzinga goal put the outcome beyond doubt. The match pitted former African champions against each other with V Club triumphant in 1973 and ASEC in 1998.

It was a great day for Congolese clubs with CARA from neighboring Congo Brazzaville scoring three goals in five minutes to whip Enyimba of Nigeria 3-0 in Group C. Racine Louamba triggered the goal blitz with a 14th-minute strike and Cabwey Kivutuka and Dicha Liema were the others scorers. CARA are a formidable force in Brazzaville with this surprisingly easy victory their fourth in a row in the second-tier African club competition this season. This match was another between former African champions with CARA winning in 1974 and Enyimba in 2003 and 2004, making them one of only three clubs to successfully defend the title.

Williamsville of the Ivory Coast lead the mini-league by one point from CARA after coming from behind in Bamako to force a 1-1 draw with 2012 Confederation Cup runners-up Djoliba of Mali. Ayoub el Kaabi confirmed his status as one of the most prolific scorers in Africa by netting twice to earn Renaissance Berkane of Morocco a 2-0 Group C win away to UD Songo of Mozambique. He scored a record nine goals this year in helping hosts Morocco win the African Nations Championship and has now claimed six Confederation Cup goals. — AFP



Manchester United's Portuguese manager Jose Mourinho

League Cup and Europa League title to the Old Trafford honors list, and midfielder Ander Herrera knows the club is defined by winning silverware. "This club is about titles, about trophies, it's about finals," the Spaniard said. "We will respect Chelsea, they are a top team and are used to winning as well. That makes the final even

more difficult." While a feisty final is expected, both sets of players, managers and fans will unite to remember former Chelsea and United midfielder Ray Wilkins whose untimely death last month will be marked by a series of special tributes before kickoff. Wilkins' widow Jackie will present the trophy to the winners. — Reuters

## African rookies Aduana snatch dramatic CAF Cup draw

**JOHANNESBURG:** African rookies Aduana Stars of Ghana came from behind three times to snatch a stoppage-time 3-3 draw with Raja Casablanca of Morocco on Wednesday in the CAF Confederation Cup group phase. Mahmoud Benhalib twice and Lema Mabidi put Raja in front only for Aduana to level through goals from Oba Ikama, Caleb Amankwah and Nathaniel Asamoah. Asamoah scored on 95 minutes to earn Stars a first point in Group A after they fell 1-0 away to ASEC Mimosas of the Ivory Coast in the opening series of mini-league matches.

Aduana against Raja appeared a mismatch on paper with the Ghanaians playing African group-phase football for the first time while regular campaigners Raja have won five CAF titles. In the same group, V Club of the Democratic Republic of Congo recovered from conceding an early goal to beat ASEC 3-1 in Kinshasa and take ownership of top place. Gbagnon Badie converted a 19th-minute penalty for the Abidjan

## Annahar Soccer Championship kicks off today



**KUWAIT:** The 2nd Annahar Soccer Championship for newspapers, magazines, TV channels and e-papers kicks off today with two matches - Kuwait Times Vs Bareeq Al-Danah at 4 pm and Al-Rai Vs Al-Shahed at 4:30 pm. The tournament is held under auspices of the Information Minister

Mohammed Al-Jabri during Ramadan. The venue for the matches will be at PAAET sports complex in Shuwaikh. Annahar daily allocated valuable prizes for the first and second place winners (KD 2000 and KD1600 respectively) in addition to three daily prizes for the fans.



## Sports

# Wembley specialist Sanchez seeks familiar FA Cup liftoff at United

## Sanchez signs the most lucrative contract in EPL history

**LONDON:** Alexis Sanchez heads to Wembley for tomorrow's FA Cup final against Chelsea hoping the magic of the cup will again prove the inspiration needed for the Chilean to kickstart a slow start to his Manchester United career. Sanchez is no plucky underdog. He reportedly signed the most lucrative contract in Premier League history when penning a four-and-a-half year contract at Old Trafford in January. However, the home of English football and its end-of-season showpiece is where Sanchez has often shone brightest.

