

# Friday Times

ISSUE NO: 17673

SAFAR 24, 1440 AH | FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2018

**4** The world of dogs brings joy, help for families in Kuwait



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LONDON: Google staff stage a walkout at the company's UK headquarters yesterday as part of a global campaign over the US tech giant's handling of sexual harassment. — AFP

## Heat on Google as workers walk out over harassment

See Page 10



## Local

## The abuse and death of a domestic helper



Local Spotlight

By Muna Al-Fuzai

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This week, local newspapers published a sad story about the death of an Ethiopian maid in the house of her sponsor. When police checked the body, they found some bruises and beat marks on the deceased's body, so the case was transferred to forensics. It did not take much time to reveal the secret of the maid's death.

Detectives found she had been beaten, allegedly by her female employer and recorded a case of a beating leading to death against the woman. Moreover, the police investigation found the victim had been repeatedly assaulted by the woman of the house, as her body had bruises and bloodstains.

When the suspect was interrogated, she admitted beating the maid to discipline her because she refused to do housework, and locked her up in a room out of fear of someone discovering the beatings. Investigations are ongoing in preparation for referral to the public prosecution and legal action.

I know that some may think that such crimes have become common, but I personally see that any disagreement leading to the death of one of the parties is not normal or acceptable - whether the domestic helper or the sponsor - because the connection between the two is of a work relationship. So, if one party is not satisfied with the workplace or the performance of the other, they should come to an agreement to leave the job. There is no need for this bloody violence, which will lead one side to the grave and the other to prison, both of which is a loss.

I am horrified by the fact that the maid, who came from afar to save a little money for her family, found herself in a place where she was abused and mistreated. Instead of asking help from her embassy to defend her and restore her rights as per the law and in a peaceful way, she became a victim of torture and abuse, until she was beaten to death to return to her country and her family as a corpse. Her future was terminated before it began.

I would like to apologize to the family of the domestic helper for what happened to her in my country and to affirm that Kuwait, like any other country in the world, has good and evil. There are sponsors whose conscience has died, but there still are good and generous sponsors. Sometimes bad luck may lead a stranger to suffering, but this does not mean that all sponsors are bad.

I am surprised by the bad behavior of some sponsors, who insist on using violence against poor helpers. Why not send them back? Why abuse? Do they think that they own the poor worker, so they can torture them? I am opposed to fully relying on domestic helpers, as it creates dependency and laziness, and as helpers mostly come from a different environment and culture, this may lead to difficulties.

I hope the Ethiopian Embassy in Kuwait follows up the investigations with the interior ministry and not give up the rights of the deceased, whether her salary or anything else. This is less than what is needed to support her poor family. We also affirm that Kuwait is a state of law and legal measures will not be disregarded.

## The air we breathe is free: For locals and expats (aka an open letter)



IN MY VIEW

by Nejouad Al-Yagout

local@kuwaittimes.com

Dear You-Know-Who,

You may not remember me. I met you years ago when I was visiting someone who was volunteering at our local orphanage. I recall you mentioning how you love to visit orphanages and how your heart melted when you met an orphan in South America (Chile, if I am not mistaken). We bonded over our love for Italy. When you mentioned you had a house in Orvieto, we spoke of the beauty of the town and how beautiful Italy is in general. This was circa seven years ago. So imagine my enthusiasm when I heard you were running for parliament a couple of years back. Yes, it may be naive of me to have banked on a first impression, but I thought: 1) She is a humanitarian. 2) She is cultured and well-traveled, and 3) It's a bonus she is a woman. Only a bonus - not a reason to have voted for you.

You became famous right away for your assertiveness, and that's not a bad thing. It must be difficult being taken seriously as the only woman in parliament. I suppose you are vying to make yourself heard. But what broke my heart, and still breaks my heart, is your language toward expatriates. I can't believe you are the same soft-spoken woman I met years ago.

Traveling unites us and transforms us into global citizens, yet here you are creating divisiveness between locals and expats with your rhetoric. At gatherings with foreigners, I hear what they say about you. They are afraid; too afraid to vocalize their fear. And I am dismayed, as a result. Because I voted for you. I had faith in you. I thought you would focus on protecting orphans and encouraging our citizens to embrace diversity since you yourself are a globetrotter. I thought your jaunts around the world would have made you more sympathetic to the plights of people, regardless of whether they are Kuwaiti or not.

Still, I will make an attempt to understand you and give you the benefit of the doubt. I know you want to make Kuwait a better place for locals. But can't we improve our lives without demeaning anyone who is not originally from here? Let us respect those who are not nationals. They have made Kuwait a home away from home, some permanently, some transiently. Some are married to us, some are adopted by us, some are our employers, some are our employees, some are our mothers, our fathers. These are our nearest and dearest. The line between locals and expats is thinner than we know. In fact, it's blurred, especially in our age of globalization.

And I will be the first to say I don't mind paying taxes. I think citizens are responsible to pay taxes in their

country and not foreigners. In every country around the world where taxes apply, citizens pay taxes. But if you insist on taxing foreigners, tax us as well. But not non-locals alone. Even if you think it would be preposterous for us to carry the burden of taxes due to the demographic imbalance in terms of the ratio of locals and expats, to use language saying that expats should "pay taxes for the air they breathe" is inflammatory, to say the least. And I didn't expect that from you. Beneath your wailing and fist-pounding, I see a woman with potential. I see the human you are beneath the mask of a politician.

At the end of the day, you make the decisions; you are the lawmaker. I can only state my opinion to a few. And whatever you decide cannot be changed by me. You may even try to assure me that taxing expatriates will make our lives as locals better, but I will still find reasons why this is unjust (even if we are a minority in our country). You may even provide me with statistics showing me the number of illiterate people in this country

and ask what they are doing here in an attempt to convince me that taxing them is beneficial. I will respond that these illiterate people are cleaning our streets, collecting our trash, a few of them are raising our children, cooking our food (using symbols to stock ingredients and prepare dishes with them, without the need for recipes). There are many jobs that do not require lit-

eracy, as long as the job gets done. We are not elitist as to turn away people who are not literate if they are working and providing a service.

Keep giving me reasons, but I will never understand why only foreigners should be taxed and why you have to be harsh while stating your proposals. Any changes or messages on your political plate can be served in a subtle manner. But I've said enough for now. And I've said what I've wanted to say for quite a while.

And regardless of what I have seen so far, I refuse to give up on you. I want my vote to count for something. I want to see that woman I met at an orphanage, not the one who has been swayed by divisive politics. Bring back the humanitarian, bring back the traveler, bring back the lady who I know is still within you. Stay blessed, dear You-Know-Who. This letter is not meant to reach you, but here's to venting, to this peaceful and humble protest, to this message of love addressed to my brothers and sisters who are not from here.

And to the "expats" - I still consider this a dirty word but have to refer to it to make things clear, sorry - reading this: I love you. And I am ready to pay taxes for you. And breathe the same air as you, harmoniously. This air is for all of us. And it's free of charge.



**They are afraid;  
too afraid  
to vocalize  
their fear.**

# Kuwait Times

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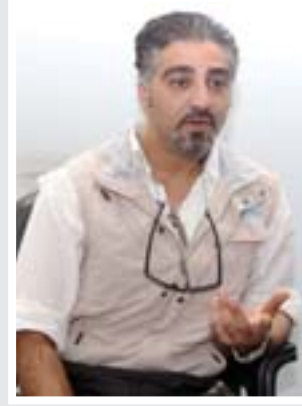
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# THE WORLD OF DOGS BRINGS JOY, HELP FOR FAMILIES IN KUWAIT

By Nawara Fattahova

**A** well-trained dog was the reason an Arab expat family opted to stay in Kuwait, after they were about to migrate to Canada. The parents have a five-year-old autistic daughter who was not accepted in a regular school, and as her parents could not afford the high fees of a special school, they thought of leaving the country.



Local dog trainer Khalid Al-Qassem works with all different types of dogs and also helps families and children with special needs through specially trained dogs that can support children with autism or down syndrome. — Photos by Yasser Al Zayyat and courtesy Khalid Al-Qassem

“Due to her condition, the girl did not look into people’s eyes when they spoke to her. She was getting treatment at a private medical center, and her doctor contacted me to join her next session with the autistic girl. Her parents told me that they reached an agreement with a school administration that if the girl looks in the eyes of the teacher, they will accept her for the school year,” Khalid Al-Qassem, Canine Behavior Consultant and Technician, told Kuwait Times.

His dog Fibi was key to her treatment. “When the girl entered the doctor’s room, she looked straight into the eyes of Fibi. I was telling my dog what to do, and she realized that the dog was taking orders from me, so she looked into my eyes - this was the start of her getting better. She was accepted in the school, and her family stayed here,” explained Qassem.

He has trained his dog to gaze. “They exchanged gazes. The gaze releases oxytocin in the body. During problems, the body releases three hormones - adrenaline, endorphin and oxytocin. Oxytocin makes a person calm down and relieves stress. When a person touches a pet, their body releases oxytocin,” he said.

Qassem has also trained Fibi to break up fights between dogs. “When she intervenes in any dogfight, they immediately stop. I teach people how to deal with dogs. For instance, what kids should do if they see a dog with its owner, if they see a dog on its own and what to do if they see dogs in various positions. As soon as a dog enters any house, it figures out who is the leader, and if he is weak, it wants to become the leader as there are no

rules applied on it,” he said.

Qassem has participated in fairs and public events, where he distributes booklets free of charge on dog care. These booklets include some important information of lectures that he presented previously, including a roadmap to a balanced and healthy canine companion, mind exercise, challenges, leadership, mind exercise, dominating, energy level of dogs and many others. Moreover, he has written for some publications in this field.

The dog has to have a purpose in your life. “A dog is a man’s best friend. If you want a good dog because you don’t have kids, this will not work. But if you want your dog to make money, it will work, as you will be dependent on it. The dog has to know that it has a job that helps you in your life and that’s why it is with you. So you have to teach it as many rules as you can, so it sees how to live in a human world and get respect. I want dogs to get respect in the human world. But I will never value a dog over a human,” said Qassem.

Trainers in Kuwait apply obedience training for the competitive sport of Schutzhund, which is a military competition-style standardized obedience set of rules that the dog has to follow. Qassem got his degree from the United States in Marketing and International Business and worked in human resources for 16 years - the last seven years in the banking sector as a talent management specialist. He was also doing executive coaching, training people how to act like managers, how to speak, body language, how to resolve conflicts and how to think calmly.



Friday, November 2, 2018

Local

To be a good leader

"I always had dogs, and people used to ask me to train their dogs, as my dogs are well-mannered. In corporate banking, I started seeing how the human element is not the number one goal. Then I went to Canada and got a degree in Group Animal Psychology (companion animals in particular). As a leader, you have to maintain the hierarchy in your group, and you have to protect them. To be a good leader, you have to be a good manager," he noted.

Dogs want the same things that employees want. "They want to feel secure and safe. You have to give it something to keep its mind busy and sharp. You have to teach it that this is its place in the organization, and you have to make sure to protect it if it makes a mistake," stressed Qassem. "My best advice is to imitate the best director you have met at your workplace and treat your dog in the same way this director treats employees. My slogan is 'dogdom' - it's actually a word in the dictionary (the world of dogs), as 'dom' includes everything. I make sure that people and dogs have the relationship that they are supposed to be having," he added.

According to him, the dog is the most successful land-based mammal on the planet. "I make people enjoy living with their dogs and I make sure that the community that I live in is better because



of dogs, and not burdened by it. If you have a dog, is it improving your life in any positive way? You have to respect people who don't like dogs or religiously think they are bad," Qassem pointed out.

Helping children with special needs

"I have over 50 cases of helping children with autism and Down syndrome with Fibi. Fibi has taught various children with autism to make eye contact. I work with a private medical center - the doctor there decides when the child is ready to start canine therapy with me and Fibi by teaching that child eye contact. Dogs within their genetic code have an element of autism and Down syndrome - that's what the latest scientific researchers say," said Qassem. "But traditionally, I say this works because dogs do not judge, don't feel sorry for each other and don't feel jealous as many people think. I know how the dog thinks, so I became an expert. I can be a dog's leader within two minutes and it will sacrifice its life for me."

Trainers can teach a dog five skills in a month, and they give back to their owners. "They have to create a relationship with the dog, but they can't create this relationship with 60 dogs in a month, so they have to influence them by either making them go hungry to respond to food, or making them uncomfortable, so they do something defensively. Dogs have some-



"CHOOSING THE RIGHT DOG FOR YOU"

اختيار الكلب المناسب لك

So many Dogs, which one is the right one for ME ?

هناك الكثير من الكلاب بالصفات والنوع والاهتمام والطعام مختلفة. ولكن أي منهم يناسب مع نمط حياتك؟

Session Date: 30th April, 2014

تاريخ العاصم: 30 أبريل 2014

Time 6:00-7:00 pm

الوقت: 6-7 مساءً

Venue: Petzone - Al-Rai, Kuwait

المكان: بيتزون - الراي الكويت

Who Should Attend: All Dog Enthusiasts and Dog Owners - No Dogs allowed in the first 45 minutes of the lecture.

من يستطيعه من المحضر: جميع محبي تربية الكلاب و كل من يريد ان يتعلم عن الكلاب.

Khalid Q. and Phoebe will conduct this session in both Arabic and English. Please sign up at the front desk, and let us know if you intend to bring your Dog with you to the lecture.

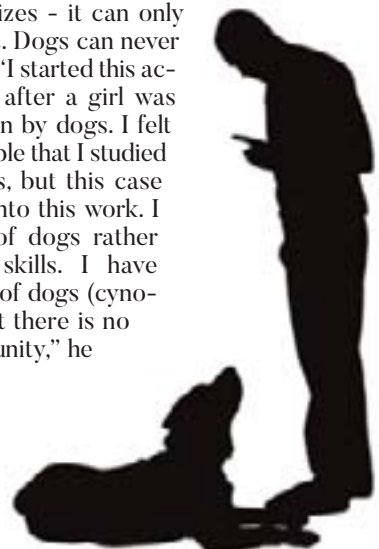
سيفادي العاصم و فيوبي سيقودان هذه الجلسة باللغة العربية والانجليزية. الرجاء التسجيل عند الكاشير والاطلاع على حال وحياتكم باجتماع الكلاب معكم في العاصم.

الرجاء من الطوماندوم للاستفسار الرجاء متابعتنا على

Instagram: DOGDOMKUWAIT

thing called food drive, play drive, prey drive and defensive drive, and these are the only reasons a dog will bite. So dogs biting the sleeve is not out of their defensive drive, but this is the reward they get for the things they did, and this is why they leave this till the end of the competition," Qassem explained.

There are 480 different kinds of dogs. "No other land-based animal on the planet comes close in this much variation with so many subspecies and sizes - it can only happen in fish or insects. Dogs can never be extinct," he declared. "I started this activity seven years ago, after a girl was found in the desert eaten by dogs. I felt shame earlier telling people that I studied the psychology of dogs, but this case encouraged me to get into this work. I develop the behavior of dogs rather than improving their skills. I have treated 17 cases of fear of dogs (cynophobia) in one year. But there is no awareness in our community," he concluded.





## Local

## A DAY IN THE LIFE



# Taking care of Kuwait's marine life

You will not have a "typical" day as a marine biologist. As a biologist, you can either work in a marine environment or in a lab for research purposes. Xavi Balcells, a 32-year-old Spanish marine biologist, shared his daily routine with Kuwait Times.

By Faten Omar

**Kuwait Times: Tell us more about yourself.**

**Xavi:** I studied biology at l'Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. I'm currently working as a senior aquarist at the aquarium of the Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Center. I have been working in public aquariums for more than five years, including the Fakieh Aquarium in Jeddah and L'Aquarium de Barcelona.

**KT: What does a marine biologist do?**

**Xavi:** Biology is the science that studies life, so marine biologists are people who study marine life. In my case, I work with them and sometimes we do some studies which will help us keep the animals safe in a good environment.

**KT: What does a normal workday look like?**

**Xavi:** My day includes preparing food, feeding the animals, cleaning the decor, analyzing water (pH, salinity, temperature, ammonia, nitrites), treating sick fish, training animals to eat from the diver and doing necropsies when an animal dies.

**KT: How many people do you work with?**

**Xavi:** We are a team of eight people divided into two areas - six people in biology and two in maintenance.

**KT: What are the pros and cons of your work?**

**Xavi:** If you like animals, it's a great opportunity to work with them. You have the opportunity to see species that are hard to find even in the wild. I also like the fact that I can get a job in many countries around the world, which I think makes people more open when they get to know different cultures. Dislikes include the daily routine. Working with animals means you will always have to work on weekends, Eids, national holidays, etc. Also, if there is a problem in the middle of the night or during non-working hours, someone may have to go to the site.

**KT: How often are you working with animals?**

**Xavi:** Most of the time in different ways - diving, feeding, taking samples of their tanks, treating them, etc.

**KT: How often are you in the lab?**

**Xavi:** We analyze water samples every day. It takes about an hour. In case there is a dead animal, we use the lab to

conduct necropsies to try to find out why it died.

**KT: How many kinds of animals do you work with?**

**Xavi:** We have around 3,500 animals. I work with fish (including stingrays and sharks) and marine invertebrates (starfish, sea urchins, sea cucumbers, jellyfish, sea snails and corals), all of them tropical seawater animals. We also have beetles, scorpions and spiders.

**KT: What are some important things to know before becoming a marine biologist?**

**Xavi:** You have to know that it is a job in demand and competition is tough, so it's not easy to get a job. You may have to work on holidays and in some jobs, you have to have a scuba diving license. As a scientist, it's important to be able to speak and understand English. Sometimes you may have to spend long periods of time in the sea, so you need to feel comfortable working alone or in a group. Finally, you should have to be good at statistics and computer programs in general.

**KT: What advice can you give to someone in this career field?**

**Xavi:** Since marine biology is a very big field, I would tell them not to try to do everything. Focus on one thing and become good at that.

**KT: What kind of jobs are there for marine biologists?**

**Xavi:** Marine biologists can do research about marine populations, how humans affect marine ecosystems, or the consequences of climate change. Others work in protecting species in danger of extinction. You can find marine biologists on fishing boats making sure they follow the laws. A marine biologist can also work in aquaculture companies, aquariums and zoos. There are lots of marine biologists who are filmmakers, underwater photographers or work in the diving industry.

**KT: What do you find most rewarding?**

**Xavi:** When some of our fish get sick and get well after treating them. I came to Kuwait when the museum was not open. When I arrived, there was no water in any of the tanks; there were still plumbers preparing the aquarium systems, painters taking care of the decor, etc. So participating in the setup and comparing how everything was one year back with now, and that visitors are enjoying the animals, is very rewarding.

**KT: What are your future plans?**

**Xavi:** I've been in Kuwait for almost a year now. My plan is to stay here for another year and then I would like to work in other aquariums around the world and keep moving forward as a professional.



# 1st



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## Local

# Amiri Diwan Minister awards martyrs' top-class children



KUWAIT: Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah and Amiri Diwan's Undersecretary and Director-General of the Martyrs' Bureau Fatima Ahmad Al-Amir pose with martyrs' young high achievers for the academic year 2017-2018. — Amiri Diwan photos

**KUWAIT:** Under the patronage and in presence of Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah, the Martyrs Bureau at Amiri Diwan organized a ceremony to honor martyrs' young high achievers for the academic year 2017-2018 late Wednesday. At the onset of the event, the National Anthem was played, Holy Quran verses were recited and a documentary patronized by His Highness the Amir was shown.

Addressing the ceremony, the minister, who doubles as the chairman of the Martyrs Bureau Board of Trustees, said it was a good opportunity to honor Kuwaiti martyrs' brilliant students, who have achieved academic success, excellence and distinction. He urged them to always remember that their dear nation needs their sincere efforts to defend it and translate loyalty into tangible action aiming at cement-

ing societal unity and amity. He also called on them to seek to promote the nation's noble values and remain united in order to be able to develop and reinvigorate Kuwait. The minister thanked His Highness the Amir for his relentless support for the martyrs' families.

Amiri Diwan's Undersecretary and Director-General of the Martyrs' Bureau Fatima Ahmad Al-Amir voiced much pleasure to honor martyrs' top-class children, who have worked hard to acquire education and knowledge. This awarding, no doubts, reflects His Highness the Amir's keenness on creating generations able to serve Kuwaiti people armed with belief and science, she said. His Highness the Amir's development strategy is mainly based on many projects, primarily effective government administration, sustainable economy, developed

infrastructure, high-quality medical care, transparency promotion and creative human capital, she boasted. "You represent this creative human capital, which is the main pillar of a future Kuwait," she said addressing the brilliant children.

In this context, Amir pointed out a governmental plan to promote the concept of creative education. She vowed to continuously work with other concerned state agencies to help and support the Kuwaiti martyrs' children and to answer all their necessary educational, health and housing needs. Afterwards, a group of children performed an operetta entitled: 'The Good Seed'. At the wrapping-up of the ceremony, Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah gave awards to the high achievers, who, in return, gave him a memorial shield. — KUNA

## 87,000 Kuwaitis traveled to US in 2017

By Ben Garcia

**KUWAIT:** Eighty-seven thousand Kuwaitis travelled to the US in 2017 and the number continues to rise. Speaking at a travel and tourism event held yesterday at Al-Dana Ballroom in Sheraton Hotel, US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman said Kuwaitis travelers visited New York, California, Florida and the Pacific Northwest, and many points in between. "We are here today to encourage you to continue to explore the United States, a country that has so much diversity; it really does have something for everyone. I encourage travel agents in the room to review the brochures we have from 12 different cities and states located throughout the country and consider promoting some of these destinations to your clients," the envoy said.

The envoy said tourism is not just entertainment, since any form of people-to-people exchanges is the foundation of a strong relationship between our two countries. "Visiting and studying in the United States creates a special bond that can only be truly established by getting to know the country and its people. The United States received over 77 million international visitors last year, who had a great time spending approximately \$250 billion during their visits," he mentioned.

Yesterday's tourism promotion event was part of the 6th annual Discover America program being held in Kuwait. It kicked off with a fun run last Friday at The Boulevard in Salmiya. "We are organizing several programs promoting different aspects of the United States. We have organized 25 different events highlighting American food, restaurants,



KUWAIT: US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman speaks during a travel and tourism event held yesterday in Sheraton Hotel. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

sport, film, education, tourism, business, automobiles and music," Silverman said.

The event saw presentations by two travelers to America - Fatima Mattar, a travel vlogger and Pervaz Sherif, who has traveled to many countries around the world by motorbike. The envoy thanked Fadi Hijazin for the generous support by Qatar Airways for most of the activities. Hijazin lauded Qatar Airways' partnership with Discover America, as he presented his carrier's latest offer. "I am delighted to partner with the US Embassy for the Discover America event; our participation in this important event demonstrates Qatar Airways' commitment to connecting the residents of Kuwait to our extensive US network. With the launch of Qatar Airways' patented Business Class seat Qsuite, passengers traveling from Kuwait to US can enjoy a new standard in premium travel including the finest in-flight entertainment system and dining experience," he said.

The US Embassy Deputy Consul Daniel Monson also presented the visa processes to obtain an entry permit to the US. The complete schedule of events can be found on the Embassy's Twitter and Instagram pages @USEmbassyQ8.

## KRCS offers distinctive model in medical aid: Chairman

**KUWAIT:** Chairman of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Dr Hilal Al-Sayer said yesterday that the KRCS presents a distinctive model for humanitarian work in the medical and health fields. The KRCS has launched a number of free of charge hospitals, medical centers and mobile clinics to provide treatment, surgical and services to disadvantaged people in many countries of the world, Sayer told KUNA after receiving a delegation from the Mt Sinai Health Care Foundation.

Dr Sayer pointed out that the KRCS has adopted many humanitarian initiatives in health field, in partnership and coordination with medical and private institutions that contributed to strengthening their relief and medical capabilities.

He explained that the visiting US medical delegation was briefed on the KRCS humanitarian and relief efforts at local and international levels, adding that the guests expressed their appreciation for the role of the KRCS humanitarian, relief and medical efforts. The delegation were also briefed on the KRCS efforts in building hospitals and health centers in a number of countries, including Lebanon, Iraq, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, as well as mobile clinics in Iraq, Yemen and Turkey for treating Syrian refugees there, he added.

He pointed out that the delegation praised the KRCS efforts in artificial limbs and cochlear implantation, dialysis, eye operations and provision of medical equipment to hospitals and medical centers where displaced persons and refugees receive treatment. His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has given a donation for treating arrhythmias' cases at St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital in New York State, which opened in 2013, Sayer noted. The delegation included President of Mount Sinai Hospital in New York Arthur Giannelli, Executive Director Casey Kamark and Pam King Sams, President of Pam King Sams and Associates. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Chairman of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Dr Hilal Al-Sayer gives a demonstration to members of a delegation from the Mt Sinai Health Care Foundation. —KUNA



## Local

# Fake companies brought in 2,900 expats in major trafficking case

## Workers paid between KD 1,500 and KD 3,000 per visa

**KUWAIT:** Police received orders to arrest around 2,900 expatriates of various nationalities after 90 people who were arrested confessed they had paid bogus companies that signed contracts with various government bodies, Al-Anbaa daily reported yesterday quoting police sources. The deputy prosecutor for human trafficking questioned owners of the three companies and released them on bail, the sources added. Meanwhile, he jailed a Syrian man for being the mastermind of processing the government transactions that enabled the bogus companies to bring in this large number of laborers.

Sources said during a sudden inspection carried out by residency detectives in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, several expats were arrested with residencies with companies that have government contracts. When asked why

they were not at work as the crackdown took place during regular working hours, they said they had paid in exchange for their visas, and were left to their own devices when they entered the country. Police reviewed the files of the companies, and discovered that the companies' offices were closed without any activity. The next surprise was finding the three companies brought in 3,000 people of various nationalities. The arrested workers said they paid between KD 1,500 and KD 3,000 per visa, and it was discovered that the majority of those brought in are Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Egyptians, with people from Pakistan paying KD 3,000 each, the sources said.

The government has in recent years beefed up efforts to fight human trafficking

in Kuwait, yet the problem remains prominent. The US Department of State stated in its 2018 Trafficking in Persons Report released earlier this year that "the government of Kuwait does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so," the report reads. The report lists Kuwait in Tier 2 for "countries whose governments do not fully comply with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act's minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards." Kuwait was able to maintain its Tier 2 position for the third straight year, and avoid a downgrade thanks to devoting sufficient resources to implement a written plan that helps the country meet the minimum standards, according to the report.



## National Assembly elects panels for new term

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** The National Assembly yesterday elected its permanent committees for the new term and the outcome of the election clearly shows that pro-government MPs continue their control of key panels like the interior and defense, legal and legislative and the economic and financial affairs committees.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent cables of congratulations to members of parliament who won memberships of standing committees. He wished all of them success in the service of Kuwait. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also sent cables to committee members to congratulate them on their memberships. His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent similar cables.

The assembly elected MPs Askar Al-Enezi, Sud Al-Shuwaier, Khaled Al-Oteibi, Nayef Al-Merdas and Nasser Al-Dossari to the interior and defense committee, with Enezi as the chairman and Merdas the secretary. The economic and financial affairs panel comprised MPs Khalaf Dumaitheer, Salah Khorsheed, Safa Al-Hashem, Faisal Al-Kundari, Farraj Al-Arbeed, Mubarak Al-Harees and Omar Al-Tabtabai as members.

MPs Mohammad Hayef, Adel Al-Damkhi, Khalil Al-Saleh, Khaled Al-Shatti, Khalil Abul, Ahmad Al-Fadhl and Mohammad Al-Dallal were elected for the legal and legislative panel. Later Hayef said he will withdraw from the committee because he didn't like the composition. The assembly also elected MPs Osama Al-Shaheen, Awdah Al-Awdah, Mohammad Al-Huwailah, Yousef Al-Fadhlah and Khalil Abul to the edu-



**KUWAIT:** National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem casts his vote during committees' elections yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

cational committee.

MPs Abdulkarim Al-Kundari, Abdulwahab Al-Babtain, Abdullah Fahhad, Hamad Al-Harashani and Farraj Al-Arbeed were elected to the foreign relations committee, one of the few panels controlled by the opposition. MPs Mohammad Al-Hadiya, Saad Al-Khanfour, Talal Al-Jallal, Hamdan Al-Azemi, Rakan Al-Nasef, Nasser Al-Dossari and Majed Al-Mutairi were elected to the public utilities committee.

The budgets committee will comprise of MPs Adan Abdulsamad, Riyadh Al-Adasani, Abdullah Al-Roumi, Mohammad Al-Huwailah, Shuaib Al-Muwaizri and Adel Al-Damkhi. MPs Khaled Al-Oteibi, Saud Al-Shuwaier, Talal Al-Jallal, Ali Al-Deqbasi and Mubarak Al-Hajraf were elected to the Complaints committee. The assembly will hold its next meeting on November 13.

Meanwhile, a Kuwaiti citizen living in the third constituency yesterday filed a complaint to the constitutional court contesting that article 16 of the national assembly internal charter violates the constitution and accordingly the assembly decision to keep the membership of opposition MPs Waleed Al-Tabtabai and Jamaan Al-Harbash is a breach of the constitution.

The assembly on Tuesday voted to maintain the two lawmakers' membership although there were sentenced to jail by the cassation court for entering the national assembly building. If the constitutional court accepts the complaint, the assembly move will be revoked.

## Interior ministry allows inmates to get married

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** A Kuwaiti prisoner was allowed to marry an Egyptian inmate following the approval of the interior ministry after it sought a legal opinion. The Kuwaiti inmate, who is serving a five-year jail sentence, had written to the interior ministry's undersecretary asking to allow him to marry an Egyptian inmate, and his request was approved, sources said. The two inmates were taken to court and marriage rituals were performed. The interior ministry allowed the couple some private time through the "home of the family" project, which allows inmates to make conjugal visits. This is the first time inmates have gotten married in Kuwait.

