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# CSC confirms 'no change' in 7-hour public sector workday

### Controversy over mandatory English test • Private companies accused of visa trading

## Russia beat Egypt, on brink of last 16



SAINT PETERSBURG: Egypt's forward Mohamed Salah (center) plays the ball during the Russia 2018 World Cup Group A match between Russia and Egypt at the Saint Petersburg Stadium yesterday. — AFP (See Page 28)

By B Izzak and Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The Civil Service Commission explained yesterday that it has not increased working hours at government offices following rumors on social media that working hours had been increased. "Irrespective of whether it is summer or winter, all government employees are required to work seven hours per day," the CSC said in a statement. "As per a CSC law established in 2006, employees get 30 minutes of leeway on arrival, while women are allowed to leave 15 minutes early given the pressure of family obligations." It added that work-places of unconventional nature should determine their work hours in coordination with the CSC. MP Riyadh Al-Adasani also said Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh, who heads the CSC, assured him the working hours remain unchanged.

The CSC had earlier issued a directive on working hours in government bodies, noting that the total daily working hours are seven from Sundays to Thursdays, ie from 7:30 am to 2:30 pm for some employees and 8:00 am to 3:00 pm for others in most government institutions. But many social media users rejected the directive and posted several tweets against what they described as "CSC's increase of the total number of working hours" without any consideration for traffic jams. On the other hand, several users hailed the decision, noting that it would help increase employees' productivity.

The head of the employees' syndicate at the Public Authority for Housing Welfare Abdulrahman Al-Ghanem rejected the CSC decision, noting that in view of the rising heat and traffic congestions, CSC should reduce working hours instead of increasing them. "CSC has been fighting Kuwaiti employees by such unstudied decisions suggested by expat advisors," he charged, wondering if Kuwaiti employees deserve such treatment without consideration to the fact that some have to drive their children to school.



The directive issued by the CSC yesterday on timings for public sector employees.

Meanwhile, a decision by the education ministry that all students sent abroad on scholarships must pass the English language IELTS test has triggered controversy among lawmakers, who are divided on the decision. Several MPs vowed to question the education minister over the decision, saying it lacks equality in the society.

Continued on Page 24

### News in brief

#### Marriage good for the heart

PARIS: Even if marriage is sometimes more a bed of nails than roses, living into old age with a partner may help ward off heart disease and stroke, researchers said yesterday. A sweeping survey of research conducted over the last two decades covering more than two million people aged 42 to 77 found that being hitched significantly reduced the risk of both maladies, they reported in the medical journal Heart. Compared to people living in spousal union, the divorced, widowed or never married were 42 percent more likely to develop cardiovascular disease and 16 percent more likely to have coronary heart disease, the study found. The risk of dying was likewise elevated for the non-married, by 42 percent from coronary heart disease and by 55 percent from stroke. — AFP

#### Saudi entertainment chief sacked

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia on Monday sacked the head of its entertainment authority, state media said, following a conservative backlash against a circus featuring women wearing figure-hugging costumes. "Ahmad Al-Khatib, chairman of the Saudi General Entertainment Authority has been removed from his position," the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said citing a royal decree, without giving a reason. The pro-government Sabq news website said Khatib was dismissed over a controversial circus performance in Riyadh, which included women wearing "indecent clothes". A video circulating on social media appeared to show a female performer in a tight pink costume, drawing outrage from Saudi arch-conservatives. — AFP

#### Saudi team plane suffers engine fire

ROSTOV-ON-DON, Russia: Saudi Arabia's national football team landed safely in Rostov-on-Don, Russia on Monday evening, after an apparent engine fire on the plane carrying the players to a World Cup match. Russia's aviation watchdog Rosaviatsya said that during the landing there was a brief fire on one of the engines and that it would investigate the incident, Interfax reported. Social and Saudi media footage also appeared to show one of the engines catching fire, but a spokesman for airline Rossiya denied a fire had occurred and said the fault was due to a bird strike. — AFP

## Hackers hijacking WhatsApp accounts of users in Kuwait

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: Dozens of users of the popular application WhatsApp in Kuwait are being scammed every month and lose control of their accounts. According to a source at the Electronic and Cyber Crime Combatting Department (ECCCD), affiliated to the Criminal Investigation Department, the majority of scammers who target users in Kuwait are from abroad.

According to the source, who preferred to remain anonymous, the ECCCD receives about 15 complaints

every week. The source didn't explain the method used by the scammers to hijack the WhatsApp accounts, but advised people to benefit from information on various types of cybercrimes posted on the department's official accounts on Instagram and Twitter: @ECCCD. One of the most recent posts on its Instagram account is a two-factor verification video, which should provide protection to WhatsApp users.

The most common way of hacking a WhatsApp account is when the target clicks on and opens a link sent by a WhatsApp broadcast or message. Just yesterday, tens or even hundreds of users were victims of two new broadcasts - one claiming to be related to registering for an Al-Maktoum competition, and the other about employment at the education ministry. Other scams include sending links by WhatsApp messages from unknown numbers, or even familiar numbers that are hacked. A popular scam claims a company is organizing a competition, urging users to register to win a car and other prizes.

## Yemen govt forces enter Hodeida airport

KHOKHA, Yemen: UAE-backed Yemeni government forces fought their way into Hodeida airport yesterday, pressing an offensive that has seen some of the most intense fighting of a three-year war against the Houthis

rebels. The United Arab Emirates, which has US-trained troops fighting alongside the Yemeni army, said the alliance had entered the airport in Hodeida - a Red Sea port city that is a key aid hub and the entry point for three-quarters of Yemen's imports.

"With the participation and support of the Emirati armed forces, the joint Yemeni resistance (army) entered Hodeida airport," the UAE state news agency WAM tweeted. A Yemeni military source confirmed to AFP that troops had entered the rebel base at the disputed airport on the southern edge of the city.

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ABU DHABI: Iranian-made Ababil drones are seen yesterday, which the Emirati armed forces say were used by Houthi rebels in Yemen in battles against the coalition forces. — AFP

## Russia, Saudis push for hike in oil output

VIENNA/MOSCOW: Russia and Saudi Arabia are pushing OPEC and its allies to raise oil output steeply from July to meet growing demand and cover supply outages in Venezuela and Libya despite opposition from several members of the producer group including Iran. "Oil demand usually grows at the steepest pace in the third quarter ... We could face a deficit if we don't take measures," Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak told reporters. "In our view, this could lead to market overheating."

Novak said Russia wanted OPEC and non-OPEC to raise output by 1.5 million barrels per day (bpd), effectively wiping out existing production cuts of 1.8 million bpd that have helped rebalance the market in the past 18 months and lifted oil prices to \$75 per barrel from as low as \$27 in 2016. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries meets on Friday to decide output policy amid calls from major consumers such as the United States and China to cool down oil prices and support the global economy by producing more crude.

OPEC's de facto leader, Saudi Arabia, and non-member Russia have proposed gradually relaxing production cuts - in place since the start of 2017 - while OPEC members Iran, Iraq, Venezuela and

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## Local

# Amir, Crown Prince meet senior state officials

## Amir offers condolences to Japan's Emperor



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — KUNA photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. His Highness also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince received

His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah; Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, and Acting Minister of Defense Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah; and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh.

In other news, His Highness the Amir yesterday sent a cable to Emperor Akihito of Japan expressing his condolences over the victims of the Osaka earthquake that left several people dead and hundreds wounded. His Highness the Amir wished the wounded speedy recovery, and hoping Japan will soon overcome the repercussions of the catastrophe. His Highness the Crown Prince and

His Highness the Prime Minister sent similar cables of condolences to Emperor Akihito. In the meantime, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem sent cables to Speakers of Japan's House of Representatives Speaker Tadamori Oshima, and House of Councillors Chuichi Date, expressing condolences and sympathy over the victims. — KUNA



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior and Acting Minister of Defense Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh.

## Kuwait on way to become financial center, says minister



KUWAIT: Kuwait's Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan welcomes Eid Al-Fitr well-wishers. — KUNA photos

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan said yesterday that the country possesses all the attributes needed to ultimately morph into a financial and commercial hub. The minister's remarks came as he welcomed Eid Al-Fitr well-wishers to his office, saying that diligence coupled with legislative reforms would bring Kuwait's aspirations of economic prominence to fruition.

Roudhan went on to describe the industrial sector as the focal point of national development, adding that Kuwait has drawn up a well-thought out plan to boost industrial output. "We are hard at work to provide an environment conducive for business in Kuwait through novel methods and proper training," Roudhan said, extending his greetings to the Kuwaiti leadership as on the joyous Islamic festival of Eid Al-Fitr. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah receives Eid Al-Fitr well-wishers from the Foreign Ministry's staff. — KUNA photos

## Foreign Minister receives Eid well-wishers

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah yesterday received Eid Al-Fitr well-wishers from the Foreign Ministry's staff and heads of diplomatic mission (HOMs) currently present at home. Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah attended the recep-

tion. Sheikh Sabah Khaled wished well-being for all, praying for eternal security, stability, progress and prosperity for Kuwait under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — KUNA



## KFH honors KTV iftar cannon team

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) recognized Iftar Cannon KTV team in recognition of their efforts throughout Ramadan as part of the Bank's Ramadan program 'Increase Good Deeds in Ramadan 4'. The honoring comes on the heels of wrapping up the bank's 'feeding the fasting' campaign that encompassed several crowded places, mosques in industrial areas, gathering places in addition to Nayef palace. KFH's recognition initiative reflects its leadership in the corporate social responsibility.

KFH's efforts in Ramadan reinforced its keenness to contribute in easing the suffering of low-income segments, while shouldering the social responsibility in all its categories, be it educational, environmental or health in an attempt to consolidate the concept of social responsibility and boost the status and position of the society.





Local

# Companies warned to avoid violations that affect Kuwait's reputation, interests

## Residency violations increased 2,700 annually

By A Saleh and Agencies

**KUWAIT:** The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) warned employers that their dossiers will be permanently shut if they are involved in violations affecting public interest and Kuwait's reputation. Meanwhile, the authority stressed that violating workers will be deprived of work permits and working in Kuwait for at least two years. The authority explained that according to the regulations approved by the authority's acting director Ahmad Al-Moussa, violators' dossiers will be suspended - effectively suspending their transactions - until the violation is removed. The authority added that employers should report employees' absence from work after seven working days and should display a notice accordingly in a visible place in the workplace.

### Residency violators

In other news, the number of residency visa violations has been increasing annually by 2,700 over the past four years, according to recent Central Statistical Bureau

(CSB) reports. According to immigration department statistics, the total number of residency visa violations jumped from 20,847 in 2014 to 31,642 in 2017, an increase of 10,795. Al-Jarida daily reported yesterday. Statistics also showed that a majority of violations (42.14 percent) have been committed by holders of article 20 residency visas. Asians formed 65.61 percent of the violators, while Arabs 22.46 percent in 2017.

Moreover, statistics showed a constant increase in the number of residency visas over four years, as the number jumped from 2,466,018 in 2014 to 2,592,276 in 2015, 2,697,195 in 2016 and 2,774,955 in 2017. Statistics also showed that after a drop in 2015, there was an increase in the number of cancelled residency visas, from 36,251 in 2016 to 39,909 in 2017. In addition, statistics showed a drop in the number of cancelled article 18 (private sector) residency visas and a rise in the number of cancelled article 22 (dependent) residency visas in 2017.

CSB statistics also showed that 40 percent of the visas cancelled in 2017 were of article 18 holders, with the majority (49.9 percent) being Arabs, and 45 percent



Asians. Al-Qabas daily reported meanwhile that only 30 percent of residency violators availed an amnesty given recently by the Interior Ministry.

### Access control

The Ministry of Education (MoE) has completed preparing the contracts needed to implement the biometric access control system for both administrative and teaching staff in various schools as instructed by the Civil Service Commission (CSC), said informed sources,

expecting the system to take effect by the second term of next year.

### Health services

Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah stressed that the Ministry of Health (MoH) is executing its part of the short-term five-year development plan (2015/2016-2019/2020), which comprises of five annual plans. Responding to an inquiry by MP Askar Al-Enezi, Sheikh Basel stressed that MoH's vision includes a package of goals targeting improving the quality of health services, developing the medical system, focusing on prevention and boosting public awareness concerning chronic diseases. He added that the vision includes enhancing the role played by the private sector and medical care expansions according to population growth and urban expansion.

Separately, manager of the geriatrics care department Dr Amani Al-Tabtabaei said final touches are being put to form a special committee to follow up the case of elderly people who deserve special parking spaces at various co-ops and shopping malls.

## IICO meets Ramadan fundraising goal by KD 3.750 million

**KUWAIT:** The International Islamic Charity Organization (IICO) announced yesterday the success of its fundraising campaign during the holy month of Ramadan with KD 3.750 million (around \$12.400 million). The organization met its goal by exceeding last year's fundraising target by 27 per-

cent, IICO Director General Bader Al-Sumait said in a speech as he greeted Eid Al-Fitr well-wishers. IICO's teams worked so diligently and faithfully during the campaign to help those in need and extreme poverty, he noted, hoping his charity makes further efforts in the coming period.

Sumait expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the campaign's donors and pledge makers for backing IICO's projects, showing their passion for benevolent actions, and expressing their good sentiments towards their fellow human beings.

IICO welcomes any suggestion and inquiry on ways to improve its actions, strategies, and measures of helping and aiding the poor and needy ones, and those afflicted by wars and disasters worldwide, he said. — KUNA



KUWAIT: IICO Director General Bader Al-Sumait speaks during a reception with Eid Al-Fitr well-wishers. — KUNA

## Parliament delegation heads to Ireland

**KUWAIT:** A Kuwaiti parliamentary friendship delegation headed yesterday

to the Republic of Ireland on an official visit that would last until June 22nd. The delegation, headed by MP Shuwaib Al-Muwaizri, is making the trip as part of mutual coordination between the two parliaments, Al-Dustour news network reported. The delegation includes MPs Osama Al-Shaheen, Saud Al-Shuwaier, Majed Al-Mutairi and Abdulwahab Al-Babtain. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Ministry of Interior's Acting Undersecretary Lieutenant General Essam Al-Nahham visited the Correctional Facilities Department, Criminal Investigations Department and General Security Department during the Eid Al-Fitr holiday. The visit came in implementation of directives of Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, according to a press statement by the Ministry's Public Relations and Security Media Department.

# Kuwait Times

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## Local

## Photo of the Day



**KUWAIT:** A street vendor sells watermelons to a motorist at a street in Kuwait. Like the case in many parts of the world, watermelon is a favorite fruit in Kuwait during the scorching summer months. Although their activities are unlicensed, roaming vendors - who in most cases are bedoons - remain a reliable source for those looking to grab their favorite summer fruit on the go. — Photo by Joseph Shagra

# Kuwait's private education market to grow from \$1.3 to \$2 billion in 5 years: Study

## GCC private education market is expected to double

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's private K-12 education market valued at \$1.3 billion in 2017 is poised to grow to \$2 billion by 2023, according to a report released recently by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), entitled 'Where to Invest Now in the GCC Private Education'. Across the GCC, the private education market is becoming a magnet for investors, and rightly so, as it is expected to double over the next five years. Despite the fact that strong growth has been predicted across the region, investors must fine-tune their strategies to account for the shifting circumstances before committing to an investment opportunity.

The report identified four drivers of growth in private education, affecting markets across the GCC:

**Shift towards Private Schools:** At \$11,000 per student per annum, private school spending is higher in the GCC region than in OECD counterparts. Parents across the region are becoming increasingly willing to pay for private schools that provide differentiated offerings and improved outcomes—and this trend will likely grow now that governments are beginning to publish performance ratings for all schools.

**Tuition Fees:** Across the GCC region, tuition fees for private education will continue to rise two percent to four percent per year. However, tuition fees are rising at a slower rate than in recent years owing to tighter regulations and an economic environment that limits consumer spending. Expatriates are also facing increased



Dr. Leila Hoteit



Maya El-Hachem

financial pressure as employers have begun to scale back their tuition-reimbursement packages. Some governments have placed caps on tuition hikes: in recent years, Kuwait has limited tuition hikes by 0 percent to 3 percent, and the UAE and Bahrain recently set a limit of 5 percent, linked to the education inflation index and schools' performance.

**Population Growth:** The student-aged population (age 3 to 17) is expected to grow at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 1 percent to 3 percent. The expatriate population is expected to grow even

faster than national populations, and expatriates attend private schools.

**Enrollment Growth:** Private school enrollment at the primary level and above is high throughout the GCC and expected to remain steady. Enrollment rates at the pre-school level (ages 3 to 6) are growing, most notably in Saudi Arabia, which has the largest overall population in the GCC region and the lowest kindergarten enrollment rate (less than 20 percent kindergarten enrollment in Saudi Arabia versus 60 percent to 90 percent in the rest of the GCC).

"New developments, such as evolving demographics, government interventions, and regulatory issues, are reshaping the complex private education market within each country in the GCC. As the potential for growth in the private education market varies significantly from country to country, it is important for investors to understand the size of each market and its potential for growth in the coming years," said Dr. Leila Hoteit, Partner and Managing Director at The Boston Consulting Group.

### A deep dive into the growth of the Kuwait's private education market

Kuwait's private school market is expected to grow from \$1.3 billion in 2015 to \$2 billion in 2023. This growth is primarily owing to two factors - population growth and a shift toward private schools. The overall population, both Kuwaitis and Expatriates, continues to grow steadily.

In tandem with this growth, Kuwaitis are increasingly shifting to private schools, as families are more willing to spend on education and better quality.

The challenges in this market can, however, have adverse effects on the sector. The government of Kuwait can sometimes allocate land in inconvenient locations, offer little support or subsidies for private international schools, and place strict caps on fee increases. In 2016, for example, the Education Minister issued a decree to halt private school fee hikes. Finally, without comparative data on school ratings, it is difficult for parents to compare school quality.

"The private education market has become increasingly complex and competitive in recent years, particularly in mature markets—and these shifts have implications for investors. Due to the competition with the UAE, Bahrain, and Qatar, it can be difficult to attract and retain teachers. Kuwaitization ratios restrict the number of expatriate teachers, and a new decree, which prohibits visas for expatriates under the age of 30 is on the horizon. All this limits the pipeline of talent," said Maya El-Hachem, Principal at The Boston Consulting Group. "Having said that, Kuwait offers investors opportunities in that there is demand for high-quality private schools, across all types of curricula and fee ranges. With its highly fragmented market, primarily composed of stand-alone private schools, there is an opportunity for large-scale operators to enter."

## More than half professionals expect pay raise in 2018

**KUWAIT:** The Bayt.com 'Middle East and North Africa Salary Survey', conducted amongst working men and women in the MENA region in partnership with YouGov, revealed a variety of insights on employees' perceptions of salaries and benefits. According to the survey, two thirds of respondents in Kuwait (67 percent) believe salaries are either increasing or staying the same. At the same time, over half (55 percent) of employees expect to receive a raise in 2018, with the largest proportion of these respondents (16 percent) expecting a raise of 1 to 5 percent.

The survey, administered by Bayt.com, the Middle East's #1 job site, and YouGov, a global pioneer in online market research, aims to gauge employee satisfaction with their current salaries and the varying components that contribute to it, as well as explore the drivers of loyalty towards employers and the significance of salary in career satisfaction and general wellbeing.

### Salaries, Benefits, and Raises

In terms of salary, over a third (36 percent) of Kuwait respondents claim that their current salary package consists of basic salary with benefits, while close to half (45 percent) claim that it consists of basic salary only. 18 percent said they receive a basic salary as well as a commission and benefits.

When it came to the preferred pay structure, 56 percent of Kuwait respondents said they prefer a '100 percent fixed pay structure', a third (33 percent) said they

prefer a 'partially fixed pay structure with a variable pay for commissions and incentives, while one in 10 (12 percent) prefer a '100 percent variable pay structure'.

Among the various benefits employees in Kuwait receive, personal medical insurance (27 percent), personal annual air ticket (24 percent), transportation allowance (21 percent), bonus (20 percent), and housing allowance (18 percent) are the most common. As for end-of-service benefits, 61 percent of respondents say their company presently offers end-of-service gratuity, 5 percent receive pension on retirement, and 9 percent receive other forms of benefits.

Looking back at last year, over a third (36 percent) of respondents received a salary raise in 2017. Nonetheless, over half (55 percent) of respondents from Kuwait expect to receive a raise in 2018, with the largest proportion of these respondents (16 percent) expecting a raise of 1 to 5 percent.

Among respondents who believe salaries in Kuwait are increasing, over a third (34 percent) attribute it to inflation and a rise in the cost of living, another third (31 percent) believe salaries are increasing as a result of good corporate performance and increased profitability, 25 percent say it is caused by intense competition for attracting and retaining talent, while 20 percent believe it is due to growth in opportunities and economic growth in their country of residence.

### Finances and Expenses

More than two thirds (68 percent) of respondents believe their cost of living increased by up to 30 percent in 2017, 20 percent believe it has increased by more than 30 percent, while 6 percent believe it decreased or remained the same. When asked about the components of living expenses which increased in cost in 2017, food and beverage (78 percent) and rent (65 percent) emerged as the top two by a large margin. A majority (74 percent) anticipate a further increase in the cost of living in 2018.



Suhail Masri

regular financial investments.

In terms of quality of life, one in two (47 percent) respondents from Kuwait believe they are better off than other people of a similar generation in their country of residence, another three in ten (29 percent) believe they are about the same, and only 19 percent believe they are worse off.

When asked about their career plans in the next twelve months, over half (56 percent) of Kuwait respondents said they will look for a better job in the same industry, and two in five (38 percent) said they plan to look for a better job in a different industry.

"Surveys like this help uncover extremely valuable insights for employers and employees alike. It is no surprise that as the cost of living increases in the MENA region, so do salaries and raise expectations," said Suhail Masri, VP of Employer Solutions, Bayt.com. "At Bayt.com, we strive to pair job seekers with the employers that best suit their needs and preferences, and vice versa. We have more than 10,000 jobs available on Bayt.com on any given day, and with the knowledge gained from this survey

and others like it, we are able to help facilitate the best matches between candidates and recruiters while making the process of finding jobs and filling vacancies smoother, less time consuming, and more rewarding all around."

### Respondent Profile

Among those surveyed, fewer than half (45 percent) of all respondents from Kuwait have been working in their current industry for up to six years, with almost a third (31 percent) having worked in their industry for more than 10 years. When it came to specific employers, three quarters (77 percent) of respondents have been working with their current employer for six years or less, with 46 percent having worked for their employer for less than three years. Less than one in ten (8 percent) have worked with their current employer for more than 10 years.

In their current role, about a third (31 percent) of Kuwait professionals claim to be 'midway in terms of seniority' when asked about the level they have reached in their career path, with another third (35 percent) claiming they are 'fairly senior level but not yet at the top', 20 percent being in the 'early days of their career', and 14 percent being at the 'most senior level' they can achieve. Just over half (52 percent) of Kuwait respondents have up to 10 people reporting to them both directly and indirectly, while just under a third (30 percent) have 11 or more people reporting to them.

"Salaries is repeatedly one of the most important research topics for the MENA region," said Nihal Jibouri, Head of Custom Research (MENA), YouGov. "With the information we cover from this survey, we are able to gauge employee's current income structure and levels, satisfaction with their salaries, perception towards their cost of living and expense allocation. This provides many insights to employers and key decision makers on many elements relating to the job market, the economy, and the quality of life."



