Set to sizzle! Model Tammy Hembrow P 21
Sex Drive Problems P 29
Sydney, Melbourne house price surge P 32

Madrid climate change talks end P 14 - 15
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A Word From the Editor

By Mamdouh Sukkarieh

Issues raised in 2019

Flipping through the pages of the past year we can see:

*The most important needs for people are housing, food and health. This Government has been talking about housing affordability since it came to office and seven years later housing is less affordable than ever. The government also said it would look at health and the cost of living, yet again four years later some are unable to pay for a visit to the doctor and food costs are higher than ever.

*A lot of accidents happened during this year and it is quite clear that young people’s driving is a major cause of the road fatalities and accidents on our roads. Why? Because they see driving as a fun activity and not as a responsibility. They all think it won’t happen to them but it could happen to anybody. I believe the government should find more effective ways to control the young people’s driving. These drivers need to be educated about driving before even getting a licence.

*The United States and most European countries have taken it upon themselves to be the best in the power game but in the areas that they have gained power, others have lost. In order to continue their industries growth, large factories are set up without regard to carbon emissions programs which will have highly negative impact on the environment. These impacts include natural disasters, storms, floods, fires and temperature rises. There have been many studies conducted on the impacts of carbon emissions and in these studies it has been found that the world’s temperature could rise four degrees Celsius by the sixties of this century. This will lead to billions of dollars being spent in order to contain the high seas elevations. Supporters of strong climate action warn the Paris agreement could unravel unless countries at the Madrid summit signal they are ready to honor the deal by rapidly strengthening plans to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

*Malala Yousafzai said: Let us remember, “One book, one pen, one child and one teacher can change the world.” It is unwise to neglect the importance of education in the development of society as a whole and most advanced countries have realised this. This has encouraged many governments to support educational programs through government grants to schools and universities. Unfortunately, and against this background The Australian Government has a budgetary problem. What I believe is that Mr. Scott Morrison has treated the government as a company and he wants to make money from the ordinary Australian family and from the every average Australian worker, in short amount of time, by cutting from here and there instead of planning for a budget surplus by investing.

*The Australian mainstream media has not been fair to our community and it does not seem like that will be changing any time soon. It is argued that there are many influences that affect what is portrayed in the media. The question arises as to why we give them the reasons that allows them to continue to portray a certain image of us in the media, rather than that our compliance with the law and leading examples in the community should also be addressed and acknowledge.

*The Meaning of Christmas It’s that time of the year again, where family and friends join together in celebration of Jesus Christ’s birth. Many people think that the meaning of Christmas is only setting up the Christmas tree, and finding the perfect gifts for the people who give meaning to your life, the lights in the windows, the cards in the mail and email, but no, that is not the meaning of Christmas. Yet, Christmas can be a season of great joy. It is a time of peace, love and happiness. You see, Christmas is when God gave a child to our mother Mary, who would hold this child in her womb and he was to grow up to do great things in the future. Shepherds, wise men, and angels all were able to experience the excitement of knowing about this great event.

Speaking of the festive season, I hope that all have a wonderful Christmas with family and friends; I also hope that this New Year is full of great happiness for all.
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This guide is purely for illustration purposes only and is not exhaustive or intended to impose or imply rules or requirements.
Christmas is a wonderful time to gather with our families and to draw close to one another.

We also know that right across the country so many Australians will be doing it tough this year. Whether it’s the floods earlier this year, or the terrible bushfires or indeed the drought which has been spreading across the country.

But Australians have stood together through all of this, and the resilience of our communities and the kindness that has been shown from one Australian to another has been a true inspiration.

While these times are difficult, there is much to reflect on and to celebrate in the great spirit of our amazing country.

For me, and for all who share the Christian faith, this is also a time of prayer and reflection to mark the miracle at Bethlehem that lies at the heart of the Christmas message.

So Christmas is a time for many things – family, friends, festivities and faith. This year, I am looking forward to spending time with loved ones, and I hope that you enjoy a quiet break with loved ones too.

May you have a safe and merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

The Hon Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister of Australia
December 2019
SEASONS GREETINGS

Wishing you and your family peace, harmony & love during the festive season.

LINDA BURNEY MP
Member for Barton

Merry Christmas

I WISH YOU AND YOUR FAMILY PEACE, GOOD WILL AND JOY THIS CHRISTMAS AND IN THE NEW YEAR

Julie Owens MP
Federal Member for Parramatta
9689 1455 | julie.owens.mp@aph.gov.au

Jodi McKay MP
Wishing you and your family a Merry Christmas
May the New Year bring you peace & happiness

مبارك ميلاد و عام آمن و سعيد

Jodi McKay MP
NSW Labor Leader
Member for Strathfield
Shadow Minister for Multiculturalism
Messages

I would like to wish all a very merry Christmas and a blessed New Year. Please stay safe during the holiday season and take the chance to reflect on how lucky we are.