### Microwaves banned from schools

Director of the Ahmadi Inspection Department at the Public Authority for Food and Nu-

trition Saud Al-Jalal said microwaves are banned from schools, noting that pastries sold there must be fresh and should not be kept for the next day, and adding that the authority's role does not stop at school cafeterias, but extends to supplying companies. Jalal said there are health requirements school administrations must comply with. A circular was also distributed in cooperation with the education ministry, in which the conditions are explained, most important of which are to keep pies and sandwiches in heat-sealed plastic bags with the dates of production and expiry clearly marked.

### Winter vaccinations

Jahra hospital director Dr Ali Al-Mutairi launched the winter vaccinations campaign at the hospital. He said vaccinations are important for those with chronic diseases, such as diabetes, asthma and kidney failure.

### Charity violations

Social Affairs Ministry's Undersecretary for Social Development Hanaa Al-Hajiri emphasized the importance of organizing charity work and monitor the actions of societies and foundations to guarantee donations are received by those who deserve them. She said statistics show a drop in the number of violations.

## Campers advised to avoid places near military facilities

By Nawara Fattahova

**KUWAIT:** With the beginning of the camping season, the Ministry of Defense issued an awareness statement for campers. The statement informs citizens and expats planning to set up camps to avoid camping near military facilities and training areas.

The general staff headquarters also

warned campers against using laser lights of all colors near military bases, camps or training fields, as it can negatively affect military equipment and instruments as well as being dangerous for aircraft. The moral guidance and public relations department of the ministry of defense called on campers and their visitors to respect these instructions to ensure the safety of everyone.





Brazil leader to move embassy to Jerusalem

Pakistani Christian ordeal highlights the plight of minorities

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LONDON: Google staff stage a walkout at the company's UK headquarters in London yesterday as part of a global campaign over the US tech giant's handling of sexual harassment.— AFP

# Google workers walk out in protest

## Another exec out amid sex harassment tension at tech giant

**DUBLIN:** Hundreds of employees walked out of Google's European headquarters in Dublin yesterday as part of a global campaign over the US tech giant's handling of sexual harassment that saw similar protests in London and Singapore. At Google's Dublin campus, around 500 people walked out in chilly conditions but were reticent about speaking to the media.

Organizer Kate, who did not want to give her surname, told the crowd that she coordinated the Dublin walkout "in solidarity with anybody who has experienced any form of sexual harassment or misconduct in our workplace". She told reporters afterwards: "If even one person has experienced it, it's important for us - for me - to show our solidarity and say that we don't agree with that, and that it shouldn't happen."

A Google Walkout For Real Change account that sprang up on Twitter on Wednesday called for employees and contractors to leave their workplaces at 11:10am local time around the world yesterday. Tension has been growing over how the US-based tech giant handles sexual ha-

rrassment claims. Google said last week that it had fired 48 employees in the past two years - including 13 senior executives - as a result of such allegations, citing "an increasingly hard line" on inappropriate conduct.

It came after The New York Times newspaper reported last week that a senior Google employee, Android creator Andy Rubin, received an exit package worth \$90 million as he faced allegations of misconduct, and that Google had covered up other claims of sexual harassment. Sam Singer, a spokesman for Rubin, rejected the allegations against him in a statement to AFP, saying Rubin left Google of his own accord.

### 'Things are changing'

In London, hundreds of workers packed into the biggest room at their main office in protest and later headed outside. "We're walking out to support colleagues in any workplace that have suffered harassment and to ensure that perpetrators aren't protected or rewarded," Sam Dutton, a developer advocate, told AFP. "I think we all feel

the same way: supporting colleagues who have been harassed and making sure that this never happens again." Google's management had been "very supportive" of the walkout, he added. Another Google worker, Anna, who did not want to give her full name, told AFP they were making a point about "power structures" and telling their leaders that "things are changing and it's time to revise what used to be considered as normal". In Singapore, dozens of employees gathered in an indoor space at Google's offices, with a picture of the gathering posted on the "Google Walkout for Real Change" Twitter feed.

Demands posted in the account included improved processes for reporting sexual misconduct and resolving cases of harassment, as well as a commitment by Google to pay and opportunity equality. The Google Walkout account said there were also walkouts in Tokyo, Zurich, Berlin and Haifa in Jerusalem.

### CEO 'deeply sorry'

The walkout call came as Google's parent

company Alphabet confirmed Wednesday that Richard DeVaul, an executive accused of sexual harassment, left the company without an exit package. Google chief executive Sundar Pichai sent a message to employees late Tuesday, a copy of which was posted online by technology news website Ars Technica. Pichai said he has heard from many employees on the subject of inappropriate behavior at work and was "deeply sorry for the past actions and the pain they have caused employees". Google released an email from Pichai to employees stating that none of the people who resigned or were fired due to sexual harassment concerns in the past two years received "an exit package". "We are dead serious about making sure we provide a safe and inclusive workplace," Pichai said in the email sent last week. The concerns at Google have added to the growing chorus of voices denouncing the existence of a sexist culture in male-dominated Silicon Valley, which has knocked a number of internet industry executives at other tech giants from their perches. — AFP



## International

# N Korean women face rampant sexual abuse by officials: HRW

## Officials prey on women with near-total impunity

**SEOUL:** North Korean police and other officials prey on women with near-total impunity, a rights group said yesterday, in a rare report on sex abuse in the isolated nation. US-based Human Rights Watch drew on interviews with more than 50 North Korean escapees to chronicle gruesome details of rape and other abuses perpetrated by security officers such as border guards, but also civilian officials. The nuclear-armed North, which is accused of widespread rights abuses by the United Nations and other critics, is a deeply hierarchical and patriarchal society where traditional values of deference to authority still hold sway.

But the vast majority of both defectors and market traders in the North are female. Many women have more freedom of movement than men as they are not assigned a state job from which their absence will be noticed. North Korean women caught fleeing the country to China or



### A rare report on sex abuse in the isolated nation

who are repatriated from its neighbor face severe punishment including torture, imprisonment and sexual abuse, the report said. "Every night some woman would be forced to leave with a guard and be raped," said one abuse victim in her 30s who was once held at a border detention centre. "Every night a prison guard would open the cell. I stood still quietly, acting like I didn't notice, hoping it wouldn't be me," she said.

Traders who smuggle goods across the border with China to sell at state-sanctioned private markets

are forced to pay "bribes" including sexual favors, the report said. Perpetrators include managers at state-owned enterprises, and gatekeeper officials at the markets and on roads and checkpoints, such as "police, prosecutors, soldiers, and railroad inspectors on trains," it said.

But the concept of rape is different in the North, it added, where it is seen as applying only if violence is used. One anonymous former textile trader in her 40s recounted being treated like a sex toy "at the mercy of men". "On the days they felt like it, market guards or police officials could ask me to follow them

to an empty room outside the market, or some other place they'd pick," where they forced sexual encounters, she said. "It happens so often nobody thinks it is a big deal. We don't even realise when we are upset," she added. "But we are human, and we feel it," she said. "So sometimes, out of

nowhere, you cry at night and don't know why."

### 'Open secret'

Some interviewees talked about rape victims in the North being expelled from university or beaten and abandoned by a husband for bringing shame to the school or their family. "Sexual violence in North Korea is an open, unaddressed, and widely tolerated secret," said HRW executive director Kenneth Roth. "North Korean women would probably say 'Me Too'

rendering him a de facto lame-duck leader.

Five Star became Italy's largest party at the March elections, winning nearly 33 percent of the vote, while the League fell in as its junior coalition partner with 17 percent. But the noise of champagne corks popping had barely died away when the League began gaining popularity, shooting into the lead while M5S flagged.

### 'Climate of uncertainty'

The League now boasts 31 percent of voter intentions, while M5S has 27 percent, polls this week show. Salvini is the country's most popular politician, with 58 percent compared to Di Maio's 51 percent, according to Ipsos Italia. "The League leader provides positive answers to his world's needs... while the Five Star sends a negative message: 'We want to (act), but others won't allow us'," commentator Stefano Folli wrote in the Repubblica.

Both leaders have fought with Brussels over the budget, but when Di Maio accused European Central Bank head Mario Draghi of attacking Italy, even the Fatto Quotidiano daily - which usually defends the movement - slammed his "infantilism and incompetence". Di Maio is being "hampered by the climate of uncertainty," Leonardo Morlino, political science professor at Rome's Luiss University, told AFP. "The movement made promises it really wants to keep. He's struggling," he said. —AFP



**YANGDOK, North Korea:** Photo shows North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un (center) inspecting the construction site of the Hot Spring Tourist Area in Yangdok County, South Phyongan Province. —AFP

if they thought there was any way to obtain justice, but their voices are silenced in Kim Jong Un's dictatorship," he added. Kim is the third generation of his family to rule the country, where state surveillance is widespread and dissent not tolerated. With the authorities imposing total control over the media the global #MeToo campaign against abuse of women has entirely passed North Korea by.

According to data submitted by Pyongyang to an UN panel on gender equality a total of five people were convicted of rape in the North in 2015. Py-

ongyang maintains that it protects and promotes "genuine human rights", and says there is no justification for the West to try to set human rights standards for the rest of the world. It condemns international criticism on the issue as a smear campaign to undermine its "sacred socialist system". Kim has sought to soften his international image and has engaged with South Korea, holding three summits with Seoul's President Moon Jae-in — a dove who advocates dialogue to nudge Pyongyang towards denuclearisation. —AFP

## Is the party over for Italy populist chief?

**ROME:** His was a stellar rise to the top, leading Italy's populists into power for the first time and becoming essentially the nation's joint chief: but angel-faced Luigi Di Maio's fortunes have since taken a tumble. One month ago, the leader of the anti-establishment Five Star Movement (M5S) took to the balcony of the seat of government to cry victory over a budget drawn up with his unlikely coalition partner, the far-right League. He toasted the win with a party for his team on a boat on Rome's Tevere or Tiber river.

Yet this weekend, furious M5S voters were burning the movement's flag over broken electoral promises. Di Maio's difficulties are thrown into sharp relief by the success of his co-deputy prime minister, League head Matteo Salvini, a far more experienced politician with a fondness for whipping up racial intolerance and a savvy social media team. Salvini, 45, is the uncontested head of a united party, while Di Maio, 32, is struggling to keep rebellious factions in line. Under the movement's rules, this is also the last term he can serve,

## French jihadist mothers face terrible choice

**PARIS:** For dozens of French women detained in Syria, an impossible choice looms: keeping their children in a war zone, or sending them home knowing they might never see each other again. Like other Western nations which experienced a jihadist exodus to Iraq or Syria, France is grappling with how to handle citizens left in the war zone following heavy losses for the Islamic State group. Last week, France announced plans to start repatriating an estimated 150 children, many of them being held alongside their mothers by Kurdish forces in Syria following IS defeats. But French officials made clear that the mothers themselves will not be welcomed home. A few days ago, Nadine - her name has been changed - got a phone call from her daughter-in-law in a Kurdish camp. The young mother was in tears. "Do I have to abandon my children in order for them to go back to France?" she sobbed.

Nadim Houry, a senior Human Rights Watch official who regularly visits the Kurdish camps,

said France's announcement would "bring an end to an unbearable situation". There are no schools or activities for children in the camps, where poor hygiene causes regular bouts of diarrhoea, vomiting and skin infections.

Lawyers for the mothers, pushing for the whole families to be repatriated, have complained for months of "deplorable" conditions in the camps. "My daughter-in-law gets sick a lot, like her children," Nadine told AFP. "She only weighs 45 kilos (99 pounds)." Reluctant to bring extremists back onto home soil, France has so far insisted its captured nationals must go on trial locally. Some 260 adults and 80 minors have already returned to France from Syria or Iraq, and earlier this year French authorities estimated that more than 700 adults and 500 children were still in the war zone.

Several French adults have already been tried in Iraq and their children repatriated. But in Syria, most of the remaining French nationals are being held in northern Syria in territory which, while under Kurdish control, does not constitute an internationally recognized state. Kurdish forces have repeatedly insisted they will not try foreign prisoners and have called on the jihadists' home countries to repatriate them. With a few exceptions such as Russia, Indonesia and Sudan, most countries have, like France, proved highly reluctant. —AFP



## International

# China-style 'digital authoritarianism' grows globally: Human rights study

## Governments worldwide stepping up use of online tools

**WASHINGTON:** Governments worldwide are stepping up use of online tools, in many cases inspired by China's model, to suppress dissent and tighten their grip on power, a human rights watchdog study found yesterday. The annual Freedom House study of 65 countries found global internet freedom declined for the eighth consecutive year in 2018, amid a rise in what the group called "digital authoritarianism". The Freedom on the Net 2018 report found online propaganda and disinformation have increasingly "poisoned" the digital space, while the unbridled collection of personal data is infringing on privacy.

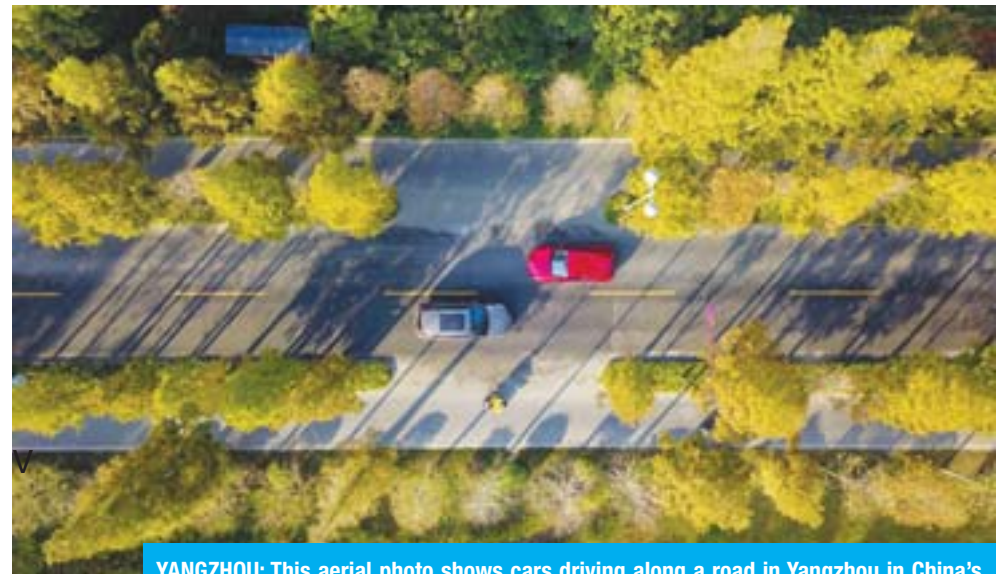
"Democracies are struggling in the digital age, while China is exporting its model of censorship and surveillance to control information both inside and outside its borders," said Michael Abramowitz, president of Freedom House. "This pattern poses a threat to the open Internet and endangers prospects for greater democracy worldwide." Chinese officials have held sessions on controlling information with 36 of the 65 countries assessed, and provided telecom and surveillance equipment to a number of foreign governments, Freedom House said. The accusations made by Freedom House are "without basis, unprofessional, irresponsible, and have ulterior motives," said Chinese foreign ministry official spokesman Lu Kang at a regular press briefing in Beijing yesterday.

Cyberspace is complex, he added, and requires "the global community, including governments, businesses, think tanks and media to adopt a constructive attitude to maintain it". The report found 17 governments approved or proposed laws restricting online media in the name of fighting "fake news," while 18 countries increased surveillance or weakened encryption protection to more closely monitor their citizenry. According to the researchers, internet freedom declined in 26 countries from June 2017 to May 2018. Gains were seen in 19 countries, most of them minor.

### China's 'techno-dystopia'

One of the greatest threats, Freedom House said, is efforts by China to remake the digital world in its "techno-dystopian" image. It cited a sweeping Chinese cybersecurity requirement that local and foreign companies "immediately stop transmission" of banned content, and compels them to ensure that data on Chinese users is hosted within the country. This has been followed by "hundreds" of new directives on what people can and cannot do online, and tighter controls on the use of VPNs to evade detection.

The report said leaked documents and other evidence suggest as many as a million Muslims may be held in internment camps in Xinjiang, many as a result of nonviolent online activities. China appears to be using its big



**YANGZHOU:** This aerial photo shows cars driving along a road in Yangzhou in China's eastern Jiangsu province yesterday. — AFP

tech firms involved in telecom infrastructure to extend its dominance and gain an edge in surveillance, according to Freedom House. Companies such as Huawei - largely banned from contracts in the US and Australia - are building infrastructure in many parts of the world including Africa and Latin America, ac-

ording to Freedom House board chairman Michael Chertoff, a former US secretary of homeland security. "This opens up a potential for exploiting information in these countries by having technological backdoors that can be used by the Chinese government to collect intelligence," Chertoff said. — AFP

## Robotic surgery for cervical cancer boosts death risk

**TAMPA:** A minimally invasive, robotic surgery commonly used for performing hysterectomies in women with early stage cervical cancer actually boosts the risk of a woman dying, researchers warned on Wednesday. A pair of studies published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* sound the alarm about a surgery that has quickly become the go-to option for many women, even before its outcome was thoroughly studied. "At this point, we would recommend only using open surgery to perform a radical hysterectomy for cervical cancer," said co-senior author Shohreh Shahabi, chief of gynecologic oncology at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine.

When a woman is diagnosed with cervical cancer, she often gets her uterus and cervix removed, an operation known as a radical hysterectomy. Minimally invasive radical hysterectomy using either laparoscopic or robot-assisted procedures have been around since 1992, but ballooned in popularity in the last decade. More than 60 percent of hysterectomies performed on women with early stage cervical cancer in 2013 were done in a minimally invasive way, allowing women to go home the same day. The procedure involves inflating the abdomen with gas and operating through small incisions, using a camera and a robotic instrument. In comparison, a traditional, open hysterectomy requires a long incision through the center of the abdomen and several days

of hospitalization. While robotic surgeries are gaining popularity fast, and are generally seen as less risky in terms of surgical complications, researchers wanted to understand which method was better from a cancer-survival standpoint.

A randomized clinical trial was conducted to compare the two methods in terms of how many women were free of disease 4.5 years later. The trial was halted early, in 2017, when researchers realized there was a 10 percent difference in survival between the two groups. Eighty-six percent of women who had the robotic surgery were alive and disease-free after 4.5 years, compared to 96.5 percent in the open surgery group. Minimally invasive surgery was also associated with a lower overall survival rate after three years - 93 percent in the minimally invasive group were alive compared to 99 percent in the traditional surgery group.

A second study analyzed 2,461 patients in the National Cancer Database who had radical hysterectomies for early-stage cervical cancer from 2010 through 2013, half by robotic surgery and half via open surgery. There, too, researchers found that women who underwent the minimally invasive surgery had higher rates of cancer recurrence and death than those who had a traditional surgery. There was a 9.1 percent risk of death in the minimally invasive group and a 5.3 percent risk in the open surgery group. But the research does not explain why. According to Shahabi, it's possible that tumor tissue is not completely removed in some robotic procedures, or that somehow the tools used encourage tumor tissue to spread. "It's important to note that our study doesn't explain why mortality is higher among women who have minimally invasive surgery," said the lead author of the larger study, Alexander Melamed, a clinical fellow in Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Biology at Harvard Medical School. — AFP

## Palestinian 'birdman' watches out over West Bank

**UBEDIYA:** As the sun rises over the mountains behind the Dead Sea, Anton Khalilieh squints into a telescope and scans the skies. A Palestinian farmer with a quizzical look wanders by with his sheep while the area is periodically patrolled by the Israeli army. Khalilieh is the executive director of Nature Palestine Society, a new small NGO seeking to document all the birds in the occupied West Bank and eventually establish observatory stations for foreign and Palestinian twitchers. While the native species are interesting, it is the twice-yearly migration season that he thinks has global appeal.

Around 500 million birds migrate through Israel and the Palestinian territories each year, according to Israeli figures. "I want to help people who are interested in coming to the West Bank and seeing the magnificence of the soaring bird migration from Europe to Africa," he says. Among those to be seen are eagles, white storks, buzzards and black kites. Birdwatching is commonplace inside Israel and even in some settlements in the West Bank, but Khalilieh says there is less interest among Palestinians.

He finished his studies at an Israeli university. "Bird watching is considered a luxurious hobby," he says. Standing on a hill with binoculars can also raise suspicions in a territory better known for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict than ornithology. Twice during the day Palestinians come from nearby villages to ask him questions. "This area used to be a training zone for the Israeli army," Khalilieh explains. "People come asking me what we are doing. They are afraid there would be some activities here they are not aware of."

Like others, he has been hit by US President Donald Trump cutting \$500 million in aid to Palestinians - he had submitted proposals for US-funded grants. A couple of hours after sunrise, Khalilieh lets out a quick "oh my god". Imperceptible at first, around 100 black specs gradually come into view, passing over his head perhaps 150 m away. The majority are honey buzzards, he explains, but there are also black kites and short-toed eagles. During migration season, they travel between 200 and 500 km a day, he adds. — AFP



International

# Somber reflection as Filipinos remember the dead

## Millions crowd Philippine cemeteries

**MANILA:** Millions packed cemeteries across the Catholic Philippines yesterday to pay their respects to the dead, on a day that mixes somber reflection with the nation's penchant for festivity. Mourners nationwide huddled at the tombs of their loved ones, while police at graveyard entrances confiscated karaoke microphones and church leaders urged the faithful to take it easy on the booze. It is all part of All Saints' Day, which takes place each year on November 1, when families pray, reminisce and honour those who died for their faith in a tradition that goes back to ancient Rome.

In the capital Manila, Virginia Acasio went with eight of her children and grandchildren to visit the grave of her grandson, Vergel, who died in an accident two years ago, when he was three years old. "It is still painful for us," Acasio, 58, told AFP. "We have to go. It is an obligation. We miss my grandchild so we have to come here on the day of the dead." In the capital's sprawling cemeteries, vendors peddled flowers and candles as well as food, drinks and even toys among the newly-whitewashed tombs to the crowds of families visiting the graves.

The final resting places for many are so-called "apartment" tombs which are stacked one on top of the other and can rise meters over the crowds. With offices, shops and schools closed, dense crowds carrying memorial flowers as well as bags packed with picnic supplies and the occa-



**MANILA:** People arrive at a cemetery to visit the graves of their loved ones in Manila yesterday. — AFP

sional bottle of beer queued up outside the cemeteries. The country's Catholic bishops conference urged people to avoid "rather inappropriate practices such as gambling, excessive drinking, and the littering of cemeteries and other holy places". "Many might have forgotten the significance of these commemorations as seen in the general lack of atmosphere of prayer in the cemeteries," it said.

The government has also discouraged excessive merry-making with police set-

ting up checkpoints at cemetery gates where they frisked entrants, and piled up seized items like cigarettes, knives, playing cards and barbecue utensils. The annual pilgrimage to the cemeteries triggers a mass exodus from the capital, with millions traveling back to their home provinces where relatives are buried. Tens of thousands of police are deployed at bus and boat terminals as well as graveyards across the archipelago nation of more than 105 million people. — AFP

## Maldives ex-leader Nasheed ends exile

**COLOMBO:** Former Maldives president Mohamed Nasheed returned home from exile yesterday, two days after the country's Supreme Court withdrew a warrant for his arrest. Nasheed, who had been jailed for 13 years on a controversial terrorism charge, was welcomed at Male airport by president-elect Ibrahim Mohamed Solih and hundreds of supporters. It was not immediately clear what role he will have in the new government to be constituted by Solih this month.

The Supreme Court had ruled that Nasheed could not be detained until his appeal against the jail sentence for terrorism is heard. The 51-year-old democracy champion was branded a fugitive from justice when he went into exile in 2016 after seeking medical treatment abroad while serving the jail sentence. He risked arrest if he ever returned to the Maldives under President Abdulla Yameen, who jailed or exiled most of his opponents.

However, the strongman leader suffered a surprise defeat last month in an election and must leave office on November 17. The president-elect is a nominee of Nasheed's Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP). Nasheed had hoped to run against Yameen but was barred by the election commission. Since Yameen's defeat, political prisoners have been freed and exiles have returned from abroad as the Maldives prepares a transition to new leadership.

Elected president in the country's first democratic poll in 2008, Nasheed was found guilty of terrorism in 2015 in a trial the UN said was politically motivated. — AFP

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## International

# One 'black box' recovered from Indonesia jet; first funeral held

## No survivors and only body parts found so far

**JAKARTA:** A black box from the crashed Lion Air jet has been recovered, authorities said yesterday, a find that could be critical to establishing why a brand new jet plunged into the Java Sea shortly after take-off, killing 189 people on board. Divers plucked the orange data recorder from the ocean and placed it in a plastic tub as search teams continued to scour the seabed for the fuselage of the Boeing-737 MAX 8, which crashed off Indonesia's northern coast on Monday and had only been in service a few months.

There have been no survivors and only body parts have been found so far. Relatives are desperate to be able to say goodbye to their loved ones and the first funeral for one of the passengers was held yesterday. But many others have yet to be located and analysts hope further victims could still be found with the bulk of the wreckage. "I assume that there will be a lot of bodies still strapped into the seats," aviation analyst Dudi Sudibyo said. Dozens of divers are taking part in the massive recovery effort along with helicopters and ships, but authorities have all but ruled out finding any survivors.

### Cockpit recorder still missing

The black boxes, which airlines are required to install, offer investigators their best chance of discovering why such a new jet crashed. The devices record information about the speed, alti-

tude and direction of the plane as well as flight crew conversations. "The good news is we have found one of the black boxes," search and rescue agency head Muhammad Syaugi told reporters. Authorities say a flight data recorder was recovered, but they were still looking for the cockpit voice recorder. On a Jakarta dockside yesterday, Boeing and US National Transportation Safety Board officials joined the Indonesian team in sifting through twisted metal plane parts and piles of passengers' torn clothing, shoes, wallets and mobile phones.

The single-aisle Boeing plane, which was on its way from Jakarta to Pangkal Pinang city, is one of the world's newest and most advanced commercial passenger jets. Despite the name, black boxes are in fact bright orange with reflective stripes. They are built to survive at vast depths and in extreme heat, and are fitted with a beacon which can emit a signal for one month. Black boxes help explain nearly 90 percent of all crashes, according to aviation experts. "Data from the plane - the engine, all the instruments - are recorded there," Sudibyo said. "If there is an anomaly, some technical problem, it is recorded there too."

### First funeral

Passengers' remains are being sent to hospital for DNA comparison to relatives. Forensic ex-



**WEST JAVA:** Officials look at the flight data recorder - part of the ill-fated Lion Air flight JT 610's black box, after it was recovered from the Java Sea, at Jakarta port yesterday. — AFP

perts identified Jannatun Cintya Dewi as the first victim of the crash Wednesday evening. The 24-year-old civil servant's coffin was carried by pallbearers through the streets of her East Java hometown Sidoarjo yesterday. Dewi's mother collapsed and had to be carried into their home,

while friends and relatives wiped away tears as the casket was laid in a freshly dug grave sprinkled with flowers. A bowl of fruit and two palm branches lay at one end. Some relatives have shared heart wrenching tales of their final contact with loved ones. — AFP

## Corruption looms large in Madagascar presidential poll

**ANDRANOTAPAHINA:** Angry residents in a rural Madagascar town line up along a road construction brandishing a banner emblazoned with the words "stop property plunder!" in a bid to halt expropriation of their land. For hundreds of local families, the protest alongside a motorway promised by Hery Rajaonarimampianina, who is running for reelection as president, has become a symbol of how widely official corruption has spread before November's election. Officials say the highway in Andranotapahina aims to ease traffic outside the capital Antananarivo, just 10 kilometers (six miles) away, but local families say it has made them victims of widely practiced graft.

"We're here to condemn high-level corruption that has led to the theft of our rights to profit companies," said Andranotapahina resident Celestin Razafimanantsoa. Madagascar votes on November 7, with Rajaonarimampianina a frontrunner in the Indian Ocean island state that was beset by protests this year over his attempts to change electoral laws. But corruption remains a major complaint. Graft affects every level of society in one of the world's poorest countries which ranks 155 out of 180 on Transparency International's corruption perception index.

Critics say graft seeps into infrastructure projects, the judicial system and even the African nation's illicit rosewood trade as bureaucrats take their cut for services or from business deals. Transparency International Initiative Madagascar (TIIM) director Ketakandriana Rafitson has

described graft as "institutionalised" and said corruption was at the core of the presidential campaign. Former prime minister Jean Omer Beriziky is running on an anti-corruption ticket against Rajaonarimampianina, who stepped down in September to seek re-election. "I want to reestablish the rule of law," Beriziky told AFP. "We are elected to serve — not to serve ourselves."

In Andranotapahina, 2,500 local families say they have found themselves in conflict over the motorway project with Filatex, an Indo-Pakistani textile company with operations in the area. Construction of the road, intended to ease traffic in the capital, required the seizure of several tracts of land. "We're not against the project, but Filatex paid the state so the road would link to their facilities — at the expense of our properties," said local resident Razafimanantsoa. Filatex denies any wrongdoing. The group rejects claims from angry residents in Andranotapahina that approval of the motorway project involved bribes.

"We're also losing part of our property which will be seized for the project," said company director Dominique Andreas. "Corruption is not part of our strategy." But local protester Georgienne Rahatarivony criticised the lack of transparency over the route selection. "We were never consulted. It got our attention when our rice fields were marked with stakes during the night," he said. Transparency International's Rafitson said: "When affected communities are not consulted, we're right to suspect corruption." (It is) the nation of bribes and the '10 percent' rule."