Local

# Senior citizen killed in Abdaly farm tent blaze

## Five fires reported around Kuwait



KUWAIT: A fire department officer inspects the scene after a blaze was put out at a farm in Abdaly.



The tent's frame is seen after the fire was extinguished.

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** A citizen in his 70s was killed when a fire broke out yesterday in a tent at his Abdaly farm. An investigation is in progress to determine the cause of the fire. Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) said in a statement released by its public relations department.

Meanwhile, a fire broke out yesterday at the Ministry of Education's (MoE) warehouses in Subhan, said security sources, noting that firemen from Subhan rushed to the scene on spotting smoke and found the fire started in scrap furniture stored in an open yard. The fire was controlled and prevented from spreading. No casualties were reported. Separately, a team from Subhan was dispatched to deal with a fire that broke out in a garbage truck in the area. No casualties were reported. Investigations are in progress to determine the cause of the fire.

Also, KFSD's public relations department

said that Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh fire-fighters were dispatched yesterday to deal with a fire that broke out in three vehicles in the area. Security sources explained that the fire had started in a vehicle parked in an open yard before it was spread to two other vehicles parked nearby. No casualties were reported. In another case, a fire broke out in the exterior of the third phase of the Avenues Mall, said security sources, noting that the fire was immediately contained without any casualties.

### Reckless driving

The Interior Ministry's relations and security media department announced that in response to reports about a person driving his vehicle awkwardly and colliding into other vehicles along Fahahel expressway, traffic patrols rushed to the scene, where they found an abandoned vehicle without license plates. The vehicle was impounded and a search is on for the driver.



A vehicle badly damaged by a fire reported in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh.



Equipment damaged by a fire reported at the Ministry of Education's warehouses.



KUWAIT: Kuwait Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Al-Khodhr received Eid Al-Fitr well-wishers yesterday at the army headquarters. Several high-ranking Kuwait army officials and personnel attended the reception.

## OPEC to take right step to maintain oil market stability

**VIENNA:** Kuwait's Oil Minister and Minister of Electricity and Water Bakheet Al-Rasheedi has said that forthcoming 174th Meeting of the OPEC Conference will make the proper decision to maintain stability of the world market. Rasheedi made the statement yesterday as he arrived in Vienna. OPEC and non-OPEC producers will not address prices but levels of production to secure further stability and avoid price volatility.

There are no definite views on raising or reducing prices, and the ministerial meeting will make the sound decision for the good of producers, consumers and market stability, he said. A technical committee from OPEC and non-OPEC - led by Russia - meets today to review developments of the world oil markets.

OPEC, and non-OPEC producers agreed in late 2016 to cut output by 1.8 million barrels daily to stabilize the world oil markets. A six-month agreement came into effect on January 1, 2017, and was later extended for nine months as of July 1, 2017. The Joint



VIENNA: Kuwait's Oil Minister and Minister of Electricity and Water Bakheet Al-Rasheedi (left) arrives in Vienna. —KUNA

Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMMC) said during a recent meeting that commitment to the deal hit a record, 152 percent.

It said in a recent report that OPEC and non-OPEC countries had started 2018 with an outstanding conformity level with their voluntary production adjustments. Rasheedi takes part today in the two-day 7th OPEC International Seminar. —KUNA

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Afghanistan's surprise ceasefire celebrations raise hopes for peace

## Thailand carries out first execution since 2009



NORTH SUMATRA: Rescue teams continue to search for victims at Lake Toba ferry port in the province of North Sumatra, after a boat overturned and rescue were being halted due to a bad weather yesterday. — AFP

# At least 128 missing after ferry sinks

## Rescuers hunt for victims on Indonesian supervolcano lake

**TIGARAS PORT:** The search for victims of a ferry that sank in the lake of an ancient supervolcano crater in Indonesia will resume today with divers and an underwater drone to scour the depths for at least 128 missing passengers. The wooden tourist ferry sank in rough weather on Lake Toba on Sumatra island on Monday.

Eighteen survivors were found that evening, but only one body was recovered, and a day long search yesterday was suspended having failed to account for any more. One survivor, Widya, said her family died when the boat was hit by strong waves. "There were at least five couples with two children each. I wish I had died with my family, but I didn't,"

she told Metro TV in tears. Transportation minister Budi Karya said a team of investigators was looking into the cause of the accident.

"We believe there was a waterspout that generated strong winds and waves that destabilized the boat and caused a panic," he told reporters. Authorities were still trying to confirm the total number of passengers, but said at least 128 people were missing, including many children. The ferry had capacity for 60 passengers but was overloaded and also carrying dozens of motorcycles, said Sri Hardianto, an transport ministry official. Video footage taken from another ferry showed life jackets being thrown to a dozen or

more people in the water. There was no sign of the stricken ferry apart from what looked like an oil slick.

"We've asked for a remote underwater vehicle (to locate the sunken vessel) and the help of special land, sea, and air crews," Muhammad Syaugi, head of the national search and rescue agency, told reporters.

Divers were also being sent to search for victims, according to another SAR official Budiawan. Lake Toba fills the caldera of a giant volcano that erupted some 75,000 years ago - one of the world's biggest eruptions which left behind a 450-metre (1,500 feet) deep lake. The scenic lake, with an area of about 1,145 square km (450 square miles), has an

island in the middle where tourists visit, from which ferries run back and forth.

There was no word on whether any foreign tourists were among the missing. The transport minister said investigators would check whether the doomed boat had been equipped with life jackets and whether they had been used. "The responsible parties should face sanctions in accordance with the law," he said. Ferry accidents are common in Indonesia, a vast archipelago, especially during the Islamic holiday of Eid al-Fitr, which fell last week, when millions of people travel by land, sea and air to their hometowns after the fasting month of Ramadan. — Reuters

## In Mexico, running for office can be a 'death sentence'

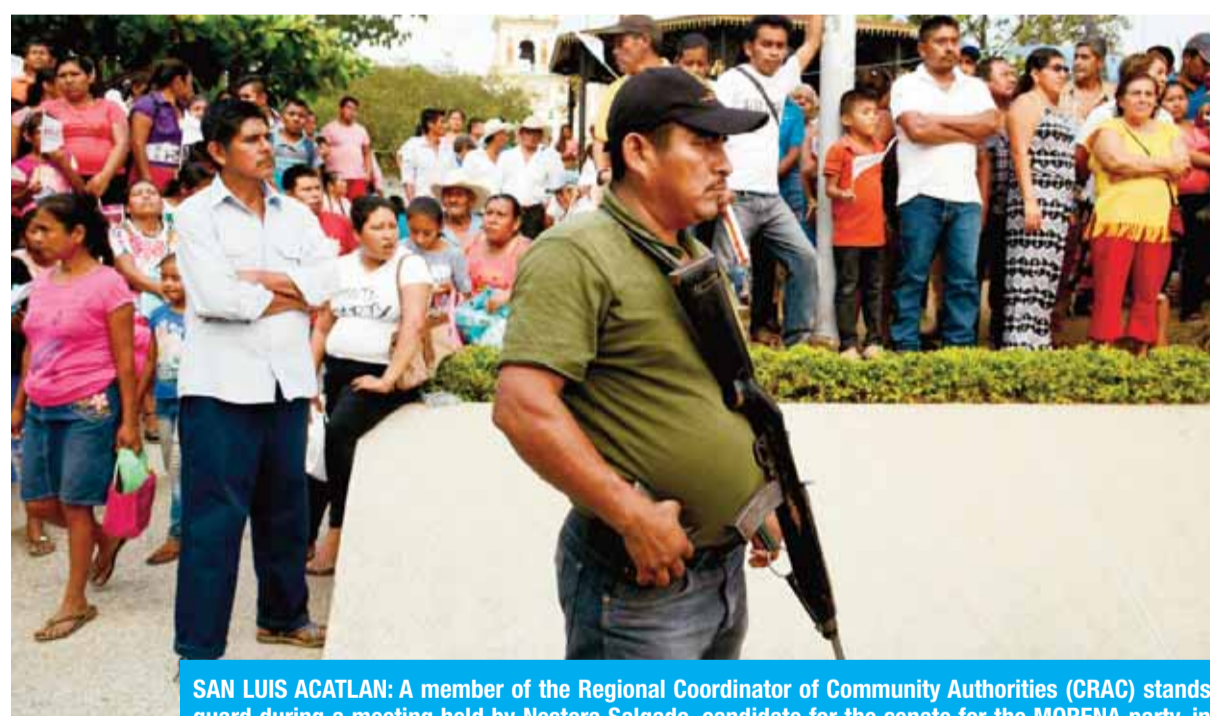
**ACAPULCO:** Running for office in Mexico is "practically a death sentence," says mayoral candidate Mario Alberto Chavez, who was eating dinner at a restaurant when a gunman opened fire on his table. Somehow, Chavez survived the April 18 attack that wounded three staff members. But more than 100 other politicians have been killed in the country's blood-stained electoral campaign. "I've asked (the authorities) to give me bodyguards many times, but they just keep ignoring me," says Chavez, a 35-year-old father of one, who is running for the New Alliance party in his hometown of Zumpango.

New Alliance is a splinter from President Enrique Pena Nieto's ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party. Chavez won't speculate about who tried to kill him, saying he once considered quitting the race after receiving threatening phone calls from people who warned him they would leave dead bodies at his campaign rallies. Rather than holding rallies, he now campaigns door-to-door in the city of 25,000 people in the violent western state of Guerrero. "I decided it was worth it, to try to pull my community out of poverty and violent crime," he says.

### Political violence

Violent crime is a top issue on Mexicans' minds as they prepare to elect a new president and thousands of other federal, state and local officials on July 1. Racked by violence linked to the multibillion-dollar narcotics trade, Mexico counted a record 25,339 homicides last year. It was the bloodiest in a string of very bloody years since the government deployed the army to fight drug trafficking in 2006. The unofficial war has unleashed a wave of killing that has killed more than 200,000 people—though it's unclear how many of the cases were linked to organized crime. Another 30,000 people are missing. As the elections approach, politicians have seen more than their share of the violence. At least 114 politicians have been murdered since September, according to consulting firm Etellect. It says at least 50 politicians' relatives have been killed and 417 attacks carried out against politicians in the same period. With more than 18,000 posts up for grabs, the violence sweeping the country was almost destined to turn political. "Mexico has had an unprecedented security problem for the past decade, and today we are holding the largest elections in our history," says National Electoral Institute chief Lorenzo Cordova. "Has that violent context burst into politics? The answer is yes, gravely so."

Sometimes the motives for the killings seem clear. On June 8, a former mayor running for the legislature in the northern



SAN LUIS ACATLAN: A member of the Regional Coordinator of Community Authorities (GRAC) stands guard during a meeting held by Nestora Salgado, candidate for the senate for the MORENA party, in San Luis Acatlan, Guerrero state, Mexico. — AFP

border state of Coahuila, Fernando Puro Johnston, was slain as he left a debate where he had vowed to relentlessly fight the Los Zetas cartel. In other cases, murdered candidates appeared to be involved with the cartels themselves. Such suspicions hover over the case of Juchitan, Oaxaca city council candidate Pamela Teran, who was shot dead on June 2. She was the daughter of alleged cartel capo Juan Teran.

Most cases, however, remain murky—and many candidates are campaigning in fear. In Guerrero alone, 496 have opted to quit. The authorities are supposed to provide bodyguards for candidates whose lives are at risk. But many candidates say their requests go nowhere. Of the 49 requests so far this campaign at the federal level, just 12 have been granted, five have been rejected and 32 remain pending, National Security Commission head Renato Sales said last week.

### Fighting back

Some candidates take security into their own hands. Such is the case for Nestora Salgado, a controversial Senate candidate in Guerrero for Morena, the leftist party of fiery presidential frontrunner Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador. Salgado is the former commander of a "community police" force—vigilantes who took up arms to do the job they accused the real police of failing to do: protecting their communities from criminals. Today, dozens of such vigilantes act as her bodyguards, toting an arsenal of aging shotguns and rifles. Her request for

official bodyguards was rejected, even though Salgado says she has received threats and found severed dogs' heads outside her house. "I hold the government responsible for what continues happening to us candidates," she says.

In Acapulco, a Guerrero beach resort turned battleground in the cartel turf wars, mayoral candidate Joaquin Badillo, of the coalition led by the conservative National Action Party, has also brought in his own bodyguards. Badillo, who owns a security firm with some 3,000 heavily armed guards, opted to use his own employees rather than government bodyguards. "I have my family, my kids to think about," he says. "But as I've said publicly, we're not going to fear the criminals. They're the ones who should fear us."

### 'Blood offerings'

Etellect chief Ruben Salazar links the violence to the fragmentation of the cartels since the drug war began. "The new cells that emerge... are seeking support from many of these candidates. And they get rid of the ones they don't manage to strike a deal with," he says. Salazar says a "polarized" environment in which many candidates have vowed to jail their predecessors for corruption is also fueling the violence in a country where voters are exasperated to see more than 90 percent of crimes go unpunished. "That can generate revenge attacks," he adds. "In these elections, calls for justice are being turned into blood offerings to voters." — AFP

## 7 shepherds killed as IS 'danger' grips Iraqi desert

**BAGHDAD:** Seven shepherds and farmers have been found murdered after the Islamic State jihadist group kidnapped dozens of people in the desert region of central Iraq, a local official said yesterday. In a renewed threat to the region, IS attacked several remote villages and seized 30 locals from their homes, Ali Al-Nawaf, a municipal council chief said. "The bodies of seven of them have been found and security forces are searching for the others," he said. The victims, in pictures posted on social media, were discovered with their hands tied behind their backs and eyes bound with red-and-white keffiyeh headscarves.

"This area used to be quite well-populated but it has emptied because it's become very dangerous for residents, who live off agriculture or as shepherds," said Nawaf. He said residents could not defend themselves because their weapons had been confiscated, first by US-led forces which invaded Iraq in 2003, by IS from 2014 and then again by Iraqi security forces and their paramilitary allies. The Shammar tribe to which the local residents belong was targeted by IS for having sided with the government in its battle with the jihadists, who were expelled from their last urban strongholds last year.

Despite the government's declaration last December of victory over IS, the jihadists have continued to carry out attacks in remote desert areas. "There are sleeper cells in the Hatra region and the thousands of square kilometres of Jazira," the vast desert stretching from the west of Baghdad right up to the Syrian border, said Haytham al-Shammar, a tribal leader. He said the jihadists were also infiltrating from Albu Kamal, a Syrian border town which the Damascus regime recaptured from IS earlier this month.

According to Nawaf, the jihadists have become emboldened in recent weeks, operating in daytime, not only at night, and travelling in larger road convoys. "Now there are incidents every day," he said. On Monday, IS killed three truck drivers in an attack on the highway linking Baghdad to oil-rich Kirkuk in the north, security sources said. Iraq's Hashed Al-Shaabi paramilitary force which has played a key role in fighting IS said 22 of its fighters were killed on Sunday night in an air strike near Albu Kamal just inside Syria. Israel has declined to comment after its ally the United States implicated it in the attack which Baghdad and Damascus had blamed on Washington. — AFP



International

# Religious Turkish party turns against former ally Erdogan

## Saadet and Karamollaoglu 'frustrating' Erdogan

ISTANBUL: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Sunday's elections risks seeing his vote critically eroded by an unlikely foe—a religiously conservative party with roots in the same Islamic political ideology as his own. Temel Karamollaoglu, the mild-mannered but strong-willed leader of the Saadet (Felicity) Party, is among the opposition candidates standing against Erdogan and hoping to push him to at least a second round. And with parliamentary polls being held on the same day, Saadet has joined an alliance of opposition parties that wants to rob the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) of its majority.

For Erdogan to win the presidential poll, he needs at least 50 percent to guarantee outright victory in the first round. While Saadet and Karamollaoglu are at best expected to improve on their last result by a couple of percentage points, this alone could be enough to tip the balance in what many pundits predict to be a very tight election. Saadet emerged from the same political movement as Erdogan's late mentor Necmettin Erbakan who for the first time brought political Islam at the centre of politics in the officially secular country.

The 77-year-old Karamollaoglu, leader of Saadet since 2016, told AFP his party fell out with Erdogan's AKP after it moved away from key principles. "Mr Erdogan declared those principles in the 2002 elections: justice, democracy, freedom of speech and freedom of thought. But he appears to have put them on the shelf now," he said. Saadet also backed the "No" side in the April 2017 referendum to oppose a package of constitutional amendments granting Erdogan sweeping executive powers. "There might

be a president's office but there also must be a strong parliament. And the justice system must be far from their influence," he said.

### 'Pious alternative'

Anthony Skinner, MENA director at risk consultancy Verisk Maplecroft, told AFP that Saadet and Karamollaoglu were playing an important role in the elections in "frustrating" Erdogan. "Karamollaoglu's candidacy in the presidential race is significant in that he could draw votes away from Erdogan who needs as many ballots as he can get to avoid a potentially tough second round vote," he said.

Saadet represents a movement started by Erbakan that startled the secular establishment in Turkey but inspired AKP's co-founders like Erdogan and former president Abdullah Gul. Erbakan later founded Saadet while Erdogan and his allies in 2002 launched the AKP.

Karamollaoglu even held talks with Gul—who since leaving the presidency in 2014 has also fallen out with Erdogan—on standing for the presidency. But the habitually reticent ex-president decided not to put his head above the parapet. Saadet currently does not have an MP in parliament and received only 0.7 percent of the vote in the 2015 parliamentary elections. However, some polls predict a stronger performance this time. "He (Karamollaoglu) offers an alternative to pious constituents who have become disillusioned with Erdogan and the AKP," said Skinner.

### 'Momentum coming'

Saadet is well below the 10-percent threshold required to send MPs to parliament. But its clout has



ISTANBUL: A girl runs past presidential campaign posters showing the candidate of the conservative Saadet (Felicity) Party in Istanbul. —AFP

increased by joining the so-called "National Alliance" of opposition parties challenging Erdogan in the parliamentary elections. Its allies here include the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP), a staunchly secular grouping which may seem an unlikely bedfellow for the Islamic-rooted Saadet. But being in the alliance means that Saadet could be able to send MPs to parliament.

Karamollaoglu indicated the party regarded with some disdain the AKP's attempts in the early period of its time in power to integrate with the European

Union and form a strategic alliance with the United States. "We said we need to pursue a foreign policy with spine. But those guys left it behind and we are now waiting at Europe's doorstep," Karamollaoglu said. Karamollaoglu is upbeat about Sunday's vote, saying the opposition can ride a wave of change that also helped leading Turkish businessman Ali Koc end the two-decade reign of long-standing Fenerbahce chairman Aziz Yildirim on June 3. "The momentum is coming, we saw it from the Fenerbahce congress," he said. —AFP



Turkish leader risks seeing his vote critically eroded

## Thailand carries out first execution since 2009

BANGKOK: Thailand has carried out its first execution since 2009, the government said, putting a 26-year-old convicted murderer to death by lethal injection in a move condemned by Amnesty International as "deplorable". Theerasak Longji was executed on Monday, six years after his conviction. His death came as Thailand's coup leader-turned-premier Prayut Chan-O-cha prepares to travel to Britain and France on a highly-publicized official visit. But the trip will now likely see the former army chief face awkward questions over the use of the death penalty as well as Thailand's wider human rights record since he seized power in a 2014 coup.

"We still have the death sentence, we have not cancelled it yet," Tawatchai Thaikaw, deputy permanent secretary at the Justice Ministry, told AFP, adding that the execution on Monday was carried out "according to the law". Thailand's Department of Corrections, which oversees one of the world's largest prison populations, said 325 convicts have been executed since 1935, the majority by firing squad.

That practice ended on December 11, 2003. Between then and 2009 a further six inmates were executed by lethal injection. Monday's execution serves as a "lesson to deter those who wanted to commit serious crime" the department added in a statement. But rights groups hit out at the sudden resumption of the death penalty, which remains mandatory for a number of offences, including aggravated murder.

"This is a deplorable violation of the right to life," Amnesty International said, accusing the kingdom of "renegeing" on commitments to move towards abolition of the death penalty. Thailand was "also putting itself out of step with the current global shift away from capital punishment". Theerasak stabbed his victim 24 times before stealing their mobile phone and wal-



MONTHABURI: Prison officers guard the entrance of the Bang Kwang high-security prison in Nonthaburi on the outskirts of Bangkok yesterday, where convicted Thai prisoner Theerasak Longji was executed on June 18, 2018. —AFP

let, the department said. Figures provided to Amnesty by the Ministry of Justice show 510 people, including 94 women, were on death row at the end of last year. Nearly 200 had exhausted all final appeals-like Theerasak. More than half are believed to have been sentenced for drug-related offences.

The death penalty is still in practice in several countries in Asia, including Singapore, Indonesia and China, which remains the world's top executioner. The International Federation of Human Rights also condemned the move in Thailand, calling it a "betrayal". It said the country would have achieved the status of "de facto abolitionist" had it not carried out any executions

before August 24, 2019, 10 years after the last death sentences were carried out.

Thailand's justice system has been criticized for favoring the wealthy and connected and for falling short in several high-profile cases that have made headlines in recent years. In 2015 two Myanmar migrant workers were sentenced to death for the 2014 murder of two British backpackers, one of whom was raped, on the diving island of Koh Tao after an investigation and trial that was widely considered flawed. Their lawyer said yesterday that they were waiting for a ruling on their final appeal. —AFP

## From Ataturk to Erdogan: Things to know about modern Turkey

ANKARA: The modern state of Turkey emerged out of the wreckage of the Ottoman Empire to become a powerful strategic nation that borders Greece to the west and Iran to the east. It has been ruled since 2002 by the Islamic-rooted conservative party of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. He has overseen some of the biggest changes since modern Turkey was created in 1923. But in presidential and legislative polls on Sunday, Erdogan and his party will face the biggest test at the ballot box to their one-and-a-half-decade grip on power. Here are five facts about Turkey.

### Successor to an empire

At its peak, the Ottoman Empire ruled a swathe of territory extending from the Balkans to modern Saudi Arabia, including the holy sites of Islam. But the Empire suffered centuries of decline and its end was confirmed by defeat in World War I, in which it had fought on the side of imperial Germany. After a War of Independence, Turkish military leaders including Mustafa Kemal Ataturk were able to salvage a modern state extending from Thrace to Mesopotamia, declaring the creation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923. Under Erdogan, Turkey has sought to rebuild its Ottoman-era influence in the Middle East, notably in Syria and Iraq as well as the Balkans and also Africa.

### Secular, Western democracy

Ataturk, Turkey's first president until his death in 1938, turned the country towards the West and made secularism one of its founding principles. Multi-party democracy was introduced in 1946. Under Ataturk's successor Ismet Inonu, Turkey remained neutral in World War II. In 1952 it joined NATO along with its one-time foe Greece with the strong backing of the United States, keen to ensure Ankara never fell into the orbit of the USSR. Critics have accused Erdogan of increasing authoritarianism, presiding over a creeping Islamisation and changing Turkey's Western tilt. But the president insists he is committed to a secular republic anchored in NATO.

### Scarred by coups

Turkey's powerful military ousted incumbent governments in coups in 1960, 1971 and 1980. The 1960 coup was followed by the hanging of ousted prime minister Adnan Menderes-Erdogan's political hero—along with two ministers. After coming to power, Erdogan clipped the wings of the military in a bid to make political interventions by the army far less likely. But in July 2016 he survived a coup attempt by a renegade army faction. Erdogan said that attempt was ordered by his one-time ally, the US-based preacher Fethullah Gulen, who denies the charges. Erdogan then declared a state of emergency that has seen some 55,000 people arrested in an unprecedented purge. He—and the opposition—have vowed to lift the emergency after the elections.