Clr Khal Asfour
MAYOR
City of Canterbury Bankstown

Merry Christmas!
May this special time be filled with laughter and joy. Best wishes for a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

Stephen Kamper
Member of the Legislative Assembly
Member for Rockdale
Member of the Australian Labor Party
478 Princes Highway
ROCKDALE NSW 2216
P: 02 9597 1414
rockdale@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Christmas is a season of great joy. It is a time when we celebrate the birth of Jesus and a time of hope and renewed strength.

Merry Christmas and God bless you and your family during this festive season. I look forward to what 2020 has in store and continuing to serve this great community.

Stephen Kamper
Member of the Legislative Assembly
Member for Rockdale
Member of the Australian Labor Party
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Clr Khal Asfour
MAYOR
City of Canterbury Bankstown
Local News

Julia Finn MP
160 Merrylands Road, Merrylands 2160
P: 9637 1656 - F: 9897 1434
E: Granville@parliament.nsw.gov.au

In the season of good will,
I wish you and your family
a Merry Christmas and
a Happy New Year in 2019

Lynda Voltz MP
Member for Auburn
Office closed from 12pm, Friday 20th December until 9am,
Monday 6th January.
Phone: (02) 9737 8822 email: auburn@parliament.nsw.gov.au
Address: Mezzanine Level 92 Parramatta Road Lidcombe

Authorised by Lynda Voltz MP, Mezzanine Level Lidcombe Centre, 92 Parramatta Road, Lidcombe 2141.

CHRIS BOWEN MP
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR MCMAHON

“I extend my warmest wishes to all in the Arabic community
for a safe and joyous Christmas, shared with loved ones.
May the New Year bring you fortune, happiness and success”.

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Australia – Economic Update

* By Radwan Hamdan

The Australian economy has relied consistently on revenue from exports to China which used to have a never ending appetite for our minerals and in particular Iron Ore. However, China’s growth has been trending backwards in the past few years which had a significant impact on our economy given that China is our main trade partner. This problem became more acute in 2013 when China growth slowed significantly from an average of 15% to less than 7% and continued to grow below 7% up-to-now. As a result, commodity prices particularly iron ore, collapsed from a peak of US$120 per tonne 6 years ago to a trough point of US$40 per tonne in 2015 but it recovered marginally in 2016/2017 where each tonne fetched US$80 per tonne and currently, we sell Iron Ore to China at US$62 per tonne. This resulted in unprecedented budget deficits in Australia that we have not seen before.

This was unusual for a country so rich in resources with superior economic management credentials and a strong and consistent AAA rating through the thick and thin times for the past 30 years. A summary of budget deficit in Australia is summarised below for the past 8 years and what is the forecast budget result in 2020.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Deficit (Billion)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>($44.0B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>($19.4B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>($49.5B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>($41.1B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>($39.9B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>($29.4B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>($10.0B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>($4.0B) - Forecast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>$4.2B - Budget Surplus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To fund the persistent deficit, Australia had to resort to external borrowing following its bulging and stubborn budget deficits. This saw the public debt escalating from $75 Billion 12 years ago to almost $540 Billion today - but the debt as a percentage of GDP remained on par or lower than OECD countries at 23 % of Gross Domestic Product.

With the ongoing trade war between the USA and China, our economy has generally weakened and our growth in GDP stands at 1.7% today which is below the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) expectation. To entice growth, the RBA had cut interest rate by 0.5% in 2019 thereby making the inter-bank cash rate at 0.75%, the lowest since Federation. The use of monetary Policy does not seem to have significantly improved the economy but it has no doubt put the Housing Market in the Eastern States on high heat where prices have improved by over 6% year to date in 2019. In addition, the Treasurer used Fiscal Policy by Cutting taxes so that individuals have more disposable income (higher net pay) which eventually will help improve pending and prop up inflation which stands stubbornly at 1.3%. This has resulted in the longest stretch of low wages growth in the history of Australia which is hindering growth

How does our future look like?
The Government should expedite and bring forward its infra structure spending to prop-up the economy as the RBA is running out of ammunition and there is little room left to cut interest rated any further. I expect the next rate cut to be in May/June 2020 to achieve 0.5% inter-bank cash rate. This is due to the housing market which is starting to show signs of over-heating. This is indirectly creating a wealth effect amongst house owners which is translating in improved spending. With the unemployment rate at 5.3%, we are not too far from our full employment target of 4.5%. Unemployment rate has been fairly steady and this was the reason why there was no pressure for wages to increase above inflation. The Government will tread a fine line by creating more jobs and increase wages growth, increase consumer confidence and spending, improve growth to its target rate of 2.5%, and maintain an affordable A$ within its range of 65 cents to 70 cents compared to the US$. We are crawling to get there. However, the biggest advantage in favor of the Governments improved income was the better than budgeted Tax Revenue by the Australian Taxation Office which improved significantly in 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 due to better compliance and audit activity on deductions for individuals and crack down on Businesses especially large Corporates.