Sanchez arrived at United from Arsenal to much fanfare as his mid-season signing was a rare victory for United over cross-city rivals and Premier League champions Manchester City this season in winning the race for the his signature. Yet, Sanchez has so far failed to deliver on that expectation—scoring just three times in 17 appearances. By a distance his most important goal for United came in the FA Cup semi-final last month as his equalizer propelled Jose Mourinho's men to a 2-1 win over Tottenham and his third FA Cup final in four seasons in England. He scored in the 2015 and 2017 finals to inspire Arsenal to victories over Aston Villa and Chelsea. It was also Sanchez's eighth goal in eight appearances at Wembley for club and country.

### 'Exhausted'

Mourinho has been a fierce defender of his marquee recruit with the Portuguese blaming the timing of his move for Sanchez's inability to

yet hit top form. "What is wrong is that he came at the worst moment of the season... that's why I don't like the winter market very much. I think this was a chance that we didn't want to lose and we took it," said Mourinho. "Hopefully next season he will be better, which is what we think is going to happen. "I am not a big fan of buying players in the winter market because of the period of adaptation, especially with attackers."

Mourinho's hunch that next season will see a significant improvement is helped by Chile's failure to qualify for the World Cup, handing Sanchez a first tournament-free summer for four years. Tomorrow will be his 301st game in the past five seasons for club and country. On international duty in March, he admitted that toll had left him "psychologically and emotionally exhausted", especially when at his best, Sanchez's game relies on explosive bursts to get beyond defenses. "He's not afraid to take responsibility," Mourinho added.

"Not afraid to try to make things happen, when he feels that he's not as dangerous as you'd like him to be, he drops back, he tries things, he tries to come to building-up areas. When he makes mistakes, he tries to compensate immediately." Despite his workload, Sanchez has made a habit of ending the season strongly in FA Cup finals. Should he repeat his feat from last season by beating Chelsea and join very esteemed company by scoring in a third final, Sanchez's mistakes since arriving in Manchester will be forgiven and forgotten.—AFP



**MANCHESTER:** Manchester United's Chilean striker Alexis Sanchez (right) tangles with Watford's Dutch defender Daryl Janmaat (left) during the English Premier League football match between Manchester United and Watford at Old Trafford in Manchester, north west England, on May 13, 2018. —AFP

## Lazio, Inter in dramatic clash for Champions League spot

**MILAN:** Lazio and Inter Milan will be involved in a dramatic clash for Italy's final Champions League group spot when they meet in a match worth millions of euros on Sunday. Lazio currently occupy the fourth and final Italian place in next season's group stage while Inter are three points behind them in fifth with the fixture list having thrown the pair together on the final day of the season for what is effectively a playoff. Inter are desperate to end a six-season absence from Europe's showcase competition which they won in 2010 under Jose Mourinho. Their last participation was in 2011-12 when they lost to Olympique de Marseille on away goals in the round of 16.

Inter and Lazio drew 0-0 in their first meeting of the season, meaning that if Inter win on Sunday, they will sneak above Lazio on their head-to-head record. Any other result will send Lazio straight into the group stage where they can expect to amass a fix minimum payment of over 12 million euros plus considerably more from the distribution of television and marketing revenue. Lazio could have clinched their place last week, but were held to a 2-2 draw at relegation-threatened Crotona despite taking an early lead.

"It's a big missed opportunity," said midfielder Senad Lulic. "We deserve the Champions League, it

would be a shame to throw it all away now." The Champions League was the very minimum Luciano Spalletti expected when he became Inter's 10th coach in seven years since Mourinho before the start of the season. Inter led the Serie A table in December, but have been exasperatingly inconsistent since then. A shock 2-1 defeat at home to Sassuolo last Saturday, which Spalletti said left his players distraught, appeared to have ended their chances but they were let off the hook by Lazio's result at Crotona the following day.