In the former French colony of 25 million, poorly-paid civil servants typically seek cash incentives for providing basic services to the public. Officials responsible for awarding contracts and tenders are often suspected of skimming off 10 percent from lucrative deals. Rajaonarimampianina, in power from 2014 until he resigned in September, has refused to comment on the issue of graft. He is not the only prominent Madagascar leader to face allegations of corruption. — AFP

## Boko Haram attacks kill 12 in northern Nigeria

**KANO:** At least 12 civilians were killed in multiple Boko Haram jihadist attacks targeting two villages and a camp for those displaced by the bloody conflict in northeastern Nigeria, civilian militia and residents said yesterday. Jihadists in seven trucks late on Wednesday attacked Bulaburin and Kofa villages as well as a camp in Dalori village outside the Borno state capital of Maiduguri.

"The terrorists attacked and completely burnt Bulaburin and Kofa villages and burnt half the Dalori two IDP (internally displaced persons) camp," militia leader Babakura Kolo told AFP. "They killed nine people in Bulaburin, two people in Dalori, and one in Kofa and looted food supplies before setting them on fire," Kolo said. The attack was launched in Kofa where the jihadists opened fire indiscriminately and killed one person as residents fled, said Kofa resident Musa Goni. "They then moved to nearby Bulaburin where they gunned down nine people and burnt the village after stealing food," Goni said.

At Dalori 2 IDP camp, which houses 10,000 homeless people, the jihadists engaged troops and civilian militia guarding the camp in a shootout before overrunning the makeshift facility, civilian militia camp member Solomon Adamu said. "When the Boko Haram gunmen came they stopped on the road overlooking the camp and started firing," said Adamu who took part in the fight. "Soldiers and civilian JTF (militia) at the gate engaged them in gunfight but were forced to withdraw into the camp because we were outgunned," he said.

Residents were forced to flee and two were killed while several were injured, according to Adamu. The jihadists invaded the camp after overrunning troops and the militia and "burnt half the camp" by setting fires and firing rocket-propelled grenades on buildings. "One grenade didn't explode and is still lying in the camp, waiting for bomb disposal units to evacuate it," Adamu said. The area has been attacked multiple times before by the Boko Haram faction loyal to Abubakar Shekau. — AFP



## International

# Kabul control slips, Afghan forces lose at a record level

## Local security forces suffer record-level casualties

**WASHINGTON:** Kabul's control of Afghanistan slipped in recent months as local security forces suffered record-level casualties while making minimal or no progress against the Taliban, a US government watchdog said yesterday. The latest glimpse into Afghanistan's security crisis highlights persistent problems among police and army units who have faced years of devastating losses, and shows the Taliban's resilience 17 years after the US-led invasion. Numbers provided by Resolute Support, the US-led NATO mission in Afghanistan, show that during the last quarter, the Afghan government controlled or influenced 226 of the country's 407 districts—or 55.5 percent.

According to the US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), which compiled the data, the figure marks a slight drop (0.7 percent) over the previous quarter. It is the lowest level since SIGAR began tracking district control in November 2015. Of the remaining districts, SIGAR assessed that 49 were under insurgent control or influence (12 percent). The balance - 132 districts—are considered “contested” between the Kabul government and the Taliban or other insurgent groups. In terms of the Afghan population itself, Kabul controls or influences 65.2 percent, the same amount as a year ago.

### Insider attack

General John Nicholson, who is now retired but at the time was head of Resolute Support, said in November 2017 that the Afghan security forces would expand control of the population to

80 percent over the next two years. Bill Roggio, an Afghanistan expert and senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, told AFP such a scenario is unlikely. “Barring a dramatic turnaround by Afghan security forces and the US re-committing itself to improving the security situation, I do not see how that is possible,” he said. Roggio, who runs a website called Long War Journal, co-wrote a piece in which he assessed that more than half the Afghan population now lives outside of government control.

Underscoring the security weaknesses, powerful police chief General Abdul Raziq was among three people killed in a brazen insider attack on a high-level security meeting this month in Kandahar. The meeting was also attended by General Scott Miller, the top US and NATO commander in Afghanistan. He escaped unhurt, but US Brigadier General Jeffrey Smiley was among 13 people wounded in the shooting, which the Taliban said had targeted Miller and Raziq.

President Donald Trump launched a revamped Afghan plan more than a year ago that saw the US scrap any timetables for a US pullout and re-commit thousands more troops to Afghanistan, most of them dedicated to training and advising local forces. Data for casualties suffered by Afghan security forces are not available to the public after Washington last year agreed to Kabul's request to classify the numbers. Before the blackout, according to figures published by SIGAR, there were more than 5,000 each year. In its latest report, SIGAR cited Resolute Support as saying this summer's toll has been worse than ever.

“From the period of May 1 to the most current



KABUL: An Afghan laborer pushes his wheelbarrow loaded with groceries in Kabul. — AFP

data as of October 1, 2018, the average number of casualties the (Afghan forces) suffered is the greatest it has ever been during like periods,” Resolute Support said, according to SIGAR. Mattis this week said more than 1,000 “Afghan lads” were killed or wounded just in August and September. SIGAR added that data show the

Afghan forces “made minimal or no progress in pressuring the Taliban over the quarter.” The report does however highlight “some successes” in counter-terrorism operations against the Islamic State group's affiliate in Afghanistan, including in August when 250 jihadists surrendered to Afghan security forces in Jowzjan province.— AFP

## China premier meets US MPs amid tensions

**BEIJING:** Chinese Premier Li Keqiang told a visiting delegation of seven US Republican lawmakers yesterday that he hoped their two countries can meet “halfway” amid friction over trade, security and other issues. Relations between Washington and Beijing have grown tense since US President Donald Trump activated new tariffs on roughly half of Chinese imports this summer while Beijing fired back with tariffs on most US products.

Some of the US lawmakers attending the meeting with Li in China's leadership compound have expressed concern over Trump's trade tactics. “Over the past four decades, the China-US relationship has had its share of ups and downs, but, generally speaking, it has been moving forward all along,” Li told the US delegation. “We do hope that China and the United States will meet each other halfway and work together in the spirit of mutual respect

and equality,” Li said.

The working relationship between the two capitals has been further tested recently by a speech by US Vice President Mike Pence accusing China of military aggression and technology theft. On Wednesday, Washington indicted 10 Chinese, including two intelligence officers, alleging a hacking scheme to steal technology from US companies. Li suggested it was still possible to get relations back on track. “In this way, our two countries will be able to overcome differences and have the wisdom to overcome the obstacles and move our relationship forward on an even sounder track,” he said.

Senator Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, a critic of the Trump tariffs, led the group of Republican lawmakers. “Your country and our country are competitors but not adversaries. And we believe that with mutual respect we can continue to prosper together,” Alexander told Li. “I would like to take this time to, first introduce my delegation, second to make a request that I think will be not easy but not so hard for China to do and, third to discuss trade,” Alexander said before reporters were ushered out. This summer the senator lamented the devastating effect the tariffs were having on his home state. — AFP

## Indonesian flight Fact-check: Did a video show the last moments

**JAKARTA:** A video purporting to show panicked passengers aboard an Indonesian Lion Air plane before it crashed into the sea has gone viral with millions of views on social media, and been reported as fact by multiple news outlets around the world. The video is not from the ill-fated plane, which had 189 people on board, but an earlier flight in Indonesia that did not crash.

### What are we verifying?

Lion Air Flight JT 610 crashed into the Java Sea shortly after taking off from Jakarta on Monday. There were no survivors. Within hours of the plane going missing a video began circulating online claiming to show passengers inside a darkened cabin calling out: “Allahu akbar”, or “God is greater”, and other Islamic verses as the plane apparently was out of control. AFP has tracked down dozens of Facebook pages that have posted the

video with claims it was from the crashed Lion Air plane, including @SpotLightHumanity where it has been viewed more than 1.3 million times. It has also been viewed more than 220,000 times on an Arabic blogger's page, 100,000 times on a Pakistani celebrity pics page, and another 100,000 times on two aviation pages. Among news outlets, Russia Today posted the video on its Arabic Twitter account where it has been viewed more than 90,000 times. It also appeared on news websites in Greece, Pakistan, India and Tunisia.

### What do we know?

The video went viral despite Indonesian authorities reacting quickly to say it was from a previous Lion Air flight, which did not crash. Indonesia's disaster mitigation agency spokesman, Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, said on Monday that the video was from Lion Air flight JT 353 to Jakarta from Padang, another Indonesian city, on an unspecified earlier date. “This video IS NOT showing passengers of Lion Air JT 610. This is of passengers of Lion Air JT 353 Padang-Jakarta some time ago which was experiencing turbulence,” Sutopo tweeted.

“All passengers were safe. There are no video/photo of JT 610 passengers before the plane crashed. Please don't spread hoaxes,” Sutopo did not give details as to where the video originated. AFP tracked the video's origin to the private Instagram account @marapi\_singgalang, which promotes a hiking tour agency. — AFP



## International

# India, China nervous spectators in Sri Lanka constitutional crisis

## Rival Asian giants watching from outside the political ring

**NEW DELHI:** Rival Asian giants India and China are anxiously watching the constitutional conflict between contending prime ministers in Sri Lanka to see whose interests get the upper hand in their own strategic battle. It is the second time in barely a month that the Indian Ocean has become a battleground between the powers, after the Maldives' hotly disputed presidential election saw the eviction of a pro-Chinese leader.

Both may be minnows compared to the two giant neighbors that loom over it to the north. But they sit on the key sea trade and oil routes from Asia to the Middle East and Europe making them vital strategic interests for the rival powers. New Delhi and Beijing insist that they are watching from outside the political ring as Sri Lanka's ousted prime minister Ranil Wickremesinghe slugs it out with Mahinda Rajapakse, the island's former authoritarian leader named to take over by the president.

But the stakes are high. "With parliament suspended and all the political trickery between the two sides, the growing tensions are a worry for India and China," said an Asian diplomat in Colombo. China was quick to deny an accusation by a lawmaker from Wickremesinghe's party this week that it was paying for Rajapakse's attempts to win over rival deputies. "Groundless and irre-

sponsible," said a frosty Chinese embassy statement in response to the allegations. The constitutional crisis pits two very different characters against each other.

Wickremesinghe is a soft-spoken reformist technocrat and free market proponent seen as wary of China's often one-sided economic deals and less suspicious of India. Rajapakse is a seasoned political bruiser, deeply charismatic but tainted by an authoritarian decade in power that culminated in a ruthless military campaign against Tamil Tiger rebels which ended a decades long civil war but killed some 40,000 civilians and saw widespread atrocities. He was also much closer to Beijing - billions of dollars of Chinese investment flowed into Sri Lankan infrastructure during his administration ranging from roads and ports to

land reclamation in Colombo.

### Tightrope act

Maithripala Sirisena, the final key character in Sri Lanka's current political crisis trinity, vowed to change all that when he beat Rajapakse in a 2015 presidential election and put Wickremesinghe in charge of the government. That should have encouraged India, which is desperate to stop China expanding its economic and military



### Growing tensions worry for Beijing and New Delhi

## France's Macron warns Europe of a return to 1930s

**PARIS:** French President Emmanuel Macron has warned Europe of a return to the 1930s because of the spread of a nationalist "leprosy" across the continent, in an interview published yesterday. He also warned that Europe risked losing its sovereignty if it is "pushed around by foreign powers." "I am struck by similarities between the times we live in and those of between the two world wars," he told the newspaper *Ouest-France*, urging people to be aware of the threats.

"In a Europe divided by fears, the return of nationalism, the consequences of economic crisis, one sees almost systematically everything that marked Europe between the end of World War I and the 1929 (economic) crisis," the paper quoted him as saying. "You must bear that in mind, be clear-headed and know how to fight back," he added. Macron, who is about to start a week-long visit to north and eastern France to mark the centenary of the end of World War I, has recently criticized fellow European Union members for giving up on EU principles.

He has notably singled out Hungary and Poland whose nationalist governments have clashed with Brussels, as well as Italy which has a populist government including the far-right League party figures. Looking ahead to his tour of World War I battlefields, the president said he was looking for the lessons of history, while seeking to promote "a more sovereign and multilateral" Europe. "Europe faces a risk—that of being broken up by nationalist leprosy and of being pushed around by foreign powers. And thereby losing its sovereignty," he said. "That is to say having its security depend on US choices, having China play an ever greater role when it comes to essential infrastructures, and Russia sometimes tempted to try its hand at manipulation, and have financial interests and markets sometimes play greater roles than that of states."

Macron, who has been losing ground in the opinion polls, is attempting to position himself as the champion of centrist politics and multilateralism in the run-up to European parliamentary elections in seven months' time, saying he expects the duel to be one between "progressives" and "nationalists". According to the latest Vivavoix poll, released on Tuesday, Macron has lost 10 points since August with his approval rating now at 26 percent. The poll, carried out between October 19 and 22, with a margin of error of between 1.4 and 3.1 percent, also suggested that nearly two out of three people have a "poor opinion" of him. —AFP



COLOMBO: Supporters of ousted Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe sit inside a large room at the Prime Minister's official residence in Colombo yesterday. —AFP

footprint in the Indian Ocean and other backyard states such as Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal. But Wickremesinghe found the battle against Sri Lanka's huge foreign debt too much. Last year his government gave a 99-year lease on the Hambantota deep-sea port to China because it was unable to repay Beijing's loans for the \$1.4-billion project. It was forced to deny US claims that China could set up a military base at the port.

India - a modest investor in power and railway projects in the north of the country — is mean-

while in talks to run Hambantota airport, another white-elephant project built with Chinese loans under Rajapakse. The airport and port deals have not been good for China's image. Both projects have been held up by critics as an example of how China's global largesse often comes with onerous repayment strings attached. Delhi has turned on the charm with its own deals while in 2015 Narendra Modi became the first Indian premier to do a standalone visit to the island in 28 years, with a second visit two years later. —AFP

## Trump's military deployment to the border

**WASHINGTON:** Thousands of active-duty US troops are immediately deploying to the US-Mexico frontier to tighten security and provide back up to overstretched border agents. Critics have blasted the move as an expensive political stunt ahead of next week's midterm elections. Here is a look at what the deployment means, and what American soldiers will be doing on the border.

US authorities say troops are needed to address large groups of migrants arriving at the border in so-called caravans, made up largely of Central American migrants. The issue has incensed President Donald Trump, who has sought to make political capital by depicting the migrants as carrying out an "invasion" of America. He has repeatedly hammered on the caravans and tried to keep the issue in the headlines ahead of crucial midterm congressional elections that could see the Democrats regain some degree of power. The Democrats, for their part, have seemed to founder in terms of presenting a coherent message on border and immigration issues and the caravans.

### How many and what will they do?

Numbers are changing daily, but so far the Pentagon has authorized 5,239 active-duty troops to go to the border on a 45-day deployment. Another 2,000 or more are on standby, and some 2,100 National Guardsmen are already in the border region to support agents there. That means more than 9,000 troops have already been committed to military operations on the border and Trump, who is prone to hyperbole, on Wednesday said the final number could swell to 15,000 troops. Whatever the case, it's a massive deployment, the largest since Defense Secretary James Mattis came into office nearly two years ago. It means that within days, the US military will have more than three times as many troops along the southern border as it does fighting the Islamic State group in Syria.

Approximately 15,000 US troops are in Afghanistan. The soldiers—who will be armed-taking part in "Operation Faithful Patriot" are not meant to directly interact with migrants coming into the US. Rather, they will provide logistical support to agents with the US Customs and Border Protection Agency. General Terrence O'Shaughnessy, head of the US military's Northern Command, said troops will focus on trying to "harden" border crossings and surrounding areas, with work done by combat engineering battalions with experience building temporary fencing. —AFP



# Brazilian left reels as country lurches right

## High court against police action in public universities

**RIO DE JANEIRO:** Still stinging from the victory of far-right President-elect Jair Bolsonaro, Brazil's once-mighty Workers' Party now faces some tricky tasks: regaining people's trust, reclaiming its leadership of the left and dealing with its jailed leader. That leader, charismatic former president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, led Brazil through a historic boom from 2003 to 2010, but now stands accused of masterminding the large-scale looting of state oil company Petrobras—a massive scandal that has badly damaged the party. Bolsonaro's resounding win in Sunday's run-off put an emphatic end to the electoral dominance of the Workers' Party (PT), which had won the previous four presidential elections.

It was particularly humiliating for the PT—which was born out of the struggle against Brazil's brutal military dictatorship (1964-1985) — that the man who put the nail in its

coffin was a former army captain who not only served that dictatorship, but continues to openly praise its use of torture and repression against leftists. Licking their wounds, many party leaders cannot help looking back to the past as they diagnose what went wrong: "There was a major effort to discredit the PT with fake news... Anti-PT sentiment was created, just like anti-communist sentiment in its day," party veteran Celso Amorim, who was foreign minister under Lula said.



### Mighty Workers' Party now faces some tricky tasks

**Return to roots**  
Bolsonaro rode the nationalist far-right wave that has been sweeping over much of the world to defeat the man picked to stand in for Lula, Fernando Haddad. Lula himself was barred from running because he is serving a 12-year prison sentence for corruption. But polls indicated he would have beaten Bolsonaro. The party insists the case was cooked up to sideline Lula—who remains enduringly popular, though immensely controversial.

Bolsonaro, however, is a contentious figure too, given his derogatory remarks on women, gays and blacks, and policy proposals such as relaxing gun-control laws so "good people" can take justice into their own hands. That may give the PT an opening to move beyond its graft-stained image and return to its roots. "I think there's a great opportunity here for the PT and other

parties to put themselves on the side of good, to rally around issues historically linked to fundamental and individual rights," said Cesar Zucco, a political scientist at the Getulio Vargas Foundation.

### Time to ditch Lula?

The PT still managed to win the most seats in the lower house, with 56, plus six senators. In one of the most fragmented Congresses in Brazilian history, it will be a leading opposition force. Bol-

sonaro-whose previously minor Social Liberal Party will be the second-largest force in the lower house—meanwhile faces the difficult job of piecing together a coalition from among some 30 parties. But to effectively lead the opposition, the PT may have to give up or tone down its fight to free Lula, which has consumed an immense amount of its political resources. "There's no general outcry to free Lula, so if that's the main flag the PT is waving, it's going to shoot itself in the foot," said Zucco.



**RIO DE JANEIRO:** Supporters of Brazilian President-elect Jair Bolsonaro wait outside the condominium where he lives in Barra da Tijuca, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil yesterday, while he meets Brazilian Judge Sergio Moro. Anti-graft judge Moro accepted the justice minister post under Brazil's Bolsonaro. —AFP

The PT still has a solid base of about 30 percent

of the electorate—but will need more than that to mount a forceful opposition to Bolsonaro. Once the vanguard of the left, its prestige is badly tarnished. Third-place presidential candidate Ciro Gomes, a center-leftist, accused the PT of aiding and abetting Bolsonaro's rise. "The PT elected Bolsonaro," he said in an interview published Wednesday. "Lula-PT-ism has become corrupt and corrupting, and it created an opposing force that is now the biggest force in Brazil. Bolsonaro just happened to be in the right place at the right time." —Agencies

## Bolsonaro to move Brazil's embassy to Jerusalem

**JERUSALEM:** Brazil's president-elect Jair Bolsonaro has told an Israeli newspaper he intends to defy the Palestinians and most of the world by moving his country's embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Brazil would become the second major country after the United States to do so. Asked in an interview with Israel Hayom published yesterday if he would move Brazil's embassy, as he had indicated during his campaign, Bolsonaro said Israel should decide where its capital is located. "When I was asked during the campaign if I'd do it when I became president, I said 'yes, the one who decides on the capital of Israel is you, not other nations'," he told the paper, which is a firm backer of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Israel considers the entire city its capital, while the Palestinians see east

Jerusalem as the capital of their future state, with international consensus being that the status of the whole city must be negotiated between the two sides. Israel occupied east Jerusalem in the 1967 Six-Day War and later annexed it in a move never recognized by the international community. In December, President Donald Trump reversed longstanding US policy and recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, prompting Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas to boycott his administration.

The embassy was officially transferred on May 14, with Guatemala and Paraguay following suit, though the latter announced last month it would return its embassy to Tel Aviv. Bolsonaro, 63, who won a run-off election on Sunday, has outraged many with his overtly misogynistic, homophobic and racist rhetoric. Following his victory, Netanyahu told Bolsonaro he was certain his election "will lead to a great friendship between our peoples and the tightening of links between Brazil and Israel." An official in Netanyahu's office said the Israeli premier was "very likely" to attend Bolsonaro's inauguration ceremony in January. —AFP

## US woman found alive 6 days after car lands on tree

**WASHINGTON:** An American woman has been found alive six days after her car flew off a highway and landed on a mesquite tree in the state of Arizona, police said on Wednesday. The 53-year-old woman was traveling on national route 60 near Wickenburg, about 50 miles (80 kilometers) north of Phoenix, when she lost control on October 12, the Arizona Department of Public Safety said in a news release.

She crashed through a highway railing and plunged 50 feet (17 meters) into the tree where the vehicle "remained suspended above the ground," the state troopers said. "There were no apparent witnesses to the crash and it would be six days before the woman would be discovered by authorities," the troopers said. On

October 18, an Arizona highway maintenance crew and a rancher were trying to corral a stray cow when they noticed the broken fence and then the mangled vehicle still lodged in the tree, the troopers' statement said.

A trooper, along with the maintenance crew and rancher, could not find anyone in the car but discovered "human tracks" leading towards a river bed. After following the tracks for 500 yards the rescuers found the severely dehydrated woman with serious injuries, the statement said, without identifying her. The woman told the trooper that she stayed inside her vehicle for "several days" before she climbed out and tried to walk towards railroad tracks in the hope she would be found. But she was too weak to make it. The woman was taken by helicopter to hospital after her rescue. Colonel Frank Milstead, the Department of Public Safety Director, praised the rescuers' diligence. "Due to their outstanding efforts, this woman's life was saved," he said in the statement. —AFP



## International

# Pakistani Christian woman ordeal highlights the plight of minorities

## Hardline Islamist party calls for assassination of the judges

**ISLAMABAD:** Until one sweltering day in 2009, Asia Bibi led a simple life with her husband and children in rural Pakistan. Hers was one of only three Christian families in her village but they'd never had much trouble from Muslim neighbors, relatives say. "She was an innocent, loving and caring ordinary woman," said Bibi's brother-in-law, Joseph Nadeem. "She and her husband both were farm workers. They had five kids and a happy life." Then, a dispute over a cup of water with fellow field laborers led to Bibi being sentenced to death for blasphemy against Islam. She spent eight years on death row before Pakistan's Supreme Court overturned her conviction this week and ordered her freed.



**Christians only  
2.6 percent of  
208 million**

Bibi's ordeal has become symbolic of the difficulties that Pakistan's tiny Christian population, only 2.6 percent of the country of 208 million, faces along with other religious minorities as hard-line Islamist movements grow stronger. Her family is now in hiding for fear of attacks by Islamists angry at the ruling, and still waiting to be reunited with Bibi. "You know my two youngest daughters were below age of 10 when their mother went away ... They don't remember

spending much time with her," Bibi's husband, Ashiq Masih, told Reuters by telephone.

The family has four daughters and one son, he said. "We are thankful to the court that it decided the case considering us human beings instead of any discrimination on the base of faith or religion." He said Bibi, who is about 50, has not been released from prison pending arrangements for her safety. Thousands of members of a hardline

Islamist party have blockaded roads for two days in major Pakistani cities to protest against the Supreme Court's decision, even calling for the assassination of the judges who made the ruling. "She can't be safe here," brother-in-law Nadeem said. "You know

what's going on outside. We want things to settle down before we go ahead for her release."

### Discrimination

The rise of Islamist parties such as Tehreek-e-Labaik (TLP), which has made "death to blasphemers" its main rallying cry, has many of Pakistan's religious minorities worried. Though the TLP gained no National Assembly seats in a general election this year, it won 2.2 million votes nationwide. The party's fiery rhetoric also pulled



**PESHAWAR:** Supporters of the Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan (TLP), a hardline religious political party, block a street during a protest following the Supreme Court decision to acquit Christian woman Asia Bibi, in Peshawar yesterday. — AFP

much of the political discourse to the right in this deeply conservative country. Pakistan is about 96 percent Sunni and Shiite Muslim, with Christians, Hindus and members the Ahmadi faith making up tiny minorities. Christians in Pakistan are often targeted in attacks by militants, including a pre-Christmas suicide bomb attack last year on a Methodist church that killed more than 50 people in the southwestern city of Quetta. The attack

was claimed by Islamic State's local affiliate.

Christians are also frequent targets of discrimination and violence. In 2013, a mob burned down more than 125 Christian homes in a neighborhood of Lahore after rumors spread that a Christian resident had insulted the Prophet Muhammad. Religious minorities are also far more likely to be charged with blasphemy than Muslims. — Reuters

## South Korean court allows conscientious objection to military

**SEOUL:** South Korea's supreme court ruled yesterday that moral and religious beliefs are valid reasons to refuse the country's mandatory military service, in a case that has implications for hundreds of conscientious objectors. Some 65 years after the end of the Korean War, nearly every able-bodied South Korean male between the ages of 18 and 35 must still complete around two years of military service.

Anyone refusing the call-up has usually ended up in prison for 18 months, with more than 19,000 conscientious objectors jailed since 1950, most of them Jehovah's Witnesses. But the Supreme Court overturned the conviction of a conscientious objector yesterday, months after a landmark constitutional court ruling that authorities had to provide an alternative to joining the military.

At the centre of yesterday's case is Jehovah's Witness Oh Seung-hun, who was called up in 2013 but refused. "It is the majority opinion of the Supreme Court that conscientious objection is... a valid reason (to refuse conscription)," said Supreme Court chief justice Kim Myeong-su. Punishing conscientious objectors "for refusing conscription on grounds of religious faith, in other words, freedom of conscience, is deemed an excessive constraint to an individual's freedom of conscience", he added. The decision overturned a previous Supreme Court ruling 14 years ago.

Oh, 34, said his refusal stemmed from biblical teachings. "The bible says that everyone who uses a sword will be killed by a sword," Oh said. "I expected to suffer for objecting to conscription but I thought the pain I would feel by not listening to my inner voice would be far worse," he added. Jehovah's Witnesses welcomed the ruling, calling it a "huge step forward in ending this policy of imprisoning our fellow believers". "Today the Supreme Court has brought South Korea more in line with international norms," said spokesman Paul Gillies. According to the Jehovah's Witnesses, more than 900 similar cases are pending in the South Korean justice system, with 96 people currently serving prison terms for not fulfilling their duties.

### Conscripts killed

The South remains technically at war with the North, after the 1950-53 Korean War ended in a ceasefire rather than a peace treaty. But the ruling comes amid a dramatic dialling-down of tensions on the peninsula, with Pyongyang holding summits with both the South and the US, long its sworn enemy. A defense ministry official said it was drawing up an alternative to military service for conscientious objectors in light of the June court ruling.

Former conscripts were unhappy about the decision, calling it unfair. "I'd understand if someone is incapable of joining the military because of some inevitable reason, but I don't think it's fair if it's because of religious reasons," said 26-year-old Park Jae-hyeong. Seoul's armed forces rely heavily on conscription, and military service often involves postings to front-line positions on the border with the North. In May 2010, a North Korean submarine torpedoed the South Korean naval vessel Cheonan, killing 46 sailors including 16 who were on military service. In November the same year, the North shelled a South Korean border island, killing two marines—both of them conscripts. —AFP

## China hosts El Salvador and Dominican leaders after Taiwan switch

**BEIJING:** Chinese President Xi Jinping greeted El Salvador's President Sanchez Ceren yesterday, pledging aid to the Central American country months after it switched allegiance from Taiwan to Beijing. Xi is hosting Sanchez Ceren and the leader of another country that recently ditched Taiwan - Dominican President Danilo Medina - this week. The Chinese leader welcomed Sanchez Ceren with a ceremony at the gargantuan Great Hall of the People, where a military band serenaded the two presidents with their respective national anthems.

The two countries then inked deals pledging to cooperate on development, including on Xi's pet Belt and Road trade infrastructure project. Beijing also promised aid for education, health and drought relief. China "welcomes" more exports from El Salvador, and will encourage more qualified Chinese companies to invest in El Salvadoran industries, said Xi in a report by state media CCTV. China is also willing to offer scholarships to El Salvadoran students visiting China, and will encourage more Chinese tourists to travel to the Central American country, he added.

Sanchez told Xi he was "representing the El Salvadoran people to show you how grateful we are and our satisfaction now that we have restored our diplomatic relations". El Salvador recognized Beijing in August, becoming the third country to abandon Taiwan this year, following the Dominican Republic and Burkina Faso. Medina will be hosted at the Great Hall of the People on Friday. He will also inaugurate the Dominican Republic's embassy in Beijing during his visit. Only 17 countries remain in Taiwan's diplomatic circle as the self-ruling democratic island struggles to fend off Beijing's growing influence around the globe. —AFP



# Friday Times Lifestyle

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This photo shows a model presenting a creation from the 'Creative Rongchang Grass Cloth' collection by Zhang Yichao during China Fashion Week in Beijing. — AFP

**'Blue is the Warmest Colour'  
director accused of assault**

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## Lifestyle | Feature



Cormorant master Shuji Sugiyama poses for a portrait in Gifu. — AFP photos



Cormorant master Shuji Sugiyama inspects his birds in Gifu.

# Japan's 'usho' keep alive the ancient art of cormorant fishing



Cormorant master Shuji Sugiyama uses cormorants to catch sweetfish in Gifu.

In the pitch black night, fires burn alongside a river in Japan's Gifu as a handful of men prepare for a ritual that dates back over 1,300 years: fishing with cormorants. Dressed in traditional clothes, they look like they come from another time. They wield their cormorants, tied together with strings, like puppets. Their profession, known as "ukai," was once common in waterside villages and towns throughout Japan and other parts of the world. But it has been on the gradual decline for centuries, and now lives on in Japan as a tourist attraction and a carefully protected part of the country's national heritage. At 46, Shuji Sugiyama is the youngest of the "usho" in Gifu, in western Japan. And he is one of just nine people to hold an imperial licence for the practice.