Radwan Hamdan is a Chartered Accountant, Chartered Tax Advisor and Certified Practising Accountant in Public Practice. He holds a Bachelor of Economics degree from the University of Sydney with a major in Commercial Law. He worked with Arthur Andersen and Price Waterhouse and worked on overseas assignments in Asia and the Middle East specialising in International Tax. Radwan Hamdan was the President of the Australian Arab Business Council from 2009 to 2013.
Tania Mihailuk MP
Member for Bankstown

أتمنى لكم جميعًا ولعائلاتكم ميلاد مجيد وسنة جديدة مليئة بالسعادة والأمان.

I would like to wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Ground Floor, 9A Greenfield Pde
Bankstown NSW 2200
02 9708 3838  bankstown@parliament.nsw.gov.au

SOPHIE COTSIS MP
Member for Canterbury
Suite 201, Level 2, 308-312 Beamish Street, Campsie
Phone: 9718 1234

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I look forward to working with you in 2020.

The Hon Shaoquett Moselmane
MLC
Assistant President Legislative Council

مناور محمد وعام سعيد
ملؤهم الأمن والطمأنينة

The Hon
Shaoquett Moselmane
MLC
Assistant President Legislative Council

I would like to wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

Electorate Office
Phone: 97269523  Fax: 97269783
Email: fairfield@parliament.nsw.gov.au
55A Smart Street, Fairfield, NSW, 2165
Mail: PO Box 771, Fairfield, NSW , 1860

Guy Zangari MP
State Member for Fairfield

مبارك عيد الميلاد وبكل عام وأنتم بخير.

From my family to yours, I wish you all the best for a Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

55A Smart Street, Fairfield, NSW, 2165
Phone: 97269523  Fax: 97269783
Email: fairfield@parliament.nsw.gov.au
Mail: PO Box 771, Fairfield, NSW , 1860
Some of the largest hailstones ever seen in Australia are thought to have plummeted to Earth over southern Queensland on Friday afternoon.

It is the second time in a month that parts of the Sunshine Coast have been hit by large hailstones.

Yet Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) senior forecaster Sam Campbell said hailstones this big were rare.

“Some really significant, in fact possibly historic, giant hailstones around parts of the Sunshine Coast and the Wide Bay, Burnett — some hail of 1113-centimetres in diameter recorded there and that’s some of the biggest hail that’s ever been seen in Australia,” he said.

It’s hot — why does it hail?

Hailstones are clumps of layered ice which form in the air that is rising within thunderstorms, known as updraughts.

They start as water vapour condensing into tiny water droplets that exist inside the updraught.

Temperatures near the top of thunderstorm clouds are very cold, dropping as low as –60 degrees Celsius, even during summer months.

How big do hailstones get?

BOM senior research scientist Harald Richter said really large hail forms from a hail embryo — a tiny ball of ice.

“This ball is flying through a thunderstorm updraught that’s collecting really cold water that’s way below freezing, it’s called super-cooled water,” Dr Richter said.

“The longer it [the ice ball] flies through that super-cooled water, the bigger it grows.

“If it has a lot of time and strong updrafts, it can form a golf ball and in really strong updraughts it can even form a cricket ball.”

Most hailstones are smaller than 25mm — about the size of a 10-cent piece.

But Dr Richter said in particularly intense storms, the upward air motion inside the updraught is so strong that even larger hailstones are suspended in the air, or fall very slowly.

In these storms, hail has more time to collect super-cooled water droplets to swell in size.

Will we see it again soon?

Mr Campbell said those conditions were unlikely to be repeated in southern Queensland on Saturday.

“I think we can safely say that won’t happen today, we had an incredible environment in terms of the storms yesterday,” he said.

“It’s very rare that we see such instability and winds as well in the atmosphere, so nothing like that today, you don’t have to worry about giant hail.”

How did the massive hailstones that fell over southern Queensland form?
Clr Rachelle Harika

I wish you and your families a Happy Christmas and safe New Year

أتمنى لكم وعائلاتكم عيداً مجيداً وسنة سعيدة

Clr George Zakhia

I hope you have a wonderful and peaceful Christmas & New Year with your family and friends

يتقدم السيد جورج زخيا عضو مجلس الحكومة المحلية من الجميع باطيب الأماني ويدأمل أن يقضى الجميع عيد ميلاد وسنة جديدة بسلام مع العائلة والأصدقاء

Message from Mr Ihab Matar

رسالة من السيد إيهاب مطر

I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a safe prosperous and Happy New Year

May you enjoy the festive season with your family and loved ones

أتمنى لجميع أبناء الجالية العربية عيد ميلاد سعيد وسنة جديدة أمنة ومزدهرة ومليئة بالسعادة وقضاء أوقات ممتدة مع العائلة والأحباء خلال موسم الأعياد
International climate talks that have gone on for two weeks have failed to reach an agreement on a key part of a deal that would help reduce global carbon emissions.

Delegates have postponed a decision on global carbon markets which put a price on the emission of carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas. Carbon markets allow one country to pay another to reduce emissions and include this under its own targets, which experts say can drastically help reduce greenhouse gas.

Countries from Europe and elsewhere had said that no deal on how to govern the exchange of carbon credits was better than a weak one that could undermine a dozen or so existing regional carbon mechanisms.