Tension between the two clubs has been raised following media reports that Lazio defender Stefan de Vrij will join Inter when his contract expires at the end of June. "Giving news like that ten days from the end of the season and a week before a direct clash is avoidable," said Lazio's sporting director Igli Tare. "It could've been done at the end of the season or even weeks ago." "I don't know if it was the club or an agent but it is something I would not have done. This lad gave us so much over the years and deserves to leave with respect and the applause of the fans."

Juventus have already wrapped up a seventh successive title while Napoli and AS Roma have taken the other two Champions League places. At the bottom, five teams, separated by only two points, are battling to avoid following Verona and Benevento into Serie A. Crotona (35 points), who pulled off a great escape last season, currently occupy the third relegation spot and have a tough trip to Napoli. Of the other candidates, SPAL (35) host Sampdoria, Cagliari (36) visit Atalanta, Udinese (37) host Bologna and Chievo (37) entertain Benevento—Reuters

## Manchester Utd on course to hit financial targets

**LONDON:** A surprise exit from the Champions League after defeat by Spain's Sevilla failed to dent English soccer club Manchester United's finances in the latest quarter as it stuck to its targets for the current year. United, whose leading players include David de Gea, Paul Pogba and Romelu Lukaku, finished second in the 20-team English Premier League on Sunday behind local rivals Manchester City. "As another season nears its close, we have achieved our highest number of points and finish since 2012/13 and we look forward to another trip to Wembley," its Executive Vice Chairman Ed Woodward said.

United face Chelsea in the FA Cup final at Wembley tomorrow. The club's adjusted earnings before interest, tax and depreciation and amortization for the three months to March 31 rose to 36.1 million pounds (\$48.71 million) from 30 million pounds a year ago. Revenue for the period rose 8.1 percent to 137.5 million pounds. United said it continued to target between 575-585 million pounds of revenue and an adjusted core earnings of between 175-185 million pounds for the year to the end of June. Manchester United Plc is listed on the New York Stock Exchange and controlled by the American Glazer family.

United have won the English league title a record 20 times but their performance has slipped in the recent seasons. However, finishing second in the English Premier League is enough to guarantee a place in next season's Champions League. The Champions League, Europe's top club soccer tournament, is widely popular around the globe and garners significant revenue for the participating clubs via pooled TV payments and higher matchday receipts. For United, matchday revenue in the third quarter rose 6.1 percent to 31.1 million pounds whereas broadcasting revenue came in 26.4 percent higher thanks to extra games in the period.—Reuters



## Sports

# Griezmann fires Atletico Madrid to Europa title

## Ruthless Griezmann sparkles in Atletico masterclass



RHONE: Atletico Madrid's French forward Antoine Griezmann and his family celebrate with the trophy after the UEFA Europa League final football match between Olympique de Marseille and Club Atletico de Madrid at the Parc OL stadium on May 16, 2018. — AFP

LYON: Antoine Griezmann was the hero for Atletico Madrid as the French striker scored twice in their 3-0 win over Marseille in Wednesday's Europa League final in Lyon, allowing his club to win the trophy for the third time in nine seasons. It is Griezmann's first major title with Atletico, and a fitting way to bow out if he leaves at the season's end, with Barcelona tipped as his next destination. Griezmann-brought up in Macon, just 70 kilometers from Lyon—scored once in each half, his lethal finishes coming either side of Marseille losing Dimitri Payet to injury, the French team's captain coming off in tears.

Griezmann now has 29 goals this season, although it was Gabi's late strike that sealed the victory. "This is a reward for me after I left home aged 14, for all the work I have put in, the suffering," said Griezmann, who has spent his whole career in Spain but had only previously won one Spanish Super Cup. Atletico's triumph comes after agonising defeats to Real Madrid in the Champions League finals of 2014 and 2016. They had previously won the Europa League in 2010 and again in 2012, the latter coming just six months after Diego Simeone's appointment as coach.

Simeone, who had to watch from the stands due to a touchline ban, called the victory a reward for his side's hard work and even expressed hope that Griezmann could be convinced to stay. "This was just confirmation of what Griezmann has been doing year after year," said the Argentine. "I hope he is happy with us. I have no doubt that there are certain things that could make it more likely that he stays. He has played three finals with us, has won two, and so that shows that he is not far away from his objective of regularly playing finals. We are not far away in sporting terms from teams who are more powerful than us."