He sits quietly on a rock by the inky water of the Nagara River, apparently undisturbed by the chatter of his fellow fish-

ermen. "It's because we live together, the man and the cormorants, that ukai fishing is possible," he told AFP. "For example, I could never fish with another master's cormorants," he added, feeling the throats of his birds as he prepares for the night's expedition. Centuries ago, the profession flourished, but by the time the palace began issuing imperial licenses to usho in 1890, the art was already on the decline. Now there are only a few dozen usho throughout Japan, and just nine of them hold imperial licences, turning over eight catches a year to the palace and receiving a symbolic salary of 8,000 yen (\$71) a month.



Fish caught by cormorants are pictured in Gifu.



A cormorant master's assistant carries baskets of the birds to a boat ahead of a fishing trip in Gifu.



A cormorant master's assistant maneuvers a boat as they fish with cormorants in Gifu.



## Lifestyle | Feature



Cormorant masters and their assistants gather around a fire before fishing with cormorants in Gifu.

#### Major tourist draw

The method is hardly a commercial enterprise, and the usho rely on subsidies from local authorities that have turned the profession into a tourist draw and hope to one day see ukai make the UNESCO World Heritage list. "Cormorant fishing is the biggest tourist draw we have in Gifu city," local tourism division chief Kazuhiro Tada told AFP. "More than 100,000 people a year come to see it, and their numbers are growing." Sugiyama inherited the job from his father, fishing alongside him until he obtained official usho status in 2002. Five generations of his family have practiced the unusual fishing technique, which once existed in Europe and elsewhere but now continues mostly in Japan and China.

The job requires a tolerance for unusual hours—fishing takes place after sundown, with the usho using flaming lamps hung on their boats to attract fish below the surface. And while the fishing season only runs from May until October, each fisherman's cormorants require daily care all year round. New birds arrive each autumn, after being captured during their migration across Ibaraki province north of Tokyo, and must be trained—a process that takes around three years. "I usually take about 10 birds fishing, and I integrate the new ones with the group so they will imitate the older ones and learn how to fish," Sugiyama said.

#### Hopes for the future

The evening's fishing begins with assistants marching through the alleys near the riverbanks, carrying the cormorants in bamboo cages to their masters. The fishermen wear traditional outfits: a blue shirt and matching bulbous hat said to protect against the ashes of the lamps, long straw skirts to keep out water and cold, and truncated sandals that leave the heels exposed to prevent slipping. Flaming torches are hung on the boats to attract



Cormorant master Shuji Sugiyama poses for a portrait in Gifu.

the small trout known as "ayu", and a draw determines the order the boats will move out in. The cormorants are tied together with ropes, and the fishermen tie string around each bird's throat to prevent them from eating the catch. The loops leave the birds enough space to eat smaller fish, and are removed when the night's catch is complete.

The birds are expert fishers and instantly kill their prey with their razor sharp beaks. When one surfaces with a fish, his usho pries it from the bird's gullet, then sends it back into the water. At the peak of the catch, the air is full with the sound of squawking birds, shouting fisherman and the rhythmic tapping produced by boatmen banging sticks on the sides of the vessel. Tourists on separate boats float around the fishermen, snapping photos. At the end of the season, Sugiyama will be able to relax a little, but he doesn't expect to take a holiday anytime soon. "I have a son who is still in primary school. I have the feeling that he has started to be interested in my work," he said. "He sees me every day with the cormorants, and I hope that one day he'll take my place." — AFP



A cormorant master handles lines tied to his cormorants to catch sweetfish in Gifu.



Cormorant master Shuji Sugiyama uses cormorants to catch sweetfish in Gifu.



Cormorants gather around cormorant masters and their assistants before a fishing trip in Gifu.



Cormorant masters use their birds to catch sweetfish in Gifu.



## Lifestyle | Feature



Former art gallery owner 58-year-old Mile Mrvalj lights a cigarette at the main railway station in Zagreb. — AFP photos



Mile Mrvalj (second left) speaks with high-school students as they attend the "Invisible Zagreb" tour.



Mile Mrvalj (center) speaks with high-school students as they attend the "Invisible Zagreb" tour.



Mile Mrvalj (second right) speaks with high-school students as they attend the "Invisible Zagreb" tour.

## Street view: Former homeless man leads 'invisible Zagreb' tour

Alcoholics, vagrants, nobodies—Mile Mrvalj rattles off common prejudices against Zagreb's "invisible" homeless community as he leads a tour around sites that usually go unnoticed in the Croatian capital. "Now you will hear the story of a painful, tough Zagreb," the 58-year-old, who spent more than three years on the streets himself, tells local high school students at the start of a recent tour. During the next hour and a half he takes the group to seemingly ordinary spots in downtown Zagreb that are a lifeline for those without shelter, especially during cold winters.

Croatia has a homeless population of around 2,000 and it is increasing, according to NGO estimates, which had put the figure at around half that just two years ago. Another 10,000 are currently classified as being "relative"—as opposed to "absolute"—homeless, meaning they have shelter but lack basic health and security standards. Mrvalj, who co-founded the tour, starts his route at the King Tomislav Square park, a neatly-trimmed lawn packed with tourists, young couples and children. No homeless person would dare rest in the park in full view, says Mrvalj, explaining that they often sleep in abandoned buildings nearby. "If a homeless person was sleeping on this grass police would fine him," he adds.

### Trams and coffee

"How did you become homeless?" a teenage boy asks Mrvalj on the tour. The former gallery owner recounts his own downward spiral-triggered by a mortgage loan he could not pay off that eventually left him bankrupt in 2009. Gradually abandoned by family and friends, he left his home in Bosnia's capital Sarajevo for Zagreb. For more than three years he lived without a roof over his head. Lighting one cigarette after another, Mrvalj describes the shame he felt when collecting refundable plastic bottles from rubbish bins to earn around three euros (\$3.4) a day.

The experience was "hell," he recalls. "I was smelling so badly. I heard so many times 'Go away stinky! Have a bath!'" In Croatia, due to economic hardship and high unemployment — 8.4 percent in September-making ends meet is a tall order for many, not only the homeless. The tour's second stop—Zagreb's main railway sta-

tion—is a place where many homeless go to warm up in the winter, though only for 30 minutes due to video surveillance and fear of police, says Mrvalj.

The next option is to ride the trams. "If it's really cold you make two, three tram tours," he explains. A cheap coffee machine inside the station provides another source of solace. "Coffee saves you, warms you up, after waking up frozen like an iceberg," Mrvalj tells the tour group.

### 'Can happen to anyone'

After obtaining a Croatian ID card four years ago, Mrvalj managed to secure health care and a room to live in. Now he runs an association to help the homeless — named Fajter (Fighter) — and since July guides the "Invisible Zagreb" tour five times a week as its sole guide. Mrvalj says the goal of the tour is to raise awareness about growing homelessness and to correct misunderstandings. "A common (prejudice) is that homeless people are to be blamed for their destiny," he told AFP.

But he said that homelessness "can happen to anyone" faced with an unlucky chain of events, such as the loss of a job leading to an inability to pay off a loan. "If someone told me 10 years ago that I would be homeless I would tell him that he was crazy." Croatia's economic problems have their roots in the 1990s independence war and its legacy, especially the fraudulent privatizations of state-run firms which threw many out of work and left companies ruined.

Last year nearly 28 percent of the country's 4.2 million people were at risk of poverty or social exclusion, according to Eurostat figures released in October. Only six other EU member states—Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, Italy, Latvia and Lithuania—had a higher number at risk. Jointly launched with an agency specialized in social impact programs, the Zagreb tour was initially planned for tourists, but now locals dominate. "People are realizing how many things they don't notice on an everyday basis," said Branimir Radakovic, of the Brodoto agency. Petra Stunja, a 16-year-old pupil on the tour, said she learned that homelessness "can happen to many without expecting it." — AFP

## Myanmar's sea turtles fight against the odds

Peril plagues the lives of Myanmar's baby turtles: if crabs don't get them before they scramble from beach to sea, then poachers or fishing trawlers might finish them off instead. Myanmar's waters boast five of the world's seven sea turtle species, including the critically endangered hawksbill, the endangered green turtle and the olive ridley, leatherback and loggerhead turtles — all listed as vulnerable.

"If we don't conserve the turtles properly, they will all disappear in the near future," head ranger Phone Maw tells AFP on Thameehla island in the Ayeyarwaddy Delta. The 56-year-old has devoted most of the last two decades to the creatures, scouring the island's 1.5-mile long coastline three times a night for nesting females. The reptiles, which can grow to more than a meter in length and weigh as much as a large piano, lay around 100 eggs in a hole dug with their hind flippers before covering the clutch with sand and returning to the water. Poachers are the first danger, even at this conservation site dedicated to the marine reptiles. Turtle eggs can sell for a dollar each, around 10 times the price of a chicken egg.

### Crab gauntlet

So Phone Maw and his colleagues dig up the newly laid eggs and rebury them in a protected area until they hatch 50 to 60 days later. Putting them back at the right depth is crucial. Sea turtles have temperature-dependent sex determination — warmer temperatures produce more females while cooler temperatures result in more males.

Once hatched, the rangers release the baby turtles onto the beach and into the sea, where myriad predators await. AFP watched as an army of red crabs scuttled to drag away some hatchlings while more fortunate siblings floundered to the frothy waters, the first hurdle of their existence complete. But trawler nets are the biggest culprit in the turtles' dwindling population, entangling the creatures which must surface to breathe.

Illegal dynamite fishing and sand dredging are also lethal and the effect of marine pollution has been devastating. Southeast Asia's waters are choked with plastic and more than half of the eight million tons dumped into the world's oceans each year comes from just five countries: China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam and Thailand. In June, a dead green turtle washed up on a Thai beach, its stomach jammed with plastic shreds, rubber bands and other debris. Days before, an autopsy of a pilot whale revealed 80 plastic bags inside.

This week a WWF report warned that unbridled human consumption had destroyed much wildlife worldwide, wiping out 60 percent of all fish, birds, amphibians, mammals and reptiles in the last half century. Just two out of every 1,000 turtle hatchlings used to survive until adulthood, Phone Maw says. "Now it's even lower because of all the pollution," he adds sadly. — AFP



Newborn green turtles heading to the sea after being released from a protected area on Thameehla Island.—AFP





Andrew Huff stands near a plaque dedicated to the stairs made famous by the 1973 movie "The Exorcist" in Georgetown in Washington, DC.—AFP photos



A young boy climbs a wall near the stairs made famous by the 1973 movie "The Exorcist" in Georgetown in Washington, DC.



Tourists take a selfie at the bottom of the stairs made famous by the 1973 movie "The Exorcist" in Georgetown in Washington, DC.

## Could 'Exorcist' Steps in Washington soon be a historic landmark?

The steep, narrow flight of 75 stone steps in the US capital's Georgetown area are part of Hollywood legend—in "The Exorcist," a priest falls to his death in one of the film's most memorable scenes. Now, Washington's so-called "Exorcist Steps" could soon achieve historic landmark status. Andrew Huff, a self-proclaimed "student of the horror genre," is a huge fan of "The Exorcist," which was released in 1973, two years after the best-seller of the same name by William Peter Blatty.

In 2015, he organized a small ceremony attended by Blatty, a graduate of Georgetown University, and film director William Friedkin when a plaque noting the spooky staircase's role in

movie history was mounted.

Blatty wrote the screenplay for the film, which tells the tale of efforts to rid a young girl of the demons that possess her via an exorcism conducted by two priests. Now, 45 years after the film's release, Huff—whose day job is in community relations at a local university—is spearheading the effort to have the site classified as a landmark. "It's deserving," Huff told AFP. "When I have friends visiting, I prefer to bring them here rather than to the Capitol or the White House, especially at the moment. They have become a tourist attraction for the city."

A community association has petitioned Washington's historic preservation review board to designate the steps as a

landmark—in part to keep the construction of a new condo building from encroaching on them. The steps were built in 1895, next to a brick trolley-car storage building known as the Car Barn. In the famous scene on the steps, Father Damien Karras hurls himself from a window and falls to his death down the stairs as he becomes possessed by the spirits haunting the young Regan. "The scene had to be shot three times," explains Huff, who says he has seen the film about 100 times. "Even if the steps were covered with half-an-inch of rubber, it was still a long way down for the stuntman." A decision from the DC historic preservation board is expected on November 15.—AFP

## 'Blue is the Warmest Color' director accused of assault

French prosecutors have opened a sexual assault investigation into Franco-Tunisian film director Abdellatif Kechiche, whose 2013 film "Blue is the Warmest Color" won the top prize at the Cannes film festival, a legal source said Wednesday. The BFM news channel said a 29-year-old woman had complained about being assaulted by the director in an apartment in Paris last June after attending a dinner party with him. The woman claims she fell asleep after consuming several alcoholic drinks and woke up to find herself partially undressed and being molested by Kechiche.

The director "categorically denies these allegations from a person whose only way of making a name for herself is by playing the victim," his lawyer Jeremie Assous told AFP. "Blue is the Warmest Color", a three-hour film about a blue-haired art student and her intense erotic relationship with a younger girl, wowed the Cannes festival in 2013 but was tarnished by a row afterwards between Kechiche and the young stars. Actress Lea Seydoux complained that she felt like "a prostitute" when filming the movie's lengthy, explicit sex scenes and described the experience of shooting with Kechiche as "horrible".

The director, a former actor with a host of movie awards to his name in France, said he felt "great regret" at the controversy and



Abdellatif Kechiche

ended up saying he would have preferred the film not to have been released because it had been "soiled" by the criticism. A host of famous names in the film and entertainment industry have been accused of sexual assault in the wake of allegations made against US movie mogul Harvey Weinstein last year, which spawned the "Me Too" movement.—AFP

## Weinstein accused of sexually assaulting 16-year-old

Disgraced Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein has been accused of sexually assaulting a minor in an updated class action lawsuit filed in a New York court on Wednesday. Weinstein denied the accusation through his lawyer Ben Brafman, who told industry magazine Variety the claim was "preposterous." The complainant, identified anonymously as "Jane Doe," said she is a resident and citizen of Poland who met Weinstein when she was 16 years old at an event with her modeling agency in New York in 2002.

He gave her his business card and invited her to lunch three days later, offering to pick her up with his driver, the complaint said. "Instead of taking them to a restaurant, Weinstein's driver dropped the two at Weinstein's Soho apartment," the complaint added. She realized the pair were alone, whereupon he began "aggressively and threateningly demanding sex."

The woman alleged Weinstein forced her to touch his genitals while he bullied and cajoled her, telling her he had the power to make her career. She added that Weinstein continued to make advances and harassed her for nearly a decade, until 2011, harming her mental and physical health. "This claim is preposterous. Like so many other women in this case who have already been exposed as liars, this latest completely uncorroborated allegation that is almost 20 years old will also be shown to be patently false," said Brafman. The complaint is an update to a class



Harvey Weinstein

action suit accusing Weinstein, his brother Bob, and board members of the Weinstein Company of racketeering. The original suit was dismissed in September. Weinstein, an international pariah after being accused by more than 80 women of sexual misconduct, is also facing criminal charges, including one count of rape and one of oral sex, which could see him spend the rest of his life in prison if convicted.—AFP





A piece depicting the cartoon character of the Portuguese everyman “Ze Povinho” created in 1875 by Rafael Bordallo Pinheiro is seen at Bordallo Pinheiro Factory in Caldas da Rainha. — AFP photos

Painters work beside a big ceramic lizard.

## New lease of life for Portugal's booming ceramics bastion

Ignoring temporary walls which point to ongoing large-scale expansion, workers burn the mid-night oil at Portugal's byword for ceramic creativity to meet orders from around the globe. For more than 130 years, Bordallo Pinheiro has been producing all manner of artistic glazed pottery, and business is booming again a decade after the company almost went to the wall. From traditional azulejos tiles, multi-coloured fruit-shaped tableware, animal-shaped vases and ceramic sardines, to Mick Jagger and Pope Francis figurines, the factory is a Portuguese porcelain fancier's paradise.

That order books are crammed is a far cry from when the company, founded in 1884 in the western town of Caldas da Rainha an hour north of Lisbon, was bought out in 2009. In the ensuing decade, sales have tripled and production has raced ahead 60 percent—hence the need to ramp up capacity at the site in the town, also renowned for its hot springs. Though some see elements of the firm's intricate wares as kitsch, for collectors, it is a pillar of Portuguese contemporary artistic culture. Sculptors make each mold by hand and the most complex require multiple molds. Bordallo Pinheiro's status was underlined in May when London's *Monocle* magazine for the high disposable income reader devoted several pages to it.

Today sees the company riding the Zeitgeist, with multimillion investments designed to lift production by around a third, as sales soar from Spain to South Korea and the United States. It now plans to open its own stores, notably in Paris and beyond, rather than selling chiefly to other distributors—quite a turnaround from its previously bleak outlook due to tough competition from China. Layoffs, late payment of wages... Victor Formiga, a 56-year-old company veteran of 30 years, well remembers the “difficult days.”

He currently leads the team making the molds into which liquid clay, or slip, is cast prior to firing in the kiln. Painting and dipping into clear glaze fol-

low, before firing a second time. “Today, things are going much better. We're proud of this expansion and I hope it will last,” says Formiga.

### Handmade

Even as the company, now based on the town's outskirts having converted its original more central site into a museum and shop, sets its sights still higher, it remains faithful to traditional, handmade manufacturing. “Bordallo will remain a kind of giant workshop. We want to pay tribute to our history by turning out almost exclusively handmade products,” says industrial director Tiago Mendes. Save for a handful of items pressed mechanically, the remainder are made manually. Many items require careful piecing together, such as a limited edition bunch of 70 bananas. Only 125 will be produced, each retailing for 2,100 euros (\$2,400).

Portuguese industrial group Visabeira bought out Bordallo Pinheiro and has made good use of the distribution network of Vista Alegre which it also bought and is another internationally renowned Portuguese ceramics brand dating back to 1824. “After a first phase of reorganization, we are entering the growth phase,” administrator Nuno Barra tells AFP. The Bordallo factory employed 180 workers when it was bought out but is expanding the payroll to 255 to help cover teams working a night shift too. By year-end, it hopes to have opened its first international boutiques in Paris and Madrid and aims to lift exports to three quarters from a current 50 percent of overall production.

### 'Creative genius'

“We place great value on brand and the quality of a product which continues to be made according to the notions of the artist originally behind it all—Raphael Bordallo Pinheiro,” Barra says. Bordallo Pinheiro was a well-known journalist, caricaturist and ceramicist who founded the company in Caldas da Rainha after first being attracted by its therapeu-



A worker glues several bananas to a bunch to create a piece by the designer Nini Andrade Silva.



Pieces depicting Portuguese Fado singer Amalia Rodrigues, caricatured by the designer Antonio Antunes, wait for the painting process at Bordallo Pinheiro Factory.



## Lifestyle | Features

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tic thermal waters. “He was captivated by the alchemy of ceramics as he found in it a means of expressing his creative genius” in a region rich in top quality clay, as well as traditional craftsmanship, says current artistic director Elsa Rebelo. His creativity was inspired by naturalist painters but also owes much to French Huguenot potter Bernard Palissy.

It was Bordallo Pinheiro who created the famous “andorinhas” swallow sculptures, manifestations of which adorn many Portuguese houses as a symbol of family and home. Another notable creation was his Beethoven vase, a baroque-style offering, 2.6 metres (8.5 feet) tall, which stands outside Rio de Janeiro’s National Museum of Fine Arts. Bordallo Pinheiro invented the cartoon character “Ze Povinho”, (literally Joe Public), whose anti-establishment, man-of-the-people mockery made him a popular favourite in newspapers and magazines. When the firm was teetering, one of Portugal’s leading artists, Joana Vasconcelos, stepped in with several orders and used some of the oeuvres bought in her own work. She would go on to become a guest-designer for the company, bringing its range to a younger, trendier clientele. — AFP



A worker enamels ceramic bowls.



A worker turns a clay lizard out at Bordallo Pinheiro Factory in Caldas da Rainha.



A worker paints a ceramic piece depicting Portuguese writer Fernando Pessoa, caricatured by the designer Antonio Antunes, at Bordallo Pinheiro Factory.



Ceramic pieces depicting lobsters are prepared for the kiln at Bordallo Pinheiro Factory.



A worker stocks ceramic pieces at Bordallo Pinheiro Factory in Caldas da Rainha.



Finished ceramic pieces are pictured after being fired in the kiln at Bordallo Pinheiro Factory.



Workers dry ceramic pieces at Bordallo Pinheiro Factory in Caldas da Rainha.

## Chinese village asks Dutch court to order mummy's return

Chinese villagers embroiled in a fight over the ownership of a 1,000-year-old mummified monk made a passionate plea Wednesday for their idol to be returned as the case wrapped up in a Dutch court. The small eastern Chinese village of Yangchun has accused Dutch collector Oscar van Overeem of buying the stolen Buddha statue containing the remains of the monk in Hong Kong in 1996. “We grew up with the statue. He was there day and night. He is our spiritual leader,” Yangchun village spokesman Lin Wen Qing said shortly after lawyers closed their arguments at the Amsterdam District Court. “For us, it is the most important thing to have him back,” said Lin, 42, speaking through an interpreter. He was one of six villagers who travelled from Yangchun to attend the hearing in the Dutch capital.

The village is asking Dutch judges to rule that the human-sized Buddha statue be returned to the temple from where it was stolen in late 1995, after being worshipped there for centuries.

Missing for two decades the statue, called the “Zhanggong Patriarch” resurfaced when villagers in 2015 recognized it as part of a display at the “Mummy World Exhibition” at Budapest’s Natural History Museum. A scan of the statue revealed a skeleton inside—said to be that of a Chinese monk who lived nearly a millennium ago during China’s Song dynasty.

The statue was subsequently withdrawn from the exhibition. The villagers are demanding that the statue be given back in a closely-watched case which could mark one of the first successful retrievals of Chinese relics in court. They said they were convinced that the statue which Van Overeem bought was their missing idol. “There is a very special bond between the villagers and the statue,” their lawyer Jan Holthuis told the judges. But Van Overeem again reiterated in court that he did not have the statue, which he said he exchanged in a swap with a Chinese collector in 2015.

“I swapped the statue in a transaction. I was happy to hear

that it would go back to China,” Van Overeem told the judges, adding he did not know the identity of the collector with whom he did the swap. He also furiously refuted Holthuis’ claims that he was in fact a dealer in Chinese art, and bought the statue in Hong Kong in 1996 — a known destination for stolen artifacts. “I’m an architect and a passionate collector. But I’m not a dealer,” an angry Van Overeem said. He said he did not know where the statue was. But Holthuis disagreed.

He accused Van Overeem and the statue’s new owner of “conspiring to make the Buddha mummy disappear to make sure that the claimants cannot take action.” Judges in the case are due to hand down a ruling on December 12. Previous retrievals of Chinese artifacts have been done through diplomatic channels. Beijing in recent years has vehemently protested the sale of artifacts that it said were stolen, particularly in the 19th century when European powers began encroaching on Chinese territory. — AFP



## TV review

# 'The Haunting of Hill House'

*Spoiler-free review of Netflix's no. 1 trending television show*



By Aakash Bakaya

What makes 'The Haunting of Hill House' (HoHH) work is its strict adherence to its characters. Nowadays almost every television series makes sure to populate its episodes with ensemble casts. A diverse cast makes sure that the audience finds relatable or redeemable features in at least one or more of the characters. This usually creates a show that is constantly juggling its main plot with a bunch of inter-connected side stories. 'HoHH' is guilty of this as well - at least at the start. It takes a while for the characters to really get fleshed out but as they do, it begins to pick up the pace and re-focuses on the thrilling story that creates a highly memorable season of television and one of the best horror shows to have ever graced the format.

On the surface, adapting Shirley Jackson's iconic novel would be an easy sell for TV or film that is if the previous adaptation wasn't absolute garbage. 1999's 'The Haunting' starring Owen Wilson and Catherine Zeta Jones still leaves a bad taste in the mouth for

many (including myself). But today, with both television and film seeing a new resurgence of Stephen King stories and horror being dialed back to its old-school roots - it was an ideal time for 'The Haunting of Hill House' to be retold for a new generation. Creator Mike Flanagan did a great job in that regard and put together a tense, tightly-knit tale of ghosts we find in haunted houses and the ones that stay trapped within ourselves. But for as good as the overall package may be, it's not without its faults.

#### Tragic beginnings

'HoHH' starts off on the wrong foot. The first episode is a decent opener, setting up the main family of seven, the dreadful events of their past in Hill House and a climax that will have you slamming on the 'next episode' button. These events are pieced together through numerous and lengthy flash-backs that form the main horror aspects of the show. Both the present and the past however are not always in chronological order so paying a bit more attention to the details not only keeps you on track but also has a nice payoff

at the end. The flash-backs also juxtapose nicely compared to the mundane, almost dreary look and feel of the events taking place in the present timeline. In fact, the present is so mundane at times initially that it almost kills the season entirely.

Netflix, in this way, kind of works as its own worst enemy particularly when it comes to making the audience stay interested with a series. With a multitude of options comes an even greater multitude of distractions and episodes 2-4 are so slowly paced you might feel like you're wasting your time. These episodes follow the 'Game of Thrones' formula of having each one stick to an individual character but the problem here is simply the fact that the characters themselves are just not that interesting at first. It plods along detailing their lives before and during a tragic occurrence befalls them and it doesn't truly open up until it moves past it. The bombshell that drops in the fifth episode isn't a huge twist by most means as clues are sprinkled throughout if you're observant enough but it sets up a fantastic second half to the season.

The five siblings of the Crain family are all radically different





from one another but unfortunately the writing never really makes them feel like they are more than the sum of their parts. The eldest Steve is an acclaimed novelist who made his big break writing about the events of Hill House much to the dismay of his sisters. Shirley is in charge of a funeral home and trying to make ends meet, Theo is a child therapist with a unique almost superhero-like special ability, Luke is a dysfunctional heroin addict and seen as a major hindrance to the rest of the family while Eleanor is unable to shake off the nightmares of her past and develops a manic depression of sorts. On paper, they sound like conflicted and interesting individuals but Flanagan (who also directs all of the episodes and writes a few) is unable to really develop them further than their base characteristics. Luke's heroin struggles and Theo's "radical" tendencies are especially rather lackluster. Ultimately what really connects them to each other and to their estranged father is the trauma from the summer they spent at Hill House. Their mother killed herself in that house and 'HoHH' is not only about why and how that happened, but also about the results of it.

#### Fear and regret are sisters

Hill House is full of ghosts and lingering spirits. They bang on walls, open doors and conjure up visions of death both old and forthcoming. But the 'Haunting' in the title doesn't only refer to them. It also refers to the fears and regrets we associate with the passing away of a loved one. It is a terrible burden to lose a family member and the show takes the time to reflex on that process.



Various stages of the grieving process are explored and a good chunk of screen time is given to the main characters to let them take it all in. It was a route I didn't expect it to take as the opening episodes seemed to be setting up a bigger, more bombastic narrative - but it doesn't go there. The timelines eventually settle down chronologically and the episodes become more concise and nerve racking. Suddenly the fate of the entire family is up in the

air and the decisions they take feel all the more impactful as the plot moves up a gear.

The actual horror elements on the other hand were a hit and miss. If you are into traditional ghost stories some scenes might really get under your skin but I doubt most modern horror fans will react to anything more than a jump or two. The scares work really well at the beginning with a mix of both old-school and more modern techniques but they are eventually dialed down and almost taken out completely by the end. This coincides with the overall themes of the story and progression of the characters and the fact that the show becomes intentionally less scary as it goes on may frustrate some more than others. That's not to say the last few episodes are a bore, far from it. They're actually the best of the bunch with a finale that wraps everything up extremely well instead of opting for a more open-ended finish.

'The Haunting of Hill House' deals with some heavy and serious subject matters that may not be everyone's cup of tea. A stellar second half makes up for a sloppy start and as much of this review implies - you should definitely stick with it till the end. Top notch production values with some superb special effects can't hide the shoddy writing at times and the acting is all over the place more often than not but it stays true to the compelling and psychological nature of the original novel. It won't scar you or make you think twice before putting off the lights but it does enough to make you question the facets of our nature we usually tend to leave alone and for that it is a success.





Lifestyle | Travel

# Get cultured in Bridgetown:

## 8 ways to explore Barbados' historic capital



Popular waterfront at the Careenage

It's easy to see why Bridgetown is a popular cruise stop. The Careenage is an Instagram-worthy scene of bridges and a boardwalk running along a river dotted with sailboats and catamarans, while waterfront cafes offer sweeping views over the city's Parliament Square. Across the water, bustling colonial-era streets are lined with pastel-colored duty free malls and warehouses turned discount stores, and alleys lure pedestrians towards fruit carts or souvenir trinkets.

Bridgetown remains the heart of Barbados' history. It was Britain's most lucrative port for nearly three centuries through sugar cane plantation and slavery, and thus its most prized and protected possession. The city's original streetscape, designed in 1657, has barely changed since then - and that's what earned Bridgetown an inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2012. Original street names remain, too, like Liverpool, Lancaster, and Swan - despite a string of at least 10 fires between 1668 and 1993 which destroyed a good part of the city's early history and official records. Fascinating stories unfold as you walk - if you know where to look. Here's how to get cultured in downtown Bridgetown.

### Explore the Careenage's past

It's hard to imagine, but the city's popular waterfront area, also known as Constitution River, was once a chaotic scene where mercantile ships unloaded and loaded goods between long-haul journeys. Boats were 'careened' to be cleaned and women lined the docks with baskets of foods for sale. The Careenage was England's first port of call on the Transatlantic Slave Trade crossing and became its most important and valuable harbor, bigger than Amsterdam and Boston.