Delegates from almost 200 nations passed declarations calling for greater ambition in cutting planet-heating greenhouse gases and in helping poor countries that are suffering the effects of climate change.

Among the documents passed at the longest ever climate talks was the “Chile-Madrid Time for Action” declaration calling on countries to improve their current pledges to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This will keep them in line with the 2015 Paris Agreement target of avoiding a temperature increase of more than
1.5°C by the end of the century.
The world is currently on course for a 3°C to 4°C rise, with potentially dramatic consequences for many countries.
It was also agreed to designate funds for the most vulnerable countries to compensate them for the effects of extreme weather events, one of the most pressing issues for small island states.
Environmental groups and activists accused the world’s richer countries of showing little commitment to seriously tackling climate change.
Jennifer Morgan, Greenpeace International’s executive director said: “The Paris Agreement may have been the victim of a hit-and-run by a handful of powerful carbon economies, but they are on the wrong side of this struggle, the wrong side of history.
“Climate blockers like Brazil and Saudi Arabia, enabled by an irresponsibly weak Chilean leadership, peddled carbon deals and steamrolled scientists and civil society.”
Chile chaired the talks, which had to be moved to Madrid amid violent anti-government protests back home.
Activists criticised the Chilean government of President Santiago Piñera for retaining coal-fired power plants until 2040.
Helen Mountford from World Resources Institute, an environmental think tank, said the talks “reflect how disconnected country leaders are from the urgency of the science and the demands of their citizens in the streets”.
“They need to wake up in 2020,” she added.
The Mayor of Bankstown Clr Khal Asfour, hosted a special Christmas party on 11th December. Over 300 guests filled the Bankstown Sport Club Grand Ballroom for what was a great night of entertainment, fun and food. “I am grateful for the support of our community, Businesses, local club, and resident of Bankstown Council.” Mayor Asfour said “On behalf of the Bankstown council I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all peace, harmony and unity within your home, workplace and community. Have a very merry Christmas and a prosperous new year!” Added Mayor Khal Asfour.
Local News

HWPL Sydney Ends the Year with a Cheer

Sydney 14 December 2019 - In the Regent’s Park Community Center, HWPL in collaboration with IWPG and IPYG Sydney hosted its end of year Christmas and celebration party for 2019. Many of HWPL’s close partners such as representatives from T and R Accountants who sponsored the event venue, Love Peace and Harmony, Afghan Peace Foundation, Iraqi Renaissance, Iraqi TV, The World Observer Media, the Indian Subcontinent Times, Councillors, Peace Educators, Peace Ambassadors, peace volunteers, Religious leaders and all those who participate in HWPL’s WARP Office and many others, gathered together to reflect on the year gone by and consider the year to come in peace and peace works.

Starting with an opening address from HWPL Australia’s Executive Director, and an iconic carol performance by the International Peace Youth Group, the event had a strong emphasis on appreciating all those who worked with together with HWPL including WARP office participants Dr Daniel Zeitoune, Mr Murikesh Maru and Sheikh Ahmed Khalil. Also they took time to appreciate those who worked in the media such as Mr Ashok Kumar, and Dr Mamdouh Sukkarieh and also Dr Ayesha Saeed who was recognized for being the first to successfully complete the International Women’s Peace Group (IWPG) Peace Lecturer training course in Australia. But a large part of the event was focused on the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) between the IWPG and The World Observer Media. Represented by Mrs. Lydia Im and Dr Mamdouh Sukkarieh, the signing was completed in a great spirit of friendship, and ended with a thankful word from Dr. Sukkarieh.

Ending with a cake cutting by HWPL, IWPG and IPYG key representatives, HWPL, IWPG and IPYG signs off for 2019, and look forward to doing more in the future for achieving peace through the Declaration of Peace and the Cessation of War in Australia and around the world.
The Australian Arab Business Network (AABN) elected a new Board Members at its Annual General Meeting (AGM) held at Waterview in Bicentennial Park on Wednesday 11 December 2019. Following presentation of the Annual report by outgoing president, Ms Genan Issa, the Election was conducted by Mr. Issa Shaweesh, a Business Member of the AABC. An election of a new Board of Management was elected as follows: President Ms Genan Issa, Vice President, Mr. George Bousamra, Secretary, Mr. Hassan Awada, Treasurer, Mr. Eddie Chehab, Board Member, Mr. Jay Sayed, Ms Joe Wazzi, Mr. Firas Kasam and Ms. Reem Borrows. The first monthly dinner of the AABC will be held in February 2020.

Photo by ANTOINE YAMMINE
Opinion

By Natalie Sukkarieh

The moon my friend

The moon is my friend
It is a loyal companion
That will stick by me till the end

It watches me
And without a doubt
It knows me inside out

It never leaves
And like a bunch of thieves
It steals the light from the sun
And makes the darkness fun

Always there to sit with at night
It unveils the beauty of the dark
And gives comfort in times of fright

It travels all around the world
But always comes back to me.
It will never flee.