Marseille had been desperate to win the second European trophy in their history, on French soil, 25 years after beating AC Milan in the inaugural Champions League final. But it was a flat

night for their huge support, who threatened to ruin the occasion by lighting flares and setting off firecrackers at one end of the stadium, with some even being thrown onto the pitch towards the end. The game carried on regardless, with Rudi Garcia's side well beaten. "We let our chance go in the first half. Firstly, we had the best chance to go ahead, and secondly an error from us meant we fell behind," said Garcia. "The scoreline is harsh but the better team won."

### Marseille's regrets

Atletico were the favorites against a Marseille side whose continental campaign had begun in the third qualifying round last July. Just being in this final was an achievement for Garcia's team, but they will look back on the evening with regrets. They had started well and had a great chance to open the scoring inside four minutes, Valere Germain shooting over after being slipped in by Payet. It was the kind of chance that does not come up often against an Atletico side who went on to keep their 34th clean sheet this season. Marseille were then punished for sloppy play as they fell behind in the 21st minute. Goalkeeper Steve Mandanda opted to pass to Andre-Frank Zambo Anguissa, deep in midfield, rather than clear long. The Cameroonian's attempt at a touch was awful, and Gabi pounced on the loose ball, sending Griezmann through to finish. Things got worse for Marseille when Payet, their captain and most influential player who had been struggling with a hamstring problem ahead of the game, came off crying just after the half-hour. OM then conceded again just four minutes after the restart. It was a glorious goal, Griezmann finding Koke and then latching onto the return ball before lifting a deft finish over Mandanda and in. Substitute Kostas Mitroglou nearly pulled one back, his header coming off the post, before Gabi's low drive in the 89th minute made it 3-0.—AFP

## A crunch time for Chelsea's Courtois

LONDON: Thibaut Courtois faces a defining period as the Chelsea goalkeeper juggles his bids for FA Cup and World Cup glory, while considering whether to commit his long-term future to the Blues. Courtois has one year to run on his current Chelsea contract and a new £200,000-per-week (\$269,000) deal to extend his stay at Stamford Bridge is reportedly on the table. But the 26-year-old has been linked with Real Madrid and a move back to the Spanish capital could make sense for Courtois, who spent three years with Atletico Madrid on loan from Chelsea. He is a regular visitor to Madrid, where his former partner Marta Dominguez lives with his children Nicolas and Adriana. Real's current goalkeeper Keylor Navas has endured an error-prone campaign, sparking talk of an offer for Courtois.

Earlier this season, Courtois, who joined Chelsea from Genk in 2011, wouldn't rule out a move, telling reporters in Spain: "I have not made a decision on my future. I said my heart was in Madrid, because I have my two children there, and it was misinterpreted. This situation is not easy for me. I do not forget that Chelsea has supported me since the beginning. I do not think (Real Madrid president) Florentino Perez will call me, but he will call my agent who will listen to him." With Chelsea having failed to qualify for next season's Champions League after finishing a disappointing fifth in the Premier League, Courtois is one of several stars whose futures with the club are now in doubt.

But before he considers whether to push for a move, Courtois has a chance to finish his domestic season on a high in Saturday's FA Cup final against Manchester United. The Wembley showdown offers Chelsea their last shot at silverware this term as they look to make amends for last season's Cup final defeat against Arsenal. Chelsea go into the final with Antonio Conte's future in doubt following the manager's season-long feud with the club's hierarchy over their failure to back his transfer plans after last year's league title triumph.

### 'Big motivation'

The intense former Juventus coach has also reportedly alienated several players with his demanding training sessions. Even beating United might not be enough to persuade Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich to keep Conte and Courtois hardly issued a vote of confidence in the Italian this week. "It's not about the manager, we want to win for the fans and the club," Courtois said when asked about the significance of the final. "If you want to win trophies, firstly, it's for the fans. They come there every week to support you. We are ready for it. We have a big motivation to win. And especially because we don't have a trophy this season." If Courtois leaves Wembley with his first FA Cup winner's medal, it would be the perfect preparation for the World Cup.