### Host to refugees

The country of over 80 million has sought to boost its influence, staunchly opposing the regime of President Bashar Al-Assad in Syria's



ANKARA: A giant electoral poster displaying Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is pictured yesterday in Ankara, ahead of June 24th Turkish presidential and parliamentary elections. —AFP

civil war but then working closely with his ally Russia to end the conflict. Turkey has taken in around 3.5 million Syrian refugees, who live mainly in the southeast and Istanbul, as well as smaller numbers from Iraq and Afghanistan. In 2016, it signed a deal to limit the flow of refugees to Europe after one million crossed the Aegean through Turkey in 2015. The deal was seen as a boost to Turkey's hopes of joining the European Union but the process has floundered ever since. Turkey has given passports to a few tens of thousands of Syrian refugees but critics say it lacks a strategy to deal with their long-term presence.

### 'Kurdish problem'

The non-Muslim minorities on the territory of modern Turkey were forced out in the 20th century and only small populations remain today. Armenians regard the killings and massacres of their ancestors as genocide, a term vehemently disputed by Turkey. Most Greeks left the country in the population exchanges of 1923. By far Turkey's largest ethnic minority are the Kurds. They make up a fifth of the population and have long complained of being denied their rights in what they call the "Kurdish problem". The outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) took up arms in 1984 in a bloody insurgency that has left tens of thousands dead. —AFP

### News in brief

#### Fifteen dead in I Coast

ABIDJAN: Fifteen people were killed in Abidjan, Ivory Coast's economic capital, in flooding caused by torrential rain overnight, Interior Minister Sidiki Diakite said yesterday. Rain poured down from 11pm on Monday night to 6am yesterday, causing flash floods up to 2.5 meters (more than eight feet) deep, he said. Rescue teams saved 115 people and searches were underway for other casualties, he said. A city of five million, Abidjan suffers from infrastructure problems and many homes are built in flood-prone areas. —AFP

#### Nicaraguan deadly crisis

MANAGUA: Another attempt at church-mediated talks to end a deadly political crisis in Nicaragua fell apart on Monday, a clergy statement said. With the death toll from almost daily street violence now at 180, opposition groups and Catholic bishops walked out of the discussions, accusing the government of failing to make good on a promise Friday to invite international organizations to come to Nicaragua and help probe the violence. "When the government sends us a copy of those invitations and the international organizations confirm to us they have received them", working groups and a plenary session of the government-opposition dialogue will be convened again, the Nicaraguan Bishops Conference said in a statement. "Nicaragua's descent into chaos was triggered on April 18 when relatively small protests against now-scrapped social security reforms were met with a government crackdown." —AFP

#### Ex-CIA employee charged

WASHINGTON: US federal prosecutors on Monday charged a former CIA employee with allegedly leaking classified national defense information to an unnamed organization that publicly disseminates such data, as well as child pornography offenses. Joshua Schulte, a New York City resident, was charged in a 13-count superseding indictment connected to alleged theft of classified information from the CIA, the US Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York said in a joint statement with US Justice Department and FBI officials. —Reuters

#### 5 hurt in Malmo shooting

STOCKHOLM: Five people were hurt in a shooting in the centre of the southern Swedish city of Malmo on Monday, police said, ruling out a terrorist link. "The state of the victims is not yet known," Malmo police said in a statement. A police spokesman told AFP that the possibility of a terrorist link to the attack had been discounted. According to the Aftonbladet daily, the victims were attacked as they left an internet cafe in the middle of the town. Witness were quoted as saying that at least one attacker was armed with an automatic weapon. The police refused to comment on the identity of the possible attacker or attackers. They also declined to give any detail of the victims although reports said several of them were well known to the police. —AFP



## International

# Dutch judges nix bid to take Brexit case to Europe court

## British expatriates' claims 'too vague'

**THE HAGUE:** Dutch judges yesterday threw out a bid by British expatriates to take a landmark case demanding rights as EU citizens after Brexit to Europe's top court. The Amsterdam appeals court found in favor of the Dutch government, ruling the claims brought by the expats "too vague" to go before the European Court of Justice. In what was believed to be the first such case as Britain prepares to leave the European Union next year, five Britons living in the Netherlands and two expat organizations took the government to court in January. They had argued that by living in the EU for so long they had acquired independent rights as EU citizens, over and above being citizens of any specific EU member country—including Britain.

But lawyer Erik Pijnacker Hordijk, representing the Dutch government, told the appeals court in April their case was "groundless" and should be ruled as "inadmissible". The Amsterdam court agreed with the lower court that the position of Britons living in the EU after Brexit was a matter of EU law. But it said the issues raised by the group were "not concrete enough" to be submitted to the European court, and it therefore "overturns the earlier judgment and denies the request".

"Everybody is extremely disappointed," the group's lawyer Christiaan Alberdingk Thijm told AFP. "We will study the decision before deciding what to do next, but it could mean either going to the Dutch Supreme Court (Hoge Raad) or starting a new more

in-depth procedure before the courts." One of the plaintiffs, Stephen Huyton, said: "I'm feeling really deflated". But he said he had felt the case was not going their way at the appeal as the judges "focused on very narrow areas." Their lawyers would now "see what proposals there are, but it leaves the situation very unclear," Huyton told AFP.

Currently, about 46,000 Brits live in the Netherlands and the Dutch state had argued in April that there was no reason "to believe ... they will run a serious risk of being told to leave the country". But the group insisted their legal rights as EU citizens—including freedom of movement—should remain and be protected by the Netherlands even after Britain withdraws from the 28-member body at midnight on March 29, 2019. Had the matter proceeded to the European court based in Luxembourg, it could have had far-reaching implications for the estimated one million Britons who live on the continent.

“Everybody is extremely disappointed”

”

### Do Brits lose EU rights?

Lower court judge Floris Bakels in February asked the European Court of Justice to answer two preliminary questions: "Does Brexit mean that Britons automatically lose their European citizenship or do they maintain their rights, and if so, under what conditions?" The issue was also raised in April in the Dutch lower house of parliament with a special round table between MPs and



VIENNA: European Parliament's Brexit coordinator Guy Verhofstadt gestures as he delivers his speech during the meeting "Post-Brexit Police and Judicial Cooperation in Criminal Matters". —AFP

expats to discuss the ramifications of Brexit.

The group's lawyer remained upbeat. "Although it was overturned, I am still convinced that this question will eventually end up before the European Court of Justice," Alberdingk Thijm said. Yesterday's ruling came just after Britain's House of Lords inflicted another defeat on the government of Prime

Minister Theresa May, setting up a fresh parliamentary showdown. Unelected peers in the upper house voted by 354 to 235 to support a rebel amendment on the role the British parliament should play, giving MPs another vote, if the government fails to secure a deal with the European Union before Britain leaves the bloc. —AFP

## Family ties make Faroese women top baby makers

**HOYVIK FAROE ISLANDS:** Gunnhild Helmsdal's mailbox has six names printed on it and will soon add a seventh: having a big family is nothing unusual in the Faroe Islands where women have the most babies in Europe despite also having the highest rate of employment. The economically prosperous and autonomous Danish territory in the middle of the North Atlantic Ocean has had the highest birth rate in Europe for decades, with around 2.5 children per woman, according to World Bank figures. In the rest of Europe, women usually give birth to less than two children on average, its data shows.

When Helmsdal, 41, gives birth to her fourth child a few weeks from now her family will grow to seven members, including her husband and his daughter from a previous union. "Children are the greatest gift of all, I think. I've always wanted to have several kids," Helmsdal, who is a doctor, tells AFP at her home. "Large families are maybe a bit chaotic but, in the end, happy families," she says, with a smile while her two-year-old son Brandur seeks her attention. His name means "sword" or "fire" in the Old Norse language. Her two neighbours, who live across the street in this residential area of Hoyvik, near the capital Torshavn, have six and seven children respectively.

### Shortage of women

The archipelago has long suffered from a deficit in women as many have emigrated since World War II and not returned. The trend has changed in the last five years as the job market, which was historically heavily focused on fishing, has diversified. Faroese society, traditionally dominated by conservative values, has also become more liberal—same-sex marriage was legalized on July 1, 2017. When asked about the reason for its remarkable fertility rate, locals often jokingly say: "There's nothing else to do here."

However, the throwaway remark does not reflect the reality: participation in the Faroese labor force is the highest in Europe, especially among women, according to Hans Pauli Strom, a sociologist at Statistics Faroe Islands. Eighty-three percent of the Faroese hold a job, compared to 65 percent in the European Union—of which the territory is not a member—and 82 percent of Faroese women work, compared to 59 percent in the bloc.

More than half of Faroese women work part-time, Strom said, adding that "it's not because they're struggling to find a full-time job but a preference and a life choice". Local authorities highlight favorable social measures to partly explain the phenomenon: a 46-week parental leave, which authorities want to extend to one year, abundant and affordable kindergartens and tax allowances, among others. Incidentally, taxes on seven-seat vehicles were reduced a few years ago.

### SOS families

Faroese family policies may seem generous compared to the rest of Europe, but they are not very different from the measures in place elsewhere in the Nordic region, where fertility and labor activity are significantly lower. So what is the secret to their formula? The Faroese have an extremely strong family bond and they live very close to each other, making it easier to get extra help from relatives, say sociologist Strom, as well as residents. "In our culture, we perceive a person more as a member of a family than as an independent individual," Strom said. —AFP

## White House defends immigration policy as outrage grows

**WASHINGTON:** The Trump administration defended its hardline immigration policy at the US-Mexico border on Monday as furor grew over the separation of immigrant parents and children, including video of youngsters sitting in concrete-floored cages. Democrats blasted such treatment as "barbaric," while a few of President Donald Trump's fellow Republicans also voiced concern as the Republican-controlled US House of Representatives moved toward voting later this week on two pieces of immigration-related legislation.

Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen, a Trump appointee, told reporters at a White House briefing that the administration was only strictly enforcing the law. "This administration did not create a policy of separating families ... What has changed is that we no longer exempt entire classes of people who break the law," she said.

The outcry over the detained children resulted from the Trump administration's "zero tolerance" policy, in which immi-

grants apprehended entering the United States illegally are criminally charged under the criminal entry statute, known as 1325. Parents who are referred by border agents for prosecutions are held in federal jail, while their children are sent to separate detention facilities, some in remote locations. Video footage released by the government showed migrant children held in wire cages, sitting on concrete floors.

An audio recording said to capture the sounds of immigrant children crying in a detention facility was circulating online. Reuters could not independently verify its authenticity. Trump administration officials say the zero-tolerance policy, which was not practiced by the two previous presidents, is needed to secure the border and deter illegal immigration. Attorney General Jeff Sessions defended the policy during an interview with Laura Ingraham on Fox News on Monday. "We are doing the right thing. We are taking care of these children. They are not being abused," he said.

But Democrats and some Republicans have admonished the administration for separating nearly 2,000 children from their parents between mid-April and the end of May. "The increasing number of children being ripped away from their parents is sickening," said Democratic Senator Michael Bennet. "Yet the president and his administration continue to perpetuate falsehoods and blame others for their own cruelty." House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi said after visiting



MCALLEN, Texas: This US Customs and Border Protection photo obtained June 18, 2018 shows intake of illegal border crossers by US Border Patrol agents at the Central Processing Center. —AFP

an immigration detention center in San Diego: "Our message to Mr. Trump is, stop this inhumane, barbaric policy." Pelosi also called on Nielsen to resign over the dispute.

### Microsoft voices 'dismay'

Seattle-based software company Microsoft Corp, one of America's largest businesses, said in a statement it was "dismayed." "We urge the administration to change its policy and Congress to pass legislation ensuring children are no longer separated from their families," it said. Trump, whose promise to crack down on illegal immigration was a major

## Goodbye Denmark? Faroese weigh pulling free of Danish grip

**TORSHAVN:** Enough is enough: for the Faroese sailor Birgir Enni, having spent more than half a millennium under Danish rule means it's about time for the North Atlantic autonomous archipelago to break away. "We've been occupied by Denmark for 600 years! That is enough and we need to change that soon," the white-haired captain tells AFP on his wooden sailing ship. Located more than 1,100 kilometers northwest of powerhouse Copenhagen, the Faroese Islands have since 1948 had their own white, blue and red flag with an offset cross, their own language originating from the Viking's Old Norse and institutions and culture.

With its breathtakingly green and high mountains covered by fog and inhabited by more sheep than people, the island territory is weighing the idea of pushing its autonomy to full independence. "We are not Danes, we will

never be Danes, we can't be Danes, we are Faroese and that's it... we have to stand up for it and fight for it," says Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister Poul Michelsen, who's also the leader of the separatist Progressive Party. "We are becoming more independent everyday... because we're taking more and more responsibility. The gap between Denmark and the Faroes comes quite naturally," Michelsen tells AFP in his office in the Faroese capital, Torshavn.

### 'No hard master'

An unlikely alliance of the left, the right, separatists and unionists, the local government is now writing a constitution, which is aimed at capturing the Faroese identity and is seen by some as one of the final pieces of a puzzle leading to emancipation. An April referendum on the constitution was postponed in order to reach the widest possible consensus on the text. As yet, no new date has been set. After the planned transfer of migration affairs to the Faroese authorities, Copenhagen will only be in charge of Faroese defense and certain aspects of foreign, monetary and judicial policies.

"Denmark is not a hard master," says Hanna Jensen, co-founder of the Progressive Party. "(But) Denmark has its own motivations, its own needs and interests for its own place in the world... they are trying to also include our needs,



KLAKSVIK, Denmark: A woman in traditional outfit attends her children on June 3, 2018 during a festival in Klaksvik, on the island of Borooy, one of the Faroe Islands located between the North Atlantic Ocean and Norwegian Sea. —AFP

our motivations and our wants, but they collide regularly," she adds. This conflict of interest was particularly notable during a mackerel and herring war with the EU—of which the Faroe Islands is not a member—in early 2010, when Denmark was forced to join a Brussels-imposed boycott against Faroese fish.

The issue touched a raw nerve in Faroese society, which is mainly reliant on fishing, and has not been forgotten to this day. The islands' economy is flour-

ishing compared to Greenland, another Danish autonomous territory, thanks to fishing, agriculture and rising tourism, although oil exploration efforts have drawn a blank. Unemployment is almost non-existent, gross domestic product per capita exceeds that of Denmark and the Faroese authorities feel so confident that they've asked Copenhagen to freeze their annual subsidies, meaning that their importance for the local economy is gradually shrinking over time. —AFP



## International

# Chinese parents-to-be seek more fertile ground abroad

## Test-tube baby boom; Chinese head to Southeast Asia, US

SHANGHAI: The easing of China's one-child policy was a godsend to Zhang Yinzhe and his wife Xu Mengsha, who had decided they wanted to use in-vitro fertilization (IVF) to freeze an embryo in the hope of one day having a second child. But most IVF procedures are restricted in China to couples who are infertile, and surging demand at overwhelmed reproductive clinics since the policy was relaxed two years ago would anyway have meant months of waiting.

So the Beijing couple flew to Thailand, part of a wave of Chinese spilling overseas into Southeast Asia, the United States, and elsewhere in a test-tube baby boom. "There is an old saying in China: a son and daughter complete the family," said Zhang, a 31-year-old airline pilot. Zhang spoke after a consultation at Bangkok's Piyavate Hospital, its walls festooned with Mandarin-language posters on IVF as other Chinese patients waited their turn.

Definitive numbers on China's share of the assisted-reproduction tourism sector are unclear, but its spending was estimated by the state-linked Qianzhan Industry Research Institute to have grown 22 percent annually to \$1.4 billion in 2017. Further rapid growth is expected. Overseas clinics are adding Mandarin-speaking staff, Chinese-language websites, and increasingly marketing to Chinese seeking a second or even third child.

Chinese figures estimate that 90 million women became eligible for another child once the family-planning policy was relaxed, and more second children were delivered last year than first-borns. But Chinese couples are increasing having children later, past their reproductive primes, and may require help from science. Around 12 percent of the childbearing population are unable to conceive naturally, according to Chinese studies, yet China only has about 400 licensed IVF clinics, where waiting lists can approach one year.

### Fertile ground

IVF involves combining egg and sperm in a lab and implanting any viable embryos into the womb. The one-child policy caused birth rates to plummet, and China eased it to ensure a big enough future workforce to support its fast-aging population. But it still bans or restricts fertility options like egg donations, surrogate motherhood, gender selection, and freezing embryos for later use partly over fears that opening the floodgates could spark a population explosion.

Only around 500,000 Chinese IVF procedures took place in 2016, health officials estimate, far short of what fertility doctors say is required. "There is big demand in China, but we can't handle it here," said Ri-Cheng Chian, director of reproductive medicine at Shanghai's 10th People's Hospital. So Chinese are booking tickets to Thailand, Malaysia, Cambodia and even Russia.

IVF treatments cost around 30,000 yuan (\$4,700) in China, but can be several times that abroad, where many Chinese feel they can find higher-quality care. Zhang, the pilot, wants IVF partly to screen for genetic defects, something restricted at home. "That's a lot of money for a Chinese family but compared to the health of my next generation, I should spend it," he said. Chartree Saenghiranwatana, a fertility specialist at Piyavate, said the clinic has been "getting increasing demand from Chinese patients the past year or two", and is recruiting Mandarin-speaking doctors and nurses. Some Thai clinics say up to 80 percent of their customers are Chinese.

### Baby bump

"A new industrial chain is forming, for reproduction, in Southeast Asia," said Wei Siang Yu, the Singaporean founder and chairman of Borderless Health Group (BHG). BHG has



BANGKOK: This photo taken on May 17, 2018 shows Chinese couple Zhang Yinzhe (L) and Xu Mengsha (R) arriving for consultation with a Thai fertility specialist at the Piyavate Hospital in Bangkok specialising in in-vitro fertilization. — AFP

created a video-conferencing platform on which Chinese patients can consult fertility experts around the world, aided by Mandarin-speaking interpreters.

BHG is also establishing sperm and egg banks in countries including Thailand, Australia and the United States, primarily for Chinese clients, complete with a phone app allowing them to monitor their "fertility assets" almost like a bank account. Yu said two years ago

Chinese patients placed sixth or seventh in the ranks of foreign patients coming to Thailand for medical tourism, but will be the largest group this year. Besides infertility or the desire for a larger family, the Chinese preference for male heirs sends some couples abroad in search of clinics that will perform gender screening—though that is technically illegal in most countries—and Chinese LGBT couples are also packing their bags. — AFP

## Modi's party pulls out of governing alliance in Kashmir

NEW DELHI: India's ruling party withdrew yesterday from an alliance government in the disputed Kashmir region in what analysts described as an attempt to appear tough on militancy before a general election. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) said it was pulling out of the governing coalition in Jammu and Kashmir state because of worsening "terrorism and violence".

The Hindu nationalist party had ruled in the restive state since March 2015 when it struck an unlikely alliance with the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), a local political outfit which has advocated more autonomy for Kashmir. "It has become untenable for the BJP to continue in the alliance government in Jammu and Kashmir," senior BJP leader Ram Madhav told reporters in New Delhi, referring to India's only Muslim-majority state. "Today there is an increase in terrorism and violence, radicalization is spreading fast."

Madhav said the state government had failed to curb radicalization or guarantee civilian rights in the volatile territory disputed with Pakistan. The state's chief minister Mehbooba Mufti, who hails from the PDP, tendered her resignation after the alliance lost the majority to rule. The state's governor, a figurehead who is appointed by New Delhi, will rule Jammu and Kashmir until fresh elections are held or a new coalition is cobbled together.

The move was seen as the BJP walking back its involvement in the troubled state, which has been racked by conflict for decades but which has witnessed an upsurge of violence under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This decision allows the BJP to act tough on Kashmir before a general election next year in which Modi will seek a second term in office, analysts said. "What it (BJP) will do between now and elections is increase its political rhetoric against the separatists in Kashmir," said Manoj Joshi from the New Delhi-based Observer Research Foundation. "It will be political rhetoric of how the BJP will save the situation in the Kashmir region of the state," he told AFP.

The decision means Modi's BJP controls one less state. But it will still govern 18 of India's 29 states outright or in coalitions.



SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir main opposition National Conference (NC) party leader and former chief Minister Omar Abdullah (sitting C) speaks during a press conference. — AFP

The PDP, which draws its support from the mainly Muslim north of the state, has long demanded the removal of a draconian law that gives Indian forces sweeping powers to search, enter property and shoot on sight. The BJP, whose

base lies in the Hindu-dominated south, said the law was needed to curb insurgents fighting for Kashmir's independence or for its merger with Pakistan. The fighting has left tens of thousands of people, mostly civilians, dead. — AFP

## Afghanistan's surprise ceasefire celebrations raise hopes for peace

KABUL: Extraordinary scenes of Afghan Taliban and security forces spontaneously celebrating a historic ceasefire showed many fighters on both sides are fed up with fighting, analysts say, raising hopes for peace in a country ravaged by war. The jubilant response to the first truce between the Afghan government and the Taliban over the Eid holiday took many by surprise, although observers warn that an end to the nearly 17-year conflict is still a long way off. "It is difficult to predict what the next move might be, but the sack has been broken," Afghan political analyst Ghulam Sakhi Ehsani told AFP. "From all the photos and videos, it seems the foot soldiers from both sides are tired of war."

In scenes unimaginable only a few days ago, Taliban fighters and security forces long locked in a seemingly intractable conflict were seen hugging and taking selfies together around the country. Civilians, who have borne the brunt of the bloody war, also flocked to greet the insurgents as they entered urban areas that they usually visit only to attack, including the capital Kabul.

Fighters on both sides of the conflict expressed hopes for the unprecedented ceasefire to continue. "We have held the ceasefire well so far," Taliban commander Baba told AFP during celebrations in the eastern province of Nangarhar on Saturday. "Everyone is tired of war and if our leaders order us to continue the ceasefire, we will hold it forever," he said. But the sight of its fighters openly mingling with security forces and civilians appeared to alarm the Taliban's leaders, who ordered their men back to their posts.

Michael Kugelman, an analyst at the Wilson Center in Washington, DC, said the Taliban leadership may have feared that "more days without fighting could convince the rank and file that peace is better than a war". "A little bit of freedom is good but too much, why go to paradise," a Western diplomat told AFP, referring to the virgin angels the Muslim holy book, the Koran, says await good Muslims, especially martyrs, when they die.

### 'Building block'

Two suicide attacks in Nangarhar, both claimed by the Islamic State group which was not part of the ceasefire—marked the otherwise peaceful Eid holiday that follows the holy month of Ramadan. But the fact that the truce held and was welcomed on both sides suggested the "dynamics

of this conflict may have changed", Afghanistan Analysts Network co-director Kate Clark told AFP.

"Once there's a recognition of common humanity, that everyone is Muslim, that people in the cities were celebrating Eid as in the villages, that it's really nice to have an ice cream with someone, hopefully it becomes more difficult to kill them," she said. Kugelman said the ceasefire had provided "a major building block" for the government's efforts to negotiate a peace deal with the Taliban, which have so far failed. "While reconciliation still feels like a remote prospect, it now feels at least a bit more of a possibility," he said. Initial euphoria over the ceasefire quickly turned to disappointment and anger among many Afghans when the Taliban resumed fighting on Monday. While analysts had expected the Taliban to return to the battlefield, some people saw it as a betrayal. "Death to the Taliban and their backers. Once again they have shown that they love shedding the blood of innocent Afghans," Madena Momad posted on Facebook.