It taught me that,
Without the darkness
We would not be able to see the stars
That surround planets like Mars

We go through phases in life
Just like the moon
But we will always shine bright
Like the sun at high noon

The moon understands what it means to be human.
Uncertain.
Alone.
Cratered by imperfections

Raising awareness during festive season celebrations

Barrister Maroun Licha
0402 968 997
Clarence Chambers
Level 11, 65 York Street
Sydney NSW 2000
www.guiltynotguilty.com.au
info@guiltynotguilty.com.au

With the coming of the Festive season comes with it a time of reflection of the past and a time of anticipation on what the future brings. It is a time of celebration for sure, a time of giving no doubt, and as we all know, a time of endless parties and celebrations. With all these parties and celebrations we not often think about our responsibilities or the consequences of our actions we may make. The most common things I see are celebrations with friends and celebrations at work during this season. Those celebrations often end with great stories to tell of fun, laughter and good times. There are sadly stories that end quite tragically.

Very often people do not think that when a group goes out to celebrate, where most people in that group drink alcohol, that individual members of that group react differently after drinking alcohol. Some people act violently, or a prone, to act violently when drinking alcohol. We have all seen the news stories of celebrations gone wrong and the “coward punch” scenario where two lives, at least, are changed violently and instantly. This ending, no doubt, was not what any person would have thought the night would end when starting a night of fun and celebration. In one small moment of time lives are changed.

Employers have an obligation to make their work Christmas party a safe environment for its employees. We all are familiar with the story. End of year celebrations at work. Personalities and friendships developing throughout the year. Employees bonding with each other over a long period of time perhaps with some flirtatious connotations. The staff Christmas party with food, fun karma and free-flowing alcohol. At the end of the night two staff members end up in the throes of passion. Is a normal scenario this would not be a problem if both employees were consenting adults. However, the big issue here is that but for the alcohol, one of the consenting parties would not have consented. Again at the start of the night people would only contemplate fun and celebrations and not something that would change people’s lives dramatically. As a criminal law barrister, with 14 years experience, I do not have the answers but I can try and raise awareness of these issues. Everybody wants to have fun and celebrate during this time and get home safely.
Celebrities

Queen can wear as many as SEVEN different outfits a day while she entertains guests over Christmas

For some of us, just changing out of our festive pyjamas on Christmas day is a step too far - but not for the Queen, who wears up to seven different outfits for the occasion.

When hosting Christmas at Sandringham, the monarch, 93, is said to be ‘just as busy as she would be in London, with more quests to entertain’, according to royal dresser Angela Kelly.

Writing in her new book The Other Side of the Coin: The Queen, The Dresser and the Wardrobe, Angela, who has worked with Elizabeth II for the past 25 years, said the Queen chooses what she’d like to wear throughout the special day.

‘The Queen is just as busy as she would be in London, with more guests to entertain,’ Angela wrote (via People).

Beyoncé reveals the ‘gift’ of her miscarriages

Beyoncé has revealed how difficult her path to motherhood was and said multiple miscarriages she suffered before welcoming Blue Ivy, her first child with husband Jay-Z, gave her a “gift” she didn’t expect.

“Success looks different to me now. I learned that all pain and loss is in fact a gift,” the star, 38, told Elle magazine’s January edition in a super personal cover story.

“Having miscarriages taught me that I had to mother myself before I could be a mother to someone else.”

As well as Blue, who turns eight in January, music’s power couple also share twins Sir and Rumi, 2.

The first photo of them, cradled in their famous mother’s arms in a floral bower, nearly broke the internet and drew over 10 million Instagram likes.

But for the Formation singer, success goes way, way beyond fame.

After her first baby was born, “the quest for my purpose became so much deeper,” Beyoncé said.

Bill Cosby loses appeal to overturn conviction

An appeals court has rejected disgraced entertainer Bill Cosby’s bid to overturn his sexual assault conviction.

The ruling is being closely watched as Cosby was the first celebrity convicted in the #MeToo era, when a jury found him guilty in April 2018 of drugging and sexually assaulting Andrea Constand at his home in 2004.

Cosby’s spokesman attacked the ruling as “a political scheme to destroy America’s Dad”.

The Pennsylvania state Superior Court says the trial evidence of five other accusers was evidence that Cosby had a “unique sexual assault playbook”.

Constand, who has agreed to be named in reports, said the decision shows no one is above the law.

Chris Hemsworth’s wife Elsa Pataky offers a rare glimpse inside their $20million Byron Bay mansion

They’ve just moved into their $20million ‘mega mansion’ in Byron Bay.

And on Wednesday, Chris Hemsworth’s wife, Elsa Pataky, offered a rare glimpse inside their family home.

The Spanish actress, 43, shared footage to Instagram of herself helping the couple’s three children decorate their huge Christmas tree.

Elsa and her children - daughter India Rose, seven, and twin sons Tristan and Sasha, five - were all wearing matching plaid pyjamas.
Set to sizzle! Model Tammy Hembrow flaunts her fit physique in a skimpy white bikini as she flirtatiously pokes out her tongue next to a luxe pool.