As you stroll the boardwalk, pause at the commemorative plaque honoring the 'strength and resilience' of those enslaved Africans transported across the Atlantic - on a direct path from West Africa to Barbados - and who 'at or near this site,' were sold as slaves. They were taken across the street from the Careenage to be auctioned off to plantation owners. The plaque also honors those who fought to abolish slavery on the island.

Continuing east leads to the Chamberlain Bridge - originally a wooden bridge when the British found it in the 1600s as they settled in Bridgetown (a clear sign that the Amerindians were

there first). It was rebuilt in 1872 as a swing bridge to allow the passage of ships and modernized in 2006. Stop along the railing and take in the panoramic views of Parliament Square before continuing a few steps west to Independence Park. Taking a break in this verdant waterfront square is a favorite local pastime. The park also features a nine-foot tall statue of Barbados' Father of Independence, Errol Walton Barrow.

On the other side of the Chamberlain Bridge, you'll find the controversial bronze statue of Admiral Nelson at Heroes' Square - erected in 1813, it precedes the one built in London by at least two decades. Heroes' Square, however, was once the site of 'the Cage,' a wood and wire prison with whipping post, where plantation owners inflicted brutal punishments on runaway slaves and locked them up in public view. Many Barbadians see this small plaza as a shrine commemorating the suffering of their ancestors. It's quite the controversy, then, that Lord Nelson's figure - a man who hated Barbados and was vehemently opposed to abolition of slavery - remains standing on such a sacred location.

For a guided, vibrant historical tour of Bridgetown's Careenage and surrounding streets, arrange for a two-hour walk





Five shipwrecks at shallow depth make scuba diving an absolute treat at Carlisle Bay

with renowned Barbadian author and expert Morris Greenidge. Sights will come to life through his storytelling, making you feel as if you've plunged back three centuries. When you're ready to rest up, the historic Waterfront Cafe, overlooking the Careenage, serves up cou-cou and flying fish with a refreshing Bajan lemonade.

#### 'Lime' on Carlisle Bay

A five-minute walk from the downtown Careenage area, lining the southern edge of the city and running over a mile, Carlisle Bay is Barbados' most stunning body of water, lined with pristine white sand and an iridescent Caribbean sea.

Ironically, it was also the first body of water that slave ships crossed when arriving from the Atlantic, starting around 1645. Today, it's a protected marine park - you can go scuba diving to explore up to five shipwrecks here at shallow depths, from former military boats to sunken drug running vessels. Snorkeling right off the beach will also lead to turtle spotting (there are marked buoys for safety). A favorite of locals and visitors from nearby hotels, crowds come here to relax in the shade of colorful umbrellas, play soccer, lunch on fish cutter sandwiches from Cuz's Fish shack or build sandcastles with their little ones.

#### See the birthplace of rum on Roebuck Street

Stand on the corner of Roebuck and Palmetto streets, a triangular spot directly opposite the Police Station, and you can brag that you've seen where rum was first discovered.

A vendor stands there daily with her fast food cart, as crowds shuffle back and forth under the hot sun. But this is where, in the 17th century, Captain Rumball owned a tavern. The legend goes that while searching for an empty shipping barrel -

all goods came and left Barbados in wooden barrels - he stumbled on one that reeked of alcohol. After tasting its content, he asked his friends to try it and realized he'd stumbled on a concoction worth selling (the barrel had been filled with sugar cane that fermented over time). And thus, the first of the Caribbean's signature beverage was served and sold at Captain Rumball's tavern on Bridgetown's Roebuck Street. The drink was so powerful and popular that an edict came in 1645 from the King of England, stating that the Royal Navy must have a tot (or half pint) of Barbados' rum on a daily basis. The drink was eventually renamed after its finder, but shortened to 'Rum'.

Over time, Roebuck Street became home to the highest concentration of rum bottlers and blenders in the world, with nearly each building housing a rum merchant. Walk past that famous corner, south of Palmetto Street, until you hit its edge and end up facing Old City Bar, a ramshackle, signature red-painted rum shop, for a swig of rum with a view of Parliament Square.

#### Go on a Bajan walking food tour

History buffs and food lovers alike will thoroughly enjoy the three-hour, leisurely 'Original Bajan Walking Food Tour' around downtown Bridgetown with Lickrish Food Tours. Tour leader and historian Claudette Levi-Farnum shares her island's trajectory along key sights, in part illustrated through black and white photographs, while you pop into various locales for a taste of eight classic Bajan dishes.

Barbecued pigtailed, fish cakes, Bajan chicken soup, flying fish and cou-cou are a few of the highlights dished out of cafe counters, food trucks and second-story cafeteria-style restaurants hidden from plain sight. RYANNE'S in particular, is a standout for its wrap-around balcony seating with views over lively Broad

Street, while Mustors is as historic as the city itself, dating back several generations.

#### Shop on Broad and Swan Streets

Strolling Bridgetown's busiest shopping streets feels like taking a step back in centuries, despite the familiar sounds of roadside vendors clamoring and haggling. Broad Street, the city's main shopping thoroughfare, is where British merchants used to trade. It's lined with duty-free stores, local restaurants and mini-malls. Off Broad, Jewish immigrants ran their commerce on the pedestrian-only Swan Street (formerly known as Jew Street, reflecting the importance of the Jewish-owned businesses in the area at the time).

Their shops were on the ground floor and their homes above. Today you'll find Swan Street swarming with shoppers, breadfruit or coconut water carts and clothing or shoe stores, among others.

On a side alley off Swan, hidden from plain view, is Busby Alley - clogged with stands displaying cheap sunglasses, fabrics and other souvenir trinkets. This block is where freed Africans used to sell value goods such as breads, cakes, or puddings (they weren't allowed to sell ground provisions because they had to be tied to a plantation to get a license to sell, even after emancipation).

#### Tour the oldest synagogue and mikveh in the Americas

When Sephardic Jews escaped Dutch Brazil and the Portuguese Inquisition in the 17th century, they took refuge in the Caribbean region. Those who picked secluded Barbados built the Nidhe Israel Synagogue in 1654, the oldest in the Americas,



## Lifestyle | Travel

with an adjacent cemetery. Part of Bridgetown's UNESCO designation - the area is known as the Synagogue Historic District - the original synagogue suffered earthquake damage in 1831 and was rebuilt in 1833. Despite their small group size, Barbados' Jewish population are credited for advancing the island's sugar production technology faster than the rest of the region and introducing new methods such as wind power, manuring and using bagasse as fuel for the sugar factories.

The highlight in this historic compound, aside from the synagogue, is an adjacent 16th century, full-size mikveh - also the first built and used in the Americas. The mikveh is a natural, sacred pool in which married Jewish women immerse their bodies seven days after their menstrual cycle ends, in order to restore 'purity' and begin conceiving again. The women would repeat this process until they were pregnant. Here at Nidhe Israel's, fresh groundwater flows in and out of the four corners of the coral stone walled chamber, naturally filtering out any prior bath water. After touring the mikveh, head towards the modern, single-story museum building at the back. It's filled with images, maps and short video presentations on the history of Barbados' Jewish immigrants. Look down at your feet, too, as glass floor enclosures display native artifacts from the island's first inhabitants.

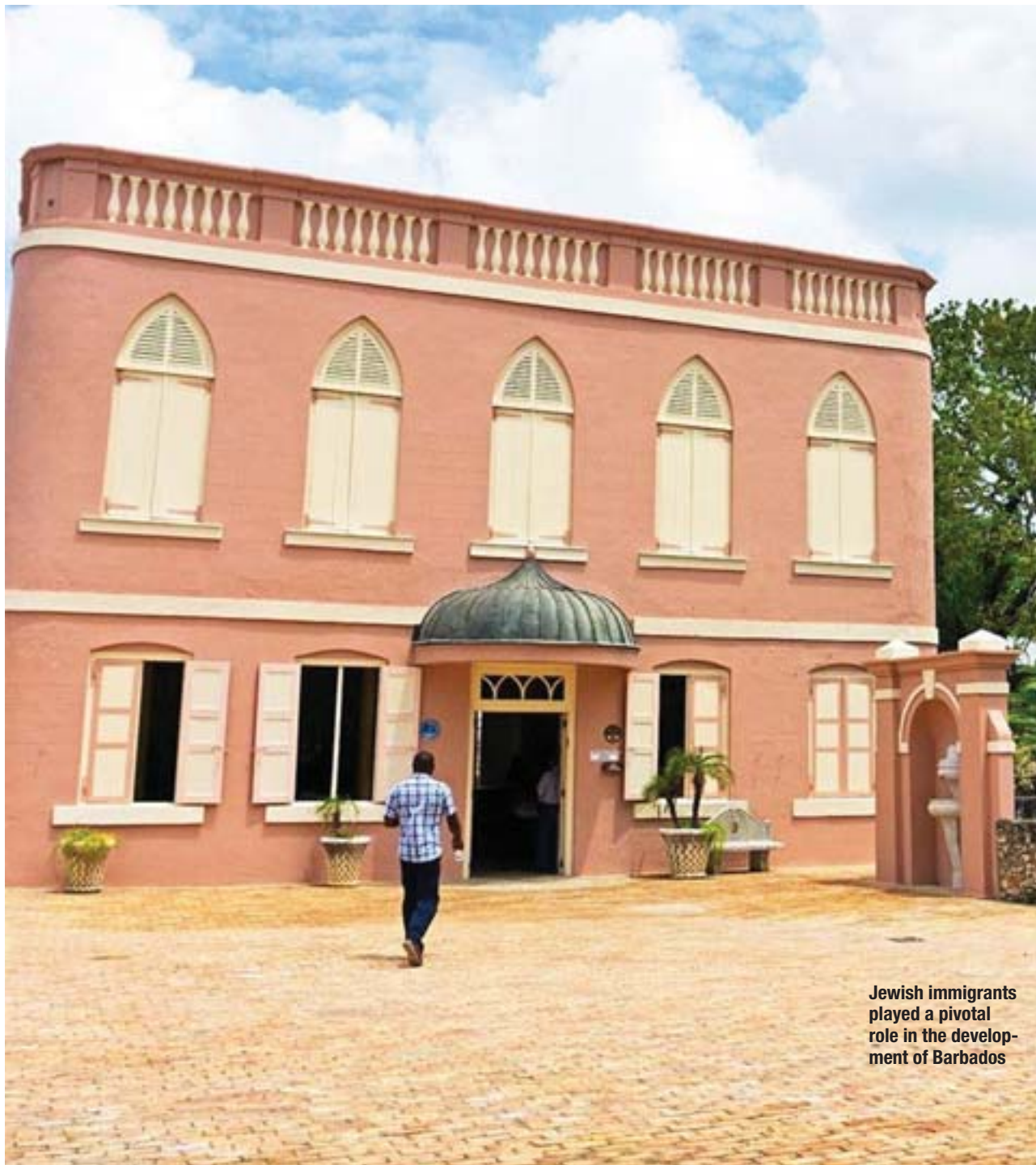
#### Visit St Mary's Church

Built in the 19th century and one of the oldest in the city, St Mary's Church is the resting place of Bajan National Hero Samuel Jackman Prescod. Prescod was the first non-white to be elected to the House of the Assembly and enter Parliament in 1843. He's credited with obtaining the right to vote for Barbados' free blacks. You can see his portrait etched on the B\$10 bill. Across St. Mary's Church, locals relax on shaded benches in Jubilee Gardens, once the first hotel district in Bridgetown.

#### Pay tribute to Barbados' only National Heroine

Sarah Ann Gill is the first and only female among Barbados' national heroes - a title earned for being one of the earliest defenders of the right to freedom of religion during the days of slavery. The daughter of black and white parents in 1795, Gill was a practicing Methodist in the 19th century, a religion that was becoming widely disliked by the British for challenging the island's slave society. In 1823, a white mob destroyed the Methodist chapel in the capital, but Gill was not deterred. She began holding church meetings in her home and persisted despite receiving death threats.

Despite prosecution for her unlawful assemblies, Gill continued to uphold her right to religious freedom. After much suffering, Gill eventually secured a clear declaration from the Crown of the right to religious tolerance across all of England's possessions. A Methodist Chapel was built on land she purchased and donated to the church. You can view it today at St. James Street Methodist Church. While there, head towards the cemetery at the back of the church to pay your respects to this feisty Bajan heroine. ([www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com))



Jewish immigrants played a pivotal role in the development of Barbados



Food tours have become a tasty way to highlight Barbados history



St Mary's church is the final resting place of Barbados' national hero, Samuel Jackman Prescod



## Comic

### Word Search

#### Golf

Find and circle all of the golf words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a Mark Twain quotation.

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

- |           |               |             |              |
|-----------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| ALBATROSS | CLUBHOUSE     | GREEN       | ROUGH        |
| APPROACH  | CLUBS         | GRIP        | RULES        |
| BACK NINE | CONDOR        | GROSS SCORE | SHOT         |
| BACKSPIN  | COURSE        | HANDICAP    | SLICE        |
| BALL      | DIVOT         | HOLE IN ONE | STROKE       |
| BERDIE    | DRIVER        | HOLES       | SWING        |
| BOGEY     | DRIVING RANGE | HOOK        | TEE OFF      |
| BUNKER    | EAGLE         | IRON        | TREES        |
| CADDOSE   | FAIRWAY       | NET SCORE   | WATER HAZARD |
| CART      | FLAGSTICK     | PAR         | WEDGE        |
| CHIP      | FORE          | PUTTER      | WOOD         |

### Yesterday's Solution

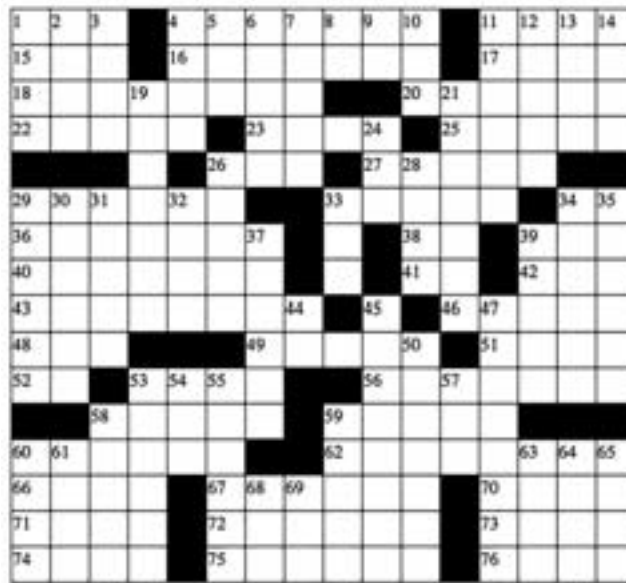
#### The Golden Girls

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

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

The hidden phrase is: THE GOLDEN PALACE

### Crossword 2050



#### ACROSS

- The capital and largest city of Japan.
- Form a mental image of something that is not present or that is not the case.
- An ancient Hebrew unit of dry measure equal to about a bushel.
- Someone who is morally reprehensible.
- Someone who works in a coal mine.
- British artist and writer of nonsense verse (1812-1888).
- A card game in which each player is dealt 6 cards and discards one or two to make up the crib.
- Any member of Athapaskan tribes that migrated to the southwestern desert (from Arizona to Texas and south into Mexico).
- A British imperial capacity measure (liquid or dry) equal to 1/60th fluid dram or 0.059194 cubic centimeters.
- In bed.
- United States anatomist who identified four pituitary hormones and discovered vitamin E (1882-1971).
- A nonmetallic element belonging to the halogens.
- Perennial plants resembling yucca.
- Lacking eyes or eyelike features.
- A radioactive element of the actinide series.
- Straggling shrub with narrow leaves and conspicuous red flowers in dense globular racemes.
- An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
- Being one more than thirteen.
- Termination of pregnancy.
- An indehiscent fruit derived from a single ovary having one or many seeds within a fleshy wall or pericarp.
- A groove or furrow (especially one in soft earth caused by wheels).
- A sheet or band of fibrous connective tissue separating or binding together muscles and organs etc.
- A condition requiring relief.
- Not out.
- Important European leguminous forage plant with trifoliate leaves and blue-violet flowers grown widely as a pasture and hay crop.
- United States evangelical preacher famous as a mass evangelist (born in 1918).
- Any of numerous carnivorous dinosaurs of the Triassic to Cretaceous with short forelimbs that walked or ran on strong hind legs.
- A local and well-defined elevation of the land.
- A person who delivers a speech or oration.
- Plant with an elongated head of broad stalked leaves resembling celery.
- A person who delivers a speech or oration.
- Plant with an elongated head of broad stalked leaves resembling celery.
- A domed or vaulted recess or projection on a building especially the east end of a church.
- A tranquilizer (trade name Navane) used to treat schizophrenia.
- Having relatively few calories.
- A drop of the clear salty saline solution secreted by the lacrimal glands.
- Regarded with deep or rapturous love (especially as if for a god).
- Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.

#### DOWN

- Electronic warfare undertaken to insure effective friendly use of the electromagnetic spectrum in spite of the enemy's use of electronic warfare.
- An Iranian language spoken in Afghanistan.
- (Norse mythology) Ruler of the Aesir.
- A ballistic missile that is capable of traveling from one continent to another.
- Extinct flightless bird of New Zealand.
- Primitive chlorophyll-containing mainly aquatic eukaryotic organisms lacking true stems and roots and leaves.
- Fleshy spore-bearing inner mass of e.g. a puffball or stinkhorn.
- Being one more than one.
- A colorless odorless gaseous element that give a red glow in a vacuum tube.
- A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.
- A tricyclic antidepressant drug (trade name Elavil) with serious side effects.
- Wood of a pecan tree.
- German chemist who was co-discoverer with Lise Meitner of nuclear fission (1879-1968).
- (Greek mythology) Greek god of war.
- Having or using two filaments.
- A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
- Small cubes with 1 to 6 spots on the faces.
- A river of southwestern Africa that rises in central Angola and flows east and then north (forming part of the border between Angola and Congo) and continuing northwest through Congo to empty into the Congo River on the border between Congo and Republic of the Congo.
- Toward the mouth or oral region.
- A Japanese supervisor.
- Dormouse of southern Europe and northern Africa.
- Remaining after all deductions.
- A solution containing a phosphate buffer.
- An agency of the United Nations responsible for programs to aid education and the health of children and mothers in developing countries.
- A state in the western United States.
- An ancient musical horn made from the horn of a ram.
- Distinguish oneself.
- A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.
- A foghorn that makes a signal consisting of two tones.
- Large arboreal boa of tropical South America.
- Changed in form or character without becoming something else.
- Austrian composer (1860-1911).
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
- Shrubby plant with aromatic grayish-green leaves used as a cooking herb.
- Nonresinous wood of a fir tree.
- Strong lightweight wood of the balsa tree used especially for floats.
- Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
- Fully developed or matured and ready to be eaten or used.
- A roughly cylindrical that is vessel open at the top.
- An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
- A collection of facts from which conclusions may be drawn.
- A unit of absorbed ionizing radiation equal to 100 ergs per gram of irradiated material.
- 100 avos equal 1 pataca.

### Yesterday's Solution

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

### Daily SuDoku

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

### Yesterday's Solution

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



## TV Listings



01:25 The Saint  
03:35 Double Trouble  
05:10 Mine  
07:05 San Andreas Quake  
08:40 The Saint  
10:45 Double Trouble  
12:20 Taken Heart  
14:00 Now You See Me 2  
16:20 Reign Of Fire  
18:10 Thor  
20:15 The Osiris Child  
22:00 Training Day



00:50 Whale Wars  
01:45 Killer Whales  
02:40 After The Attack  
03:35 Into The Shark Bite  
04:25 Whale Wars  
05:15 Killer Whales  
06:02 Wildest Indochina  
06:49 Pit Bulls & Parolees  
07:36 Echo And The Elephants Of Amboseli  
08:00 Echo And The Elephants Of Amboseli  
08:25 Rugged Justice  
09:15 Animal Cops Houston  
10:10 Whale Wars  
11:05 Killer Whales  
12:00 Wildest Indochina  
12:55 Pit Bulls & Parolees  
13:50 Into The Shark Bite  
14:45 Animal Precinct  
15:40 Killer Whales  
16:35 After The Attack  
17:30 Rugged Justice  
18:25 Animal Cops Houston  
19:20 Shark Island  
20:15 Vet Gone Wild  
21:10 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet  
22:05 Life On Earth: A New Prehistory  
23:00 After The Attack  
23:55 Pit Bulls & Parolees



00:15 Friday Night Dinner  
00:40 Mum  
01:10 The Detectorists: Christmas Special 2015  
01:40 Holby City  
02:40 Doctors  
03:10 Doctors  
03:40 EastEnders  
04:10 Father Brown  
05:00 I Want My Wife Back  
05:30 I Want My Wife Back  
06:00 Doctors  
06:30 EastEnders  
07:00 Holby City  
08:00 Casualty  
08:50 Father Brown  
09:40 Death In Paradise  
10:40 Casualty  
11:30 Casualty  
12:25 Holby City  
13:20 Father Brown  
14:10 Death In Paradise  
15:05 Casualty  
16:00 Doctors  
16:30 Doctors  
17:00 Doctors  
17:30 Doctors  
18:00 Doctors  
18:30 Shakespeare And Hathaway: Private Investigators  
19:20 Shakespeare And Hathaway: Private Investigators  
20:10 Line Of Duty  
21:15 Ordeal By Innocence  
22:10 The Last Post  
23:10 Father Brown

03:50 The First 48  
04:45 Cold Case Files  
05:30 Homicide Hunter  
06:15 Homicide: Hours To Kill  
07:00 Crimes That Shook Australia  
08:00 It Takes A Killer  
08:20 The First 48  
09:05 Cold Case Files  
09:50 Homicide Hunter  
10:35 Homicide: Hours To Kill  
11:30 Crimes That Shook Australia  
12:25 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence  
13:20 Cold Case Files  
14:16 Evil Up Close  
15:10 It Takes A Killer  
15:40 It Takes A Killer  
16:05 The First 48  
17:00 Homicide Hunter  
18:00 Crimes That Shook Australia  
19:00 Jo Frost On Britain's Killer Kids  
20:00 Jo Frost On Britain's Killer Kids  
21:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill  
22:00 It Takes A Killer



00:05 Tosh.0  
00:30 Key And Peele  
00:55 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
01:20 Another Period  
01:45 Russell Howard's Stand Up Central  
02:10 Tosh.0  
02:35 Key And Peele  
03:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
03:25 Tosh.0  
03:50 Tosh.0  
04:15 Sweat Inc.  
05:05 House Of Food  
05:55 Workaholics  
07:15 Lip Sync Battle UK  
08:05 Lip Sync Battle  
08:55 Sweat Inc.  
09:45 The Dude Perfect Show  
10:35 House Of Food  
11:25 Lip Sync Battle  
12:15 Friends  
13:30 Kroll Show  
14:20 Impractical Jokers  
15:10 Workaholics  
16:30 Impractical Jokers  
17:45 Takeshis Castle Thailand  
19:00 Lip Sync Battle  
19:25 Lip Sync Battle  
19:50 Friends  
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
21:30 Amy Schumer-Mark Normand: Don't Be Yourself  
22:25 Martha And Snoop Potluck Dinner Party  
22:50 Tosh.0  
23:15 Tosh.0  
23:40 Carlos Mencia: No Strings Attached



00:30 NASA's Unexplained Files  
01:20 How It's Made  
01:45 How It's Made  
02:10 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101  
03:00 Tanked  
03:50 Ultimate Survival  
04:40 Weather Gone Viral  
05:30 NASA's Unexplained Files  
06:20 How It's Made  
06:40 How It's Made  
07:00 Destroyed In Seconds  
07:25 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
07:50 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101  
08:40 How It's Made  
09:05 How It's Made  
09:30 Tanked  
10:20 Ultimate Survival  
11:10 Destroyed In Seconds  
11:35 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
12:00 Rip Off Food  
12:50 Weather Gone Viral  
13:40 NASA's Unexplained Files  
14:30 The Food Inspectors  
15:20 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101  
16:10 Country House Rescue  
17:00 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101  
17:50 Tanked  
18:40 Destroyed In Seconds

19:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
19:30 Ultimate Ninja Challenge  
20:20 The Carbonaro Effect  
20:45 The Carbonaro Effect  
21:10 How It's Made  
21:35 How It's Made  
22:00 Country House Rescue  
22:50 Ultimate Survival  
23:40 Ultimate Ninja Challenge



00:50 Black And Blue  
01:45 Evil Stepmothers  
02:40 Evil Lives Here  
03:35 Broken Trust  
04:30 The Perfect Murder  
05:25 Murder Calls  
06:20 The Perfect Suspect  
07:10 I Almost Got Away With It  
08:00 California Investigator  
08:25 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones  
09:15 Disappeared  
10:10 Bad Blood  
11:05 The Perfect Suspect  
12:00 Murder Calls  
12:55 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones  
13:50 I Almost Got Away With It  
14:45 Murder Calls  
15:40 The Perfect Suspect  
16:35 The Perfect Murder  
17:30 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones  
18:25 Disappeared  
19:20 I Almost Got Away With It  
20:15 Murder Calls  
21:10 The Perfect Suspect  
22:05 Evil Online  
23:00 The Devil Speaks  
23:55 Drew Peterson: The Wife Killer Cop?



00:10 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
00:35 Binny And The Ghost  
01:00 Hank Zipzer  
01:25 Alex & Co.  
01:45 Disney Mickey Mouse  
01:50 Evermoor Chronicles  
02:15 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
02:40 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
03:05 Binny And The Ghost  
03:30 Binny And The Ghost  
03:55 Hank Zipzer  
04:15 Disney Mickey Mouse  
04:20 Hank Zipzer  
04:45 Alex & Co.  
05:10 Alex & Co.  
05:35 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
06:00 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
06:25 Binny And The Ghost  
06:45 Disney Mickey Mouse  
06:50 Rolling With The Ronks  
07:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
07:25 Raven's Home  
07:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts  
07:55 Tangled: The Series  
08:20 Bunk'd  
08:45 K.C. Undercover  
09:10 Bizaardvark  
09:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
10:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
10:25 Tangled: The Series  
10:50 Tangled: The Series  
11:15 Bizaardvark  
11:40 Bizaardvark  
12:05 Liv And Maddie  
12:30 Liv And Maddie  
12:55 K.C. Undercover  
13:20 K.C. Undercover  
13:45 Hotel Transylvania: The Series  
14:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
14:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir

15:00 Hotel Transylvania: The Series  
15:15 Bunk'd  
15:40 K.C. Undercover  
16:05 Disney Mickey Mouse  
16:10 A.N.T. Farm  
16:35 Bizaardvark  
17:00 Freaky Friday  
18:40 Bunk'd  
19:05 K.C. Undercover  
19:30 Bizaardvark  
19:55 Descendants Wicked World  
20:00 Raven's Home  
20:25 Liv And Maddie  
20:50 K.C. Undercover  
21:15 Disney Mickey Mouse  
21:20 A.N.T. Farm  
21:45 Bizaardvark  
22:10 Hotel Transylvania: The Series  
22:35 Stuck In The Middle  
23:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
23:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
23:50 Lolirock



00:15 The Lion Guard  
00:45 Sofia The First  
01:10 Minnie's Bow-Toons  
01:15 Zou  
01:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
02:00 PJ Masks  
02:25 PJ Masks  
02:50 The Hive  
03:00 Zou  
03:15 Zou  
03:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
03:55 Henry Hugglemonster  
04:20 The Hive  
04:30 The Hive  
04:40 Zou  
04:55 Zou  
05:10 Zou  
05:25 The Hive  
05:35 The Hive  
05:45 Henry Hugglemonster  
06:00 Henry Hugglemonster  
06:15 Henry Hugglemonster  
06:30 Minnie's Bow-Toons  
06:35 The Hive  
06:45 PJ Masks  
07:00 PJ Masks  
07:15 PJ Masks  
07:30 PJ Masks  
08:00 Disney Muppet Babies  
08:20 Puppy Dog Pals  
08:35 PJ Masks  
08:55 Mickey And The Roadster Racers  
09:10 Mickey And The Roadster Racers  
09:29 Vampirina  
09:45 Vampirina  
10:00 Sofia The First  
10:30 Elena Of Avalor  
11:00 Puppy Dog Pals  
11:20 Puppy Dog Pals  
11:40 Puppy Dog Pals  
12:00 Disney Muppet Babies  
12:20 Paprika  
12:30 Paprika  
12:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
13:10 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
13:40 PJ Masks  
14:00 PJ Masks  
14:20 PJ Masks  
14:40 Paprika  
14:50 Paprika  
15:00 Claude  
15:20 Claude  
15:40 Trulli Tales  
15:55 Trulli Tales  
16:10 Paprika  
16:20 Paprika  
16:30 Vampirina  
16:50 Vampirina  
17:05 Vampirina  
17:25 Disney Muppet Babies  
17:40 Paprika  
17:50 Paprika  
18:00 Claude Shorts  
18:31 Puppy Dog Pals  
18:46 Puppy Dog Pals  
19:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers  
19:31 Vampirina  
19:45 Vampirina  
20:00 PJ Masks  
20:15 PJ Masks

20:30 The Lion Guard  
21:00 Sofia The First  
21:30 Elena Of Avalor  
22:00 Puppy Dog Pals  
22:15 Puppy Dog Pals  
22:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers  
22:45 Mickey And The Roadster Racers  
23:01 Vampirina  
23:20 Vampirina  
23:40 PJ Masks  
23:55 PJ Masks



