

TOMORROW IN
WSJ. MAGAZINE

THE
WOMEN'S STYLE
ISSUE

TODAY IN MANSION

The Pursuit of Paradise

ARENA Sochi: Skating in the Shadow of a Miracle

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

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DJIA 16027.59 ▲ 63.65 0.4% NASDAQ 4240.67 ▲ 0.9% NIKKEI 14534.74 ▼ 1.8% STOXX 600 331.48 ▼ 0.2% 10-YR. TREAS. ▲ 17/32, yield 2.736% OIL \$100.35 ▼ \$0.02 GOLD \$1,300.40 ▲ \$5.10 EURO \$1.3680 YEN 102.17

What's News

Business & Finance

Comcast faces tough regulatory hurdles after sealing a \$45.2 billion stock deal to acquire Time Warner Cable. **A1**

■ **The deal rids** Time Warner Cable of unwanted suitor Charter, which is unlikely to make a counterbid. **B1, B4**

■ **BNP Paribas is in talks** to settle U.S. probes of money laundering and sanctions violations and has set aside \$1.1 billion for potential fines. **C1**

■ **Retail sales fell** 0.4% in January from December, the steepest drop in a year and a half. **A2**

■ **Harsh weather** will trim 0.3 percentage point from GNP this quarter, economists forecast. **A2**

■ **Stocks renewed** their climb despite the economic data. The Dow rose 63.65 to 16027.59. **C4**

■ **The SEC is shaking up** the way it prepares for trial after a run of courtroom defeats. **C1**

■ **The agency tapped** an ex-Finra official to head the trading and markets division. **C2**

■ **AIG raised** its dividend and buyback target as it swung to a profit, and set job cuts. **C3**

■ **PepsiCo will sweeten** its payout but has decided not to split off its drinks business. **B6**

■ **Cocoa prices have climbed** to levels not seen since 2011 as chocolate demand soars. **C1**

■ **Pandora plans** an ad service that will allow listeners to be targeted based on politics. **B1**

■ **Brookstone is weighing** a bankruptcy filing as talks advance with potential buyers. **B3**

■ **Penney is replacing** its CFO amid the retail chain's flagging turnaround effort. **B3**

World-Wide

■ **The Pakistani Taliban** has tightened their grip on Karachi. Militants took responsibility for a blast that killed at least 12 police officers and three tentative peace talks into disarray. **A1**

■ **Afghanistan freed** 65 detainees the U.S. military says are tied to attacks on American and allied troops. **A11**

■ **Russia rejected** a proposal to discuss removing Assad from power during a political transition in Syria. **A6**

■ **Damascus freed** some of the men detained upon evacuation from Homs. The U.N. called off its relief mission. **A6**

■ **Italy's premier** was forced to quit in the face of an open revolt in his party, clearing the way for a rival's ascent. **A7**

■ **South Korea has moved** to ease U.S. security concerns over a plan for China's Huawei to develop a wireless network. **A6**

■ **Kerry said** he would urge China to push North Korea to give up its nuclear program. **A6**

■ **The "right to bear arms"** extends outside the home, a federal appeals court ruled in a California case. **A3**

■ **A federal judge ruled** that Virginia's ban on same-sex marriage is unconstitutional. **A5**

■ **Putin backed** a presidential bid by Egypt's top commander, who was in Russia seeking deeper military ties. **A8**

■ **Germany's parliament** will take up a bill aimed at altering the statute of limitations to aid restitution of Nazi-looted art. **A7**

■ **Scientists designed** robot crews able to build structures without plans or outside aid. **A3**

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Another Snow Day, but Not for All

Charlotte, N.C. 7.6" Washington 14" New York 9.5"

PILING UP: Snow mounted throughout Thursday, as the Northeast was pummeled by the storm system that earlier paralyzed much of the Southeast with snow and ice. In Brooklyn, above, New Yorkers scrambled to get children to school after the nation's largest district went ahead with classes, sparking criticism. **A4, A17, A19**

Pakistani Taliban Tighten Grip on Commercial Hub

By SAIED SHAH AND SYED SHOAB HASAN

KARACHI, Pakistan—The Pakistani Taliban have tightened their grip over the country's commercial hub, officials and residents said, despite a five-month government crackdown here.

On Thursday, tentative peace talks with the government were thrown into disarray when the militants claimed responsibility for a roadside bombing that killed at least 12 police officers

when the bus taking them to duty was destroyed near the city's southeastern Landhi neighborhood, an area the Taliban dominate.

Karachi is likely to pay a steeper price if efforts by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government to forge a peace deal with the al Qaeda affiliate's leadership in tribal areas collapse and a military operation is launched.

"If the peace talks fail, we fear that a big terrorism wave will hit Karachi," said Raja Umar Khattab, a senior officer in the

counterterrorism Crime Investigation Department of the Karachi police.

When Mr. Sharif launched the indirect negotiations in January, he insisted that "talks and terrorism cannot go together." The Taliban had blamed other militant groups for a series of bloody attacks that rocked Pakistan since then.

But the Taliban reversed course on Thursday, despite seemingly encouraging results from the talks in recent days. *Please turn to page A9*

Some Old Movies Are More Thrilling In These Remakes From Ghana

Collectors Pay Thousands for Film Posters Painted on Flour Sacks; A Jet Li No-Show

By WILL CONNORS AND DREW HINSHAW

ACCRA, Ghana—There's a lot going for "Mars Attacks!"—a 1996 film featuring Jack Nicholson, Glenn Close and homicidal space aliens. But the original posters just didn't project enough of the movie's drama for Jeours Oka Afutu.