Instagram queen Tammy Hembrow flaunted her sensational figure in a pale pink bikini earlier this week. And on Thursday, the 25-year-old was up to her old tricks yet again as she flaunted her fit physique in yet another raunchy snap.

Taking to Instagram, Tammy sizzled in a skimpy white bikini which was emblazoned with flames. She wore minimal makeup in the glam shot.

Tammy later shared a snap of herself putting on a flirty display, flirtatiously poking out her tongue for the camera.

Harvey Weinstein reaches tentative $25m deal with accusers

Film mogul Harvey Weinstein has reached a tentative $25m settlement with dozens of women who have accused him of sexual misconduct, lawyers have said.

Some 30 actresses and ex-employees would share the payout in the deal. However, it still needs signing off by all parties, Mr Weinstein's lawyers have not commented and some say the deal will punish those holding out.

Mr Weinstein faces a separate criminal trial next month on rape and sexual assault charges, which he denies. The Hollywood producer could face life in jail if convicted.

On Wednesday, Mr Weinstein's bail sum was raised from $1m to $5m for the alleged mishandling of an electronic ankle monitor.

He attended the court hearing in New York using a walking frame. His lawyers said he was undergoing surgery on Thursday for injuries suffered in a car accident in August.

SAG Awards 2020: Australians dominate the nominations including Nicole Kidman, Margot Robbie, Russell Crowe and Toni Collette

Four Australian A-listers have received nominations for next year’s SAG Awards.

On Wednesday, the nominees for the 26th Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards were announced in Los Angeles ahead of next month’s ceremony.

Australian females continue to dominate the upcoming awards season with Nicole Kidman, Margot Robbie, Russell Crowe and Toni Collette all nominated for awards.

The SAG Awards are one of the key ceremonies ahead of the Academy Awards, and nominations provide a significant boost to actors’ campaigns.
Your best photos from 2019
Here is a selection of photos sent in by audience members from around Australia
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Odd News

Australian students falling behind in reading, maths and science

Australian students have recorded some of their worst results in reading, maths, and science since international testing began almost two decades ago.

The Programme for International Student Assessment results, released on Tuesday, found Aussie kids were going backwards in every single category.

The federal education minister, Dan Tehan, said the results were “incredibly disappointing” and “should have alarm bells ringing” but pushed responsibility on to the states.

“One of the frustrations I have as federal education minister is I’m not responsible for any schools across the country,” he told Sunrise.

“We need to get back to focusing on literacy and numeracy as the core fundamentals of our education system.”

“This is what will be on the table when I meet with state and territory education ministers next week.”

Company advertises for cannabis tester who will be paid $4000 a month to smoke weed

It’s not a joke or a ploy to bust a drug user - this job advertisement is 100 per cent legitimate.

A company in the US is advertising for someone to smoke pot for USD $3000 a month (AUD $4420).

New York-based website American Marijuana is offering someone the chance to test and review “a wide variety of cannabis products” to give their readers “honest and reliable insights”.

“The applicant will have to write about their honest reviews and opinions of the product in the form of a blog,” the company website states.

“They must also be comfortable in front of the camera, since the job includes unboxing videos and explainer videos of how each cannabis product performs and differs from other, more notable products in the category.”

Whoever gets the job could earn up to USD $36,000 (AUD $52,000) a year, “depending on experience.”

There’s a catch though - hopefuls are only eligible if they live somewhere where marijuana is legal, which rules Australia out.

Cannabis is legal in Canada and a handful of US states, including California, Colorado, Michigan and Oregon.

Teacher at top South African school accused of sleeping with 5 students

A female teacher at a prestigious South African school has been found to have engaged in sexual misconduct with several students.

Fiona Viotti, aged in her 30s, resigned on October 11, amid allegations she had a relationship with an 18-year-old student at Bishops Diocesan School in Cape Town, News24 reports.

It was also revealed the now former teacher may have been involved with several other students.

The ages of those students remains unclear.

“As the teacher resigned from Bishops with immediate effect on the 11th October 2019, no disciplinary action can be taken against her by the school for these breaches,” the school’s headmaster Guy Pearson in a statement on Monday.

After an investigation into the matter, the school found Viotti had engaged in sexual misconduct with at least five students, during the time she was employed - from 2013 to 2019.
Pay no gap with private health insurance

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WA Indigenous group’s $290 billion compensation claim could become one of world’s biggest payouts

Indigenous leaders have filed an unprecedented compensation claim against the West Australian Government that could become one of the world’s biggest legal payouts. Noongar people of south-west WA are pursuing more than $290 billion for “spiritual damage” caused by loss of their traditional land.

The figure would be almost a quarter of Australia’s gross domestic product of $1.4 trillion and more than West Australia’s gross state product of $259 billion.

If the action is successful, it would put it in the range of a landmark $US206 billion ($304 billion) payout made by the tobacco industry to governments across the United States in 1998.

Noongar woman Naomi Smith, a lead claimant, said her people had been struggling since European settlement when they lost access to their traditional land.

She said this claim was seeking reimbursement for the extinguishment of their native title rights over vast swathes of their country.