### Hopes for dialogue

What comes next in the long conflict is unclear. There has long been secret back-channel dialogue between interlocutors on both sides of the war, and direct talks between Kabul and the Taliban were held in Pakistan in July 2015, but were quickly derailed. Analysts say even if the Taliban could be convinced to give formal talks another try—they now refuse to negotiate with the Afghan gov-

ernment, which they see as illegitimate—it could still take years to reach and then implement an agreement. There is no roadmap and neither side appears to be clear on what a post-conflict Afghanistan would actually look like or has identified their "red lines" in talks.

President Ashraf Ghani announced over the weekend that the government's eight-day ceasefire, which expired yesterday, would be prolonged for another 10 days. But while Taliban leaders hailed the three-day truce a success and a demonstration of their "full control" over their fighters, they refused Ghani's request for an extension. The government's move may buy the president more time to work out how to keep the momentum going. "Ghani's only option is to keep trying for peace," Kugelman said. "The war can't be won militarily so he'll need to make any and all possible efforts to secure some type of negotiated end to the war."

Ghani's February offer of peace talks with the Taliban, considered to be one of the most comprehensive plans ever offered by an Afghan government, was ignored by the militants, which went on to launch their annual spring offensive. The insurgents have repeatedly demanded direct dialogue with the United States, which Washington has refused, and the withdrawal of foreign troops. But last month the Pentagon said that senior Taliban officials have been secretly negotiating with Afghan officials on a possible ceasefire. "This weekend was a very strong indication that if the pieces fall together in the right way there can be a constructive dialogue," another Western diplomat said. — AFP



MAZAR-I-SHARIF: In this photograph taken on June 18, 2018, Afghan children play in a merry go round ride at a playground. — AFP

## US, South Korea agree to suspend military exercise

WASHINGTON: The United States and South Korea have agreed to suspend a joint military exercise scheduled for August, South Korean and US officials said on Monday, following President Donald Trump's pledge to end "war games" after his summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un last week. "South Korea and the United States have agreed to suspend all planning activities regarding the Freedom Guardian military drill scheduled for August," according to a South Korean defense ministry statement.

A Pentagon statement confirmed the suspension and added that there would be a meeting between the secretaries of defense and state as well as Trump's national security adviser on the issue this week. "Consistent with President Trump's commitment and in concert with our Republic of Korea ally, the United States military has suspended all planning for this August's defensive 'war game' (Freedom Guardian)," the statement said.

"We are still coordinating additional actions. No decisions on subsequent wargames have been made," Pentagon spokeswoman Dana White said separately. The Pentagon rarely uses the words "war game" for joint military drills and it is a phrase more often seen in North Korean state media. Last year, 17,500 American and more than 50,000 South Korean troops participated in the Ulchi Freedom Guardian drills, although the exercise is mostly focused on computerized simulations rather than live field exercises that use weapons, tanks or aircraft. The US-South Korean exercise calendar hits a high point every spring with the Foal Eagle and Max Thunder drills, which both wrapped up last month.

The decision to halt military exercises in South Korea has bewildered many current and former US defense officials, who only learned about it when Trump made his remarks. Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said yesterday there would be no changes to joint drill plans between the United States and Japan, both of which also engage in regular deterrence exercises against North Korea. "The United States is in a position to keep its commitment to its allied nations' defense and our understanding is there is no change to the US commitment to the Japan-US alliance and the structure of American troops stationed in Japan," Suga said in a regular briefing.

### Cost of drills?

The Pentagon has yet to publicly release the cost of previous and future joint military exercises with South Korea, a week after Trump cited their "tremendously expensive" cost as a reason for halting them. Spending data for previous military exercises in Korea and elsewhere, however, suggest that the cost of a single exercise would be in the low or perhaps tens of millions of dollars in a US military budget this year of nearly \$700 billion.

In response to repeated requests for cost data, Pentagon spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Logan, said: "We are currently evaluating the costs of the exercises." Calculating the cost of military exercises is a complicated process, often requiring data from different branches of the military and spread over several budgets over different years. Troops who would have been involved in the exercises would still require training and certification, which would still cost money, said Abraham Denmark, a former deputy assistant secretary of defense for East Asia under President Barack Obama. "To me, the idea of this as a cost saving measure doesn't really make much sense," Denmark said. — Reuters



## Analysis

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## Challenges facing Colombia's new president Duque

Ivan Duque comfortably beat his leftist rival in Sunday's election but his determination to change a historic peace agreement with the FARC and Colombia's ceaseless drug war signal problems ahead for the inexperienced young president, analysts say. Mobilized by a powerful right-wing coalition which controls the Congress, more than 10 million voters backed Duque, the first-term senator largely seen as a protégé of former president and senator Alvaro Uribe. But from Aug 7 when he is sworn in to succeed Juan Manuel Santos as his country's youngest president in modern times, 41-year-old Duque will face challenges in four key areas overshadowing Colombian politics.

### Fragile agreement

Buoyed by his clear victory in the second round, Duque lost no time in reminding everyone of his election promise to revise a fragile 2016 peace agreement with FARC signed by Santos. Under the pact, 7,000 FARC rebels disarmed and began to rehabilitate to civilian life, the rebel movement transforming itself into a political party. In his victory speech, Duque pledged "corrections" without giving details. During the campaign he said former guerrillas guilty of serious crimes - currently benefitting from what he says is an over-lenient peace deal - would go to prison and be banned from sitting in Congress.

"It's one thing to say this during the campaign speeches, another when you have taken office. I think it would be very costly to backtrack," on the agreement, said analyst Fabian Acuna from Javeriana University. The FARC party, which has ruled out a return to arms, called on Duque to exercise "good sense" in modifying the deal. For the moment, he has pledged to change the deal without tearing it up, while his beaten leftist rival, Gustavo Petro, has promised to mobilize the opposition to fight for it. Duque has also pledged to take a tougher line in talks with National Liberation Army (ELN) guerrillas, the country's last active rebel force.

### Uribe's shadow

The question has come up often during the campaign: Is Duque a puppet of Uribe? Can he be truly independent as president when he owes much of his success to his political mentor? "Duque has always profited by doing what Uribe tells him, so Uribe's ghost is real," said Acuna. Uribe has been omnipresent in Colombian politics since his 2002-2010 presidency, and the majority of Colombians have paid little heed to a series of investigations embroiling the 65-year-old former president over alleged links with far-right paramilitaries, bribery and witness tampering.

"He's the most important political personality of the 21st century in Colombia," said analyst Nicolas Liendo. Uribe's influence was largely credited with steering his then-foreign minister Santos into power in 2010, and his re-election four years later. In 2016, he led the "No" campaign in the referendum on the FARC peace deal. Duque is expected to lead Latin America's fourth-largest economy with the same principles as his mentor, showing a firm hand in dealing with former and current guerrillas, supporting investment and championing the defense of traditional family values. Meanwhile he can count on Uribe's political support from the Senate, where he leads the dominant conservative bloc.

### Drugs and the United States

Despite billions of dollars spent in trying to eradicate it, the world's largest producer of cocaine is seeing an increase in coca production, much to the alarm of the United States - a close ally as well as the main market for the drug. Duque, who wants a good relationship with US President Donald Trump, has pledged to resume aerial spraying of coca plantations, which many say could revive tensions with farmers. He has pledged to fight rampant drug-trafficking in former FARC strongholds along the Ecuador and Venezuelan borders, at a time when Mexican cartels are financing FARC dissidents.

### Pressure on Maduro

A committed opponent of President Nicolas Maduro in neighboring Venezuela, Duque wants to lead international pressure against what he has called a genocidal dictatorship. "Going by the campaign speeches, we can expect the relationship with Venezuela to be terrible," Acuna said. Although he gave no details about his foreign policy, he has threatened to join efforts to take Maduro to the International Criminal Court, and force a "transition" to democracy in Venezuela with the backing of the Organization of American States.

Colombia has faced an unprecedented influx of migrants fleeing the economic and political crisis in its neighbor, with which it shares a 2,200 km border. More than one million people have flooded into Colombia over the past 16 months as Venezuela's economic crisis worsened. — AFP



## In Vietnam, distrust of China policy fuels protests

Protests by thousands of people in cities across Vietnam are showing just how easy it is to unite public opinion and mobilize dissent when an issue has one key ingredient: China. The demonstrations, which are technically illegal, sprung up for a second consecutive week on Sunday, stoked by fears that proposed coastal economic zones for foreigners would be beachheads for an invasion of Chinese businesses. The proposal makes no mention of China. But political analysts say Vietnamese minds were already made up, with popular Facebook posts reinforcing deep-rooted suspicion that Chinese interests are influencing state policy.

Central to the issue is a combustible mix of generations of anger over perceived Chinese bullying, and a lack of faith in Vietnam's ruling communist party to do anything about it. "The government underestimated the amount of anti-China sentiment in the country," said Murray Hiebert, a Southeast Asia specialist at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. "There's a constant undertone among many in Vietnam that the government isn't doing enough to protect the country's sovereignty against China," Hiebert added.

Social media such as Facebook, used by half of Vietnam's 90 million people, makes such fervor easy to stoke and hard to contain. After protests spanned cities nationwide, the National Assembly last week postponed its vote on the economic zones until October. Security was tightened on Sunday to prevent protests in major cities, but thousands still gathered in central Ha Tinh province, many with signs saying "No leasing land to Chinese communists for even one day."

Tensions are likely to persist as long as China pushes its Belt and Road initiative to advance its overseas business, and takes stronger action to fortify its claims over almost the entire South China Sea. China has been accelerating construction and militarization in the Spratly and Paracel islands claimed by Vietnam, and in March pressured Hanoi to suspend some major offshore oil drilling for the second time in the space of a year.

### 'Patriotism' appreciated

The Vietnamese government's resistance to Chinese pressure has

been limited. The communist party top brass rarely acknowledges anti-China sentiment even exists in Vietnam. On Friday, house speaker Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan skirted the issue, saying the legislature "appreciates the people's patriotism and their profound concerns about important issues". Party chief Nguyen Phu Trong weighed in on Sunday to reassure the public about the economic zones, which have 99-year leases, but also made no specific mention of China. "No one is that foolish to hand over land to foreigners for them to come and mess things up," state media quoted him saying.

The June 10 protests were in large part peaceful, but turned violent in central Binh Thuan province, where vehicles were set

emboldening ordinary Vietnamese, but also complicating the party's difficult balancing act of tolerating some dissent while keeping it under control. That risks angering a vital trade partner that can hold Vietnam's fast-growing economy hostage.

### Skilled instigation

The protests are being taken seriously by China: its diplomatic missions in Vietnam held meetings last week with Chinese business groups, local government and local media. In one of several postings on the embassy's website, it said charge d'affaires Yin Haihong "demanded" that Vietnamese authorities protect Chinese businesses and citizens. Yin said the embassy had been informed by the Vietnamese authorities that people with "ulterior motives" had "deliberately misrepresented the situation and linked it to China."

The recent rallies follow similar protests in 2014 after China's deployment of an oil rig off central Vietnam, and months of demonstrations in 2016 over an environmental disaster at a steel plant run by Taiwan's Formosa Plastics. Responding to questions from Reuters, Vietnam foreign ministry spokeswoman Le Thi Thu Hang made no mention of China but said "extremists" had "incited illegal gatherings." He added that Vietnam's policies served its peoples' interests and supported business and investment.

Nguyen Van Quynh, a well-known lawyer followed widely on Facebook, said it was clear that the rallies were organized and violence had been instigated. He said they showed meticulous planning and knowledge of state security procedures, and suggested Binh Thuan was a weak spot. "The scale, organization, sophistication of the protests, riots are increasing, proving that there must be a person or a leading group with knowledge and skill for it to be organized this way," Quynh said.

Some current and former lawmakers say it is time to revisit a long-delayed law to regulate demonstrations. The constitution allows freedom of assembly, but protests are often broken up by police and participants held for "causing public disorder". Others say it's time to listen more to public opinion. "The administration needs to care for what its people care for," said Nguyen Si Dung, a former deputy head of the National Assembly office. — Reuters



Govt says  
violence  
orchestrated  
by extremists

ablaze and angry mobs hurled rocks and charged at riot police. Tran Vu Hai, a prominent lawyer, said the anger had been festering for years in Binh Thuan, where China is blamed for assaulting fishermen, polluting the land with a Chinese-built power plant, and for deforestation to mine minerals exported primarily to China.

Hai said people were venting fury not only at China, but at a local government, which is perceived as being corrupt and enslaved by destructive Chinese commercial interests. "They don't investigate why people are irritated and they don't solve the people's problems," he said.

"The trust in the authority in that area has already been lost." Analysts say the turnout and coordination of protests is now

## Snakebites and choc: Costa Ricans teach tourists jungle secrets

To treat snakebites, bathe in a tea brewed from yellow button-shaped flowers, advises Melissa Espinoza Paez as she describes the medicinal properties of Costa Rica's jungle plants, pointing out towering vines used to combat kidney problems. In the lush mountains close to the Panama border that make up the Bribri indigenous territory, Espinoza hopes the country's first certified indigenous tour agency can deliver a bigger slice of income from ecotourism directly to local women.

"When other agencies brought tourists to our territory, sometimes they'd give a small amount to the people here, but it wasn't really the value of their work," said Espinoza, 38, indicating a green dart frog trying to hide in the undergrowth. "We're giving a tourism experience that is truly cultural... We are trying to live a more dignified life," she said at the Siwakabata farm near Bribri town, some 220 km southeast of the capital San Jose.

Based in Talamanca canton, one of the poorest in Costa Rica, the recently licensed Talamanca Indigenous Bribri Tour Guides Association (AGITUBRIT) wants to ensure the financial benefits start to trickle down to local families, said Espinoza. Alongside medicinal plant and gastronomy tours, hiking, jungle and river trips are run through a network of indigenous guides who stamp their cultural identity on the expeditions. Costa Rican tourists, who often have little knowledge of indigenous culture, as well as Europeans, have so far made up the visitors who come to find out more about the relatively isolated Bribri people.

Tourists often stay with local families in thatched wooden houses to absorb Bribri traditions and learn the language, while some make appointments with traditional doctors who prescribe plant-based medicines. Home to dense jungles and cloud forests teeming with wildlife, Costa Rica has become one of the world's best-known ecotourism destinations. A quarter of its territory is now national parks or protected reserves. But while ecotourism offers an incentive to protect the biodiversity that pulls in visitors, there has been less success in channelling benefits to those who provide services and protect the local environment, say some in the industry.

"The tourism sector in general is still learning how to deal with the social factors," said Saul Blanco Sosa, a sustainable tourism specialist with the Rainforest Alliance conservation group. "Dealing with people is more complicated than dealing with natural reserves." Tour companies need to think about ways to become more socially responsible and inclusive, and avoid disrupting communities with their activities, he added.



Melissa Espinoza Paez, her mother Nora Paez Mayorga, Basilia Jackson Jackson and her daughter Flor Dias Jackson, prepare cacao at the Siwakabata agro-ecology farm in Talamanca, Costa Rica on May 10, 2018. — Reuters

### Culture crash course

Ecotourism ranks as one of the fastest-growing sectors of the global travel market, and is worth around \$100 billion a year, according to a 2017 report by the UN World Tourism Organization and United Nations Development Program. The World Travel & Tourism Council says about 13 percent of Costa Rica's gross domestic product comes from tourism, which is expected to employ 265,000 people directly and indirectly in 2018 to deal with its 3 million annual visitors. Tourists have long come inland from Costa Rica's Caribbean coast to explore the mountains, swim in waterfalls or float in long wooden canoes along the rivers lacing the Bribri territory.

But by the time middlemen have taken a hefty slice of their money, little is left for local people offering trips or cultural demonstrations, said Espinoza, who is learning English to help bring in more international tourists. Guides from outside the area explaining the Bribri's spirituality and strong connection with nature usually just learn their spiel from a book or the internet, she added. "We live it, we feel it - but for the others, it's just about money," said Nora Paez Mayorga, who helps run the 15-hectare Siwakabata agro-ecology project with her daughter Melissa.

### No jobs

For many women living in Costa Rica's remote southeast corner with few formal qualifications, jobs other than raising chickens or growing crops such as plantain are hard to come by. Younger people often have little choice

but to head to San Jose to find work, said Paez, as she served up fried pastries and mugs of bitter chocolate drink. Alongside its eight guides, the tour organization works with about 40 women from local indigenous communities. Some are employed at Siwakabata to cook for visitors, while others come to sell handicrafts, clothes, fruit and chocolate.

Demonstrating how to remove cacao seeds from their padded pods, dry and toast them on an open stove before grinding them to a paste, Basilia Jackson Jackson said she was looking to attract tourists to her home village of Coruma two hours away.

Growing bananas and cacao, her family's fortunes depend on the prices set by buyers, she explained, turning the wheel of a metal grinder. "We've never dealt with tourists, we're just getting involved with it... we could have a little bit more income - it wouldn't be much, but it would help the family," said Jackson, who travelled to Siwakabata with her daughter Flor. "In this area, we don't have much work. Between women, we've got to get organised to see how we can help each other."

Espinoza, who left to work in a factory in San Jose before returning to study and finally helping set up AGITUBRIT, is optimistic the agency will prove invaluable in strengthening the position of local women while protecting their culture. "As indigenous women from here, we know what we need. We can help each other to develop this project - valuing, maintaining and respecting our world view and our culture," said Espinoza. — Reuters



## Business

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DANDONG: This picture taken on May 31, 2018 shows a man riding his bike in the border city of Dandong, in China's northeast Liaoning province. —AFP

# China accuses Trump of 'blackmail'

## Another tariffs threat leads to further anger in Beijing

**BEIJING:** Beijing yesterday accused Donald Trump of "blackmail" and warned it would retaliate in kind after the US president threatened to impose fresh tariffs on Chinese goods, pushing the world's two biggest economies closer to a trade war. Trump said on Monday he had asked the US Trade Representative to target \$200 billion worth of imports for a 10 percent levy, citing China's "unacceptable" move to raise its own tariffs.

He added he would identify an extra \$200 billion of goods-for a possible total of \$450 billion, or most Chinese imports-"if China increases its tariffs yet again". "Further action must be taken to encourage China to change its unfair practices, open its market to United States goods and accept a more balanced trade relationship with the United States," Trump said in a statement.

### 'Working together'

Last week, he announced 25 percent tariffs on \$50 billion in Chinese imports, prompting Beijing to retaliate with matching duties on US goods. The US leader warned Friday of "additional tariffs" should Beijing hit back with tit-for-tat measures. "The trade relationship between the United States and China must be much more equitable," he said in explaining his latest decision.

"I have an excellent relationship with President Xi (Jinping), and we will continue working together on many issues. But the United States will no longer be taken advantage of on trade by China and other countries in the world." China's commerce ministry immediately

responded by saying the US "practice of extreme pressure and blackmail departed from the consensus reached by both sides during multiple negotiations and has also greatly disappointed international society".

"If the US acts irrationally and issues a list, China will have no choice but to take comprehensive measures of a corresponding number and quality and take strong, powerful countermeasures." The news hit stock markets in Asia, with Shanghai down almost four percent and Shenzhen tumbling nearly six percent, while Hong Kong fell more than two percent.

Leading the fall in Hong Kong was Chinese telecom giant ZTE, plunging nearly 26 percent and shedding nearly two-thirds of its value since striking a deal with the Trump administration to lift a ban on using critical US components. But on Monday, the US Senate defied Trump by voting to overrule his administration's deal with legislation to reimpose the ban on hi-tech chip sales to the company, whose fate has figured prominently in the trade talks.

Trump is moving forward with the trade measures after months of sometimes fraught shuttle diplomacy in which Chinese offers to purchase more American goods

failed to assuage his grievances over a widening trade imbalance and China's aggressive industrial development policies. China had offered to ramp up purchases of American goods by \$70 billion to help cut its yawning trade surplus with the United States, whereas Trump had demanded a \$200 billion deficit cut. "Disregarding the consensus reached by the two countries, the US is playing fast and loose and once again stirring up a trade war," said China's foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang.

"This way of doing things breaks faith with everyone," Geng said.

**"The US is playing fast and loose"**

### 'Unacceptable'

The China trade offensive is only one side of Trump's multi-front battle with the United States' economic partners as he presses ahead

with his protectionist "America First" agenda. Since June 1, steel and aluminium imports from the European Union, Canada and Mexico have been hit with tariffs of 25 percent and 10 percent, respectively.

"This latest action by China clearly indicates its determination to keep the United States at a permanent and unfair disadvantage, which is reflected in our massive \$376 billion trade imbalance in goods," Trump said of

China's retaliatory tariffs. "This is unacceptable."

Two decades ago, China's economy was largely fuelled by exports, but it has made progress in rebalancing towards domestic investment and consumption since the global financial crisis erupted last decade-limiting the damage trade tariffs could inflict on Beijing.

Still, strong exports this year have lifted the economy, which is now showing signs of losing steam under the weight of Beijing's war on debt, launched to clean up financial risks and rein in borrowing-fuelled growth. Initially, 545 US products valued at \$34 billion will be targeted by China, mimicking the Trump administration's tariff rollout. Beijing wants to "demonstrate that things will be done their way or not at all," said Christopher Balding, an economics professor at Shenzhen's HSBC Business School, who believes Chinese policymakers prefer demonstrations of "power and control" over "technical policy rightness."

"It is a game of chicken," Balding said. So far Beijing has targeted major American exports to China such as soybeans, which brought in \$14 billion in sales last year, and are grown in states that supported Trump during the 2016 presidential election, as well as other politically sensitive products. Officials also drew up a second list of \$16 billion in chemical and energy products to hit with new tariffs, though China did not announce a date for imposing them. More American targets are likely to follow as soon as the Trump administration follows through with publishing an expanded tariff list. —AFP

## OPEC braces for tough Vienna talks

**LONDON:** OPEC ministers gather in Vienna today for crunch talks on a landmark pact curbing oil output, with Saudi Arabia and Russia hoping to persuade their peers to increase production again. The upcoming June 22-23 meetings of OPEC and non-OPEC energy ministers are expected to be contentious, with several countries bristling at the thought of reversing a deal that has been in place for 18 months and helped lift oil prices to around \$70 a barrel.

Resistance is being led by Iran, deeply wary of any move by regional rival Saudi Arabia that could push down oil prices at a time when Tehran faces renewed sanctions following US President Donald Trump's decision to quit its international nuclear deal, which is likely to send the country's oil exports plummeting.

Riyadh meanwhile, which cheered Washington's exit from the nuclear deal, is under pressure from its US ally to boost output

as Trump hopes to keep pump prices low ahead of November's mid-term elections. "You're dealing with a very political situation," analyst Amrita Sen of Energy Aspects told AFP.

### Geopolitical tensions

The 14-nation OPEC cartel and its 10 non-member partner nations, including Russia, together account for more than 50 percent of the world's oil supply, giving them huge sway over the global market. 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 and shore up low prices.

The strategy paid off, with prices jumping from below \$30 a barrel in early 2016 to around \$70 in the second quarter of 2018. The pact was meant to run until the end of this year. But a collapse in oil production in crisis-hit Venezuela and the prospect of fresh Iranian sanctions have raised fears of a supply crunch, sending the price of crude spiking again.