They didn't show any guns or explosions or disembodied heads, for example. Or the bikini-clad woman with a dog's face.

So Mr. Afutu put his brush to a flour sack last fall and painted those critical elements onto an exuberantly ghastly movie poster of his own, adding a bloody knife that isn't in the movie.

When people look at his poster, says the 39-year-old Ghanaian artist, "they will all think about it and say: 'I have to go and watch this movie.'"

A local art dealer bought it for the equivalent of \$75, he says. If he had painted the poster back when the movie came out, it might have fetched thousands of dollars today from a Western collector.

Ghana has created much traditional art that Western collectors crave. Now joining that portfolio is the often garish locally painted movie poster, a decades-old art form enjoying a revival—and commanding prices that have inspired alleged fakery.

The posters hark to the 1980s and 1990s, when entrepreneurs showed films in villages across Ghana on generator-powered television sets. To attract customers, they paid artists like Mr. Afutu to paint posters, typically on flour-sack canvases.

But because the painters of *Please turn to page A10*

Poster for 'The Spy Who Loved Me'

Deal to Test Cable Chief's Capital Clout

Comcast's Bid for Time Warner Cable Expected to Face Tough Regulatory Review

By GAUTHAM NAGESH

Now that Comcast Corp. has sealed a deal to buy Time Warner Cable Inc. for \$45.2 billion in stock, its top executives face a new challenge: clearing formidable regulatory hurdles.

Comcast Chief Executive Brian Roberts has spent the past five years making friends with the Obama administration, but he faces a host of unknowns on the regulatory front. The government review is likely to be lengthy and could touch on everything from cable prices to the way web traffic is prioritized.

The expected marathon regulatory scrutiny may become a measure of the company's clout in the capital, and in particular that of its senior executives. Mr. Roberts sits on a presidential jobs council, has hosted President Barack Obama and top

presidential adviser Valerie Jarrett at his Martha's Vineyard home and has also golfed with the president.

The Justice Department lately has been a forceful presence on antitrust matters. It blocked AT&T Inc.'s bid to acquire U.S. wireless operator T-Mobile US Inc. from Deutsche Telekom AG in 2011 and sent strong signals recently that a Sprint Corp. bid would meet the same fate. Last year, it sued to block major deals in the beer and airline industries. *Please turn to page A12*

FRENEMIES

How a Pupil Bested His Mentor

Alarm bells went off a week ago at Charter Communications Inc. when emails and phone calls to executives at Comcast Corp. went unanswered.

By Shalini Ramachandran, Martin Peers and Dana Mattioli

Charter had been hot to buy Time Warner Cable Inc. Cable legend John Malone, who controls Charter's largest shareholder, and Comcast Chief Executive Brian Roberts had talked several times by phone, including around Christmas. Mr. Roberts indicated he was willing to work together on a deal for the struggling company, according to people familiar with the talks.

It was a high point in a sometimes competitive relationship that harked back decades, to when Mr. Malone—now chair-

man of Liberty Media Corp.—had become a mentor to Mr. Roberts. In recent months, said people familiar with the discussions, Mr. Malone's efforts to consolidate the cable industry through Liberty-backed Charter had drawn Mr. Roberts into the TWC fray.

Then Comcast went "almost radio silent," said a person familiar with the negotiations.

Comcast had quietly changed course and had begun a sprint toward its own deal with TWC, with Mr. Roberts working the phones from his hotel room at the Sochi Olympics—sitting out all but one competition—as his top executives worked in New York with TWC counterparts to hammer out details as a winter storm bore down on the city.

Late Wednesday, Liberty executives were caught off guard to hear that Comcast had sealed a *Please turn to page A12*

After poor performances by U.S. speedskaters, such as Shani Davis, some suspect a flaw in their high-tech suits.

Are New Suits Slowing the U.S.?

By JOSHUA ROBINSON AND SARA GERMANO

SOCHI, Russia—In the hours after gold-medal favorite Shani Davis finished nowhere near the podium, the U.S. speedskating team pored over data through the early morning Thursday, questioning everything from race strategy to skate blades.

After an equally disastrous outcome in the women's 1,000-meter race later on Thursday, a suspect emerged: the high-tech racing suits the team adopted for the Winter Olympics.

These suits—designed by apparel sponsor Under Armour and billed before the Games as a competitive advantage—have a design flaw that may be slowing down skaters, according to three people familiar with the U.S. team.

Vents on back of the suit, designed to allow heat to escape, are also allowing air to enter and create drag that keeps skaters from staying in the low position they need to achieve maximum speed, these people said. One skater said team members felt they were fighting the suit to maintain correct form.

Kevin Haley, the senior vice president of innovation for Under Armour, which has sponsored the U.S. team since 2011, said he was confident the suits were fast, but, in the absence of medal-winning performances, "we'll move heaven and earth to make them better."

Several skaters, including Heather Richardson, ranked No. 1 in the 1,000 meters, sent their suits to an Under Armour seamstress Thursday to have the panel modified with an extra piece of rubber. After the alteration, Ms. *Please turn to page A8*

◆ Sochi's merchandise stumble... B1

◆ More Olympics.... D1-5, WSJ.com