00:15 Misfit Garage  
01:05 Cooper's Treasure  
01:50 Running Wild With Bear Grylls  
02:35 Virus: Invisible Killers  
03:20 Misfit Garage  
04:05 Alaska: The Last Frontier  
04:50 Dirty Jobs  
05:35 Storage Hunters UK  
06:00 Backyard Oil  
06:23 Beetle Crisis  
06:45 Storage Hunters UK  
07:10 How Do They Do It?  
07:35 Alaska: The Last Frontier  
08:20 Backyard Oil  
08:45 Beetle Crisis  
09:10 Dirty Jobs  
09:55 Alaska: The Last Frontier  
10:45 Dirty Jobs  
11:30 Misfit Garage  
12:20 Backyard Oil  
12:43 Beetle Crisis  
13:05 Storage Hunters UK  
13:30 How Do They Do It?  
13:55 Dirty Jobs  
14:40 Misfit Garage  
15:30 Cooper's Treasure  
16:15 Running Wild With Bear Grylls  
17:05 Virus: Invisible Killers  
17:50 Abandoned Engineering  
18:40 Sinking Cities  
19:25 Misfit Garage  
20:15 Misfit Garage  
21:00 Diesel Brothers  
21:50 Street Outlaws: No Prep Kings (Special)  
23:30 Gold Rush



00:15 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
00:35 Booster  
01:00 Booster  
01:25 Counterfeit Cat  
01:45 Counterfeit Cat  
02:10 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
02:35 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
03:00 Booster  
03:20 Booster  
03:45 Dude That's My Ghost  
04:10 Dude That's My Ghost  
04:35 Counterfeit Cat  
05:00 Marvel's Guardians Of The Galaxy  
05:29 Marvel's Avengers Assemble  
06:00 Marvel's Spider-Man  
06:29 Big Hero 6 The Series  
07:00 Milo Murphy's Law  
07:29 Big City Greens  
08:00 Marvel's Spider-Man  
08:31 Marvel's Spider-Man  
09:00 Phineas And Ferb  
09:29 Phineas And Ferb  
10:00 Kickin' It  
10:29 Kickin' It  
11:00 Big Hero 6 The Series  
11:29 Big Hero 6 The Series  
12:00 Lab Rats  
12:29 Lab Rats  
13:00 Phineas And Ferb  
13:29 Furiki Wheels  
14:00 Disney 11  
14:29 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
16:29 Supa Strikas  
17:00 Big City Greens  
17:29 Right Now Kapow  
18:00 Disney 11  
18:29 Lab Rats  
19:00 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything

19:29 Kickin' It  
20:00 Lab Rats: Bionic Action Hero  
20:50 Big Hero 6 The Series: Shorts  
21:00 Marvel's Spider-Man  
21:29 Star Wars Rebels  
22:00 Phineas And Ferb  
22:29 Phineas And Ferb  
23:00 Dude That's My Ghost  
23:25 Dude That's My Ghost  
23:50 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja



00:05 Model Squad  
00:55 Model Squad  
01:50 E! News  
02:50 Botched  
05:30 Celebrity Style Story  
06:00 Second Wives Club  
06:55 E! News Middle East  
07:10 Second Wives Club  
08:10 E! News: Daily Pop  
09:10 Botched  
12:00 E! News Middle East  
12:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
13:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
14:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
15:00 E! News Middle East  
15:15 E! News: Daily Pop  
16:15 Model Squad  
19:00 E! News  
20:00 Botched  
23:00 E! News Middle East  
23:15 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry



00:10 Alphabetical  
01:00 Emmerdale  
01:30 Coronation Street  
02:00 Coronation Street  
02:30 Don't Tell The Bride  
03:25 This Time Next Year  
04:20 A Right Royal Quiz  
05:15 Alphabetical  
06:15 Masterpiece With Alan Titchmarsh  
07:10 Don't Tell The Bride  
08:05 This Time Next Year  
09:00 A Right Royal Quiz  
09:55 Alphabetical  
10:55 Masterpiece With Alan Titchmarsh  
11:50 Don't Tell The Bride  
12:45 Emmerdale  
13:15 Emmerdale  
13:45 Coronation Street  
14:15 Masterpiece With Alan Titchmarsh  
15:10 Don't Tell The Bride  
16:00 The Voice Kids 2017  
17:15 The Voice Kids 2017  
18:25 Culinary Genius USA  
18:50 Emmerdale  
19:15 Emmerdale  
19:45 Coronation Street  
20:10 Don't Tell The Bride  
21:00 The Voice Kids 2017  
22:20 The Voice Kids 2017  
23:40 Coronation Street



00:00 Weapons At War  
01:00 Engineering Disasters  
02:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded  
03:00 In Search Of Aliens  
03:50 Ancient Aliens  
04:40 The Universe  
05:30 Weapons At War  
06:20 Engineering Disasters  
07:10 How 2 Win  
08:00 Engineering Disasters  
09:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded  
10:00 In Search Of Aliens  
11:00 Ancient Aliens  
12:00 The Universe  
13:00 Weapons At War  
14:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded  
15:00 In Search Of Aliens  
16:00 Ancient Aliens  
17:00 The Universe  
18:00 Weapons At War



00:00 Homicide Hunter  
01:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill  
02:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill  
02:55 The Killing Season



## Stars



### Aries (March 21-April 19)

You may find someone within your circle is exuding a type of energy that you perceive as harsh. This could leave you feeling drained and on edge. Emotionally this could cause a blockage in your world and leave you extremely frustrated. This may be a person you should just walk away from rather than facing head on. You will only bring yourself down by engaging in confrontation. This is a very challenging time for you and you may feel as if you are lacking support from your peers. This is a time to keep a positive attitude and focus on things in your life that you do have control over. Do not let anyone steal your joy, Aries. Stay positive and focused and press on.



### Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Your focus should be on keeping your own feelings and emotions in check. It is ok to listen to and help others in times of trouble. Be sure to not take things so personally. No one can succeed while carrying the weight of the world on their shoulders. Take time to step back and take in the beauty of the world that surrounds you. Feed your soul with positive vibes.



### Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You know what you want and you will not let anything stand in your way. You have your eye on the prize. This has gone way beyond a want. You are actually obsessed with obtaining what you want. You will let nothing stand in your way and nothing stop you. Your determination will be admired by those around you and you may be asked to help someone dear to you achieve goals they have set in their life.



### Cancer (June 21-July 22)

High energy and assertiveness find their way to you today. You are unstoppable. You are ready to face anything that comes your way. You are able to laugh at an obstacle that finds itself in your path. You have definitely lived and learned. Turning the problems you have faced into life lessons and learning from your mistakes have made you the person you are today. Cancer, you are invincible. Face this day with pride. You have truly learned to enjoy the ride.



### Leo (July 23-August 22)

You can see the future as clearly as you can see the past today. Memories of days gone by seem to flood in. You have come to appreciate the obstacles life has put in your path. You know that the struggles you have faced have only made you stronger. You may develop a strong bond with someone younger today. Your wisdom and life experience will be very beneficial when helping them with a situation they are dealing with.



### Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You may find yourself feeling emotionally detached from your surroundings. Ideas are what are important to you now. You may not have tolerance and find yourself distancing yourself from those who do not see things this way. You seem to be drawn to all that is unusual and a bit on the eccentric side. From the way you are beginning to think to the material possessions you wish to acquire, your taste is changing. You have a desire to travel and are focused on your relationships with friends and those who are in your social circle. Pay close attention to any red flags that seem to appear. Do not ignore these signs as they may be just the encouragement you need to take a detour and avoid some type of conflict or setback.



### Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your mind is sharp but your tongue is sharper. Use this sword wisely. Take a breath, count to ten. Today is a day to stop and think before you speak. Today, you will turn heads and be noticed. Your energy demands it. You are wise beyond your years and others will take note of this. A strong desire for independence may come over you. This will fuel your soul with a new found energy and you will stand tall and proud today. All that is different and unique will become very appealing to you. Today is your time to shine.



### Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You crave all that is new and different. What has been great motivation to you in the past may seem meaningless. You have been a creature of habit as long as your friends can remember. This new you and the new path you have chosen may catch others off guard. Follow your heart. This is your journey and your journey alone. Do what makes you happy and put yourself first for a change. You can not change the way others see you. Chase your dreams and do what sets your soul on fire.



### Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

As clearly as you can see what direction you want to be headed, you are also able to see the past today. Memories of days gone by seem to flood in. You have come to appreciate the obstacles life has put in your path. You know that the struggles you have faced have only made you stronger. You may develop a strong bond with someone younger today. Your wisdom and life experience will be very beneficial when helping them with a situation they are dealing with.



### Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

To see life through the innocent eyes of a child again is something you long for today. Back when life was simple and you knew the meaning of true happiness. Cast away your fears and embrace every beautiful moment of this day. By keeping a positive attitude, you will be able to face this day seeing the beauty in all that surrounds you. Know that any problem that comes your way can be faced head on and viewed as nothing more than one more lesson in your life. Find the positive in every negative situation and you may find yourself becoming an inspiration to others today.



### Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You may feel an emotional distance to your loved ones at this time. You are deeply focused on your ideas at this time. Personal concerns are trivial to you as your level of thinking and focus deepens to that which is new, edgy, and unusual. An abstract way of thinking. You are fascinated by the more eccentric things in life. You may find that you are surrounding yourself with like-minded individuals as you have no tolerance for those who do not appreciate your points of views on matters. Within the company of these individuals you find your communication skills to be on point today and feel as if you are in your element.



### Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Your relationships seem to take on a new importance for you now. You have come to realize you gather strength from the support of those closest to you. You may experience a bit of a wakeup call today. A refreshing reminder that helps you remember it is ok to put yourself first. You are not responsible for anyone's happiness but your own. Always putting others ahead of yourself after time can cause you to be unhappy. Take some time today to spoil yourself. This will be rewarding and satisfying to you.

## 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	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	Nigar	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 US	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

# Older dads' kids run higher health risks at birth: Study

**PARIS:** Newborns of fathers 45 and older are more likely to be underweight or wind up in intensive care, researchers reported yesterday, adding to the list of problems associated with older dads.

For fathers 55 and up, infants tended to score worse in a standardized test used to assess the baby's health immediately after birth. Even more startling—and harder to explain—was a heightened risk for women carrying the child of a man 55 and older of diabetes arising during pregnancy, according to a study published in the medical journal BMJ.

All these conclusions, the researchers cautioned, are based on an analysis of medical records rather than a controlled experiment, which means no firm conclusions about cause-

and-effect can be drawn. The overall risk of such outcomes also remained low, they added. But the findings held true even after other factors that might skew the results—age of the mother, maternal smoking, level of education—were taken into account, they said.

“A significant number of these negative birth outcomes were estimated to be prevented if older fathers had elected to have children before the age of 45,” the scientists concluded.

“The risk associated with advanced paternal age should be included in discussions regarding family planning and reproductive counselling.” The average age of fatherhood has been steadily rising in wealthy nations, as has the percentage of fathers above 45 or 55. In the United States, the number of births to men 40 and old-

er has almost doubled to nine percent over the last 40 years. For men over 50, the percentage has gone up from 0.5 to nearly one.

Similar trends are found in western Europe. In England, for example, fathers over 35 accounted for 40 percent of all births in 2003, compared with 25 percent in 1993.

To date, most research on the link between the age of parents and health outcomes in children has focused on older mothers. But recent studies suggest that being a father later in life may also be associated with higher risks in offspring of autism, genetic abnormalities and mental problems.

One possible culprit is thought to be changes with age in male reproductive cells that affects the way genes are expressed,

rather than the genes themselves.

To better understand the possible impact of advanced-age fatherhood on infants and mothers, researchers led by Michael Eisenberg of Stanford University combed through data on more than 40.5 million births in the United States from 2007 to 2016.

Children born of fathers 45 or older were on average 20 grams lighter, and had a 14 percent higher risk of low birth weight—less than 2.5 kilos (5.5 pounds) — than infants born to younger dads.

These children were also 14 percent more likely to be admitted to a neonatal intensive care unit, and had 18 percent higher odds of experiencing a seizure compared with infants of fathers aged 25 to 34. — AFP

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- ◆ Member of American cosmetic dermatology society.
- ◆ Reference reviewer of International Journal of Dermatology.

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Consultant interventional Cardiology  
Department: Heart & Vascular Center

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- ◆ Fellow of American College of Surgery
- ◆ Canadian Board of General Surgery
- ◆ Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians & Surgeons of Canada
- ◆ American Board of Colo - Rectal Surgery
- ◆ American Board of Surgical Critical Care

**Dr. Abdullah Al Haddad**  
Surgery Department  
Consultant General Surgery, Laparoscopic & Colo - Rectal Surgeon

**daralshifa**  
Email: aalhaddad@daralshifa.com

**Dr. Ahmad Alaeddine**  
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Jazeera Airways	177	Qatar Airways	22423888
Wataniya Airways	22 066 536	KLM	22425747
American Airlines	22087425	Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6
	22087426	British Airways	22425635
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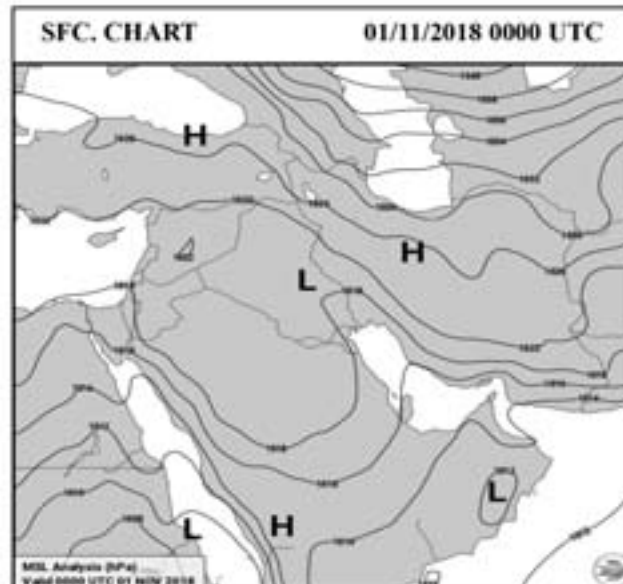
### Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

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

**BY NIGHT:** Partly cloudy with light to moderate variable wind to north westerly wind, with speed of 06 - 26 km/h .

WEATHER WARNING: No Current Warnings

STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	30 °C	22 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	30 °C	16 °C
ABDALY	31 °C	16 °C
BUBYAN	-- °C	-- °C
JAHRA	31 °C	18 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	29 °C	20 °C
SALMIYAH	29 °C	23 °C
AHMADI	28 °C	22 °C
NUWAISIB	30 °C	18 °C
WAFRA	30 °C	14 °C
SALMY	28 °C	16 °C



4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Friday	11/02	Partly cloudy	30 °C	16 °C	NW-VRB	06 - 26 km/h
Saturday	11/03	Partly cloudy to cloudy with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times	28 °C	18 °C	NW-NE	08 - 32 km/h
Sunday	11/04	Partly cloudy to cloudy with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times	29 °C	18 °C	NE-SE	15 - 40 km/h
Monday	11/05	Unstable and rising dust with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times	28 °C	22 °C	SE-S	20 - 50 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:40
Sunrise	06:01
Zuhr	11:32
Asr	14:39
Sunset	17:02
Isha	18:20

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	30 °C
MIN. Temp.	14 °C
MAX. RH	63 %
MIN. RH	19 %
MAX. Wind	NW 28 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

## Hospitals

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

## Clinics

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



# Business

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2018

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**40** What the looming bear market might look like



**41** Bank, govt feud threatens India's economy: Analysts



## Xi admits 'uncertainty' in China's economy

Beijing promises to prop up private firms with lower taxes



SHANGHAI: A woman sits in front of a shop in downtown Shanghai yesterday.—AFP

**BEIJING:** President Xi Jinping sought to reassure Chinese entrepreneurs at a meeting yesterday with promises to prop up private firms with lower taxes and more funding, as he acknowledged uncertainty in China's economy. Xi held the meeting amid signs that the world's second largest economy is losing steam as it faces a trade war with the United States, a massive debt buildup and a weakening currency.

Though China's overall economic status is stable, "uncertainty in our country's economic development has clearly increased, downward pressure has grown, and companies are facing more difficulties," said Xi, according to the official Xinhua news agency.

Xi, who has voiced his support for private firms multiple times this year, made several pol-

icy suggestions, including lowering corporate taxes and resolving funding challenges faced by companies. He also proposed that provincial governments raise their own "rescue funds" to bail out companies.

Xi also emphasized creating a fair and competitive business environment and tasked local governments with "correcting" the behavior of certain government departments, as well as large companies that use their dominance to "bully" smaller firms. Representatives from 10 companies addressed the meeting to give suggestions on how to support the development of private enterprises, Xinhua said.

US tariffs on half of what China exports to the United States have sapped confidence in Beijing's ability to maintain current growth levels.

Analysts say that the country's overleveraged companies and local governments are likely to put a further drag on expansion.

It was the second meeting this week in which Chinese leaders vowed to protect the economy. Xi presided over a conclave of the Politburo on Wednesday, with the leadership saying China had "achieved overall economic stability with steady progress" in the first three quarters but more work needed to be done to help the private sector. "The leadership is paying great attention to the problems, and will be more pre-emptive and take action in a timely manner," it said.

A key indicator on Wednesday showed that Chinese factory activity slowed in October, the latest sign that the economy is losing momentum. The Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) came in

at 50.2 for the month, down from 50.8 in September, the National Bureau of Statistics said.

A separate survey calculated independently by the Caixin media group showed factory activity at 50.1 in October, up from 50 a month earlier, which had been its lowest level for 16 months. A number under 50 indicates a contraction. Further complicating the picture is the falling price of the yuan against the dollar, with the unit at its lowest level in a decade. A weaker yuan makes Chinese exports less expensive overseas, offsetting some of the higher costs brought by the US tariffs. But it has also driven up the cost of critical raw materials from abroad and threatened domestic confidence in the currency, driving some investors to move assets overseas. — AFP



## Business

# BoE trims growth outlook, holds rates ahead of Brexit

## UK house prices rise at slowest pace in over 5 years

**LONDON:** The Bank of England yesterday trimmed its growth forecasts due to Brexit uncertainty and froze interest rates—but warned it could alter monetary policy “in either direction” after Britain quits the European Union next year.

The central bank’s nine-strong Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) all voted at a regular policy meeting to keep the central bank’s key rate on hold at 0.75 percent, it announced in a statement.

The BoE, detailing its latest quarterly forecasts alongside the rate decision, predicted the economy will expand by 1.3 percent this year, downgrading prior guidance of 1.4 percent given in August.

Gross domestic product (GDP) was then predicted to expand by 1.7 percent in 2019, the year in which Britain will leave the European Union. That was down from 1.8 percent forecast previously.

The forecasts are based on the assumption of a smooth transition period, but there is growing unease on markets about a potentially chaotic no-deal Brexit amid stalled talks between Brussels and London.

“The economic outlook will depend significantly on the nature of EU withdrawal, in particular the form of new trading arrangements, the smoothness of the transition to them and the responses of households, businesses and financial markets,” the BoE said.

“The implications for the appropriate path of monetary policy will depend on the balance

of the effects on demand, supply and the exchange rate. “The MPC judges that the monetary policy response to Brexit, whatever form it takes, will not be automatic and could be in either direction.”

“At this meeting the MPC judged that the current stance of monetary policy remained appropriate.”

The BoE news comes just days after the UK government ramped up its 2019 growth outlook to 1.6 percent, from 1.3 percent. But finance minister Philip Hammond had also cut his 2018 growth guidance to 1.3 percent from 1.5 percent in his annual budget statement on Monday.

Hammond, whose official title is chancellor of the exchequer, also confirmed this week that a disorderly Brexit would spark a new budget sooner than expected. Britain is scheduled to leave the EU at the end of March 2019.

British house prices rose at their slowest pace in more than five years in October as uncertainty about the economy in the run-up to Brexit weighed on the market, mortgage lender Nationwide said yesterday. Compared with October 2017, prices rose by 1.6 percent, down from an increase of 2.0 percent in September and below a median forecast of 1.9 percent in a Reuters poll of economists.

That was the weakest increase since May 2013, before Britain’s housing market started to throw off the after-effects of the global financial crisis.

House prices based on Nationwide’s index

weeks, Guriev said, the year ahead was still going to be “very difficult”.

Growth is set to nosedive and the hike in interest rates will make it far more expensive for companies to refinance any loans that are coming due. Elsewhere, the picture was more stable. Excluding Turkey, growth for the EBRD’s region of operation, which stretches from Morocco to Mongolia, is forecast to stay around 3 percent. Direct spillovers from Turkey’s troubles are expected to be limited. Economies including Poland, Hungary, Armenia, Mongolia and Turkmenistan all received forecast upgrades for 2018 and 2019.

Russia is expected to grow 1.5 percent in both years. Romania, Jordan and the Kyrgyz Republic all saw small or medium-sized reductions for both years. The EBRD also echoed the International Monetary Fund’s recent warning of a growing set of pressures. “Escalation of trade conflicts is a major risk to the outlook,” it said. “Other risks include disruption to cross-border supply chains in the case of a no-deal Brexit, high levels of corporate indebtedness and geopolitical instability.” An escalation in the trade war between the United States and China that slowed the global economy could cut “several decimal points” of growth from the EBRD’s region, Guriev said. —Reuters



**LONDON:** The Bank of England trimmed its forecast for Britain’s growth next year when it is due to exit the European Union. — AFP

were rising by about 5 percent a year at the time of the referendum decision to leave the European Union in June 2016.

Prices were flat in October in monthly terms after 0.2 percent rise in September, Nationwide said. It said it continued to expect that prices would rise by around 1 percent in 2018 with household budgets still stretched and as the out-

look for the economy remained unclear ahead of Britain’s departure from the EU in March 2019.

“Looking further ahead, much will depend on how broader economic conditions evolve,” Nationwide economist Robert Gardner said. “If the uncertainty lifts in the months ahead, there is scope for activity to pick up throughout next year.” —Agencies

## Development bank EBRD slashes Turkey growth forecasts

**LONDON:** The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) slashed growth forecasts yesterday for Turkey, its biggest lending market, but left the rest of its region largely unscathed despite growing pressures. The development bank still expects all 38 of the economies where it works to grow this year and next, but cutting Turkey’s forecast a combined 4 percentage points, along with a possible brief recession there, will lower the region’s overall growth rate by 0.6 percentage points to 2.6 percent next year.

It comes after turmoil in Turkey, where the lira has lost roughly a third of its value and forced the country’s central bank to nearly double domestic interest rates to fend off a full-blown currency crisis. “We have downgraded our Turkey forecasts to 1 percent (for 2019) and that of course has a major impact on our overall forecast for the whole region,” Sergei Guriev, EBRD’s chief economist, told Reuters. Turkey has seen tentative signs of stabilisation in recent

## US weekly jobless claims fall; productivity slows in Q3

**WASHINGTON:** New applications for US unemployment aid fell last week and the number of Americans receiving benefits was the lowest in more than 45 years as labor market conditions tightened further. Other data yesterday showed worker productivity slowing in the third quarter, but still growing at a relatively decent clip and compensation surging, adding to recent reports and anecdotal evidence that the strong labor market was pushing up wage gains.

Initial claims for state unemployment benefits dropped 2,000 to a seasonally adjusted 214,000 for the week ended Oct. 27, the Labor Department said. Data for the prior week was revised to show 1,000 more claims received than previously reported. Claims fell to 202,000 during the week ended Sept. 15, which was the lowest level since November 1969. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast claims falling to 213,000 in the latest week. The Labor Department said claims for North Carolina continued to be affected by Hurricane Florence, while Hurricane Michael impacted those for Florida and Georgia.

The four-week moving average of initial

claims, considered a better measure of labor market trends as it irons out week-to-week volatility, rose 1,750 to 213,750 last week.

The claims data has no bearing on October’s employment report, which is scheduled for release on Friday, as it falls outside the survey period. According to a Reuters survey of economists, nonfarm payrolls probably rebounded by 190,000 jobs in October after Florence depressed restaurant and retail payrolls in September. But the pick-up in job growth was likely tempered by Michael, which struck the Florida Panhandle in mid-October. Payrolls increased by 134,000 in September, the fewest in a year. The unemployment rate is forecast unchanged at a near 49-year low of 3.7 percent in October. US financial markets were little moved by the data.

### Near full employment

The labor market is viewed as being near or at full employment. There are a record 7.14 million open jobs in the economy, suggesting a shortage of skilled workers.

Yesterday’s claims report also showed the number of people receiving benefits after an initial week of aid declined 7,000 to 1.63 million for the week ended Oct. 20, the lowest level since July 1973. The four-week moving average of the so-called continuing claims decreased 6,250 to 1.64 million, the lowest level since August 1973. In a second report yesterday, the Labor Department said nonfarm productivity, which measures hourly output per worker, increased at a 2.2 percent annualized rate in the third quarter. —Reuters



## Business

# Re-pricing: A business necessity in Argentina's economic crisis

## Current economic climate turns entrepreneurs into price jugglers

**BUENOS AIRES:** Argentina's currency woes may be forcing many businesses to close but for some entrepreneurs today's economic climate has merely turned them into price jugglers in order to keep afloat. "Every week we get in new stock, but unfortunately for two months now we have been engaging in what I call for fun the 're-labeling festival' - changing prices," said Fernando Hechtlinger, who recently opened two health food stores.

Some of his merchandise is imported from abroad, making it vulnerable to fluctuations in the peso's value against the dollar, and to red tape. The 46-year-old opened the first store at the end of last year near Mar del Plata and the second in a wealthy Buenos Aires neighborhood in July.

But this year alone, Argentina has suffered two currency crises that have seen the peso lose around 50 percent of its value against the dollar.

Prices rise so quickly that Argentina's 44 million people have lost a significant part of their buying power.

### Obligatory repricing

Each time the peso crashed, inflation shot up and is expected to reach 45 percent for 2018. "It's not good for the customer, either. You have to take the time to explain why" prices have risen, added Hechtlinger, a jack of all trades who previously worked as a screenwriter, creative editor and consultant. "If I don't re-price, I would have to close. That's the reality because I'd lose my ability to restock." The peso has recovered a little over the last two weeks on the back of a 56 billion dol-

## Cuba says investor interest up despite US hostility

**HAVANA:** Cuba's foreign trade and investment minister said on Wednesday the country had signed nearly 200 investment projects worth \$5.5 billion since it slashed taxes and made other adjustments to its investment law in 2014. Cuba began a major effort to attract foreign investment as socialist ally Venezuela's economy went into crisis and has ratcheted it up as export revenues decline and the Trump administration backtracks on a detente begun under then-US President Barack Obama.

"Foreign investment in Cuba is growing despite the recent strengthening of the US economic, trade and financial blockade, though it is below what we want," the minister, Rodrigo Malmierca, said at an investment forum in Havana. Even as the forum unfolded, debate on an annual resolution condemning US sanctions got underway at the UN General Assembly in New York and the Trump administration said that it would announce new sanctions aimed at Cuba's military and security services.

Malmierca said 40 new projects were signed over the last year valued at \$1.5 billion.

Many agreements are in the tourism sector

and are often simple management and marketing accords. Others are in manufacturing, oil exploration and to a lesser extent areas such as pharmaceuticals, agriculture and logistics. Cuba says it wants a minimum \$2.5 billion per year in direct foreign investment to dig its way out of years of crisis and stagnation.

While \$5.5 billion in deals may have been signed since 2014, the government has said only around \$500 million has actually been invested annually, including foreign government credits and donations. Diplomats and business officials report that many projects are hard pressed to obtain financing and the Communist-run country's bureaucracy also slows deals from getting off the ground. For example, since 2014 five golf resorts valued at close to \$2.5 billion were signed with British, Chinese and Spanish investors, but ground has yet to be broken on any of them, according to foreign business officials and diplomats with knowledge of the projects.

Malmierca said the country was working to overcome numerous obstacles for investors, such as lengthy delays for project approval, lack of experience among Cuban negotiators and Cuba's dual monetary system with fixed exchange rates.

Under then-leader Fidel Castro, foreign investment was first nationalized, then, after the fall of former benefactor the Soviet Union it was viewed as an unfortunate necessity. Today it is lauded as an integral part of the country's development strategy. —Reuters

lar bailout from the International Monetary Fund at the end of September. But that required drastic economic measures and sky-high interest rates. "Many things are happening that don't help the economy, families or citizens. It's clear that the current model doesn't help anyone," said Hechtlinger, who comes from a family of Jewish restaurateurs from Bahia Blanca, 600 kilometers (370 miles) to the south of the capital. However, he said things never got so bad that people couldn't afford to put food on the table. Changing prices regularly is a risk but one that "works for us," added Hechtlinger, who employs two people in each shop and next plans on opening a health distribution store.

As well as the endless red tape, Hechtlinger has to contend with Argentina's taxes.

"You can't avoid taxes. Here, in this country, in this context, unfortunately, your main partner is the state. One way or another, 50 percent (of your earnings) go to the state in taxes," he said.

Economist Rodolfo Santangelo from Macroview says the country's interest rates of over 60 percent aren't viable over the long-term and will result in "many small and medium-sized businesses having lots of problems with capital... and finance."

### 'Difficult to predict'

Federico Veleno, 29, is surrounded by ukuleles in a shared working space in Buenos Aires, looking over his latest shipment from China. Originally from Portugal, the four-stringed lute was adopted



**BUENOS AIRES:** Argentine start-up businessman Fernando Hechtlinger at his natural foods grocery store in Buenos Aires. —AFP

by Polynesians from Hawaii to Tahiti but are now in fashion in Argentina.

It's been six months since Veleno launched Bamboo, his musical instrument brand. The instruments may be made abroad but they are designed by Argentines.

"This first order of 800 were sold in two weeks," Veleno said. "When we put in the order, the merchandise takes three to four months to arrive. "With the situation in the country it's difficult to predict our sales."

Two weeks ago a shipment arrived but the peso exchange rate against the dollar had fallen from 34 to the greenback to 42 — between the time deals were made with customers and the stock actually reached Argentina.

"What do we do? Do we sell it at the same price or increase?"