As recently as April, Saudi Energy Minister Khaled Al-Faleh had voiced support for the oil cut deal, saying the market had the capacity to

absorb higher prices. But Trump made it clear he disagrees. "Oil prices are too high. OPEC is at it again. Not good!" he tweeted last week.

Observers believe Trump is dialing up the pressure on Riyadh because he wants to offset the expected drop in Iranian production. "There's definitely pressure from the US," said Sen, adding that she believed Saudi had made a "commitment" to Washington in exchange for its abandonment of the Iran nuclear agreement. In Russia meanwhile, private oil companies are finding it increasingly difficult to justify the cutbacks to shareholders eager to cash in on the higher prices.

For technical reasons, any decision to ramp up output also has to be timed not to coincide with Russia's harsh winter, meaning the next OPEC meeting in November would come too late. "They cannot as easily ramp up production during the winter," said UBS commodity analyst Giovanni Staunovo. SEB analyst Bjarne Schieldrop said Russia's stance in favour of easing production curbs should also be seen against the backdrop of Moscow's efforts to increase its geopolitical clout in the Middle East. —AFP

## Most French firms won't be able to stay in Iran, says minister

**PARIS:** Most French companies hoping to keep doing business in Iran after the US imposes new sanctions on the country will find it impossible to do so, Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire said yesterday. These companies "won't be able to stay because they need to be paid for the products they deliver to or build in Iran, and they cannot be paid because there is no sovereign and autonomous European financial institution" capable of shielding them, Le Maire told BFM television.

The new sanctions announced by US President Donald Trump in May after he pulled out of a 2015 nuclear deal with Tehran would punish any foreign firm

operating in Iran which also does business with the US or in dollars. "Our priority is to build independent, sovereign European financial institutions which would allow financing channels between French, Italian, German, Spanish and any other countries on the planet," Le Maire said.

"It's up to us Europeans to choose freely and with sovereign power who we want to do business with," he added. "The United States should not be the planet's economic policeman." Le Maire and his EU counterparts have been trying to secure exemptions for their firms, many of which rushed back into Iran after the landmark accord curtailing Tehran's nuclear program. But French oil group Total and carmaker PSA have already indicated they are unlikely to stay in the country, while Renault has said it will remain despite the sanctions-though it does not sell its cars in the US. —AFP



NBK-Report - Bahrain Outlook

# Economy remains supported by resilience in non-oil growth

## Inflation expected to be higher in 2018 and average around 2.5%

KUWAIT: Thanks to continued output gains in the non-oil sector, real GDP growth accelerated in 2017 to 3.9% from 3.2% in 2016. The services sector-financial and social & personal services especially-and the construction sectors were major contributors to the non-oil sector's impressive growth of 5.0% last year, the highest in the GCC.

We expect non-oil growth to average 4.6% over 2018-19, underpinned by government infrastructure spending on a record \$8 billion worth of projects-the kingdom's largest ever pipeline. Capital spending spans a variety of projects in transportation, water and power, and housing sectors. Such spending has been bolstered over the past few quarters by the allocation of funds under the Gulf Development Program-a pledge by Bahrain's neighbors in 2011 to provide \$10 billion in grants over 10 years to boost investment in infrastructure and housing.

Burgeoning non-oil activity also helped offset some of the contraction in the oil sector due to the OPEC+ production

cut agreement, in which Bahrain is a participant. Oil sector output is expected to fall slightly in 2018 as Bahrain adheres to its OPEC+ quota obligations and as oil field output is affected by lingering maintenance issues.

However, the expected winding down of the production cut agreement from mid-2018 onward should allow Bahrain to ramp up to full output capacity, likely in 2019, boosting real oil GDP by 0.8%. The kingdom is also in the process of upgrading its oil infrastructure, including the ageing oil pipeline from Saudi Arabia and the expansion of the Sitra refinery that will see refining capacity increased by almost 50 percent. The latter is expected to boost state revenues by about \$1 billion, according to official sources.

### Inflation to rise in 2018 and in 2019

Moreover, in April, Bahrain announced that it had discovered up to 80 billion barrels of shale oil and around 20 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in offshore deposits. (The kingdom currently produces about 44,000 b/d from its own field and shares the revenues from a 300,000 b/d field owned by Saudi Arabia.) It hopes to monetize these new reserves with in the next five years with the help of international oil companies.

To this end, the government recently launched an energy fund that aims to raise \$1 billion from local and international investors. Monetizing these new energy resources could ultimately restore investor confidence and

reduce the country's fiscal deficit and high public debt levels-Bahrain is currently rated at below investment grade by major rating agencies S&P (B+), Moody's (B1) and Fitch (BB-).

Consumer price inflation is expected to rise from 1.4% in 2017 to 2.5% this year and then further to 3.5% in 2019 on the back of a planned value-added tax (VAT) and higher housing and food costs. Latest figures showed inflation averaging 2.8% y/y in IQ18-higher than the 0.7% y/y average recorded during the same period last year-after excise duties were levied on tobacco and soft drinks. The introduction of a 5% VAT, now expected in 2019, is projected to add initially around 2% to the overall inflation rate.

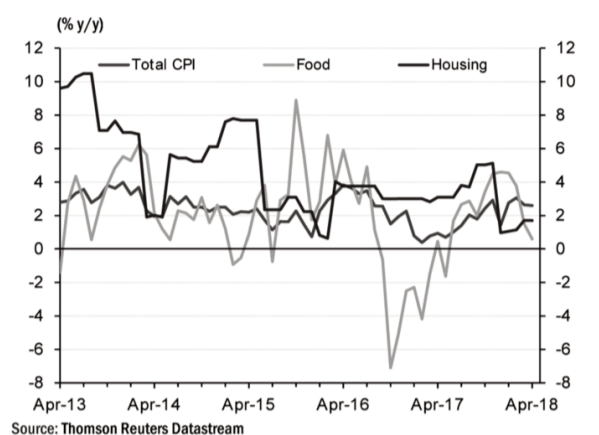
### Budget deficit to gradually narrow but remain high

The budget deficit is expected to gradually narrow, given ongoing fiscal consolidation efforts and some improvement in revenues. While the VAT should raise around \$300 million (approximately 1% of GDP) in additional tax revenue per year, the deficit will remain large at around 9.3% and 7.6% of GDP in 2018 and 2019, respectively.

The government will therefore have to continue to look to domestic and international bond markets to plug the shortfall. The latest issue came in March 2018, a 7-year \$1 billion Sukuk at 6.875%, higher than the 5.25% on Sukuk issued in late 2017. The hike in pricing reflects investors' concerns over the fiscal position and rising debt (which is expected to top 100% of GDP by 2019) as well as higher short-term rates.

Credit default swaps (CDS), which tend to be good bellwethers of sovereign risk, spiked to near multi-year highs around mid-May amid growing concerns about Bahrain's large fiscal deficit and mounting debt burden. As of 5 June, the CDS on five-year government debt was at 383 bps, up 92 bps year-to-date, while yields on five-year government debt stood near record highs at 7.32%.

Growth in credit to businesses continued to climb in IQ18, thanks to the ongoing gains in lending activity in the construction sector. This has helped push total private credit growth higher, averaging an impressive 9.7% y/y in IQ18, which is



much higher than the 2.9% y/y recorded in IQ17. In contrast, private sector deposits grew by 2.8% y/y in IQ18, higher than the 1.7% y/y average of IQ17. With deposit growth subdued, M1 and M2 declined in April by 4.0% y/y and 1.4% y/y respectively.

Following the US Fed's move in June, Bahrain raised its key policy rate by 25 bps to 2.25%. Interbank rates have been edging higher in tandem with the policy rate hikes over the past year. As of early June, the 3-month rate was up 49 bps year-to-date. While lending may come under pressure from higher rates, the business sector is expected to continue to support overall credit growth.

### Foreign reserves remain under pressure

Given its large fiscal (and external) deficits, Bahrain's international reserves remain under pressure. In April, the central bank's international reserves stood at \$2.1 billion, covering a mere 1.8 months of imports. After rallying briefly towards the end of 2017 and at the start of this year, Bahrain's All Share Index moved lower in 2Q18, weighed down by fiscal and debt concerns. However, a more encouraging economic outlook and higher oil prices should offer the market some support going forward.

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Dow Jones	25,090.48	24,987.47	-103.01	▼ -0.41	1.09
HASDAQ	7,746.38	7,747.02	0.64	▲ 0.01	12.22
SP500	2,779.66	2,773.75	-5.91	▼ -0.21	3.75
Financial Times	7,631.33	7,594.49	-36.84	▼ -0.48	-1.21
DAX	12,834.11	12,662.34	-171.77	▼ -1.34	-1.98
CAC 40	5,450.48	5,392.77	-57.71	▼ -1.06	1.51
Swiss	8,519.57	8,452.03	-67.54	▼ -0.79	-9.91
Nikkei 225	22,680.33	22,278.48	-401.85	▼ -1.77	-2.13
Topix	1,771.43	1,743.92	-27.51	▼ -1.55	-4.05
Hang Seng	30,309.49	29,468.15	-841.34	▼ -2.78	-1.51
Straits Times	3,324.04	3,301.35	-22.69	▼ -0.68	-2.98

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Kuwait	4,842.68	4,826.67	-16.01	▼ -0.33	0.11
Saudi Arabia	8,243.97	8,270.46	26.49	▲ 0.32	14.08
Dubai	2,982.58	2,939.33	-43.25	▼ -1.45	-11.50
Abu Dhabi	4,588.27	4,561.64	-26.63	▼ -0.58	4.32
Bahrain	1,295.86	1,307.33	11.48	▲ 0.89	-2.69
Qatar	9,080.24	9,097.91	17.67	▲ 0.19	6.53
Oman	4,596.05	4,589.33	-6.72	▼ -0.15	-9.87
Lebanon	1,078.53	0.00	0.00	-	-6.10
Jordan	2,100.22	2,097.42	-2.80	▼ -0.13	-1.25
Egypt	16,220.93	16,044.56	-176.37	▼ -1.09	8.00
Morocco	12,313.82	12,343.17	29.35	▲ 0.24	-0.37
Tunisia	7,874.30	7,930.35	56.05	▲ 0.71	25.35

Currency	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	US Dollar	Euro	Sterling Pound	Swiss Franc	Japanese Yen	Australian Dollar
Kuwait Dinar		12.2845	3.2895	2.8488	2.4977	3.2757	361.28	4.4676
Saudi Riyal	0.08140		0.2678	0.2319	0.2666	29.41	0.3637	
US Dollar	0.30400	3.7345		0.8660	0.7593	0.9958	109.83	1.3581
Euro	0.35103	4.3122	1.1547		0.8770	1.1501	126.84	1.5684
Sterling Pound	0.40037	4.9183	1.3170	1.1403		1.3118	144.68	1.7891
Swiss Franc	0.30528	3.7503	1.0042	0.8695	0.7623		110.32	1.3639
Japanese Yen	0.00277	0.0340	0.0091	0.0079	0.0069	0.0091		0.0124
Australian Dollar	0.22384	2.7497	0.7363	0.6376	0.5589	0.7332	80.87	

Currency	US Dollar	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	Bahraini Dinar	Qatari Riyal	Omani Riyal	Emirates Dirham	Egyptian Pound
US Dollar		0.30400	3.7345	0.3749	3.6270	0.3831	3.6571	17.7900
Kuwaiti Dinar	3.2895		12.2845	1.2332	11.9309	1.2603	12.0299	58.5197
Saudi Riyal	0.2678	0.08140		0.1004	0.9712	0.1026	0.9793	4.7637
Bahraini Dinar	2.6674	0.81088	9.9613		9.6746	1.0219	9.7549	47.4527
Qatari Riyal	0.2757	0.08382	1.0296	0.1034		0.1056	1.0083	4.9049
Omani Riyal	2.6101	0.79349	9.7476	0.9785	9.4670		9.5456	46.4345
Emirates Dirham	0.2734	0.08313	1.0212	0.1025	0.9918	0.1048		4.8645
Egyptian Pound	0.0562	0.01709	0.2099	0.0211	0.2039	0.0215	0.2056	

Currency	1-Week	1-Month	3-Month	6-Month	1-Year
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.19	1.75	2.00	2.19	2.50
US Dollar	1.97	2.08	2.32	2.49	2.77
Euro	-0.42	-0.39	-0.35	-0.30	-0.23
Sterling Pound	0.49	0.50	0.63	0.75	0.93
Swiss Franc	-0.79	-0.78	-0.73	-0.64	-0.52
Australian Dollar	1.67	1.91	1.87	1.87	1.90
Japanese Yen	-0.07	-0.08	-0.04	0.01	0.11

Country	2-Year	5-Year	10-Year	30-Year
United States	2.51	2.75	2.87	3.01
Europe	-0.67	-0.28	0.36	1.13
United Kingdom	0.68	1.01	1.27	1.75

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Kuwait Oil	71.69	71.63	-0.06	▼ -0.08	11.47
Brent	74.36	74.52	0.16	▲ 0.22	9.79
West Texas	65.91	65.91	0.00	-	8.27
Gold	1277.91	1278.56	0.65	▲ 0.05	-1.93
Silver	16.40	16.33	-0.07	▼ -0.43	-3.35

Source: National Bank of Kuwait

## Venezuela's 'millionaires' are the country's new poor

CARACAS: Elizabeth Torres is outraged, but as a Venezuelan she takes the affront in her stride. "We are a country of millionaires," she says ironically, eyeing a carton of eggs in the market. Price? Three million bolivars. "You are a millionaire because you have to pay that much, and for that you get 36 eggs, but the minimum salary is 2.6 million! With what you get every month, you can't buy them," she says.

It's the great irony of the country's cruel decline. Sitting atop the world's largest reserves of crude, Venezuela-once Latin America's richest country-is now a state of millionaires, but the millions are in bolivars and practically worthless. According to the country's leading universities, 87 percent of the population is now officially poor. In the market in the eastern Caracas suburb of Chacao, Torres, a 64-year-old retired accountant, isn't the only one to grumble.

Between stalls of vegetables, meat and imitation leather shoes, people complain loudly about the cost of living. Torres' salary is equivalent to 32 dollars at the official exchange rate and barely one much-coveted black market dollar. Venezuelans have to pay seven-or-eight digit sums to buy staples like flour, rice, bread or some other reasonably nutritious and filling carbohydrate.

Carmen Machado, 57, was fired a few days ago from her job at an office cleaning company. They gave her 5.8 million bolivars as severance pay after four years of service, she said. Enough to buy a kilo of meat. Venezuelans are forced to keep up with crazy prices that rise two or three times a week. The accumulation is staggering. The opposition-majority parliament says hyperinflation was nearly 25,000 percent in the last 12 months, meaning the price of an item now costs 250 times' what it did a year ago.

At a pet shop Olga Aviles, 53, is torn between buying a tin of food for her cat and a kilo of meat for the family. "There



CARACAS: People buy fruits and vegetables at the municipal market of Chacao. — AFP

always has to be a certain quota of sacrifice. If I spend on one thing, I don't spend on the other." "In Venezuela, we are not living, we are surviving," she said. "If you buy fruit, you cannot buy vegetables. If you buy grains, you do not buy cereal."

Though the government sells some subsidized foods in poorer neighborhoods and electricity, water and gas cost a pittance, many goods and services are priced on the value of a "dolar negro" or black market dollar-worth 30 times the official one. Only a small sector of society has access to dollars. "We have to ask family members outside to send something back."

With what we get here we cannot eat," says Aurora Gonzalez, 71, whose son emigrated and sends home remittances to keep his family going. President Nicolas Maduro, whose controversial re-election in May will keep him in the presidency until 2025, argues that Venezuela's inflation is the result of speculation and an economic war designed to cripple the country and force a transition. But Venezuelan economist Luis Vicente Leon blames the crisis on the state

monopoly of foreign currency and strict price and exchange controls.

### 'Millionaires of lies'

In March, Maduro announced a redenomination of the bolivar, lopping off three zeroes from its value to counter hyperinflation. The launch has been postponed as the electronic banking system wasn't ready and nor were the promised new banknotes printed. Leon dismisses the measures as "an ephemeral work of art".

"Removing zeroes from the currency does not extinguish the fuse that causes hyperinflation," says the economist. Many Venezuelans are already lopping off the zeroes automatically, "for convenience and for the psychological effect. For instance, when something costs 4.5 million we say 4,500," says Olga. In 2017, Maduro announced a new 100,000 bolivar bill, which would now no longer buy an egg. Now, the highest value will be 500 bolivars, which might buy you a coffee. For Elizabeth Torres and many like her, it's a surreal, unfunny joke. "We are millionaires of lies. What we are is poorer." — AFP

## EXCHANGE RATES

### BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL	America	Sri Lankan Rupee
British Pound	0.394687	0.408587	0.223671	0.001624
Czech Korune	0.005626	0.014926	0.299200	0.09927
Danish Krone	0.043192	0.048192	0.299700	0.009087
Euro	0.344712	0.358412		
Georgian Lari	0.122510	0.122510		
Hungarian 0.000995	0.001185			
Norwegian Krone	0.033076	0.038276		
Romanian Leu	0.058461	0.075311		
Russian ruble	0.004750	0.004750		
Slovakia	0.009048	0.019048		
Swedish Krona	0.030141	0.035141		
Swiss Franc	0.299040	0.310040		
Australia Dollar	0.215319	0.227319		
New Zealand Dollar	0.203399	0.212899		
Canada Dollar			0.223671	0.001624
US Dollars			0.299200	0.09927
US Dollars Mint			0.299700	0.009087
Bangladesh Taka	0.003145	0.003946		
Chinese Yuan	0.045707	0.049207		
Hong Kong Dollar	0.038551	0.039301		
Indian Rupee	0.003901	0.004673		
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023		
Japanese Yen	0.002681	0.002861		
Korean Won	0.000263	0.000278		
Malaysian Ringgit	0.072222	0.078222		
Nepalese Rupee	0.002660	0.003000		
Pakistan Rupee	0.001953	0.002723		
Philippine Peso	0.005549	0.005849		
Singapore Dollar	0.218544	0.228544		
Bahraini Dinar				0.797621
Egyptian Pound				0.014316
Iraqi Dinar				0.000084
Jordanian Dinar				0.000197
Kuwaiti Dinar				0.423482
Lebanese Pound				0.432482
Moroccan Dirhams				1.000000
Omani Riyal				0.000150
Qatar Riyal				0.000250
Saudi Riyal				0.020538
Syrian Pound				0.044538
Tunisian Dinar				0.781474
Turkish Lira				0.079019
				0.083959
				0.079793
				0.081093
				0.001285
				0.001505
				0.113434
				0.121434
				0.058997
				0.069297



Business

# Ongoing trade war worries slam China and emerging markets

## MSCI Asia-Pacific index slides to lowest since February

LONDON: Chinese stocks fell almost 4 percent and alarm bells rang across global markets yesterday, as trade tensions between the United States and China escalated further. The yuan also hit a five-month low overnight after US President Donald Trump threatened to impose a 10 percent tariff on another \$200 billion of Chinese goods. Beijing in turn warned about \$50 billion of retaliatory penalties on US goods.

Asian stocks wilted to a four-month low and Australia's dollar, South Africa's rand and the euro were among a diverse group of currencies caught in the crossfire. Europe's main equity benchmarks sank 1 to 1.5 percent and Wall Street futures were pointing to similar declines there. Government bonds and the Japanese yen rallied as investors sought protection.

"You only have to look at how far the main Shanghai index has fallen to see that people would probably want some safe-haven assets at this point," said DZ Bank analyst Andy Cossor. China's falls came after it had warned it would take "qualitative" and "quantitative" measures if the US government published an additional list of tariffs on its products. The trade frictions have unnerved financial markets, with investors and businesses increasingly worried that a full-blown trade battle could derail global growth. "Trump appears to be employing a similar tactic he used with North Korea, by blustering first in order to gain an advantage in negotiations," said Kota Hirayama, senior emerging markets

economist at SMBC Nikko Securities in Tokyo. "The problem is, such a tactic is unlikely to work with China."

### Great fall of China

MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan fell 1.9 percent to its lowest since early December. The losses had intensified through the day as the rout deepened in China. The Shanghai Composite Index slumped nearly 5 percent at one point to its lowest level since mid-2016 as more than 1,000 stocks slumped by their 10 percent daily limit. Hong Kong's Hang Seng shed as much 3 percent.

China's economy is already clouded by a sharp slowdown in fixed asset investment growth because of the government's de-leveraging drive, a problematic property sector, mounting debt and rising credit defaults. "The rising risk of a disruptive trade conflict makes a bad situation tentatively worse," economists at Nomura wrote.

Japan's Nikkei lost 1.8 percent and South Korea's KOSPI retreated 1.5 percent. Australian stocks bucked the trend and stayed steady, helped by a depreciating currency and an overnight bounce in commodity prices. The dollar fell 0.75 percent to 109.715 yen following Trump's tariff comments. The yen is often sought in times of market turmoil and political tensions. Most other currencies lost against the dollar, though. The U.S. currency gained 0.4

percent on the euro to a near 11-month high at \$1.1547. The skid by China's yuan to a five-month low was its biggest fall in a year and a half. The Australian dollar, often considered a proxy for China-related trades, brushed a one-year low of \$0.7381 too. "In the global environment - and due in particular to this trade issue - the risks are more on the downward side and a little bit worrying," European Central Bank policymaker Jan Smets said in a CNBC interview. "Basically it is not good news."

### Eyes on OPEC

With Russia and Saudi Arabia pushing for higher output, crude oil markets remained volatile ahead of Friday's OPEC meeting. Brent crude futures fell 0.6 percent to \$74.88 a barrel after rallying 2.5 percent overnight, while US light crude futures retreated 1.4 percent to \$65.27. Lower-risk assets gained on the latest round of trade threats. Spot gold was steady at \$1,282.26 an ounce.

The 10-year US Treasury note yield - yields move inversely to price - touched 2.871 percent, its lowest since June 1. Most European yields dropped, too, with Germany's 10-year government Bund, the benchmark for the region, at a two-week low of 0.363 percent. At the same time, Italian government bonds, which are considered less safe and have suffered from recent domestic political ructions, sold off, with their 10-year yields up 2 bps at 2.58 percent.



JIUJIANG: Investors monitor stock prices at a securities company in Jiujiang in China's central Jiangxi province. — AFP

But the stress was highest in emerging markets, where the average yield on domestic currency debt was the highest since March 2017 and fast approaching 7 percent. Industrial metals also buckled with copper tumbling 1.9 percent in its ninth fall in the last 10 sessions and nickel down 2.1 percent. "Escalation (of trade tensions) is a

sort of impossible thing to forecast, but if it stops at this level you have probably created some nice risk premia in Asia and emerging markets," said Hans Peterson, global head of asset allocation at SEB Investment Management. "So if it doesn't get worse, it is probably a buying opportunity." — Reuters

## BoE to keep rates steady as winter chill slow to lift

LONDON: The Bank of England will be looking to see if Britain's economy has recovered from a severe winter chill as it weighs the prospects for a future interest rate rise this week. No economists polled by Reuters expect the BoE to raise rates tomorrow, and some are getting cold feet about their forecasts for a rate rise in August, which would be only the central bank's second increase since the 2008 financial crisis.