“It’s going to be huge in regard to what Noongar people could do for our Noongar kids,” she said.

David Stevenson, the solicitor representing Ms Smith, said it was “far and away” the largest claim made in Australia.

“It’s effectively the largest litigation and largest compensation claim in the world,” he said.

In 2008, the traditional owners were granted native title over 19.7 million hectares of land, an area almost the size of Victoria.

But their rights to the vast majority of this land, 19.4 million hectares, have been “extinguished” because it was now used as government land, or for commercial, residential, agricultural or mining purposes.

This extinguishment meant the Noongar people were no longer able to exercise their traditional rights on the country.

“This is about our cultural and spiritual damage, as all the damage to our land,” Ms Smith said.

“The Noongar people were fed up … hopefully our people will get something out of this.”

Lawyers confident of success

The claim was filed in the Federal Court last week and was yet to be heard by a judge.

Lawyers representing the group said they were confident the claim would be successful, as their case was based on a precedent set earlier this year in a native title compensation test case.

The High Court awarded $2.5 million in compensation to traditional owners of Timber Creek in the Northern Territory for 170 hectares of land that had native title extinguished.

They were awarded $15,000 in compensation per hectare, for economic and emotional damages.

Lawyers in the Noongar claim were using the same formula, pursuing $15,000 per hectare for the 19.4 million hectares of extinguished native title on Noongar country.

“One potential catch

But there was a potential sticking point in the case — compensation can only be paid for the native title areas extinguished after the 1975 Racial Discrimination Act was brought into effect.

Mr Stevenson said it was unclear what portion of the land fell into this category, but a team of experts were working to calculate the final figure.

One of the lead solicitors on the Mabo case, Greg McIntyre SC, who is also the president of the Western Australian Law Society, said this factor could greatly reduce the amount of land eligible for compensation.

“I think there are some difficulties about [the Noongar people] being successful in a claim of that kind,” he said.

“Lots of the extinguishing of native title for Noongars and in Western Australia generally pre-date the 1975 Racial Discrimination Act.

“It may [however] attract a negotiated result [between the Government and Noongar people].”

The State Government previously offered $1.3 billion to the six clan groups which their native title had not been extinguished.

That agreement was thrown out of court when some elders refused to sign.

Now those same leaders, including Ms Smith, are leading the charge for this new claim.

She said she felt there was solidarity behind this push, but they would continue to consult with all Noongar people.

“They are fully supporting it, they are supporting it all the way, so it’s going to be huge for the Noongar people.”

Premier says claim ‘way over the top’

WA Premier Mark McGowan said his Government would fight the claim.

“A $290 billion claim is pretty extreme,” he said.

“We will get advice on what the best course is but it sounds way over the top to me.”

Mr McGowan said the State Government had already reached a deal under the Indigenous Land Use Agreement with the Noongar nation.

“The Noongar settlement has already occurred,” he said.

“We may have been a little too conservative, it could have been a little bit larger,” he said.

“It’s not whether the state can afford it, it’s simply that what is owed.”

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“It may [however] attract a negotiated result [between the Government and Noongar people].”

The State Government previously offered $1.3 billion to the six clan groups that form the Noongar nation, for access to the remaining 300 hectares in which their native title had not been extinguished.

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“The Noongar settlement has already occurred,” he said.

“I don’t know the details of it but clearly we’ve already reached a settlement with the Noongar people.”
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Couples who have sex just once a week are the happiest

THE SECRET to marital bliss is not very sexy, researchers announced Wednesday. Couples having sex every day are not necessarily happier, a new study published by the Society for Personality and Social Psychology reveals. Those doing the deed once a week are just as cheery, researchers said.

“Although more frequent sex is associated with greater happiness, this link was no longer significant at a frequency of more than once a week,” lead researcher Amy Muise said.

“Our findings suggest that it’s important to maintain an intimate connection with your partner, but you don’t need to have sex every day as long as you’re maintaining that connection.”

Couples shouldn’t put “too much pressure on engaging in sex as frequently as possible,” she suggested.

The study was based on data collected over four decades from a survey of 30,000 Americans in relationships.

“Our findings were consistent for men and women, younger and older people, and couples who had been married for a few years or decades,” Muise said.

But there was no association between sexual frequency and happiness for singles, noted Muise, a social psychologist at the University of Toronto-Mississauga.

3 Questions to Ask if You Have Sex Drive Problems in Your Relationship

If a disparity in libidos is causing strife in your relationship, you may need to take a closer look at each partner’s role. This process is best done with professional help, preferably through counseling with a certified sex therapist. But there’s some work the couple can do first. Joy Davidson, PhD, a New York City–based psychologist who’s on the board of directors of the American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors and Therapists, recommends discussing the following questions.

1. What turns on the partner who has a low libido?
   Are there certain times when this partner is more motivated to be sexual? What’s different about those times? Analyze that and try to replicate those conditions.