In the end Veleno opted to reduce his profit margin. In the past, he and his brother tried to have the instruments made in Argentina, but that didn't work. —AFP

## Shell profits gush on higher oil prices

**LONDON:** Royal Dutch Shell said yesterday that net profit jumped 43 percent in the third quarter, energized like its competitors by rising oil and gas prices.

Profit after tax leapt to \$5.84 billion (5.15 billion euros) in the three months to September from \$4.09 billion in the same period of 2017, the Anglo-Dutch energy giant said in a statement.

Production however declined two percent to 3.596 million barrels of oil equivalent per day amid the group's ongoing asset disposal strategy.

"Earnings primarily benefited from increased realized oil, gas and liquefied natural gas (LNG) prices," it added. Profit on a current cost-of-supplies (CCS) basis, which strips out changes to the value of its oil and gas inventories-gained 37 percent to \$5.6 billion in the third quarter.

Revenues increased 32 percent to more

than \$100 billion. Shell has expanded rapidly into liquefied natural gas following its 2016 takeover of Britain's BG Group.

The group had announced in early October that it had approved a vast liquefied natural gas project in British Columbia, Canada, to help meet an expected boom in Asian demand.

Shell's earnings came after British rival BP revealed earlier this week that its third-quarter net profit had doubled also on sharply higher oil prices. Brent crude soared in September to a four-year peak above \$82 a barrel partly on supply fears particularly in Iran, which faces new US sanctions. That contrasted with about \$50 in the summer of last year.

Supply also remains under pressure after the OPEC oil cartel joined forces with 10 non-members including Russia to curb their collective output at the end of 2016.

The move was aimed largely at countering surging shale energy production in the United States, a key factor which had helped push Brent oil under \$30 earlier that year.

The so-called OPEC+ group agreed a milestone deal to trim production from January 2017 by 1.8 million barrels a day to clear a global oil glut. —AFP



## Business

# What the looming bear market might look like

## Will history repeat itself next year or 2020?

**LONDON:** Let's assume the correction currently underway on Wall Street turns into an outright bear market, and the main US equity indices rack up peak-to-trough losses of at least 20 percent. What kind of bear market can we expect?

All bear markets are different, but they are less frequent than bull markets and, on average, much shorter. They can also be extremely damaging. The stock market is not the economy and the economy is not the stock market, but every US recession over the last half century has been accompanied by major lurches lower on Wall Street. Will history repeat itself next year or 2020?

Since 1900, the S&P 500 has undergone 32 bear markets, which means statistically they occur roughly once every three and a half years, according to independent financial advisor Dana Anspach.

Analysts at First Trust Portfolios calculate that since 1926 the average bear market period has lasted 1.4 years, with an average cumulative loss of 41 percent. Analysts at Bespoke Investment Group, meanwhile, have looked at the data since 1927 and reckon the average bear market is shorter, at 296 calendar days.

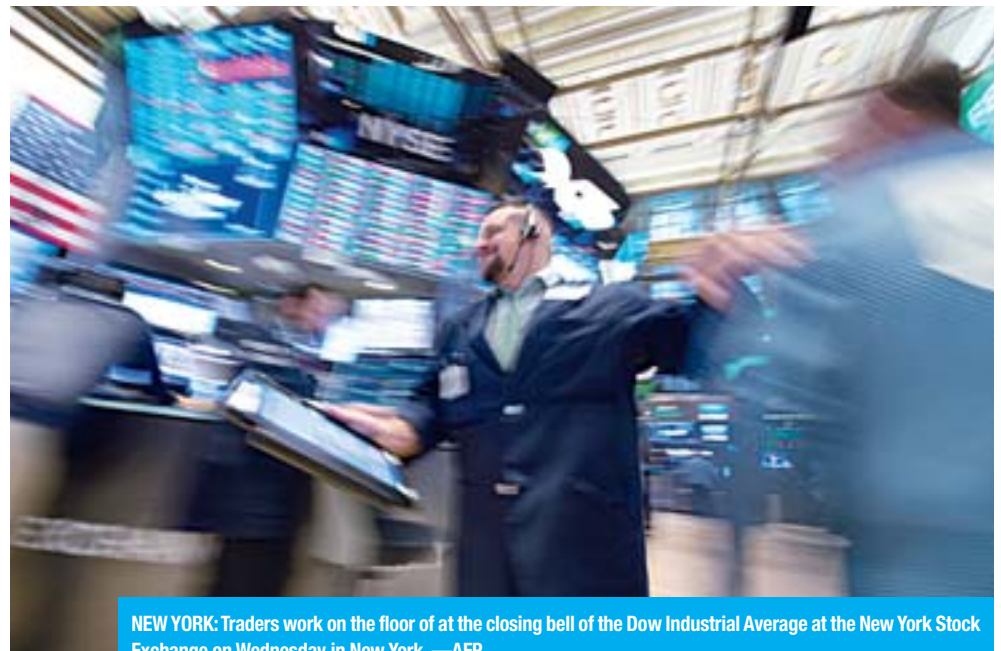
The last two bear markets on Wall Street in 2000-02 and 2007-09 saw the S&P 500 decline 45 and 50 percent, respectively. That helped pull the MSCI World index down 50

and 60 percent, respectively.

The correction underway on Wall Street has seen the S&P 500 fall 11.5 percent from its peak a month ago, while the MSCI World has fallen as much as 15 percent from its peak in January, also in part driven by major weakness in emerging markets. China, for example, is down 30 percent from its January peak.

But as long as the US selloff is just a correction, the multi-year bull run remains the second-longest in history, even if it is losing steam. There are compelling reasons to believe it will roll over into a bear market, but getting the timing right is tricky. Bull markets run much longer than bear markets as populations and economies expand. More people means more savings that need to be invested, and as equity historically has offered higher returns than bonds, stock markets attract more of those funds and rise over time.

The average bull run since 1927 is close to 1,000 days, according to Bespoke Investments. The longest in history is the late 1987-early 2000 run of 4,494 days. That will be broken if the current run, already over 3,000 days, extends until June 29, 2021. The following chart from FT Portfolios shows that the average bull market since 1927 has lasted 9.1 years, with an average cumulative total return of 480 percent. The current bull market is already 9.7 years long. According to Dana Anspach, 53 percent



**NEW YORK:** Traders work on the floor of at the closing bell of the Dow Industrial Average at the New York Stock Exchange on Wednesday in New York. —AFP

of all S&P 500 trading days have been "up" days and 47 percent have been "down" days. In terms of months, the split is 58 percent up and 42 percent down, and in quarters it is 63 percent up and 37 percent down.

The S&P 500 fell 6.9 percent in October, its

worst month in seven years. Are valuations now cheap enough and will fragile sentiment solidify enough to spark a rebound? Or will investors' worries over growth, trade, rising US interest rates and future earnings keep the bears in charge? —Reuters

## Brazil CB keeps rate on hold at 6.5%

**BRASILIA:** Brazil's central bank kept its benchmark interest rate unchanged Wednesday at 6.5 percent, in its first meeting since far-right President-elect Jair Bolsonaro was elected with a pledge to slash government spending. In a unanimous vote, the bank's monetary policy committee decided to keep the Selic interest rate at its historic low for the fifth straight time, in line with analysts' expectations, against a backdrop of weak growth and low inflation.

At 4.53 percent, inflation is currently near the middle of the bank's target range of 2.5 to 6.5 percent, and Sunday's election win by debt hawk Bolsonaro further bolstered the argument to keep the rate on hold. Bolsonaro was the market favorite, and his march to the presidency has also helped the Brazilian real strengthen against the dollar, reducing upward pressure on prices in the world's eighth-largest economy.

The bank did not mention the election in its statement, saying only that future rate moves "will continue to depend on the evolution of economic activity, the balance of risk and inflation projections."

It said the biggest risks facing Brazil are abandoning the budget-cutting reforms launched by outgoing President Michel Temer, or a downturn in external conditions for emerging markets.

The bank had previously cut the rate 12 times straight, before pausing in May. "The fact Bolsonaro is already talking about reforms is a good sign," said economist Victor Candido of Guide Investimentos.

In his first interviews as president-elect, Bolsonaro said he hoped to start passing "at least part" of his proposed pension reform this year. Markets are keenly watching efforts to overhaul the bloated pension system, which have stalled because of the political cost. Bolsonaro's top economic adviser, liberal economist Paulo Guedes-tapped to head an economy "super ministry" in his government-vowed immediately after the election to cut spending, privatize state enterprises and whip the government's books into shape.

After tumbling into a record recession from 2015 to 2016, Brazil's economy is forecast to grow about 1.4 percent this year. —AFP

## GM reports strong profits, lifting shares

**NEW YORK:** General Motors profits eclipsed expectations in the latest quarter, despite the impact of tariffs and slipping sales volume, as the company unveiled a plan on Wednesday to cut jobs and reduce costs. The company reported better-than-expected third-quarter earnings even as it sold fewer vehicles in both North America and China.

Strong pricing in those markets allowed the company to offset the hit from trade tariffs and the burden of the strong dollar in South American markets and report profits that topped Wall Street forecasts by a wide margin.

Earnings for the quarter ending September 30 were \$2.5 billion-up from a loss of \$3 billion in the year-ago period when results were hit by a one-time accounting charge.

That translated into \$1.87 per share, compared with Wall Street expectations for \$1.25 per share.

Revenues rose 6.4 percent to \$35.8 billion. "Our results demonstrate our commitments to execute our plans amid industry headwinds," Chief Executive Mary Barra said on a confer-

ence call with analysts.

The strong sales come as the US and China are embroiled in a trade dispute.

Executives said they were hopeful a deal could be negotiated and that there had been no hit to GM-branded products in the market as a result of the conflict.

GM said it experienced \$400 million in higher costs due to US tariffs on steel and aluminum but that strong pricing and cost cuts had offset the hit.

To keep a lid on costs, GM plans a "voluntary severance" program in North America and 18,000 of the 50,000 salaried employees in the region are eligible, a company spokesman said.

"Even with the positive progress we've made, we are taking proactive steps to get ahead of the curve by accelerating our efforts to address overall business performance. We are doing this while our company and economy are strong," a GM spokesman said. GM has no target for job cuts but if the process does not yield sufficient savings, "we will evaluate the need to implement a subsequent involuntary program," the spokesman added.

The plan is the latest evidence of how GM has sought to reposition itself to focus more on profitability and less on market share compared with years past, a drive that has also led it to exit unprofitable markets while steering funds to new technologies, including its Cruise autonomous driving initiative. —AFP



## Business

# Bank, govt feud threatens India's economy: Analysts

## Economy grapples with a perfect storm of problems

**MUMBAI:** A rift between India's government and central bank threatens to derail Asia's third-largest economy as it grapples with a perfect storm of problems including a plummeting rupee and crippling high fuel prices, analysts warn.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's administration has been accused of trying to influence Reserve Bank of India (RBI) policy-leading to fevered speculation that its chief Urjit Patel is set to quit. Analysts have urged for an end to the standoff, warning the spat could ripple through the world's fastest-growing major economy at a precarious time and with an election looming in the spring.

"With the rupee falling, oil prices surging and a host of local credit crunch issues, this is the last straw that can completely break down the working capacity of the RBI and government," said Dun & Bradstreet India economist Arun Singh. Indian business dailies have reported that Modi's government has invoked never-before-used powers to send at least three letters to Patel seeking to impact the central bank's decision-making.

Some newspapers reported that Patel was preparing to resign over the use of "Section 7" of the RBI Act-which allows the government to instruct the governor on matters of public interest-although the central bank has not commented publicly on whether the measure was used or not.

## Ryanair to carry on fight for cabin bag charge

**LONDON:** Ryanair said yesterday it would fight an order by Italian regulators to suspend a charge for carry-on bags that had been set to take effect on November 1.

"We will immediately appeal this decision," a Ryanair spokeswoman said. Italy's competition watchdog told low-cost airlines Ryanair and Wizz Air on Wednesday to suspend the charges on carry-on bags in overhead bins. Both companies

The government is believed to be unhappy with the bank over a number of issues including interest rates, how to deploy reserves and what to do to respond to India's sliding rupee.

The rupee has been one of Asia's worst performing currencies this year, tumbling 14 percent against the dollar as investors withdraw from emerging economies. The feud entered the public domain on Friday when Patel's deputy, Viral Acharya, warned in a strongly worded speech that undermining the bank's independence could be "potentially catastrophic".

Finance minister Arun Jaitley then hit back at the RBI on Tuesday over a massive multi-billion-dollar bank loan crisis that is hampering India's corporate sector. Jaitley accused the central bank of failing to stop indiscriminate lending from 2008 to 2014, saying it had "looked the other way" while banks issued loans that became non-performing assets.

The Indian finance ministry moved to cool the row on Wednesday by releasing a statement admitting to "consultations" with the RBI, but reiterating that it respected the bank's independence.

### 'Breaking point'

The rift flared up again when economic hardliners from a powerful Hindu nationalist group linked to Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) told Patel to fall in line with the govern-

ment or quit.

had decided recently to allow only a small bag that could fit underneath the seat for free, causing angry consumer associations to take up the matter before the Antitrust Authority.

"Asking more for an essential element of the air transport contract, carry-on baggage, is a fallacious representation of the ticket's true price and harms cost comparison among carriers, which misleads consumers," the Antitrust Authority said in a statement. When announcing the policy change in August, Ryanair said it aimed to reduce boarding delays, caused by being forced to place some suitcases in the hold when there was not enough space in the overhead bins. "There is no basis for a competition authority to issue a decision that relates to air safety or punctuality," said the Ryanair spokeswoman. "This policy is transparent and beneficial to consumers."—AFP

ment or quit.

"The Reserve Bank of India Governor should work in sync with the government or otherwise resign," Swadeshi Jagran Manch's co-convenor, Ashwani Mahajan, told the Press Trust of India news agency Wednesday.

The SJM is the economic arm of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) — a millions-strong Hindu movement which courts influence over ruling party ideology and campaigns for BJP candidates.

Ashutosh Datar, an economist in India's financial capital Mumbai, said the RSS was "trying to piggyback" off the standoff and hoped "calmer heads prevail and the government backs down". Sujan Hajra, an economist at financial firm Anand Rathi, told AFP that the rift between RBI and the government had "reached breaking point". "It is not a very happy situation for the markets or the economy," he said. "The relationship needs to be resolved at the earliest as India's economy faces challenging times and a general election in the near future."

The rupee's slump is widening India's current account deficit, when the value of imports exceeds that of exports, and threatening to derail economic growth. The Indian currency is hovering around record lows of 74 after starting the year at 63.67 to the dollar. It is also being squeezed by high crude prices, as India imports most of its oil it uses. It is understood the



**MUMBAI:** There has been widespread speculation that Reserve Bank of India chief Urjit Patel is set to quit due to policy differences with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's administration. —Reuters

government is pressuring the bank to enact policies to help spur growth-translating into votes ahead of next year's poll in which Modi will run for a second term.

The government would like the RBI to lower interest rates and free up more of its cash reserves to invest in the economy, boosting growth, analysts say. It is also said to be unhappy with the bank's handling of defaults by key lender IL&FS, one of India's biggest shadow banks, which has roiled financial markets and threatened infrastructure investment. — AFP

## Sterling jumps on financial services Brexit deal

**LONDON:** The British pound rallied yesterday on reports of a post-Brexit financial services deal, as investors also awaited an interest rate decision from the Bank of England.

Sterling surged to a one-week peak at \$1.2920 in morning London deals, having risen overnight to retrace ground lost over the last few weeks. "November kicked off with the focus shifting back onto the pound, with the currency rocketing higher after the latest Brexit update," said Spreadex analyst Connor Campbell. "The Times reported that Theresa May has tentatively reached a deal with the EU that would allow UK financial services firms access to European markets post-divorce." London and Brussels have agreed a preliminary deal that would see UK financial services retain access to European Union markets after

Brexit, the paper reported. British and EU negotiators have struck a tentative agreement on all aspects of a future partnership on services and the exchange of data, The Times said, citing UK government sources.

Such a deal would guarantee British companies access to EU markets as long as domestic regulations remained broadly aligned with those set by Brussels. However, analysts expressed caution over the latest development, which comes amid stalled trade talks before Britain's scheduled EU exit in late March 2019. "This is a real positive as the UK is heading into the final stages of Brexit negotiations this month," noted analyst Stephen Hubble at global payments group Centrip.

"However, agreeing a deal and setting out a legal trade agreement are very different things. "No one will look for ways of making the life easy for the City of London, which is a UK financial-services spot coveted by other EU members."

Europe's stock markets meanwhile rose strongly, reversing earlier losses as dealers mulled improving US economic optimism on the eve of nonfarm payrolls data. London stocks won 0.5 percent ahead of the BoE's latest call at 1200 GMT, when it is widely expected to maintain its key interest rate at 0.75 percent.—Reuters





## Sports

# Funding deal, vote keeps alive Calgary Winter Olympics bid

**OTTAWA:** Calgary voted Wednesday to keep alive Canada's bid for the 2026 Winter Olympics, after a last-minute funding deal was struck between Ottawa and the province of Alberta. The next hurdle is a plebiscite on Nov 13. After more than eight hours of often acrimonious debate, city councillors voted 8-7 in favor of a recommendation from the city's Olympic committee to end their pursuit of hosting duties over a lack of cash from the central and provincial governments. But it was not enough (10 were needed) to kill the bid.

Overnight Tuesday a deal between federal and provincial officials resulted in a proposal to fund most of the public costs, and effectively reduce Calgary's share of the burden. The agreement - which would see the original Can\$3 billion (US\$2.3 billion) public portion of the Games budget reduced by 10 percent and, along with it, each party's share of the costs - has been validated by federal Sports Minister Kirsty Duncan and Alberta Premier Rachel Notley.

Hundreds of supporters of Canada's bid, including former Olympians - most wearing Canada's red and white colors - flooded into the Calgary city council chamber for the crucial vote. Outside, they waved placards that read "Go Olympics" and "Don't Luge this Calgary," at times breaking into chants of the national anthem. "We support the Calgary Olympic bid. Calgary is a world-class city. It would be great to host the Olympics in Canada," Prime Minister Justin

Trudeau said in Ottawa.

But at city hall, councillors said the proposal was "not viable and vetted" and based on "creative accounting," while countering accusations of being spoilers. Evan Woolley, chairman of the Olympic bid committee, said the funding deal had been struck too late to allow Calgarians to make an "educated decision". "If you look at the Olympic process around the world it's divisive everywhere... and I think that's what happened here," commented councilwoman Druh Farrell, after several heated exchanges.

## Scared off

The host city of the 2026 Winter Olympics will be announced in June next year in Lausanne, Switzerland. A Calgary withdrawal would have left only Milan and Stockholm in the running. The International Olympic Committee is facing a scarcity of applications for the Winter Games, with many scared off by the bill for Sochi 2014. Several cities that initially expressed interest in hosting the 2026 edition pulled out after tepid support from their local populations.

As the last Canadian city to host the Winter Olympics in 2010, Vancouver lost tens of millions of dollars even though the US\$7 billion cost was relatively modest when compared to Sochi's US\$50 billion. Calgary, which previously organized the 1988 Winter Games, can save on facilities but new construction will still be needed. Financing talks

world. "I'm obviously very very happy that I made it in the end."

## 'Out of my hands'

Earlier, Australia's Ashleigh Barty beat an out-of-sorts French number one Caroline Garcia to keep her semi-final hopes alive. Ninth seed Barty broke Garcia once in each set to win the round-robin tie 6-3, 6-4 in one hour and 16 minutes. Barty, who lost to Aryna Sabalenka on Tuesday, now has to wait for the outcome of Garcia and Sabalenka's match to see if she will progress to the semi-finals on Saturday.

"It's out of my hands," Barty said in her post-match press conference. "I just have to sit back and watch tomorrow. But I'm certainly pleased to have had the year we've had and really nice to finish on a positive note today." She said she was in a "win-win situation", being able to "play with freedom", but knowing that if she lost she could still go home at the end of the season. Garcia, 25, was crowned champion in Tianjin in October, but she was unable to bring that form into her opening match.

The world number 18, seeded eighth, said she had some back pain coming into the tournament, and felt her legs weren't moving the way she wanted on court. "It was a very difficult match for me today and I think she played great but I wasn't feeling very good and didn't have the rhythm I wanted." Second seed Anastasija Sevastova beat China's Zhang Shuai in Thursday's evening game 6-0, 7-6. Despite breezing through the first set, the Latvian was taken to an exhilarating tie-break in the second, which she eventually won 12-10. The Elite Trophy features 12 players ranked roughly from nine to 20. This year's total prize money is \$2.35 million across the singles and doubles tournaments. — AFP



**CALGARY:** In this file photo taken on February 13, 1988 fans cheer and wave flags as the Canadian delegation (lower right) parades during the opening ceremony of the XVth Winter Olympic Games 13 February 1988. — AFP

came to a head on Friday, when Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi threatened to end the city's bid if the federal government didn't provide more money.

"If we cannot come to a mutually agreeable conclusion by Monday, I deeply regret that I will have no choice but to request that Calgary City Council cancel the plebiscite and thus terminate the bid, an event none of us want," he told the Calgary Herald. Ottawa had initially held fast on its

offer, saying it was in line with its share of the costs to host other major sporting events - notably the 2010 Winter Games in Vancouver and the 2015 Pan American Games in Toronto. Under the new terms, it has agreed to pick up half of the cost, while Calgary and the province are expected to split the remainder. Significant savings were also found in revised security estimates for the Games, reducing the overall costs. — AFP

## Birthday joy as Goerges clinches Zhuhai semis spot

**ZHUHAI:** Defending champion Julia Goerges gave herself an early birthday present yesterday by beating Elise Mertens to book her place in the semi-finals of WTA Elite Trophy. The fifth seed bounced back from a bruising defeat to Anett Kontaveit on Wednesday, but overcame Mertens 6-2, 7-6 in a tense round-robin tie in Zhuhai, southern China.

Goerges, who turns 30 on Friday, was pushed all the way in the second set by her 22-year-old Belgian opponent, but the German clinched the nailbiting tiebreak 7-5 at the Hengqin International Tennis Center. "Well actually I don't feel like 30 yet," Goerges told her post-match press conference. "With my performance today I gave myself the best present I good ask for tomorrow." The straight sets victory was enough to take Goerges to the top of the group, and the world number 14 jumped with joy on court and punched the air in celebration.

Asked if she knew she had to win 2-0 qualify, she said: "I knew what I had to do today — to win in straight sets — and I think it was up to me to dictate the game. "It's never easy when you know you have to play extremely well to beat someone in straight sets, especially here, where there are only the best players in the

## Serena can still grab Slams record: Keys

**ZHUHAI, China:** American number three Madison Keys said she has no doubt Serena Williams can equal the record of 24 Grand Slam titles despite her stormy defeat in the US Open final. Keys said Williams, who argued furiously with the umpire during her shock loss to Naomi Osaka in New York, certainly had Margaret Court's all-time mark as a target. Williams, 37, returned from giving birth to her first child in September last year to reach the Wimbledon and US Open finals, but suffered upset losses in both to leave her stuck on 23 major wins.

"I definitely think she can do it, and I definitely think it's something that she thinks about," Keys told AFP at the WTA Elite Trophy at Zhuhai in China. "I think she wants it and I think when Serena puts her mind to something, it usually happens," she added. Keys, 23, started playing tennis after watching Williams and her sister Venus on television and has often cited them as an inspiration. "She came back and she played three Grand Slams and made two finals," the world number 16 said. "No one is ever going to be Serena and I think she's done a ton for

the sport and has helped players like me a lot," she added.

She said it will be a "big loss" when Williams finally retires, but that she would remain a major figure in tennis. "Obviously when she decides to stop playing it's going to be a big loss but I think she'll always be a part of it, and she's always going to hold all these records and still be the greatest tennis player ever. "So I think we'll always have her in the sport even though she's not playing."

Until Sloane Stephens won last year's US Open, the last American woman to lift a major trophy, apart from the Williams sisters, was Jennifer Capriati in 2002. But Keys said American women's tennis was in "pretty good" shape. Sixth-ranked Stephens, the current American number one, was runner-up at last week's WTA Finals. "Sloane has obviously done really well this year, I think I'm one of the US players who's had a pretty good season this year," Keys said. "I think there's a lot of really great American players and I think the younger ones have done a really great job this year."

Asked if anybody on the current tour will ever match Williams's achievements, Keys said: "Everything's always possible. But to do what she did, especially as she started at such a young age, and to keep continuing to be so good, I think it would be very difficult." Keys beat top seed Daria Kasatkina in her opening match in Zhuhai, which follows the round-robin format until tomorrow's semi-finals. She will next play China's Wang Qiang. —AFP



## Sports

# West Indies demolished as Jadeja spins India to series-clinching win

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, India:** Ravindra Jadeja starred in India's nine-wicket series clinching win over West Indies after the tourists were skittled out for just 104 in the fifth one-day international yesterday. West Indies won the toss and elected to bat in Thiruvananthapuram but collapsed, surviving just 31.5 of their 50 overs under overcast skies to register their lowest ODI total against India. Jadeja claimed four wickets with his left-arm spin as India romped to their target in 14.5 overs to take the five-match series 3-1. The second game was a tie. It is India's sixth successive ODI series win on home soil.

Opener Rohit Sharma, who smashed 63, and skipper Virat Kohli, who made 33, put on an unbeaten 99-run stand as the hosts raced to their target before the sun had set in the day-night game. "It was a clinical performance. Credit has to go to the bowling unit, pitching the ball in the right place," Kohli said after the win. "We wanted to bowl first anyway and we got lucky. We were surprised West Indies batted," he added.

Fast bowler Oshane Thomas bowled opener Shikhar Dhawan for six but the wicket proved just a hiccup in India's march towards an easy win. Jadeja set up the convincing victory after returning figures of 4-34 from his 9.5 overs. Jasprit Bumrah combined with pace spearhead

Bhuvneshwar Kumar to get two West Indies batsmen in the first two overs. Bumrah bowled Shai Hope for zero. Marlon Samuels tried to steady the innings with counter-attacking boundaries but he fell to Jadeja's spin for 24. Jadeja also trapped big-hitter Shimron Hetmyer lbw for nine to rattle the West Indies middle-order.

Skipper Jason Holder top-scored with 25 to raise hopes of a West Indies fightback but the rest of the batting folded. Young paceman Khaleel Ahmed also made his presence felt for India, with two key strikes including the wicket of Holder. Jadeja, who was named man of the match, polished off the West Indies' tail and India did not need the customary break after end of the first innings to get past their target. Kohli was the man of the series for his 453 runs in five matches including three centuries and a highest score of 157 not out.

The prolific run-getter became the quickest to 10,000 ODI runs in his 205th innings in Visakhapatnam ODI that ended in a tie last week. "To get runs as captain always gives me confidence. It won't happen all the time, but when I'm going, I want to keep going longer," said Kohli. "I don't play for awards, just to impact the series and help the team win." The two sides now head to Kolkata for the first of three Twenty20 internationals on Nov 4. — AFP



**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM:** West Indies bowler Oshane Thomas (R) reacts after missing a wicket during the fifth one day international (ODI) cricket match between India and West Indies at the Greenfield International Stadium. — AFP

## Imran Khan urged to restore India Test links

**LONDON:** India great Farokh Engineer has called on former Pakistan captain turned Prime Minister Imran Khan to use his political clout to help restore Test match links between the border rivals. Despite wild enthusiasm about cricket in both nations, the two have not met in a five-day Test match since they played out a draw in Bangalore in 2007. Bilateral cricket ties between India and Pakistan have been frozen amid political tensions and they only play each other in multi-nation events such as the World Cup.

Imran Khan, one of the outstanding all-round cricketers of his generation, became Prime Minister earlier this year and Engineer believes he now has the authority to break the impasse. "Imran Khan, he is the prime minister now. Hope-

fully India and Pakistan will start a dialogue," Engineer, a brilliant wicket-keeper, told the inaugural Ranji Memorial Public Conversation on Cricket in London this week. "They should be playing Test cricket against each other because it will do Pakistan cricket, their economy, a world of good. But you hear about border skirmishes and this and that. They've got to have dialogue."

Unfortunately, the Indian government controls the BCCI (Board of Control for Cricket in India) or they (the BCCI) have been using that as an excuse. As a cricketer, I would love India to play Pakistan or vice versa. But it is a question of convincing the political leaders. Basically we are the same people. Both countries have extremely talented cricketers and I, for one, would love to see that happen but unfortunately the brakes are on," Engineer lamented. Pakistan's position has been complicated by the fact that since a 2009 attack by armed militants on the Sri Lanka team bus in Lahore, most major cricket nations have refused to tour on security grounds, with Pakistan forced to play the bulk of their 'home' matches in the United Arab Emirates. — AFP

## Cricket Australia chief quits after tampering outcry

**SYDNEY:** Cricket Australia chairman David Peever quit yesterday after coming under intense pressure over a ball-tampering scandal which has triggered an exodus of senior figures

and long bans for three players. The former Rio Tinto mining executive was only voted in for a new three-year term last week, days before a scathing independent review sparked by the cheating row slammed the governing body. Calls have been mounting for Peever to go after it emerged that the CA-commissioned report was not provided to the country's state associations before he was re-elected.

He was also widely criticized after an interview with broadcaster ABC this week in which he referred to the ball-tampering affair, which rattled the sport and caused an outcry among

the Australian public, as a "hiccup". "Cricket Australia has today confirmed that Mr. David Peever has announced his resignation as chairman of the board of Cricket Australia, effective immediately," the governing body said in a statement. His deputy Earl Eddings was appointed as interim chairman and said: "We have a way to go to earn back the trust of the cricket community."

The review by the Sydney-based Ethics Centre blasted CA's conduct leading up to the tampering incident in March, when players were caught using sandpaper to alter the ball at a Test match in Cape Town. It found that an

"arrogant" and "controlling" culture within the governing body contributed to players, who existed in a "gilded bubble", cheating in the pursuit of victory. The document also included complaints that there was a bullying culture in elite men's cricket.