Belgium head to Russia—where they face England, Panama and Tunisia in the group stage—ranked as one of the dark horses to win the tournament after assembling a squad packed with world-class talent. But, despite the presence of Courtois, Eden Hazard, Kevin De Bruyne and company, they have underachieved in recent years, bowing out in the quarter-finals of the 2014 World Cup and Euro 2016. A long-awaited strong run from Belgium would set the stage for Courtois to underline his credentials as one of the world's top keepers—and up the ante as Chelsea wait to discover if he will rebuff Real's interest.—AFP



## Sports

# Italy great Buffon calls time on 17-year Juventus career

## Buffon, 40, captained Juventus to 7th straight Serie A title

**TURIN:** Juventus goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon announced yesterday that he will leave the Turin giants after 17 years but did not as expected declare the end of his playing career. Buffon, 40, captained Juventus to a seventh straight Serie A title and fourth consecutive Italian Cup triumph this season. "To end this adventure with two new victories was important," the Italian told a press conference at the Allianz Stadium. Italy's most capped player with 176 appearances, Buffon also confirmed he would not play again for the Azzurri, ruling out an expected international farewell on June 4 in a friendly against the Netherlands.

The former Parma goalkeeper will make his 640th Serie A appearance against Verona on Saturday. Italy defender Giorgio Chiellini will take over the role of captain. Buffon said he would like to take more time to reflect on his future, which could be either on or off the pitch. "What am I going to do? Saturday, I'm playing a match and it's the only thing that's certain," he continued. "Until 15 days ago, I was sure to stop playing, but I received some exciting proposals, both on and off the pitch. Off the pitch the most interesting was made to me by (Juventus) president (Andrea) Agnelli." "Next week, after a few days of calm reflection, I will make a definite and certain decision."

According to the Italian press, Buffon has received offers from top European clubs including

Liverpool, Real Madrid and Paris Saint-Germain. "I'd like to get out of my comfort zone and to test myself in more complicated situations that I don't know," said Buffon. "That's a way of seeing what you're made of and I've never been afraid of a challenge. "I'm certainly not someone who thinks it's right to end my career in who knows what third or fourth division. "I am a competitive animal and I won't be able to live or feel at ease in that situation. "My fear was to reach the end of the Juventus adventure as someone who people just put up with or a player who had lost it."

It was a rollercoaster season for Buffon with Italy failing to qualify for the World Cup finals for the first time in six decades. His final Champions League game ended in another fiasco last month as he raged into the night at the referee after being sent off late in a semi-final defeat by Real Madrid. Buffon is facing a UEFA ban for his verbal abuse of English referee Michael Oliver, whom he said had "a rubbish bag for a heart". European titles for both club and country are the only major ones missing from his collection as Juventus finished runners-up twice in the Champions League and Italy were beaten by Spain in the 2012 European Championships.

### Italy career over

The 2006 World Cup winner has definitively drawn a line under his 21-year international career. A tearful Buffon had called time immedi-



**MADRID:** In this file photo, Juventus' Italian goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon gives the thumbs up during the UEFA Champions League quarter-final second leg football match between Real Madrid CF and Juventus FC at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid. — AFP

ately after Italy's World Cup exit in a play-off last November. But his return to help the Azzurri in friendlies against Argentina and England sparked controversy for those who wanted to rebuild the team. "As for the national side, if Buffon became a problem three months ago, I daren't think what he could be after three months or even six. Italy have some great, young goalkeepers who need experience," he said.