Patchy growth as the economy prepares to

leave the European Union in March next year places BoE policy in sharp contrast to the United States, where the Federal Reserve plans to raise rates four times in 2018, and three times in 2019. "The Monetary Policy Committee will be wary of providing any firm guidance over the likely timing of the next hike as it won't want to tie its hands," BNP Paribas economist Luigi Speranza said on Monday. Goldman Sachs currency strategists said sterling - which is already near a 2018 low - continued to price in too high a chance of an August move. BoE Governor Mark Carney has said first-quarter weakness looks temporary and expects to raise rates to rise gradually over the next couple of years, to prevent overheating at a time of above-target inflation and the lowest unemployment since 1975.

But he has been much vaguer about pre-

cision timing. A putative May rate rise was thrown off course by an unusually harsh winter - and a possible underlying slowdown - that led to the economy almost stagnating from January to March. A record proportion of the public in a BoE survey last month had no idea what would happen to rates over the coming year - perhaps reflecting Brexit uncertainty as well as BoE indecision.

Trade concerns exist outside Britain too. The Bundesbank sharply cut its growth forecast for Germany on Friday, partly due to worries that U.S. President Donald Trump may spark a trade war with his tariffs on European and Japanese steel.

### Hedging bets

If it wishes, the BoE will have ample chance to bring clarity tomorrow, when the MPC will

publish a statement at 1100 GMT and Carney is due to give a major speech at 2015 GMT. But many economists expect the central bank to keep hedging its bets. Since its last meeting, inflation has fallen to a one-year low of 2.4 percent and April industrial output and construction data were strikingly weak.

However, business surveys for May have perked up, pointing to second-quarter growth of 0.3-0.4 percent, according to IHS Markit, a financial data company. This is just about in line with the maximum rate the BoE thinks the economy can sustain without causing too much inflation. Wage growth has been solid if unspectacular, and May retail sales were strong, reflecting sunny weather, a royal wedding and a partial easing of the inflation pressure that has squeezed British consumer demand since June 2016's Brexit vote.

Two BoE policymakers - Ian McCafferty, whose term ends in August, and Michael Saunders - are expected to stick with their view, held since March, that rates need to go up now. The rest of the MPC are likely to conclude that there is little cost in waiting until at least August before deciding whether to raise rates, economists say. Even then, it could find further reason to delay. A change to the Office for National Statistics' publication schedule means second-quarter GDP data will not be released until after the BoE's August rate meeting. "August would be too much of a gamble and (we) see November as the next best opportunity for a hike, assuming data strengthens more than we expect and that Brexit remains free of major disruption," Barclays economists Fabrice Montagne and Sreekala Kochugovindan said. — Reuters

## Japan start-up Mercari soars in first day of Tokyo trade

TOKYO: Japanese flea market app Mercari soared yesterday as it debuted on the Tokyo Stock Exchange, a major success for the rare example of a Japanese "unicorn"-a start-up valued over \$1 billion. The company initially priced its stock at 3,000 yen (\$27.30) a share, at the top of a prospective range. But that price was quickly surpassed yesterday, with shares trading around 5,300 yen at midday, putting the firm's value at over 700 billion yen (\$6.37 billion).

The online marketplace, started in 2013, allows users to buy and sell everything from clothes and electronic goods to event tickets. It has attracted international attention for its steady growth, saying it has around one million products on sale on any given day, and generates \$100 million a month in transactions globally. The app has tapped into a relatively new but vibrant market in Japan for second-hand goods, which has also seen brick-and-mortar stores specializing in used books and electronics thrive.

Founder Shintaro Yamada has said the idea for the app came to him as he travelled abroad and saw the appetite for used goods and the power of mobile shopping. Mercari has already begun expanding overseas, launching in the United States in 2014, and in Britain in 2017, and is expected to plough some of the funds raised by its share offering into further international expansion. — AFP

## Visa: Over 5m payments affected by June outage

LONDON: Payment systems giant Visa said yesterday that a massive technical glitch earlier this month had affected 5.2 million card transactions, almost half of which were in Britain. Visa, revealing the details in a letter to a British parliamentary committee that is probing the matter, said the "rare" disruption prevented many cardholders from making payments in Europe for 10 hours on Friday June 1. And the company apologized "unreservedly" for the failure and outlined plans for a compensation scheme.

"Overall, for cards issued both in the UK and elsewhere ... 51.2 million Visa transactions were initiated and sent to Visa's European systems for processing," wrote Visa Europe chief executive

Charlotte Hogg. "Of these, 5.2 million failed to process correctly," she added in the letter to Treasury Select Committee chair Nicky Morgan.

The outage was caused by a "very rare partial failure" of a switch in one of Visa's data centers, Hogg added. It has since been fixed. Visa said there were 27.6 million transactions made in the UK during the disruption, of which 2.4 million failed to process properly. "At its peak, the disruption affected people in the midst of returning home from work, socializing in restaurants and pubs, and doing end-of-day shopping," Hogg said in the letter published yesterday.

"We take seriously our important role in supporting financial stability in the UK. A disruption to our processing that impacts consumers at any time is unacceptable, let alone during a busy Friday afternoon," she added. "We apologize again unreservedly to everyone who was affected by the incident," Hogg said. "Visa, together with our financial institution partners, has quickly implemented a compensation program for cardholders." — AFP

Kuwait Times

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## Business

# Chevrolet Alghanim signs a new deal to deliver 2018 Chevrolet Aveo vehicles

**KUWAIT:** Yusuf A Alghanim & Sons Automotive (Chevrolet Alghanim), the exclusive distributor of Chevrolet vehicles in Kuwait, announced a new partnership with Behbehani Finance Company Car Rental & Leasing Division, a reputable operational leasing company in Kuwait, in which Chevrolet Alghanim provides a large number of 2018 Chevrolet Aveo vehicles to be used by Americana for Delivery operations.

The new partnership comes in line with Chevrolet Alghanim's commitment to providing all segments of customers with the performance, quality and safety of Chevrolet vehicles. The 2018 Chevrolet Aveo is a more expressive, sporty take on the brand's fun-to-drive small car. It offers big technologies such as a new MyLink system with segment-exclusive Apple CarPlay compatibility, and a fresh exterior. The updated styling complements new comfort and convenience features such as an available 7-inch-diagonal color touch screen for the new MyLink system. Rear Park Assist is also available on the LS and LT.

## Refined design

Aveo's sporty and youthful exterior has an entirely new, expressive look echoing the global Chevrolet cues. It is a richer, more detailed design, with the front end featuring a new hood, new front fascia and new lighting elements. Projector-beam headlamps are standard. Likewise, the rear fascia is new. There are also new 15-inch wheel designs with steel on the Base and LS trims and alloy wheels on the LT trim.

## Interior and technology enhancements

Aveo's thoughtful interior retains its focus on delivering comfort, convenience and technology. A new, detailed gauge cluster incorporating an analog speedometer adds a higher degree of refinement to the cabin, complementing additional new comfort and convenience features. Also new is a 7-inch-diagonal infotainment system designed to support the latest connectivity technologies, including Apple CarPlay. The Aveo sedan offers a 60/40 split-folding rear seat, plus an impressive 502 liters of cargo space for the sedan.

## Safety first

Aveo offers safety features, including two standard air bags. Antilock brakes come standard, along with a Tire Pressure Monitoring System. The Aveo comes with Standard StabiliTrak(r) Electronic Stability Control System that helps reduce the risk of rollover crashes.

## Performance

The Aveo comes with a 1.6L DOHC 4-cylinder engine with variable valve timing, backed by an available six-speed automatic or manual transmission. Rated at 115 horsepower & offers a combined fuel economy of 14.1 km/L. Chevrolet Alghanim offers to its customers who purchase a Chevrolet the benefits of the complete Care Program, which entails new levels of post-sale support and trust.

The Chevrolet Care is an exceptional customer service that is based on four main pillars: competitive and transparent service costs (especially for four-wheel drive vehicles), scheduled service appointment booking with same day delivery, quality service by certified



technicians and 3yr/100,000km warranty with 24x7 roadside assistance for 4 years. This partnership reassures the strong business relations between Behbehani Finance Company Car

Rental & Leasing Division and Chevrolet Alghanim and the level of confidence in Chevrolet cars quality, equity and after sales experience.

## Young at heart? Mercedes cultivates its ageing workforce

**BERLIN:** Too slow, inflexible, forgetful, always off sick. Those are some attitudes about older workers that carmaker Mercedes-Benz is trying to dispel as Germany grapples with the challenges of an ageing society. The luxury brand owned by Germany's Daimler AG is waging a company-wide campaign to combat those mistaken impressions. "We wanted a paradigm shift in attitudes," said Sylvia Huette-Ritterbusch, a Mercedes personnel expert whose job is to decide what skills the firm will need in future.

One initiative Daimler has developed is an exhibition to challenge stereotypes about ageing. It has already been visited by 80,000 people, including 2,500 of its factory managers and has now been brought to Berlin and opened to the public. Visitors are asked to choose between the "young" or "old" door to enter the exhibition. Many retired visitors, who obviously feel young at heart, come in through the "young" door.

Once inside, you can take tests to measure memory, balance, ability to work in a team, the tightness of your grip, how high you can jump and how easily you can relax. It turns out that this correspondent, real age 45, has a biological age of 36, but 119 years of life experience. The initiative has been championed by Mercedes production head Markus Schaefer, who says: "Many prejudices about ageing are long out-of-date. Every age has potential... age diversity means diversity of experience, perspectives and new ideas." The average age of Daimler's 136,000 employees in Germany is 44.7 years. Rival carmaker BMW expects workers aged over 50 to make up more than 35 percent of its workforce by 2020, from 25 percent in 2014. Germany faces a serious skills shortage as the post-war "baby boomer" generation retires. The working-age population is expected to shrink by some 2 million by 2030.

The shortage of workers is costing the economy up to 0.9 percentage points of output a year, the IW German Economic Institute said recently. The German government has moved to discourage people from retiring early and the pension age is scheduled to rise gradually from 65 to 67 by 2030. "Companies know it is not so easy to attract young workers. They are realising they can't do without some of the baby

boomers and will try and hang onto them," said Andre Schleiter, a demographics expert at the Bertelsmann Foundation think tank.

## Car-making 'you tube'

In addition to the exhibition, Mercedes has introduced demographic audits across the company to encourage employees and management to openly discuss the age structure of their teams and address ways to promote cooperation between young and old. Initiatives that have come out of that process include the launch of a corporate video platform where older workers can post YouTube-like tutorials on complex working processes to pass on their expertise to the next generation.

The company has also launched formal joint tool-making training for teenage apprentices and employees aged over 50 and is testing ergonomic tools, such as an exoskeleton which reduces muscle strain for workers installing parts overhead. Other ideas include a system to help workers swap shifts more easily; allowing older staff to work part-time as they approach retirement and hiring retirees for short-term projects. "People don't want to be on or off," said Huette-Ritterbusch.

Mercedes is not alone in seeking to address the challenge of an ageing population. German tech company SAP runs a "mature talents" program which promotes two-way mentoring between experienced employees and younger colleagues, as well as a structured knowledge transfer process before older staff members retire. BMW has taken steps including installing wooden floors to soften the impact on workers' knees and rotating jobs during shifts so staff avoid too many repetitive movements.

Company initiatives and government policies seem to be bearing fruit: the employment rate among those aged 55 to 60 has risen sharply in the last decade. Germany now has one of Europe's highest rates of older people working. "Companies are investing more systematically in people over 50 because it is clear that there aren't enough young people coming up with qualifications," said Schleiter. "In coming years, more companies will make a bigger commitment to 55-year-olds who still have another 12 years to work." — Reuters

## Burgan Bank announces winners of Yawmi account draw



**KUWAIT:** Burgan Bank, the second largest in terms of assets, yesterday announced the names of the daily draw winners of its Yawmi account draw, each taking home a cash-prize of KD 5,000.

The lucky winners are:  
1. Amer Abdulqader Baqer Alawadhi  
2. Mohammad Abdulaziz Ateyah Aljamil  
3. Mohammed Majed Bakdash  
4. Mubarak Benah Khalaf Alorf  
5. Ilham Tegmouss

In addition to the daily draw, Burgan Bank also offers a Quarterly Draw with more chances to win higher rewards, offering the chance to one lucky customer to win KD 125,000 every three months. The Yawmi Account offers Daily and Quarterly Draws,

wherein the Quarterly Draw requires customers to maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 in their account for two months prior to the draw date. Additionally, every KD 10 in the account will entitle customers to one chance of winning. If the account balance is KD 500 and above, the account holder will be qualified for both the quarterly and daily draws.

Burgan Bank encourages everyone to open a Yawmi account and/or increase their deposit to maximize their chances of becoming a winner. The higher the level of the deposit, the higher the likelihood to win. For more information on opening a Yawmi account, the new quarterly draw or on any of the bank's products and services, customers are urged to visit their nearest Burgan Bank branch, or simply call the bank's Call Center.

## HUAWEI P20 Pro takes clearer pictures, even when zooming 5X closer!

**KUWAIT:** Take a picture with maximum zoom on your smartphone. Now take a picture with the HUAWEI P20 Pro's 5X hybrid zoom. The difference is remarkable! No more disappointing pixelated images and fuzziness. The new flagship smartphone from Huawei takes smartphone photography to the next level. By utilizing innovative technology, the HUAWEI P20 Pro can make photographs as stunning as ever, even if the camera is zoomed in to its maximum capacity.

The smartphone camera king - HUAWEI P20 Pro, built in collaboration with Huawei and Leica, produces a harmony of features, never seen in a Huawei flagship smartphone. Features which redefine the standards for premium hand-held devices, the HUAWEI P20 Pro outshines when placed in line with its competitors.

In the history of smartphone technology, the action of zooming in on an image is never synonymous with superior quality images, a drawback that many smartphones faced in the past. But Huawei and its pursuit for best-in-class technology have helped resolve this obstacle. A hybrid between optical and digital technology, the smartphone enables its users to achieve maximum render quality from images which are zoomed in five times from their original frame. This produces shots which lack tacky, blurry effects produced by numerous other smartphones in the market.



The HUAWEI P20 Pro captures stunning details as if you're standing right in front of the object and even when the camera zoom is utilized to the extreme, you can always capture the vivid colours and intricate details.

The simple yet immensely important feature of zooming in, is essential to photography, as any photographer would attest to. By providing the best quality for each image with its 5X hybrid zoom feature, Huawei provides the tools to make any memory, scenery, urban landscape or portrait exceptional.

Beautiful distance shots can be captured using the dual camera smartphone, framing each detail as the naked eye sees it: smooth, and with details most smartphone cameras miss. Maintaining a natural white balance, the images which result from the 5X hybrid zoom, stay true to their real-life colors and contrasts. Travelers and photography enthu-

siasts are not the only ones encouraged to utilize this feature, as every single feature of HUAWEI P20 Pro is built to enable everyday consumer to effortlessly produce professional-quality photos. Daunting hallways, spiraling skyscrapers and winding landscapes, can all be framed to perfection with the HUAWEI P20 Pro's camera.

The smartphone that's receiving unprecedented applause globally is packed to the brim with exciting features which serve a utilitarian purpose. The hybrid zoom being one of the many technological leaps in smartphone technology. The 40MP RGB camera acts as the perfect companion to any shot required, and the hybrid zoom feature is the perfect addition to a smartphone filled with surprise.

## UK's Debenhams suffers share price collapse

**LONDON:** British department store chain Debenhams warned on profits yesterday, sparking a slump in its share price and compounding the gloom for large UK retailers. Debenhams said that annual profits were expected to miss expectations, blaming falling sales, fierce competition and weak consumer spending. The news sent Debenhams' share price tumbling 20 percent in morning deals.

"Against a background of increased competitor discounting and weakness in key markets, trading in May and early June has been below plan," said Debenhams, which has 240 stores worldwide including 176 in the UK and Ireland. In a statement, the group said that it expects pre-tax annual profit of between £35 million and £40 million (\$46 million and \$53 million, 40 million euros and 46 million euros). Analysts' consensus forecast had been for £50.3 million.

In later morning deals, Debenhams' share price recovered to stand at 18.40 pence, but still down 6.12 percent from Monday's closing level. Major UK retailers are increasingly fac-



LONDON: Shoppers walk past a Debenhams shop in Oxford Street. — AFP

ing tough times in the face of intense online competition from the likes of US giant Amazon. The UK is experiencing also weak household spending amid Brexit uncertainty. Chinese-owned department store chain House of Fraser is closing more than half its shops across Britain and Ireland, risking the loss of 6,000 jobs.

Clothing-to-food retailer Marks & Spencer is meanwhile shutting more than 100 UK stores as it looks to shift at least one third of sales online. Elsewhere, UK budget chain Poundworld could collapse with the loss of up to 5,100 jobs unless a last-ditch buyer is found. Poundworld is also battling against heavy discounting by supermarkets. — AFP

## Malabar 'Win Up To 5 Kilos of Gold' campaign



The raffle draw winner of "Win Up To 5 Kilos of Gold" campaign by Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Rawan Rafeek D/O Rafeek Layin receiving the prize 50gm Gold from Afsal Khan, Zonal Head, Malabar Gold & Diamonds in the presence of management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds.



The raffle draw winner of "Win Up To 5 Kilos of Gold" campaign by Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Mr. Hamza receiving the prize 50gm Gold from Afsal Khan, Zonal Head, Malabar Gold & Diamonds in the presence of management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds.



## Technology

## Asia's borders, trafficking survivors dial in for justice

## Technology that could revolutionize the pursuit of justice

**JESSORE, Bangladesh:** When Neha Maldar testified against the traffickers who enslaved her as a sex worker in India, she spoke from the safety of her own country, Bangladesh, via video conferencing, a technology that could revolutionize the pursuit of justice in such cases. The men in the western city of Mumbai appeared via video link more than 2,000 km (1,243 miles) west of Maldar as she sat in a government office in Jessore, a major regional hub for sex trafficking, 50 km from Bangladesh's border with India.

"I saw the people who had trafficked me on the screen and I wasn't scared to identify them," Maldar, who now runs a beauty parlour from her home near Jessore, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "I was determined to see them behind bars. I told them how I was beaten for refusing to work in the brothel in the beginning and how the money I made was taken away," she said, adding that she had lied to Indian authorities about her situation after being rescued, out of fear.

Thousands of people from Bangladesh and Nepal - mainly poor, rural women and children - are lured to India each year by traffickers who promise good jobs but sell them into prostitution or domestic servitude, anti-slavery activists say.

Activists hope the safe, convenient technology could boost convictions. A Bangladeshi sex trafficker was jailed for the first time in 2016 on the strength of a victim's testimony to a court in Mumbai via video link from Dhaka, Bangladesh's capital. Convictions for cross-border trafficking in the region are rare as most victims choose not to pursue cases that have traditionally required them to testify in Indian courts, which meant staying in a shelter for the duration of the trial.

"They have always wanted to go back home, to their families," said Shiny Padiyara, a legal counsel at the Indian charity Rescue Foundation that has facilitated video conferencing cases and runs shelters for trafficking victims. "And most never return to testify." But video conferencing is making it easier to pursue justice. Survivors have given

statements, identified their traffickers, and been cross examined in at least 10 other ongoing international cases in Bangladesh, advocates said.

"Enabling victims to testify via video conference will lead to a possible decrease in acquittal rates for want of prime witnesses," said Adrian Phillips of Justice and Care, a charity that supports the use of video testimony to help secure justice.

Even then, it is tough. During Maldar's three-hour deposition, she withstood a tough cross-examination, showed identity documents to prove her age and countered allegations by the defence lawyer that she was lying about her identity.

**Unpardonable**

Tara Khokon Miya is preparing her 27-year-old daughter to testify against the men who trafficked her to India from Dhaka, where she had been working in a garment factory. "I almost lost my

daughter forever," she said, sitting in her home in Magura, less than 50 km from Jessore, describing how she disappeared after work and was taken to a brothel in India, and raped and beaten for almost a year before being rescued.

"What the traffickers did to my daughter was unpardonable," Miya said, wiping her tears. "We seek justice. I nurtured her in my womb and can't describe what it felt like to not know about her whereabouts." The trial has been ongoing since 2013 when the young woman, who declined to be named, was repatriated. The charity Rights Jessore is helping the family through the process, by providing counselling and rehearsing cross-examination.

"The best thing is her father will be by her side when she talks in court," Miya said, finally breaking into a smile. India signed a bilateral agreement with Bangladesh in 2015 to ensure faster trafficking investigations and prosecutions, and with Nepal in 2017, and laid down basic procedures to encourage the use of video conferencing in court proceedings. "The procedure is very transparent," said judge K M Mamun Uzzaman at Jessore court house, which often converts its conference hall into a courtroom for



SHIPUR, Bangladesh: Tara Khokon Miya in her village home. — Reuters

video conferencing cases to protect survivors' privacy. "I'm usually present and victims are able to testify confidently ... it is easy and cost effective for us," he said. "But the biggest beneficiaries are the survivors."

**The future**

Video conferencing in Bangladesh has been plagued by technical glitches such as power cuts and poor connections. "Sometimes the internet connection is weak or it gets disconnected during the testimony," said Binoy Krishna Mallick head of Rights Jessore, a pioneer in using this technology to encourage trafficking survivors to pursue justice. "But these are just teething troubles."

The bigger challenge, activists say, is to ensure survivors remain committed to the trial despite delays caused by a backlog of cases and witnesses' failure to appear to testify. Swati Chauhan, one of the first judges to experiment with video testimony in 2010, is convinced that technology can eliminate many of these hurdles.

"Victims go through a lot of trauma so it is natural that they don't want to confront their trafficker in a court - but that doesn't mean they don't want the trafficker to be punished," she said. "A video conference requires meticulous planning and it is not easy coordinating between departments and countries. But it is the future for many seeking justice." — Reuters

## Can blockchain tech save Moldova's kids from traffickers?

**CHISINAU:** Laura was barely 18 when a palm reader told her she could make \$180 a month working in beetroot farms in Russia - an attractive sum for a girl struggling to make a living in the town of Drochia, in Moldova's impoverished north. That she had no passport, the fortune teller said, was not a problem. Her future employers would help her cross the border.

"They gave me a (fake) birth certificate stating I was 14," Laura, who declined to give her real name, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in an interview. That was enough to get her through border controls as she travelled by bus with a smuggler posing as one of her parents. It was the beginning of a long tale of exploitation for Laura - one of many such stories in Moldova in eastern Europe, which aims to become the first country in the world to pilot blockchain to tackle decades of widespread human trafficking.

Trafficking generates illegal profits of \$150 billion a year globally, with about 40 million people estimated to be trapped as modern-day slaves - mostly women and girls - in forced labor and forced marriages, according to leading anti-slavery groups. The digital tool behind the cryptocurrency bitcoin is increasingly being tested for social causes, from Coca-Cola creating a workers' registry to fight forced labor to tracking supply chains, such as cobalt which is often mined by children.

Moldova has one of the highest rates of human trafficking in Europe as widespread poverty and unemployment drive many young people, mostly women, to look for work overseas, according to the United Nations (U.N.) migration agency (IOM). Due to the hidden nature of trafficking and the stigma attached, it is unknown how many people in the former Soviet country have been trafficked abroad but IOM has

helped some 3,400 victims - 10 percent of whom were children - since 2001.

In Russia, Laura was forced to toil long hours, beaten and never paid. After ending up in hospital, she was rescued by a doctor, only to be trafficked again a few years later when an abusive partner sold her into prostitution.

She now lives with her daughter in a rehabilitation centre in the northern village of Palaria with help from the charity CCF Moldova. "I had a lot of suffering," the 36-year-old said. "I am very afraid of being sold again, afraid about my child."