It made 42 recommendations, including establishing an anti-harassment code to stop sledging and training to improve team leaders' "moral courage". Peever had until now kept his job despite the exit of CA chief executive James Sutherland, coach Darren Lehmann and team performance boss Pat Howard. — AFP

### SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the fifth and final one-day international between India and West Indies in Thiruvananthapuram yesterday:

#### West Indies

K. Powell c Dhoni b Kumar	0
R. Powell c Dhawan b Ahmed	16
S. Hope b Bumrah	0
M. Samuels c Kohli b Jadeja	24
S. Hetmyer lbw b Jadeja	9
J. Holder c Jadhav b Ahmed	25
F. Allen c Jadhav b Bumrah	4
K. Paul c Rayudu b Yadav	5
D. Bishoo not out	8
K. Roach c Jadhav b Jadeja	5
O. Thomas lbw b Jadeja	0
Extras (lb1, w7)	8
Total (all out, 31.5 overs)	104
Fall of wickets: 1-1 (K. Powell), 2-2 (Hope), 3-36 (Samuels), 4-53 (Hetmyer), 5-57 (R. Powell), 6-66 (Allen), 7-87 (Holder), 8-94 (Yadav), 9-103 (Roach), 10-104 (Thomas).	

Bowling: Kumar 4-1-11-1 (w1), Bumrah 6-1-11-2 (w1), Ahmed 7-1-29-2 (w3), Jadeja 9.5-1-34-4 (w1), Yadhav 5-1-18-1 (w1).

#### India (target 105)

R. Sharma not out	63
S. Dhawan b Thomas	6
V. Kohli not out	33
Extras (lb1, nb1, w1)	3
Total (1 wicket, 14.5 overs)	105
Did not bat: A. Rayudu, MS Dhoni (wk), K. Jadhav, R. Jadeja, B. Kumar, K. Yadav, J. Bumrah, K. Ahmed	
Fall of wickets: 1-6 (Dhawan)	
Bowling: Roach 5-2-13-0, Thomas 4-0-33-1 (w1, nb1), Paul 2-0-22-0, Holder 1-0-15-0, Bishoo 1.5-0-16-0, Allen 1-0-5-0.	
Result: India won by nine wickets.	



## Sports

# Resurgent Rose turns back the clock to score 50 against Jazz

**MINNEAPOLIS:** Derrick Rose scored a career-high 50 points, including the go-ahead basket with 30 seconds left, to lift the Minnesota Timberwolves to a 128-125 victory over the Utah Jazz on Wednesday in Minneapolis. Rose shot 19 of 31 from the field, including 4 of 7 from 3-point range. Karl-Anthony Towns added 28 points and 16 rebounds for the Timberwolves, and Andrew Wiggins scored 19 points.

Donovan Mitchell scored 26 points while Rudy Gobert added 22 points and 13 rebounds to lead the Jazz. Jae Crowder contributed 18 points for Utah. Rose's performance offset the absence of starters Jeff Teague (knee) and Jimmy Butler (rest), who both sat out of the game. His final basket broke a 123-123 tie in the last minute. Utah had three shots at a tying basket in the final seconds, but Crowder, Joe Ingles and Dante Exum all came up short on 3-point shot attempts.

## Lakers 114, Mavericks 113

LeBron James made a tiebreaking free throw with 2.1 seconds left, and Los Angeles held on for a win over visiting Dallas. The Mavericks tied the score after trailing by 19 points in the third quarter and by 14 points in the last four minutes of the game. After James hit 1 of 2 free throws to restore Los Angeles' lead, Dallas' JJ Barea missed a desperation 3-point attempt at the buzzer. James scored 14 of his 29 points in the third quarter as all five starters scored in double figures for Los Angeles, which ended a two-game skid. Wesley Matthews scored 21 points to lead the Mavericks, who lost their fifth straight.

## Warriors 131, Pelicans 121

Stephen Curry scored 16 of his game-high 37 points in the third quarter, helping Golden State run off to a 15-point lead en route to a victory over New Orleans in Oakland, Calif. Kevin Durant finished with 24 points and eight assists for the Warriors, while Green flirted with a triple-double with 16 points, 15 rebounds and eight assists. Klay Thompson, coming off his 52-point explosion in Chicago, went for 18. Anthony Davis returned from a two-game absence due to an elbow injury to contribute 17 points, 12 rebounds and seven assists to the New Orleans cause in 41 minutes. Jrue Holiday had 28 points and Nikola Mirotic had 26 for the Pelicans.

## Nuggets 108, Bulls 107 (OT)

Paul Millsap's put-back layup with 0.1 seconds remaining in overtime lifted Denver to a win at Chicago, the Nuggets' sixth win in seven games this season. Nikola Jokic led the Nuggets with 22 points, 12 rebounds and nine assists. Millsap contributed 19 points and six rebounds. Zach LaVine scored 28 points on 11-for-24 shooting to pace the Bulls. Rookie Wendell Carter Jr. added a career-high 25 points to go along with eight rebounds, five assists and three steals.

## Nets 120, Pistons 119 (OT)

Spencer Dinwiddie scored all 25 of his points after halftime, including a go-ahead 3-pointer with 7.1 seconds left in overtime, and Brooklyn edged Detroit in New York. Joe Harris had 23 points for the Nets, and Caris LeVert supplied 19 points, six rebounds and six assists. Blake Griffin led the Pistons with 25 points. Andre Drummond contributed 24 points and 23



MINNEAPOLIS: Derrick Rose #25 of the Minnesota Timberwolves drives to the basket during the game against the Utah Jazz on October 31, 2018 at Target Center. —AFP

rebounds, and Reggie Jackson added 21 points. Detroit shooting guard Reggie Bullock exited in the first half with an ankle injury.

## Spurs 120, Suns 90

DeMar DeRozan and LaMarcus Aldridge scored 25 and 24 points, respectively, on 20-of-25 combined shooting in just three quarters of play at San Antonio rolled to an easy win at Phoenix. Marco Belinelli added 14 points for the Spurs, who shot a season-best 55 percent from the floor despite canning just 4 of 18 3-point attempts. TJ Warren led the Suns with 21 points. The loss was the sixth straight for Phoenix, which was without star guard Devin Booker

(hamstring) for the third consecutive game.

## Pacers 107, Knicks 101

Victor Oladipo gave Indiana the lead for good with a fastbreak dunk off his own steal with 2:43 left in the fourth quarter, and he drained a pair of pivotal 3-pointers over the final 90 seconds as the Pacers won at New York. Domantas Sabonis hit all 12 of his shots from the field and finished with 30 points in just 21 minutes off the bench for the Pacers, who have won three of four. Oladipo scored 24 points. Tim Hardaway Jr scored a season-high 37 points for the Knicks, who have lost six of seven. —AFP

## Boxing body vote could see sport out of Olympics

**MOSCOW:** The congress of the scandal-hit International Amateur Boxing Federation (AIBA) that begins in Moscow today may be a turning point for the sport and its future in the Olympics. Gafur Rakhimov, an Uzbek who has been linked to organized crime by the US Treasury Department, is one of two candidates standing for the position of AIBA president at the meeting.

Rakhimov has vigorously denied US government allegations but in October the International Olympics Committee (IOC) froze relations with AIBA and refused to accredit Rakhimov to the Youth Olympics in Buenos Aires. The IOC move made it clear that it was prepared to kick the AIBA out of the Olympic movement and remove boxing from the 2020 Tokyo Games if the "governance problems" in the ruling body were not resolved. In February, the IOC said they were worried by the nomination of the Uzbek businessman for the AIBA interim presidency, a position he still occupies.

The IOC has been losing patience with boxing since a judging scandal at the 2016 Rio Games

when all 36 officials and referees were suspended while allegations of bout-fixing were investigated. An internal power struggle saw the previous president, Taiwan's CK Wu, ousted. He was banned after a report by "forensic investigators" K2 Intelligence documented "gross negligence and financial mismanagement of AIBA affairs and finances".

The ban will need to be ratified by member federations at the AIBA Congress in Moscow. IOC president Thomas Bach said in February that he was "extremely worried about the governance of AIBA". And though amateur boxing's under-fire chiefs handed over a crucial report on internal reforms to the IOC in April, the threat of losing a place in the Olympic movement remains. "This report shows some progress and goodwill but still lacks execution and substance in some areas," Bach said in May. "Therefore we retain our right to exclude boxing from Tokyo 2020."

The other candidate for the AIBA president post is Serik Konakbayev, a Kazakh who won the Olympic silver medal at Moscow Games in 1980 for the Soviet Union. His participation in the race was thrown into doubt this month when the AIBA election commission barred him for allegedly failing to submit certain forms by a deadline. But Konakbayev lodged an appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport, which ruled (CAS) against the AIBA decision. —AFP

## Vietnam to host F1 race in 2020: Official

**HANOI:** Vietnam will host a Formula One race in April 2020, Hanoi city officials said yesterday, becoming the third Southeast Asian nation to welcome top-flight racing as the franchise seeks to move into new markets. The race will be hosted in the capital Hanoi, with the circuit set to be unveiled at a gala next week, the Hanoi People's Committee said yesterday in an invite to the event.

"The city of Hanoi managed to conclude the cooperation to be entitled as the official host of a race of the FIA Formula 1 World Championship (from) April 2020," the letter read. Authorities said earlier this year they supported the idea of hosting a race, but would not dip into government coffers to pay for the event. Mai Tien Dung, head of the government office, said in August that he hoped costs could instead be covered by potentially "huge" advertising revenues.

Officials had originally considered hosting the race around Hanoi's scenic Hoan Kiem lake near the bustling Old Quarter, but decided instead on a route near the national stadium, where the roads are wider. Formula One's governing body, the International Automobile Federation (FIA), did not

immediately reply to AFP's request for comment yesterday. F1 race director Charlie Whiting told reporters earlier this month that he had visited the site in Hanoi and was confident the circuit would be ready in time for the 2020 season. He said much of the race would be on existing roads but some sections would need to be built, according to Fox Sports. "That shouldn't be a problem based on previous experience," he said.

## Blessing or curse?

Formula One races can be costly endeavors and are seen as financially risky for host cities like Hanoi where racing remains outside of the mainstream. In 2017, Malaysia said it would cancel the Formula One races that it has hosted since 1999, saying the loss-making event had been hard hit by competition from neighboring Singapore. Though informal — and illegal — motorbike street racing, and a nascent offroad racing scene have started to gain traction in Vietnam, Formula One has yet to take hold among the mainstream of sports fans, most of whom are football-mad.

Vietnam will be only the third Southeast Asian country to host a Formula One race, after Malaysia and Singapore. Organizers are pinning hopes that a mushrooming middle class in Southeast Asia, home to some of Asia's fastest growing economies, will embrace sports like racing that have taken off in richer nations. Formula One was taken over by US firm Liberty Media last year for \$8 billion, and the new owners have said they are keen on exploring new regions. —AFP



## Sports

# Kuwait Shooting Club reward marksmen for recent medal haul



**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Shooting Sport Club held an honoring ceremony on Wednesday for the Kuwaiti winners of continental and global medals days before hosting hundreds of marksmen for a crucial event on the Asian calendar. Abdulrahman Al-Faihan, Khaled Al-Mudhaf and Talal Al-Rasheedi led the men's trap team to

gold in the recent ISSF World Championships, while Mansour Al-Rasheedi clinched an individual skeet gold at the Asian Games in Jakarta.

Al-Faihan, who was also an individual World Championships bronze-medalist, has additionally qualified to the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. Their efforts, on behalf of Kuwait, were praised by



KSSC President Duaij Al-Otaibi as he handed out the awards to the shooters at the club's HQ. KSSC have decided to sponsor Olympic finalist, Al-Faihan, on a monthly basis in recognition of his accomplishments and to spur him on to achieve great things at the largest global sports event, the sports official said.

Tomorrow, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex will begin hosting more than 600 men and women shooters from across the continent for the Asian Shotgun and Airgun Championships. The event will include dozens of senior and junior events, held over an 11-day period. — KUNA

## VAR to be used in CAF Champs League final

**JOHANNESBURG:** Video assistant referees (VAR) will be used in the CAF Champions League final for the first time today when Al Ahly of Egypt host Esperance of Tunisia in the first leg. The system allows off-field referees to assist match officials regarding goals, penalty and straight red card decisions, and mistaken identity when awarding red and yellow cards.

VAR has been used once before in Africa, for the 2018 CAF Super Cup match between Wydad Casablanca of Morocco and TP Mazembe of the Democratic Republic of Congo. While VAR has been both lauded and loathed by footballers and officials, its use at the World Cup in Russia this year was considered "largely successful" by FIFA. "We used it for the Super Cup last February without any hitches and are delighted to go a step further," CAF general secretary Amr Fahmy said. "This is another historic moment for African football. CAF is determined to use the latest innovative technologies available."

Record eight-time champions Ahly and twice trophy-holders Esperance have met 16 times at various stages of the Champions League, starting with two goalless 1990 qual-

ifiers. The most controversial refereeing decision came in a 2010 semi-final when Nigerian Michael Eneramo clearly handled when scoring the goal that won the tie for Esperance. It was scant consolation to Ahly that the Ghanaian referee who allowed the goal to stand in Tunisia was banned.

Ahly and Esperance go into the two-leg title decider — the second leg is on November 9 in Tunisia — knowing a great deal about each other having also met in the group stage. After a 0-0 draw in Egypt, Ahly won the return match 1-0 through a goal from Morocco-born Walid Azaro, one of six he netted in the Champions League this season. Anice Badri of Esperance has scored one more with his seventh coming five minutes from time to secure overall victory in a dramatic semi-final against Primeiro Agosto of Angola. Other potential match-winners in Alexandria and Rades include Haythem Jouini of Esperance, who has come off the bench to score vital goals.

Walid Soliman of Ahly is another, firing two of the three goals that took the 'Cairo Red Devils' past Entente Setif of Algeria in the semi-finals. A key factor in the consistent success of north African clubs in CAF competitions is the number of top quality goalkeepers the region boasts. So, it was unusual that rival coaches Patrice Carteron of Ahly and Mouine Chaabani of Esperance had to defend their shot-stoppers after the semi-finals. Both Mohamed el Shenawy of Ahly and Rami Jeridi of Esperance conceded soft second-leg goals that, fortunately for them, did not prevent their clubs progressing. — AFP

## Tardelli gets ban for rubbing face during anthem

**SHANGHAI:** China's football association has handed a one-game ban to Shandong Luneng's Brazilian midfielder Diego Tardelli for rubbing his face during the Chinese national anthem before a game.

The country's Communist regime passed a law last year to severely punish people who disrespect the anthem, and Tardelli is not the first prominent figure to be punished in China over the "The March of the Volunteers".

Tardelli, 33, was looking down and rubbing his face with his right hand as the anthem played before the game against Shanghai SIPG on Sunday. "Tardelli's manners were not solemn when the national anthem was played and sung, causing adverse social impact," the CFA said in a punishment notice published on Wednesday. The ruling shocked some fans. "Touching his face is undignified behavior? That's a bit of exaggeration," wrote one person on China's Twitter-like Weibo microblogging website. But others backed the ban.

"What's wrong with CFA's action? No matter which country you come from, you should show respect to a country's national anthem and national flag," another post read. With global interest in Chinese football growing, the CFA has been busy dishing out bans, fines or warnings for on- and off-field misdemeanors that would go

unpunished or receive a mere wrist slap in most countries. SIPG received a warning and a 40,000 yuan (\$5,800) fine from the CFA for arriving late to the game on Sunday before beating Shandong Luneng 4-2.

Tardelli's ban came weeks after authorities in Shanghai detained a popular live-streamer for five days after she waved her arms and mimicked a conductor as she sang the anthem during a broadcast. In September last year, the National People's Congress passed a law against mocking the national anthem, with a punishment of up to 15 days in jail. The NPC changed the criminal law in November to allow sentences of up to three years. President Xi Jinping, considered China's most powerful leader since Chairman Mao Zedong, has stepped up the promotion of patriotism in the world's most populous country. Xi also has grand ambitions to turn China into a global football powerhouse that could one day host a World Cup. — AFP



MATCHES ON TV  
LOCAL TIMING

ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE	
SSC Napoli v Empoli	22:30
beIN SPORTS	
GERMAN BUNDESLIGA	
VfB Stuttgart v Eintracht Frankfurt	22:30
beIN SPORTS HD 5	
FRENCH LEAGUE	
Paris Saint-Germain v LOSC Lille	22:45
beIN SPORTS HD 6	



## Sports

# Chelsea beat Lampard's Derby in League Cup Halloween thriller

**LONDON:** Chelsea dumped Frank Lampard's Derby out of the League Cup on Wednesday despite a valiant effort by the Championship side to battle back from a defensive Halloween horror show. Maurizio Sarri's much-changed side eventually emerged 3-2 winners, with all five goals coming in a helter-skelter first half, on a night when there were also fourth-round victories for Arsenal, Tottenham and Middlesbrough. Two astonishing early defensive errors at Stamford Bridge from Fikayo Tomori — on loan from Chelsea — and Richard Keogh either side of a Jack Marriott equalizer gave the home side a 2-1 lead.

Undaunted, Lampard's side leveled shortly before the half-hour through Martyn Waghorn before Cesc Fabregas restored order for the Premier League high-flyers. Lampard, one of Chelsea's greatest-ever players, felt his side deserved a draw on chances created but said he was a "lucky man" to be able to enjoy such an occasion. "The difference between the sides was they scored three... actually we scored four didn't we? I joke because I'm proud," he told Sky Sports. "Talking to their staff, they're saying we're playing well." "I respect this club, I don't have to talk about this club. I'm proud of my players."

The 40-year-old former England midfielder received a rapturous reception on his first return to Stamford Bridge as a manager, soaking up the atmosphere before kick-off. Buoyed by his side's win on penalties at Old Trafford against his former Chelsea boss Jose Mourinho in the previous round, he was dismayed to witness the errors

from his side, which made their task all the harder. Tomori sliced into his own net in the fifth minute, miscuing a clearance when attempting to deal with an innocuous-looking Davide Zappacosta cross.

Midway through the half, lightning struck twice when Keogh failed to deal with another Zappacosta delivery, haplessly steering the ball into his own net. But the visitors played a full role in a frantic first half, looking sharp as they came forward and were back on level terms before Fabregas scored what turned out to be the decisive goal.

## Late Derby pressure

Keogh had a late chance to make amends for his earlier howler but Willy Caballero saved at close range and David Nugent hit the post in the 89th minute, leaving Lampard holding his head in his hands in frustration. As former Chelsea and Leicester manager Claudio Ranieri looked on from the stands, there was a minute's applause before kick-off in tribute to Leicester's late Thai owner Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha, killed in a helicopter crash on Saturday.

Ten-man Arsenal were made to sweat by League One Blackpool before eventually emerging 2-1 winners, with goals from Stefan Lichtsteiner and Emile Smith-Rowe. Two goals from Son Heung-min and a strike from Fernando Llorente gave Tottenham a 3-1 win against West Ham while Championship side Middlesbrough upset Premier league outfit Crystal Palace 1-0.

game at home against PSG. "If there's rotation I will do it only to put on fresh players for this game. "Some players will change but I won't name names to keep you guessing. "The next match is not in my thoughts, the one against Empoli is now the most important." "We're in a good period, we're in good shape mentally and physically .. but there are always pitfalls just around the corner." Empoli lost 2-1 to Juventus last weekend after a Cristiano Ronaldo double, and are in the relegation zone with just three points from their last nine games.

Massimiliano Allegri's Juventus host Cagliari on Saturday, before next week's visit by Manchester United, with Inter Milan at home against Genoa on Saturday, ahead of their date with Barcelona in the San Siro. Allegri remains wary of the threat of resurgent Inter, who are looking for their seventh straight league win against Genoa, who have just three days to recover from their 2-1 loss to AC Milan. "Inter had a great game against Lazio (last weekend) and are an important rival against whom we should have great respect," said Allegri. "They have all the credentials to compete for the title, the team was built to win the Scudetto and to fight with us and Napoli.

"Spalletti is a very experienced coach and has brought Inter to the Champions League." Juventus defender Miralem Pjanic said that the Champions League was top of their thoughts after away wins in Valencia and Manchester. — AFP



**LONDON:** Derby County's English midfielder Martyn Waghorn (R) vies in the air with Chelsea's Brazilian defender Emerson Palmieri (L) during the English League Cup football match between Chelsea and Derby County at Stamford Bridge. — AFP

On Tuesday, Burton Albion and Bournemouth booked their places in the quarter-finals while Premier League leaders Manchester City play Fulham. The quarter-final draw pits Arsenal

against Spurs, while Chelsea take on Bournemouth and Middlesbrough play Burton. Leicester or Southampton will play Manchester City or Fulham. — AFP

## Ancelotti's Napoli play catch-up in Serie A

**MILAN:** Napoli will be looking to hit struggling Empoli hard in Friday's early Serie A match to keep touch with leaders Juventus before next week's Champions League blockbuster against Paris Saint-Germain. Carlo Ancelotti knows well that at home against Empoli, his side have to get back on track for the title after last Sunday's 1-1 draw against Roma, thanks to Dries Mertens' late equalizer. Napoli, with 22 points from 10 games, are now third, level on points with Inter Milan, who are ahead on goal difference, but six points adrift of seven-time champions Juventus. "We will fight to the end, the goal is very clear," said Ancelotti at Thursday's press conference. "There are several teams that aim to get closer to Juve, Inter had a positive run and they're closer like us and that increases the competitiveness of the championship. "AC Milan are getting closer now too."

The Napoli coach was playing his cards close to his chest as he ruled out resting players including Lorenzo Insigne ahead of Tuesday's

## PSG superstars need more teamwork: Cavani

**MONACO:** Uruguayan striker Edinson Cavani says Paris Saint-Germain's team of dazzling individuals including Neymar and Kylian Mbappe need to work more as a team if they are to win the Champions League. In an exclusive interview with AFP, Cavani said the importance of winning the Champions League for the French club was drummed into him even before he signed from Napoli in 2013.

"It's an objective that the club discussed with me before I signed the contract," said ahead of Tuesday's Champions League Group C clash in Naples. "It is in my head. It flows through my veins. I want to win it because that is the job that was presented to me when I came (to PSG)." PSG's domination of Ligue 1 — they have won five of the past six championship titles — allows them to prepare well for their ultimate goal of winning Europe's premier club competition. But the Champions League has produced nothing but heartbreak for PSG and their Qatari owners, who have plunged millions in the club in the hope of creating one of the continent's top sides.

PSG's hopes ended at the quarter-finals four years in succession from 2013-2016, and at the last 16 in the past two campaigns. Coach Unai Emery was fired last summer and left for Arsenal

after failing to bring the trophy to Paris and new coach Thomas Tuchel has inherited the task of realizing the dream. Tuchel has brought the emphasis on teamwork to PSG's training ground, said Cavani. "He has a wonderful mentality and likes to win with a strong team structure," said the 31-year-old, voted PSG player of the year in 2017. "He wants everyone to play together and that is what is important for me."

Cavani cited Atletico Madrid and Juventus as clubs who play together with the kind of robust, disciplined teamwork that Tuchel is trying to instill into PSG. "That does not mean that we (PSG) do not work together," said Cavani, whose star has declined since fellow strikers Neymar, the world's most expensive player, and teenage sensation Mbappe joined him in attack. But Cavani denied there was friction. "We are a work in progress," he said. "That does not mean I don't get on with Neymar or Mbappe."

I hope that work with the new coach can give the perfect structure to produce a big season — all together." After defeat at Liverpool and being held 2-2 by Napoli last time out, a win at the San Paolo stadium will be crucial if PSG are to make it past the group stages. But before facing his former club, Cavani said: "It will be good match to show that we have moved up to a higher level, and that we are able to deal with this kind of pressure — because if we lose, that will make it tough for us to get out of the group stage." Appearing in Monaco to receive the Golden Foot award for outstanding athletic ability and personality, Cavani told AFP he had shrugged off a recent thigh injury and expected to play in PSG's home league match against Lille today. — AFP



## Sports

# Zain main sponsor of Kuwait International Rally 2018

**KUWAIT:** Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, announced its main sponsorship of the Kuwait International Rally 2018 organized by Kuwait International Automobile Club (KIAC) in collaboration with the Public Authority for Sport and Basel Salem Al Sabah Motor Racing Club (BMRC). The rally, organized during 1-3 November, is being held at the Kuwait Motor Town Race Circuit as the first international event to be organized at the new circuit.

Zain took part in the press conference that was held at Kuwait Motor Town Race Circuit headquarters in Arifjan, which witnessed the attendance of Chairman of the Rally's organizational committee Sheikh Athbi Nayef Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, Zain Kuwait's Chief Corporate Communications and Relations Officer Waleed Al Khashti, as well as a number of rally's most prominent participants.

Waleed Al Khashti, Zain Kuwait's Chief Corporate Communications and Relations Officer, commented during the press conference: "today we are proud to announce Zain's main sponsorship of the Kuwait International Rally 2018, which will be held at the Kuwait Motor Town Race Circuit as the first international event to be organized inside the circuit. This makes us all proud, as such an international event will surely raise the name of Kuwaiti sports within the global sporting community".

Al Khashti continued: "we strongly believe in the important role the private sector plays in developing the Youth and Sports sectors in our country. At Zain, we make this concept a reality by sponsoring and supporting various major



**KUWAIT:** Al Khashti and Sheikh Athbi Al Sabah with the rally's participants during the press conference.

sporting events in Kuwait, including this international rally, as well as sponsoring and encouraging many Kuwaiti athletes who represent Kuwait in local, regional, and international arenas. Many of these athletes, who achieve great titles that we take pride in, are in motorsports".

Al Khashti concluded: "our presence at the Kuwait International Rally 2018 comes in line with Zain's keenness on encouraging the various efforts that contribute to developing the Kuwaiti Youth and Sports sectors. We put the support of Kuwaiti sports at the forefront of our priorities

under the umbrella of Zain's Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy, and our support of Kuwaiti champions results in many achievements that we are proud of one year after another".

It is worth mentioning that the Kuwait International Rally 2018 is considered the fourth round of the Middle East Rally Championship 2018 (MERC), which is run under the auspices of the FIA (Federation Internationale de l'Automobile). The championship features five rounds taking place in Jordan, Cyprus,

Lebanon, Kuwait, and Qatar, and witnesses the participation of a great number of Middle Eastern champions, including many Kuwaiti champions. The Rally is organized by Kuwait International Automobile Club (KIAC), which is an official member of the FIA, AIT (Alliance Internationale de Tourisme), FIM (Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme), and IRU (International Road Transport Union), and in collaboration with the Public Authority for Sport and Basel Salem Al Sabah Motor Racing Club (BMRC).

## Solari's Real impress in Africa Cup outing

**MADRID:** Santiago Solari's reign as interim Real Madrid coach got off to an encouraging start on Wednesday as the European champions made light of third-tier hosts Melilla in the Copa del Rey. Goals from Karim Benzema, Marco Asensio, Alvaro Odriozola and Cristo Gonzalez earned the 19-time champions a 4-0 win on their first visit to this Spanish enclave on the north African coast.

Solari was promoted from boss of Real's Castilla B team on Monday after the sacking of Julen Lopetegui only 139 days after his appointment. Sunday's 5-1 Clasico humbling by Barcelona proved the last straw for Real president Florentino Perez, who will nevertheless have been warmed by the team's display in this last 32 first leg clash. "In tough times, we are all pulling in the same direction," said Solari. "We have a team of great champions who know what to do to get the job done."

Defending champions Barcelona, meanwhile, needed a stoppage-time header from French international Clement Lenglet to secure a 1-0 win at third division Cultural Leonesa. Melilla may not be Barca or Manchester City but there was

plenty to like about Real Madrid's performance, not least the bright debut of highly-touted Brazilian teenager Vinicius Junior. After catching the eye in Solari's Castilla side the 18-year-old Flamengo recruit was handed his first team starting debut, and was one of Real's best players. His superb pass set up Asensio for Real's second on the stroke of half time, after Benzema playing as a central striker had tapped in Odriozola's assist from close range on 28 minutes. At the restart Solari made two changes, introducing Nacho for Sergio Ramos with Benzema replaced by Federico Valverde. Melilla began the second period brightly, as they had done the first, proving more of a threat to their well-heeled but hurting visitors.

### No Conte no cry

Against the run of play only a fine point blank save from Melilla keeper Dani Barrio denied Dani Ceballos on the hour. Then Vinicius almost marked his first team arrival with a goal, his shot thudding off the crossbar. Odriozola bagged his first goal for Real, firing into an empty net after good work from Vinicius and Reguillo before substitute Gonzalez headed home. Solari said on Tuesday he was open to becoming Real coach on a long term basis, and as a statement of intent he could not have asked for much more from his first game in charge.

The Argentinean, who spent five years playing for Madrid between 2000 and 2005, is likely to remain in post for Real's La Liga game at



**MELILLA:** Real Madrid's Spanish midfielder Daniel Ceballos (L) vies with UD Melilla's Spanish forward Antonio Islam Otegui during the Spanish King's Cup (Copa del Rey) football match between UD Melilla and Real Madrid CF at the Alvarez Claro municipal stadium. — AFP

home to Real Valladolid on Saturday and could stay on for next week's trip to Viktoria Plzen in the Champions League. Madrid have sounded out former Chelsea and Juventus coach Antonio Conte but initial talks have reportedly not gone smoothly. Belgium boss Roberto Martinez and

the club's former midfielder Guti have also been linked. But if Solari continues to impress he may well find himself signing a full time contract as he seeks to emulate another former Castilla coach who went on to a glorious innings as Real boss — Zinedine Zidane. — AFP





MINNEAPOLIS: Derrick Rose #25 of the Minnesota Timberwolves drives to the basket during the game against the Utah Jazz on October 31, 2018 at Target Center. — AFP

## Rose scores 50 as Wolves drop Jazz

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