Buffon made his Serie A debut with Parma in

1996, winning the Italian Cup, Italian Super Cup and UEFA Cup before joining Juventus for 51 million euros in 2001. He holds the record for going 974 minutes in Serie A without conceding a goal. "His numbers are crazy: with Juve he has won 26 trophies, played 17 extraordinary seasons, 655 matches in total of which 300 without conceding a goal," said Agnelli. But he is second for overall Serie A appearances with former AC Milan defender Paolo Maldini on 647.—AFP

## She's gloving it: China goalkeeper rejected catwalk for football

**SHANGHAI:** Zhao Lina is the face of Chinese women's football, a striking presence who towers over most people and turned down approaches to be a model. Now the 26-year-old international goalkeeper, who stands 1.88 meters (6ft 2in), hopes to use her stature to help raise the profile of the women's game in China. The country, under football-fan President Xi Jinping, is on a mission to stage and perhaps even win the men's World Cup.

Chinese clubs are lavishing money to attract foreign coaches and players, while authorities are building football infrastructure and encouraging the nation's youth to take up the game. Among the star players lured to China was Argentine forward Carlos Tevez, reportedly on a contract worth 730,000 euros a week at Shanghai Shenhua before he returned home earlier this year. Zhao, who played for China at the 2016 Olympics and has more than 50 caps, earns just over 10,000 yuan (\$1,500) a month at club side Shanghai Rural Commercial Bank (RCB) - and she is the highest-earner.

In her first major interview with foreign media, Zhao said that she is less interested in the money—even if it is "far from enough"—and wants more people to watch women's football. Her team, who are full-time professionals, play their home games at a Shanghai university. "The stadium is only half open and it can only seat a few thousand. As far as I can remember, it has never been full," said Zhao, who has played for the Shanghai side since she was a teenager. "Not to exaggerate, but other than our relatives—my parents and other players' parents—there may be just a couple dozen of real fans there to watch. "But China's women's football is used to this."

### 'Quite pitiful'

There is a sense of irony that women's football could get lost in the whirlwind of ambition and cash that characterizes the sport in China. Because while the men are something of a national embarrassment—never winning the Asian Cup and reaching the World Cup only once, in 2002 where they failed to score a goal—the women have enjoyed great success. Nicknamed the Steel Roses, they have lifted the Asian Cup eight times, coming third in the 2018 edition last month, and have qualified for the World Cup in France next year.

Though more fans watch the women's national side than club matches, Zhao hinted at despair over the lack of attention. "If there aren't many people watching us play, what's the point?" she asked after rigorous afternoon training in the Shanghai sun. The RCB players train twice a day and the coaches allow only the briefest of water breaks, even as temperatures top 35 Celsius (95 Fahrenheit).—AFP

## Brazil 'lucky' to have both Jesus, Firmino'

**LONDON:** Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola said Brazil face a selection dilemma whether to start with his team's striker Gabriel Jesus or Liverpool's Roberto Firmino at the World Cup. Jesus scored 17 goals across all competitions for Premier League champions City this season while Firmino has netted 27 to help Liverpool secure a fourth-placed league finish and reach the Champions League final. Brazil manager Tite suggested during his squad announcement on Monday that Jesus' record of nine goals in 15 international matches could see the 21-year-old start over Firmino at the World Cup.

Guardiola, however, remained neutral on the selection debate, saying both play-

ers had their qualities. "Lucky for Brazil that they have two incredible strikers. Gabriel has an energy, his desire is contagious, his movement... I think that this will calm down with age. Firmino is older, has already played in other places," Guardiola told ESPN. "I can imagine what Brazil can be like in a World Cup on a media level. If you play one, you have to play the other, if you play the other, you have to play the one. It's an endless discussion. "It's Tite's problem, not mine. But it's a debate."