**Scans and bribes**

Moldova plans to launch a pilot of its digital identity project this year, working with the Brooklyn-based software company ConsenSys, which won a U.N. competition in March to design an identity system to combat child trafficking. Undocumented children are easy prey for traffickers using fake documents to transport them across borders to work in brothels or to sell their organs, experts say.

More than 40,000 Moldovan children have been left behind by parents who have migrated abroad for work, often with little supervision, according to IOM. "A lot of children are staying just with their grandfathers or grandmas, spending (more) time in the streets," said Lilian Levandovschi, head of Moldova's anti-trafficking police unit.

Moldova, with a population of 3.5 million, is among the poorest countries in Europe with an average monthly disposable income of 2,250 Moldovan Leu (\$135), government data shows. ConsenSys aims to create a secure, digital identity on a blockchain - or decentralized digital ledger shared by a network of computers - for Moldovan children, linking their personal identities with other family members. Moldova has strengthened its anti-trafficking laws since Laura's ordeal and children now need to carry a passport and be accompanied by a parent, or an adult carrying a letter of permission signed by a guardian, to exit the country.

With the blockchain system, children attempting to cross the border would be asked to scan their eyes or fingerprints. A phone alert would notify their legal guardians, requiring at least two to



PALARIA: Laura, a survivor of slavery who did not want to be identified, looks outside a window of rehabilitation centre for victims of violence. — Reuters

approve the crossing, said Robert Greenfield who is managing the ConsenSys project. Any attempt to take a child abroad without their guardians' permission would be permanently recorded on the database, which would detect patterns of behavior to help catch traffickers and could be used as evidence in court.

"Nobody can bribe someone to delete that information," said Mariana Dahan, co-founder of World Identity Network (WIN), an initiative promoting digital identities and a partner in the blockchain competition. Corruption and official complicity in trafficking are significant problems in Moldova, according to the US State Department, which last year downgraded it to Tier 2 in a watch list of those not doing enough to fight modern day slavery. Moldova is eager to prove that it is taking action as a further demotion could block access to US aid and loans.

**Tricked**

Many details have yet to be agreed before the blockchain project starts, including funding, populations targeted, the type of biometrical data collected, and where it will be stored. But the scheme is facing resistance from some anti-traffick-

ing groups who say it will not help the majority of victims - children trafficked within Moldova's borders and adults who are tricked when they travel abroad seeking work.

"As long as we don't have job opportunities ... trafficking will still remain a problem for Moldova," said IOM's Irina Arap. Minors made up less than 20 percent of 249 domestic and international trafficking victims identified in 2017, said Ecaterina Berejan, head of Moldova's anti-trafficking agency. "For Moldova, this is not a very big problem," she said, referring to cross-border child trafficking, adding that child victims may travel with valid documents as their families are in cahoots with traffickers in some cases.

But supporters of the blockchain initiative say low official trafficking figures do not account for undetected cases, and they have a duty to attempt to stay ahead of the criminals. "Many times, authorities are late in using latest technologies," said Mihail Beregoi, state secretary for Moldova's internal affairs ministry. "Usually organized crime uses them first and more successfully ... Any effort (to) secure at least one child is already worth trying." — Reuters

## EU leaders to urge progress on digital tax despite concerns

**BRUSSELS:** European Union leaders are expected to call for progress on new rules to tax companies' digital revenues at a summit next week in Brussels, according to draft conclusions of the meeting. The text, which is still subject to change, would represent an attempt to revamp the EU Commission's proposals for a 3 percent tax on large firms' digital turnover after many EU states opposed the plan.

EU leaders, who will meet in Brussels on June 28-29 for a regular summit, will urge progress to "take work forward on the Commission proposals on digital taxation," the draft said. The Commission, the EU's executive arm, proposed in March to reform the way online business is taxed in a bid to raise more revenue from large corporations accused of paying too little in Europe by routing their profits to low-tax member states, such as Ireland or Luxembourg.

Some smaller states, like Luxembourg and Malta, have immediately opposed the plan saying tax changes should be made only at global level to avoid damage to Europe's competitiveness. This argument was also supported by the bloc's Nordic countries in a joint statement this month, in which they criticized the proposed plan to tax companies on their turnover rather than profits. However, global reforms of tax rules have proved very slow in the past, and leaders will reiterate their commitment to move forward alone, if needed.

"The fight against tax avoidance, evasion and fraud must be vigorously pursued both at global level (notably in the OECD) and within the EU," the draft document said, referring to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, a global group of mostly rich nations, which includes EU countries, the United States and Japan. — Reuters

## CEO Musk emails staff on employee 'sabotage'

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Tesla Inc Chief Executive Elon Musk said on Monday in an email to staff that an unnamed Tesla employee had conducted "extensive and damaging sabotage" to the company's operations including allegedly making unspecified code changes to its manufacturing operating system and sending what the email said was sensitive Tesla data to unnamed third parties.

Company spokeswoman Gina Antonini declined to comment on the email. Musk said in the email, which was seen by Reuters, that he learned about this alleged behavior over the weekend. "The full extent of his actions are not yet clear, but what he has admitted to so far is pretty bad," Musk wrote. "His stated motivation is that he wanted a promotion that he did not receive." Musk did not specify to whom he was referring.

Reuters could not independently confirm any of the claims in the email. Musk wrote that the company would be investigating the matter this week, adding that Tesla needed to determine if the person was acting alone or in concert with "any outside organizations." "As you know, there are a long list of organizations that want Tesla to die," Musk wrote, saying they included Wall Street short-sellers, oil and gas companies, and car company rivals but naming none. — Reuters

## Apple fined for Australia false iPhone claims

**SYDNEY:** Apple was fined Aus\$9 million (US\$6.7 million) yesterday by an Australian court for making false claims about consumer rights when refusing to fix faulty iPhones and iPads previously repaired by a third party. Customers of the US tech giant had complained to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) after an operating system update disabled their devices in a global issue known as "error 53".

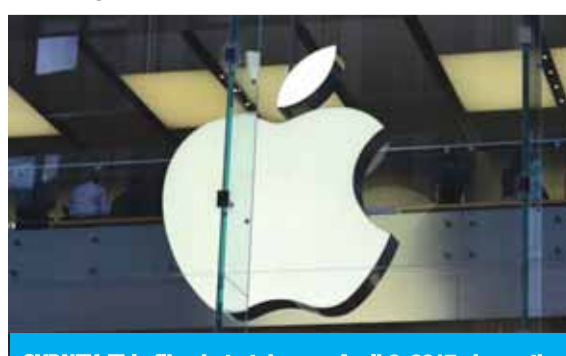
The users were told by Apple that they were not eligible for a remedy if the iPhone or iPad had been repaired by another company. The ACCC took Apple to the

Federal Court last year over allegedly false or misleading representations to customers with faulty iPhones and iPads about their rights under the law.

"If a product is faulty, customers are legally entitled to a repair or a replacement under the Australian Consumer Law, and sometimes even a refund," ACCC Commissioner Sarah Court said in a statement. "The court declared the mere fact that an iPhone or iPad had been repaired by someone other than Apple did not, and could not, result in the consumer guarantees ceasing to apply, or the consumer's right to a remedy being extinguished."

Apple admitted misleading at least 275 Australian customers over the issue between February 2015 to February 2016 on its US website, by its Australian store staff and on its customer service phone calls. The consumer watchdog said Apple had also committed to providing new devices as replacements, after allegations that the company was giving customers refurbished goods instead after a device suffered a major failure.

There was no immediate comment from Apple, which has previously described the error as appearing "when a device fails a security test". It has released an operating system update to fix the issue. — AFP



SYDNEY: This file photo taken on April 6, 2017 shows the Apple logo displayed at a store in the central business district of Sydney. — AFP



## Health

# Ultra-secure lab in Gabon equipped for Ebola studies

**FRANCEVILLE, Gabon:** At a research facility in Gabon, one isolated building stands behind an electrified fence, under round-the-clock scrutiny by video cameras. The locked-down P4 lab is built to handle the world's most dangerous viruses, including Ebola. "Only four people, three researchers and a technician, are authorized to go inside the P4," said virologist Ilich Mombo, who is in charge of the lab, one of only two in all of Africa that is authorized to handle deadly Ebola, Marburg and Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever viruses. The other is in Johannesburg. The P4 was put up 800 meters (half a mile) distant from older buildings of the Franceville International Centre for Medical Research (CIRMF), in large grounds on the outskirts of Franceville, the chief city in the southeastern Haut-Ogooue province.

Filming the ultra-high-security lab or even taking photos is banned and the handful of people allowed inside have security badges. Backup power plants ensure an uninterrupted electricity supply. "Even the air that we breathe is filtered," Mombo explains. When he goes into the P4 lab to work on a sample of suspect virus such as Ebola—which has claimed 28 lives in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) during an outbreak in the past six weeks—Mombo wears a head-to-foot biohazard suit. The special clothing is destroyed as soon as he has finished. Draconian measures are in force to prevent any risk of contamination, with potentially disastrous effects.

#### 'Teams on alert'

Once a suspect virus has been "inactivated"—a technique that stops the sample from being contagious—it is carefully taken from the P4 unit to other CIRMF laboratories in the compound, where it is analyzed. Specialized teams will scrutinize it, looking to confirm its strain of Ebola and hunting for clues such as the virus's ancestry and evolution, which are vital for tracking the spread of the disease. CIRMF director Jean-Sylvain Koumba, a colonel in the Gabonese army and a military doctor, said lab teams had been "placed on alert" to handle Ebola samples sent on by the National Institute of Biomedical Research in the DRC capital Kinshasa.

The nature of the sample can be determined with rare precision, for the facility has state-of-the-art equipment matched in few other places worldwide. "On average, it takes 24 to 48 hours between the time when a sample arrives and when we get the results," Mombo said. Founded in 1979 by Gabon's late president Omar Bongo Ondimba to study national fertility rates, the CIRMF moved to AIDS, malaria, cancer, viral diseases and the neglected tropical maladies that affect a billion people around the world, according to the WHO. The center is financed by the Gabonese state, whose main wealth is derived from oil exports, and gets help from France. In all, 150 people work for the CIRMF and live on the huge premises. Its reputation draws scientists, students and apprentices from Asia, Europe and the United States, as well as Africa.

"(The) CIRMF is uniquely suited to study infectious diseases of the Congolese tropical rain forest, the second world's largest rain forest," two French scientists, Eric Leroy and Jean-Paul Gonzalez, wrote in the specialist journal *Viruses* in 2012. "(It) is dedicated to conduct medical research of the highest standard ... with unrivalled infrastructure, multiple sites and multidisciplinary teams."

#### Animal 'reservoir'?

The facility also conducts investigations into how lethal tropical pathogens are able to leap the species barrier, said Gael Darren Maganga, who helps run the unit studying the emergence of viral diseases. "A passive watch consists of taking a sample from a dead animal after a request, while the active watch is when we go out ourselves to do fieldwork and take samples," he said. A major center of interest is the bat, seen as a potential "reservoir"—a natural haven—for the Ebola virus, said Maganga.

Staff regularly go out all over Gabon to take samples of saliva, faecal matter and blood. The consumption of monkey flesh and other bush meat is common practice in central Africa. "It's still a hypothesis, but the transmission to human beings could be by direct contact, for instance by getting scratches (from a bat) in caves, or by handling apes which have been infected by bat saliva," he said. —AFP



FRANCEVILLE, Gabon: Dr Mombo conducts analysis at the Franceville International Centre of Medical Research (CIRMF) is seen in Franceville. —AFP

“ Even the air that we breathe is filtered ”

## In US, cigarette smoking reaches new low

**WASHINGTON:** Just 13.9 percent of the US population smokes cigarettes, according to a US government report yesterday which said the American smoking rate has reached "the lowest level ever recorded." The findings by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics refer to adult cigarette smokers in 2017. A previous CDC report using 2016 data found

that 15.5 percent of adults smoked. A half century ago, more than 40 percent of adults smoked in the United States. Decades of health warnings have boosted public awareness that the addictive habit can cause lung and many other cancers, resulting in a declining number of smokers, experts say.

However, large disparities remain, with people living in rural areas still far more likely to smoke than city-dwellers, said the latest CDC report. Just 11 percent of adults in a metro area of one million people or more smoke, compared to nearly 22 percent in rural areas, it said. People living outside city centers also "had the highest rates of being obese, having experienced serious psychological distress during the past 30 days, or having diagnosed diabetes," said the report. —AFP

# CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times

248 33 199

## Global Medical Center Welcomes Dr. Marzouq Al-Bader Consultant vascular and general surgery

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What's On

# NBK concludes Ramadan social activities program

The National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) recently concluded its Ramadan social activities program, which it carried out for the 25th consecutive year, said NBK's Public Relations Executive Manager Abdulmohsen Al-Rushaid, noting that those activities were part of the bank's social responsibility.



Abdulmohsen Al-Rushaid

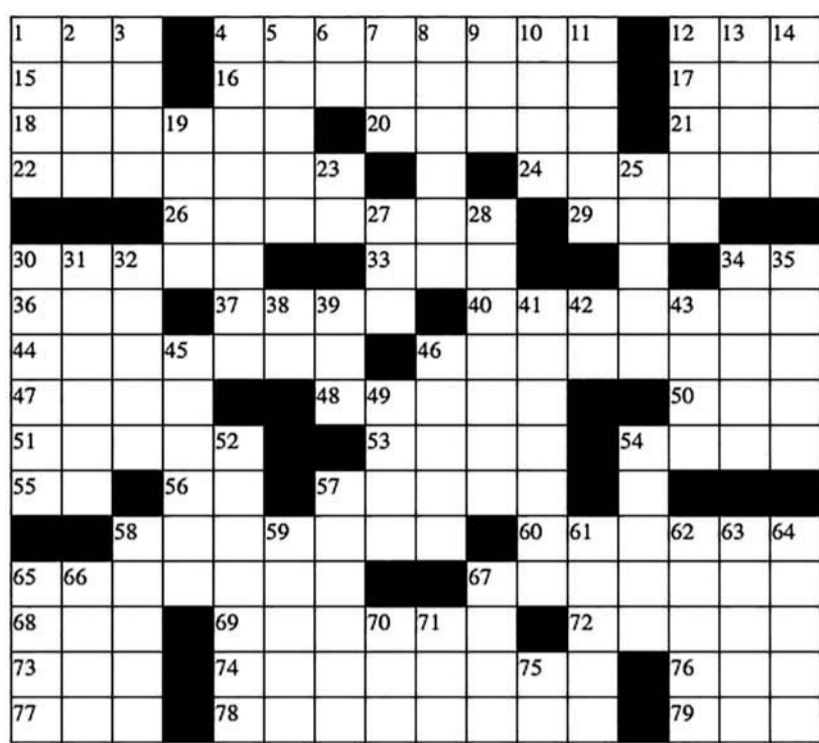
Rushaid explained that the activities included distributing around 50,000 meals, and holding iftar banquets at NBK's tent, Nayef Palace, hospitals and mosques. He also noted that the program included helping 40 needy families, supporting the education of 5,000 students in collaboration with the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS), celebrating girgarian with hospitalized kids, posting Ramadan-related medical tips on social media, posting social media tips on Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFS) personnel health and safety during Ramadan. NBK also cooperated with the voluntary work centers on boosting public awareness concerning safe driving, namely with the approach of iftar time, and mobilized dozens of volunteers to serve worshippers in various mosques, Rushaid added.





Stars

CROSSWORD 1938



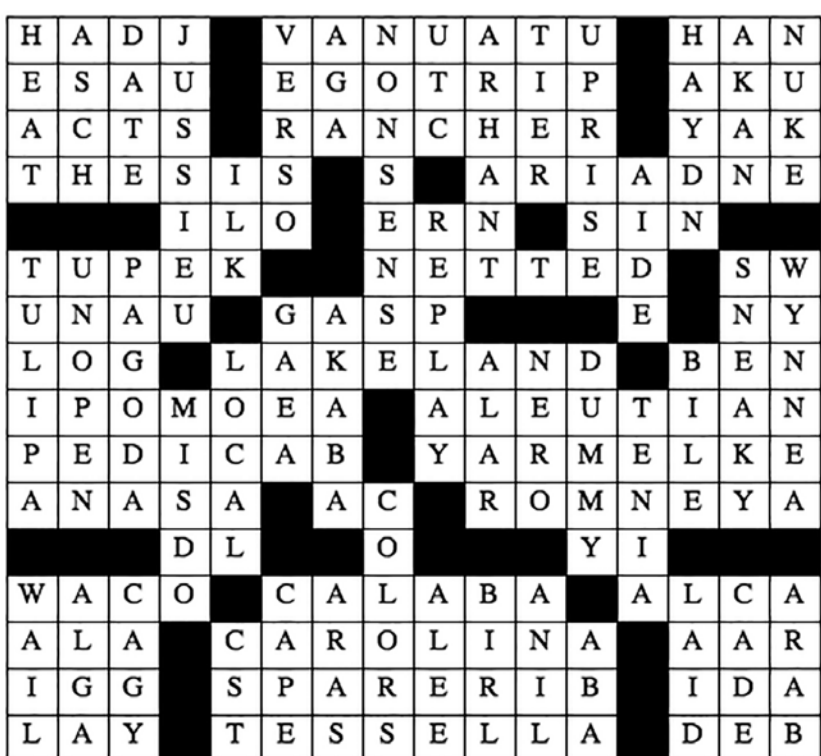
ACROSS

1. The 21st letter of the Greek alphabet.
4. Elegance by virtue of being fashionable.
12. An undergarment worn by women to support their breasts.
15. An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.
16. The amount of electromagnetic radiation leaving or arriving at a point on a surface.
17. The sense organ for hearing and equilibrium.
18. A member of a widespread group of Amerindians living in northeastern South America.
20. Slanderous defamation.
21. How long something has existed.
22. United States anthropologist noted for his studies of culture (1876-1960).
24. A mountainous republic of south-central Europe.
26. A festival featuring African-American culture.
29. The United Nations agency concerned with the international collection of meteorological data.
30. A family of Sino-Tibetan languages spoken in southeastern Asia.
33. An edge tool used to cut and shape wood.
36. A member of a people living in southern Benin and Togo and southeastern Ghana.
37. A narcotic that is considered a hard drug.
40. A city in central Texas.
44. Of or concerning this or that.
47. A three-tone Chadic language.
48. Fishes having large mouths with a wormlike filament attached for luring prey.
50. Someone (especially a woman) who annoys people by constantly finding fault.
51. A city on the River Aire in West Yorkshire in northern England.
53. German tennis player who won seven women's singles titles at Wimbledon (born in 1969).
55. Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).
56. That is to say.
60. The capital and largest city of Zambia.
65. Any expected deliverer.
68. (informal) Of the highest quality.
69. Hard white substance covering the crown of a tooth.
72. A device (trade name Aqua-Lung) that lets divers breathe under water.
73. A hospital unit staffed and equipped to provide intensive care.
74. French revolutionary who was prominent in the early days of the French Revolution (1749-1791).
76. A rapid escape (as by criminals).
77. A doctor's degree in dental medicine.
78. A permanent absence of rainfall.
79. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

1. Of a period of maximal use or demand or activity.
2. A German man.
3. The United Nations agency concerned with civil aviation.
4. (of movement) At an angle.
5. Australian shrubs and small trees with evergreen usually spiny leaves and dense clusters of showy flowers.
6. A state in the Rocky Mountains.
7. An alliance made up of states that had been Soviet Socialist Republics in the Soviet Union prior to its dissolution in Dec 1991.
8. An embroidered rug made from a coarse Indian felt.
9. The compass point midway between northeast and east.
10. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
11. Short-horned dark-coated goat antelope of mountain areas of south and southeast Asia.
12. A game in which numbered balls are drawn and random and players cover the corresponding numbers on their cards.
13. East Indian cereal grass whose seed yield a somewhat bitter flour, a staple in the Orient.
14. A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
19. Flightless New Zealand rail of thievish disposition having short wings each with a spur used in fighting.
23. A radioactive gaseous element formed by the disintegration of radium.
25. Small cold-water silvery fish.
27. An angular shape characterized by sharp turns in alternating directions.
28. An antibiotic (trade name Azactam) used against severe infections.
31. Traveling by wheeled vehicle such as bicycle or automobile e.g..
32. United States industrialist who manufactured plows suitable for working the prairie soil (1804-1886).
34. Make uniform.
35. Grasslike or rushlike plant growing in wet places having solid stems, narrow grasslike leaves and spikelets of inconspicuous flowers.
38. A heavy odorless colorless gas formed during respiration and by the decomposition of organic substances.
39. A federation of North American labor unions that merged with the Congress of Industrial Organizations in 1955.
41. Hardy breed of cattle resulting from crossing domestic cattle with the American buffalo.
42. The sciences concerned with gathering and manipulating and storing and retrieving and classifying recorded information.
43. Bulky grayish-brown eagle with a short wedge-shaped white tail.
45. The length of a line segment between the center and circumference of a circle or sphere.
46. Of a pale yellow color like straw.
49. A cruel wicked and inhuman person.
52. Argentinian carisma.
54. Ratio of the hypotenuse to the opposite side.
57. The Indic language spoken in Bihar (and by some people in Pakistan and Bangladesh).
58. A person who makes deceitful pretenses.
59. (Norse mythology) Race of ancient gods sometimes in conflict with the Aesir.
61. Type genus of Ursidae.
62. Scale-like structure between the base of the wing and the halter of a two-winged fly.
63. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
64. Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.
66. Electronic warfare undertaken to insure effective friendly use of the electromagnetic spectrum in spite of the enemy's use of electronic warfare.
67. To run away.
70. (informal) Roused to anger.
71. The compass point that is one point north of due east.
75. A very poisonous metallic element that has three allotropic forms.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Today may find you in love. A rare feeling of being in love with yourself. This love of self will be quite evident, and you may find that others are drawn to the self-confidence you exude. A day you will find yourself surrounded by others looking to you for advice and leadership. You will be the one that not only everyone wants to be near but the one that everyone wants to be. Someone may even refer to you as someone they refer to as their hero, Aries. Your goals are being accomplished and you are on the right track. Shine on!