2. Are you playful?
   “Look at what you’re actually doing,” Davidson says. “Is your sex life dull and routine? Do you have fantasies that you can share with your partner? Do you read books about sexual alternatives or surf the Web looking at sex toy sites?” A person with a low libido may be uncomfortable with such ideas. “If you freak out at these questions, it is understandable that you seem to have low libido,” says Davidson. Perhaps you have been raised to view sex as something dirty or shameful and need to work through those feelings with a professional. “If you have a sex-negative attitude,” she says, “your libido will be repressed too.”

3. What’s going on outside the bedroom?
   You or your therapist may look at what Michael Krychman, MD, executive director of the Southern California Center for Sexual Health and Survivorship Medicine in Newport Beach, Calif., calls “environmental sexuality”—basically, what’s going on outside the bedroom.
   For instance, he says, “I’ve had couples in the same house, texting each other from different rooms,” wondering why their sex life has taken a dive.
Over 2000 people walked through Lakemba taking a stand against violence against women and children. Schools, emergency services, community groups, faith groups, NGOs and sports clubs. We are stronger together. Well done to the organising committee and all volunteers - you are brilliant!!

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House prices in most Australian cities are surging, with average prices nationally posting their first annual growth in 19 months, even as the economy continues to sputter.

The widely watched CoreLogic home value index jumped 1.7 per cent nationally in October, taking the index to a small annual rise of 0.1 per cent.

CoreLogic’s head of research, Tim Lawless, said that was the first national annual home price growth since April 2018. “The synergy of a [cumulative] 75-basis-point rate cut from the Reserve Bank, a loosening in loan serviceability policy from APRA, and the removal of uncertainty around taxation reform following the federal election outcome are central to this recovery,” Mr Lawless said.

“Additionally, we’re seeing advertised stock levels persistently low, creating a sense of urgency in the market as buyer demand picks up. “The prospect that interest rates are likely to fall further over the coming months and an improvement in housing affordability following the recent downturn are other factors supporting a lift in values.” However, the monthly gains in the index were more spectacular.

“Aussie home prices are booming. National property prices lifted by the most in 16 years in November. And in Australia’s most populous city — Sydney — home prices surged by 2.7 per cent, posting the biggest monthly gain in 31 years;” noted CommSec chief economist Ryan Felsman.

“Record-low mortgage rates and an easing in lending standards have seen a surge in values.”

There are early signs that more sellers are taking advantage of the rise in prices to put their properties on the market.

CoreLogic’s weekly auction figures showed that more than 3,000 homes went under the hammer last weekend — the most since March 2018. Despite more homes being up for sale, a preliminary clearance rate of 79 per cent across the capital cities was 10 percentage points higher than the previous weekend and almost double the 41 per cent recorded on the same weekend a year earlier.

Sydney’s preliminary clearance rate of almost 85 per cent was near peak boom-time levels, while Melbourne’s auction success rate of 78 per cent indicated further price rises.

**New records likely within months**

Given current market trends, Mr Lawless expects new price records in Australia’s two biggest cities within months. “Melbourne values are still down from their peak by nearly 4 per cent, so the recovery there is likely to be a little bit shorter, probably in the next two months,” he said.

“And Sydney in the next four months. Sydney values are still down 8 per cent from their [2017] market peak.” AMP Capital’s chief economist Shane Oliver agrees, and notes that current auction clearance rates point to price gains of 1015- per cent in those two cities in 2020.

Hobart and Canberra home prices are already at record levels. By way of contrast, Perth is 21 per cent off its peak and Darwin prices have fallen more than 30 per cent.

However, Mr Lawless said the current breakneck pace of price increases in the two biggest capitals was unlikely to be sustainable for long, even if interest rates fell further.

“Annualising the growth rate over the past three months implies the national index is already tracking well above double-digit annual growth (+15.3 per cent), while Sydney and Melbourne dwellings are tracking around the mid-20 per cent range for annualised capital gains based on the most recent three-month trend,” he said.

“Considering wages and household income growth remains low, economic conditions are losing momentum and housing affordability is once again worsening (from an already high base in the largest cities), there are likely to be some headwinds in maintaining such a fast recovery.”

**Very uneven house price boom**

Moreover, the rebound in home prices is not uniform across the country.

While Sydney prices surged 2.7 per cent last month, Hobart jumped 2.3 per cent, Melbourne 2.2 per cent and Canberra 1.6 per cent, price rises were more subdued in Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth, while values in Darwin fell another 1.2 per cent. Over the past quarter, only Sydney and Melbourne posted outsized gains, while Canberra, Hobart, Brisbane and Adelaide rose moderately and Perth and Darwin continued to fall.

Even within Sydney and Melbourne, CoreLogic’s data show that more expensive areas were recording far bigger price increases than lower-priced suburbs. The four strongest sub-regions for capital city price gains over the past year were Melbourne’s inner-east, inner-Melbourne, Sydney’s Hills district and the Harbour City’s inner-west.

Overall, the quarterly price rise in the most valuable quarter of Sydney properties was 7.4 per cent, versus 3.8 per cent across the lower quartile, with a similar gap in Melbourne (8.1 versus 4.2 per cent).