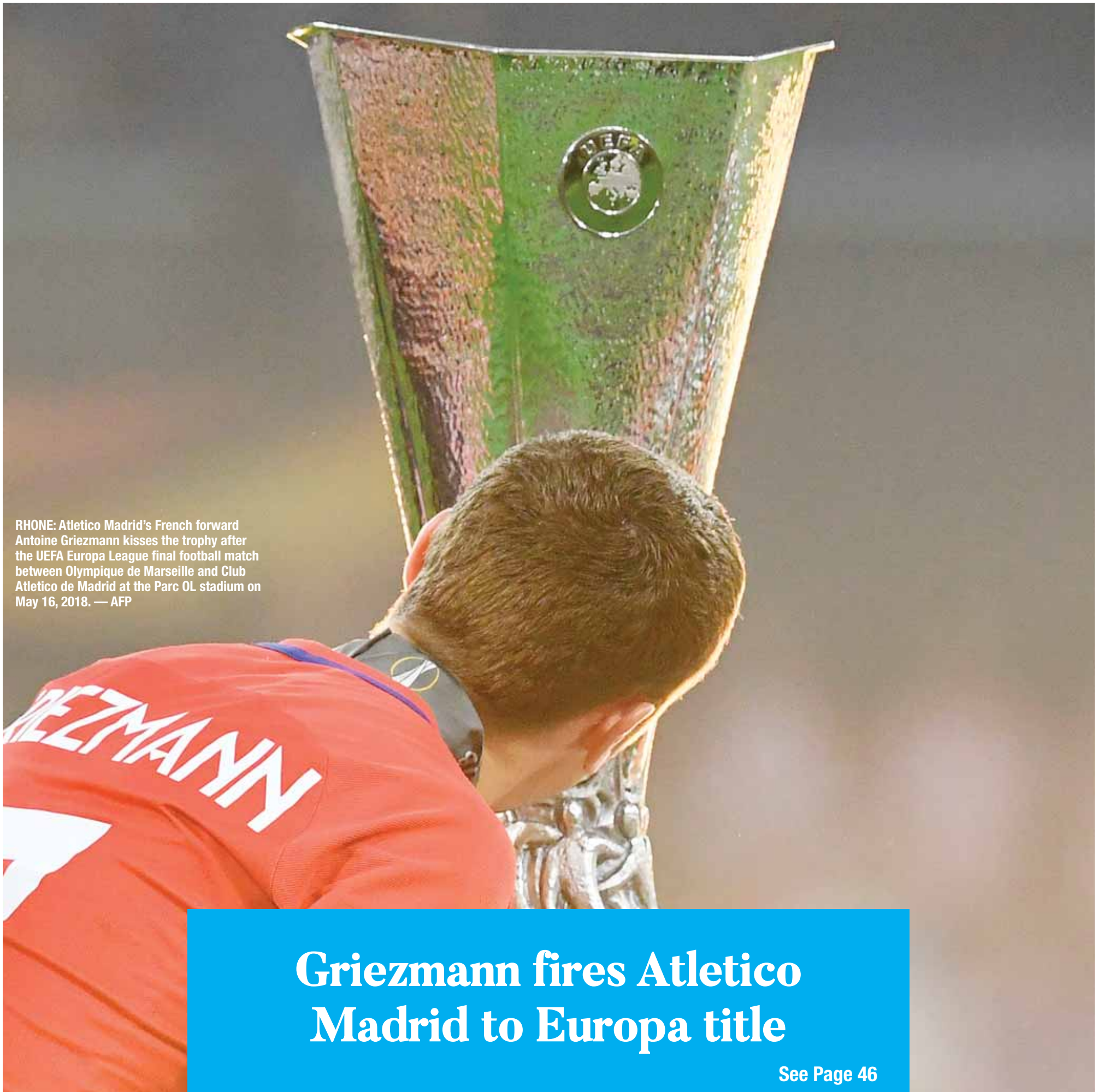
City have flourished under Guardiola this campaign, embarking on a record-breaking run to seal the title, but his first season at the club was not as successful with the Etihad outfit failing to win any silverware. "Last season has helped us to understand a lot of things so that we apply this season," Guardiola said. "People usually believe that coaches, no matter who they are, arrive at a club and things start working fine. And it is not like that." The former Barcelona and Bayern Munich boss dismissed the notion that he doubted himself during City's poor run, saying he was "very clear and psychologically strong" about the club's playing style. — Reuters



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RHONE: Atletico Madrid's French forward Antoine Griezmann kisses the trophy after the UEFA Europa League final football match between Olympique de Marseille and Club Atletico de Madrid at the Parc OL stadium on May 16, 2018. — AFP

## Griezmann fires Atletico Madrid to Europa title

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