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

This could be a good time for a change in your life. You have been seeking answers in regard to making some major changes in your life. Expect these answers to become very clear to you. You may find while mentoring those close to you, the answers to your own questions become very clear. Emotions run high at this time so take a deep breath and keep your composure to avoid an explosive confrontation. You may find this to be a near impossible task as you are highly emotional at this time. A change of focus could help things go more smoothly as this is a very productive time for you in the workplace. Pour your energy into a current project at work and turn this into a win-win situation for yourself.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

This may be a time of change for you. You may be considering a change in your living situation or a change in your lifestyle overall. How you handle and organize your personal life shines a positive light on you in the work place. Those close to you admire your ability to face adversity and come out on top. This alone may be what puts you in a position to be chosen for a project at work that requires a more conservative approach. Your life seems to be structured and organized you are demonstrating great levels of self-control. This self-control will play a great financial role in your life today as you may be tempted to make an extravagant purchase based on the mere fact you may be drawn in by the glamor of your surroundings.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You find yourself happy with where you are emotionally. You find it is time to get yourself to the same level physically. Diet and exercise play a big role in your life now. These physical changes you are making will attribute to an improved self-image. This will help in all aspects in your life and may lead to a new love interest. This stay will find you very peaceful. You are looking forward to what your new lifestyle has to bring. This has been something you have known you needed to do but your mindset at this time is leading you to take the step and make the move. Stick to the plan, Cancer, you will reap great rewards.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Now is the time to focus on turning your dreams into reality. You know exactly where you want to be and what you want out of life. Your focus is strong, and your determination is stronger. You are a force to be reckoned with. There is no place for anyone nor anything that appears to stand in your way. You may experience recognition for a group project and your ability to identify the strengths of those involved and delegate responsibility to complete this project. Your timing seems perfect to those around you. You are quick to offer solutions to everyone who seeks your advice and are admired for your drive and determination.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

This is a great time to surround yourself with others. You may feel as if you are center of attention. All eyes are on you and you feel as though much praise and appreciation are being directed toward you. You are understanding and very sensitive when it comes to others and you know how to make them feel good. You may find yourself being offered a management position as these qualities are not only noticed by loved ones but also in the workplace. You are a natural born leader and make it easy for people to like you. Virgo, you have worked hard, and the rewards are forthcoming.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You have developed a strong sense of who you are. Lots of thought and meditation may have led you to this point but you have learned to love and admire yourself. This begins a time of the ability to truly love and appreciate those around you. You have developed an understanding and of what led you to this point in your life. You are learning when faced with adversity to look at this in a positive light as one more lesson to be learned rather than feeling beat down or defeated. You are well on your way to conquering your emotions and experiencing a whole new level of self-control.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You may feel like taking a chance today. Stepping out of your comfort zone could bring great reward your way. You may feel drawn to surround yourself with those closest to you. Spending time with family, children, or lovers will satisfy a great need to be admired and appreciated today. Expect great conversations with those you love, and peace and happiness should come very naturally today.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Today may find you a bit at odds with others. Keep your nose clean and hold your tongue. You may find that your thoughts may not quite align with your feelings and could find yourself at odds with others if you are not careful. You may find yourself the object of much admiration in the workplace today. Others appreciate your ability to make practical decisions. You find yourself able to make clear decisions concerning others at this time. You may find that that through reflection and a bit of time to yourself that you truly appreciate where you are in life and find yourself being very kind to those around you.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

In general you are looked at as a natural born leader. Today is no different. You may be asked to lead a project in the workplace. You will be great for the job. You also may find yourself being looked at as a mentor for someone younger. They look up to you and seek your advice on a very personal level. Today also may bring you answers you have been seeking in regard to the direction of your own life.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Today is a great day to clean out that closet or organize that cabinet. You may be in the mood to declutter and organize. The includes mental and physical aspects of your world. It may be a time you find it necessary to bite your tongue. Be sure and think before you speak to prevent yourself from offending someone today. This may be harder than you think. You find yourself being leaned upon for emotional support or someone may confide some very personal issues with you. You are sympathetic and very compassionate with those you care about and today you may find satisfaction in being able to make a difference in someone's life.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

This is a great time of reflection for you. Understanding who you are and how your life experiences have affected you and molded your life along the way will help you organize your thoughts and feelings. This may make you realize not only where you went wrong along the way, but which decisions were absolutely the best possible choices you have made. You are in a good place career wise and in your personal life and things are looking up for you in the areas of growth and expansion. This day may find you very appreciative of where you are in life and have you beaming with pride. Pisces, your mind should be clear and now is a great time to make decisions regarding yourself and others.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Real Estate 1

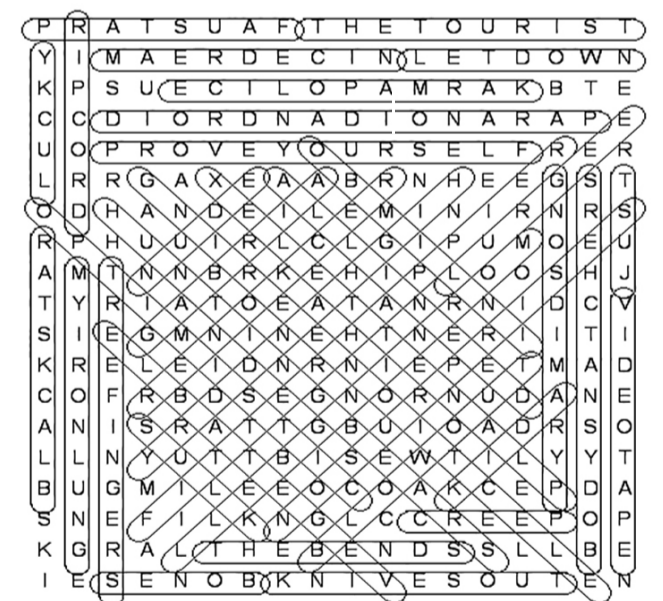
Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 22 letters spell a common Real Estate phrase.



- |              |              |              |                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| AGENT        | CONTRACT     | INTERIOR     | REALTOR        |
| AMORTIZATION | CREDITOR     | LAND         | SELL           |
| APPRAISAL    | DEED         | LAWYER       | SKYSCRAPER     |
| ASSESSMENT   | DEPOSIT      | LENDER       | SOLD           |
| ASSET        | DEPRECIATION | LIEN         | SQUARE FOOTAGE |
| BUILDING     | DUPLEX       | LOAN         | TAXES          |
| BUNGALOW     | EXTERIOR     | LOFT         | TIMESHARE      |
| BUYING       | FLIPPING     | MARKET VALUE | TOUR           |
| CLOSER       | FOR SALE     | OFFER        | TRIPLEX        |
| COLLATERAL   | HOUSE        | PAYMENT      | VACANCY        |
| CONDEMNED    | INSPECTOR    | PLOT         | VALUATION      |
| CONDO        | INSURANCE    | PROPERTY     | ZONE           |

Yesterday's Solution

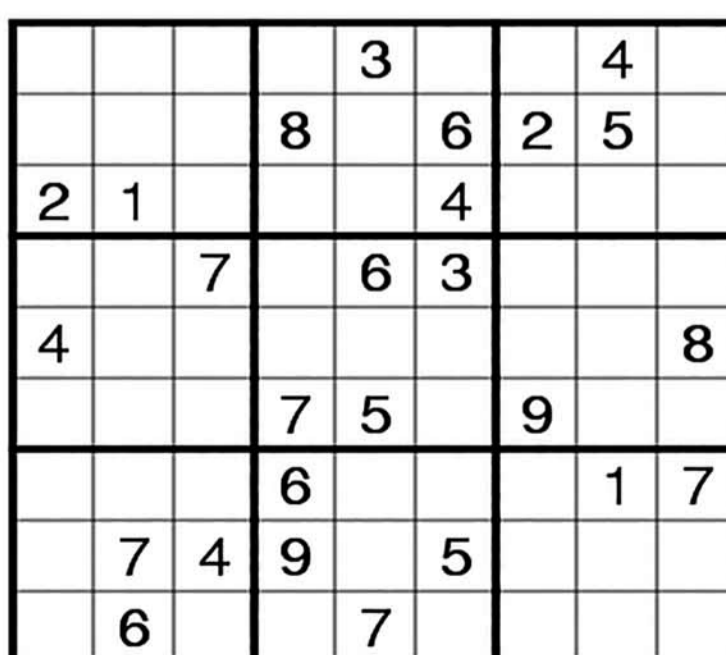
Radiohead Songs



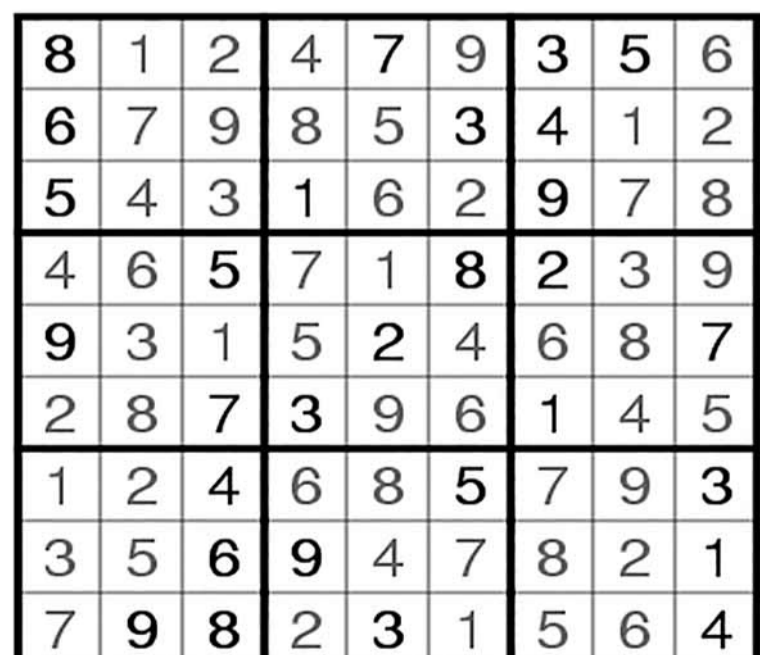
- |                |               |                  |              |
|----------------|---------------|------------------|--------------|
| AIRBAG         | HIGH AND DRY  | MORNING BELL     | PYRAMID SONG |
| ALL I NEED     | HUNTING BEARS | MY IRON LUNG     | RECKONER     |
| BLACK STAR     | IN LIMBO      | NICE DREAM       | RICORD       |
| BLOW OUT       | JUST          | NO SURPRISES     | SULK         |
| BODYSNATCHERS  | KARMA POLICE  | NUDE             | THE BENDS    |
| BONES          | KID A         | OPTIMISTIC       | THE TOURIST  |
| CREEP          | KNIVES OUT    | PARANOID ANDROID | TREEFINGERS  |
| ELECTIONEERING | LET DOWN      | PLANET TELEX     | VEGETABLE    |
| FAUST ARP      | LUCKY         | PROVE YOURSELF   | VIDEOTAPE    |
| FITTER HAPPIER | LURGEE        |                  |              |

The hidden song is: SUBTERRANEAN HOMESICK ALIEN

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution





# Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20, 2018



This photo shows an image of a 'thousand-hand Bodhisattva' created using different varieties of rice in a paddy in Shenyang in China's northeast Liaoning province. — AFP

## Chart-topping rapper XXXTentacion shot dead at 20

XXXTentacion, the troubled 20-year-old rapper whose grim, often suicidal rhymes propelled him to the top of the US chart just months ago, was shot dead Monday in Florida in a possible robbery, authorities said. The rapper, whose lyrics were filled with insecurity and his real life marred by violence, was gunned down in broad daylight near a motorcycle store in Deerfield Beach north of Miami, the Broward County sheriff's department said. The artist whose real name was Jahseh Onfroy was pronounced dead at a nearby hospital. He becomes one of the biggest names in hip-hop to be killed in recent years after a slew of targeted slayings in the 1990s.

The rapper, who was born and lived nearby, was leaving the Riva Motorsports store when two armed suspects approached him, with at least one opening fire, the sheriff's department said. The pair raced off in a dark SUV and are wanted by authorities, it said. "Investigators say it appears to be a possible robbery," the sheriff's department said in a statement. The celebrity news site TMZ, which first reported the shooting, said that the two suspects snatched a Louis Vuitton bag from the rapper's vehicle.

### 'Look at Me!'

Sporting spiked-up dreadlocks and often covering his face with a black-and-white mas-



In this 2017 arrest photo made available by the Miami Dade Dept of Corrections shows Jahseh Onfroy, also known as the rapper XXXTentacion, under arrest. — AP photos



Investigators surround a vehicle after rapper XXXTentacion was shot in Deerfield Beach, Fla.

querade mask, XXXTentacion rose suddenly to fame more than a year after putting out the song "Look at Me!" on the sharing site SoundCloud. The rapper—his stage-name alludes to the unknown, pornography and the Spanish word for "temptation"—sampled alternative rock and reggaeton in his dark, often muffled style of hip-hop full of depressive lyricism. Without any traditional sort of promotion, his second album, entitled "?," debuted at the top of the Billboard album chart in March.

XXXTentacion's success triggered controversy due to a past that is violent even by the standards of the rap world. Around the time of his latest album's release, he was being released from house arrest as he awaits trial on charges of beating his pregnant ex-girlfriend. But his music found a critical following. Kendrick Lamar, one of the most influential figures in hip-hop, heaped praise last year on XXXTentacion's debut album "17" in which he found a unique rawness. Kanye West mourned XXXTentacion on Twitter, writing: "I never told you how much you inspired me when you were here." "Jocelyn Flores," the best-known track off "17," described XXXTentacion's despair over the suicide of a friend. "Sad!" a more melodious but equally bleak track off his latest album, delves into his anxieties with women as he raps. "Suicide if you ever try to let go / I'm sad, I know / Yeah, I'm sad, I know."

### Backlash over abuse

While winning fans, XXXTentacion faced a

backlash by critics who said that his alleged mistreatment of women should be a career-stopper in an age that the #MeToo movement is demanding higher standards from men. Spotify last month singled out XXXTentacion as part of a policy not to promote songs by artists known for "harmful or hateful" behavior, but the leading streaming service backed down after charges that it had overstepped its role. His former girlfriend, in an interview published earlier this month with the Miami New Times, said that the emerging star subjected her to a summer of abuse in 2016 that included physical attacks every three or four days, along with threats of grisly sexual violence.

Shortly after a pregnancy test came out positive, the then girlfriend said that the rapper beat her for 15 minutes, injuring her so badly that she lost vision and vomited. The rapper, who was expelled from middle school for hitting a classmate and whose mother kicked him out of home, has also been implicated in other violent incidents, including stabbing his manager and brawling with audience members in concert. XXXTentacion frequently referenced his real life in his verse. The song "Revenge" appears to address his ex-girlfriend as he rapped, "I've dug two graves for us, my dear," and concluded, "In my grave, I'll rot." — AFP

## Artist Christo launches 7,500 floating barrels in London

The artist Christo on Monday unveiled 7,506 coloured barrels floating on a lake in central London, a puzzling installation designed to stimulate debate as much as the senses. "The London Mastaba" on the Serpentine in Hyde Park, a trapezium-shaped work weighing 600 tons, was launched with an air of mystery by the Bulgarian-born US artist. Twenty meters high, 30 meters wide and 40 meters long, some may see the metal barrels and wonder if there is an environmental message, thinking of barrels of oil in the heart of one of London's green lungs. Visible from several hundred meters away, others will see a prism, giant pixels, or a simple geometric creation.

However, the work is open to all interpretations and comes with no message attached, said its 83-year-old creator. "There are no messages: there is something in it to discover yourself. I cannot direct you. You should develop your senses," he said. Christo is known for his contemporary artworks including "The Pont Neuf Wrapped" (1985), which involved wrapping the oldest bridge in Paris in polyamide fabric, and "Wrapped Reichstag" (1995), a similar project on the parliament in Berlin. "It's created an enormous invitation, like a stairway to the sky," said the artist, on the banks of the lake popular with swans, ducks and tourists on pedalos.

Christo's first major open-air art installation in Britain is in the shape of a mastaba, a type of ancient Egyptian tomb. The floating platform is held in

place with anchors. Red with a white candy stripe on the sides, and blue, mauve and red on the ends, the barrels are a striking contrast with the lakeside surroundings. "The colors will transform with the changes in the light and its reflection on the Serpentine lake will be like an abstract painting," said Christo.

### 'What in the world does it mean?'

The artist has long appreciated the low cost and aesthetic appeal of working with barrels. In 1962, having fled communist Bulgaria, he blocked off a Paris street with a wall of them, in response to the Berlin Wall. More recently, he created a wall of 13,000 barrels in Oberhausen in Germany. Construction on "The London Mastaba", financed by the artist himself, started on April 3. It will stay in place until September 23, when it will be taken down and recycled.

The artwork is already drawing astonished reactions in Hyde Park. "It's very modern, but this place is nature and historical. I don't like it here," said Turkish tourist Yasmin Koc Ozcengel, 46. Another onlooker, Anna Andronova, said: "It's good because if it was less brave in its shape and volume it would be less stunning." Sheila Steffenson, 58, an American living in London, said: "I'm sitting here pondering what in the world does it mean... if it means anything. I'm just not really sure how I feel about it. Maybe it's a message about pollution. Who knows?" — AFP



Bulgarian artist Christo Vladimirov Javacheff, better known as 'Christo', poses for a photograph as he unveils his artwork, 'The Mastaba' on the Serpentine lake in Hyde Park in London. — AFP





Actor Chadwick Boseman accepts the Best Hero award for 'Black Panther' onstage during the 2018 MTV Movie And TV Awards at Barker Hangar in Santa Monica, California.



(From left) Actors Finn Wolfhard, Noah Schnapp, Sadie Sink and Gaten Matarazzo attending the 2018 MTV Movie & TV awards, at the Barker Hangar in Santa Monica.



Actor and show host Tiffany Haddish accepts the Best Comedic Performance award for 'Girls Trip' onstage.



Host Tiffany Haddish performs onstage.— AFP photos

# 'BLACK PANTHER' STAR HONORS REAL-LIFE HERO AT MTV AWARDS

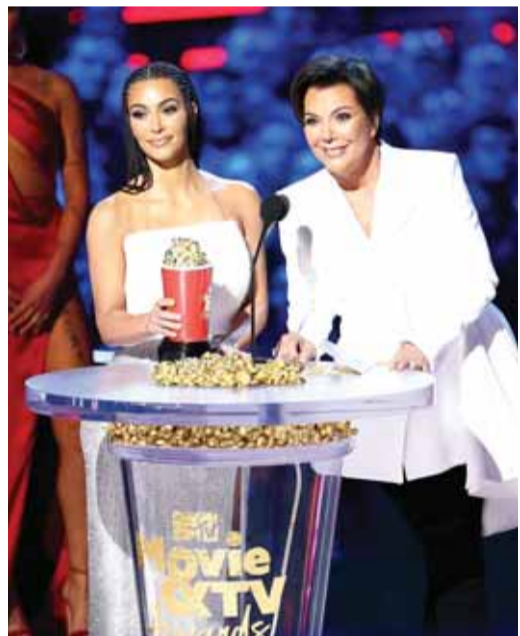


Actor Madelaine Petsch accepts the Scene Stealer award for 'Riverdale'.



Singer/actor Lady Gaga speaks onstage.

Landmark blockbuster "Black Panther" and nostalgic horror sensation "Stranger Things" shared the spoils Monday with a real-life hero at the MTV Movie and TV Awards. Marvel's "Black Panther" racked up four awards, including best movie. Its star, Chadwick Boseman, won best hero and best movie performance while his nemesis Michael B Jordan was named best villain. Boseman, 40, got his hero statuette from presenters Olivia Munn and Zazie Beetz and promptly gave it to James Shaw Jr., the man who stopped a mass shooter at a Tennessee Waffle House.



Kim Kardashian and Kris Jenner accept Best Reality Series/Franchise for 'Keeping Up with the Kardashians' onstage.

"Receiving an award for playing a superhero is amazing but it's even greater to acknowledge the heroes that we have in real life," Boseman said. He beckoned the 29-year-old on stage and led the crowd in a standing ovation. "If you don't know

James Shaw Jr., he fought off a gunman in Antioch, Tennessee, at a Waffle House. He saved lives," he said. Shaw singlehandedly wrestled the AR-15 semi-automatic rifle from the hands of Travis Reinking as he was allegedly reloading in the middle of a shooting rampage in April.

Four people were killed and two others wounded at the Waffle House restaurant in Nashville, America's country music capital. But Shaw has been credited with saving many more lives. He suffered a graze wound from a bullet and burns on his right hand from grabbing the hot barrel of the gun. He was hailed as a hero by the survivors and their family members, but has repeatedly has rejected the label, saying he acted for reasons of self-preservation. For the second year running, Netflix hit "Stranger Things" took best show and best actor in a show for Millie Bobby Brown. Noah Schnapp picked up best frightened performance.

Tiffany Haddish hosted, capping her night with the award for best comedic performance for "Girls Trip" while "scene stealer" went to Madelaine Petsch as Cheryl Blossom in The CW's teen drama series "Riverdale." The MTV Movie and TV Awards have been taking a sideways look at Hollywood since 1992, honoring films and their actors with "golden popcorn" statuettes. The nominees are decided by producers and MTV executives, while the winners are chosen by the public, who vote online. As a result, the awards have historically recognized commercial favorites, in contrast to the Oscars and other events based on critical or industry acclaim.

MTV reverted to pre-recording the show, filmed on Saturday in a cavernous hangar at Santa Monica Airport in southern California, after broadcasting live last year. For the second year running, the prize-giving dispensed with gender distinctions in the categories, and awarded best kiss to a same-sex embrace. Nick Robinson and Keiynan Lonsdale played two American teenagers struggling with their sexuality in "Love, Simon," which is also nominated for August's Teen Choice Awards. —AFP



Host Tiffany Haddish speaks onstage.



Kim Kardashian and Kris Jenner



Actor Keiynan Lonsdale



Actors Lakeith Stanfield and Tessa Thompson speak onstage.



Actor Michael B Jordan accepts the Best Villain award for 'Black Panther' onstage.



(From left) Actors Camila Mendes, Madelaine Petsch and Lili Reinhart speak onstage.



Host Tiffany Haddish speaks onstage.



(From left) Actors Alisha Boe, Dylan Minnette, Katherine Langford, and Miles Heizer speak onstage.



Actor/writer Lena Waithe accepts the MTV Trailblazer Award onstage.



Actors Mandy Moore and Amandla Stenberg speak onstage.



Lifestyle | Music & Movies



US actor Chris Pratt



Actor Katherine Langford



Singers Chloe x Halle perform onstage.

Winners

- MOVIE OF THE YEAR:** "Black Panther"
- SHOW OF THE YEAR:** "Stranger Things"
- BEST ACTOR IN A MOVIE:** Chadwick Boseman - "Black Panther"
- BEST ACTOR IN A SHOW:** Millie Bobby Brown - "Stranger Things"
- BEST HERO:** Chadwick Boseman (T'Challa/Black Panther) - "Black Panther"
- BEST VILLAIN:** Michael B Jordan (N'Jadaka/Erik Killmonger) - "Black Panther"
- BEST KISS:** Nick Robinson (Simon) and Keiynan Lonsdale (Bram) - "Love, Simon"
- MOST FRIGHTENED PERFORMANCE:** Noah Schnapp (Will Byers) - "Stranger Things"
- BEST ON-SCREEN TEAM:** "It" - Finn Wolfhard (Richie), Sophia Lillis (Beverly), Jaeden Lieberher (Bill), Jack Dylan Grazer (Eddie), Wyatt Oleff (Stanley), Jeremy Ray Taylor (Ben), Chosen Jacobs (Mike)
- BEST COMEDIC PERFORMANCE:** Tiffany Haddish - "Girls Trip"
- SCENE STEALER:** Madelaine Petsch (Cheryl Blossom) - "Riverdale"
- BEST FIGHT:** "Wonder Woman" - Gal Gadot (Wonder Woman) vs German soldiers
- BEST MUSIC DOCUMENTARY:** "Gaga: Five Foot Two"
- BEST REALITY SERIES/FRANCHISE:** "The Kardashians"



Actors Michael B. Jordan and Mila Kunis speak onstage.



Ulya, mother of 28-year-old Turkish rapper 'Ezhe1' whose real name is Omar Sercan Ipekcioglu, waves after he was released yesterday in front of the Anadolu courthouse in Istanbul. — AFP

## Turkish rapper **Ezhe1** acquitted on first day of drugs trial

An Istanbul court yesterday acquitted a popular Turkish rapper who faced up to 10 years in jail on charges of encouraging drug use, activists and lawyers said, on the first day of a trial that had sparked widespread alarm. Ezhe1, 28, whose real name is Omer Sercan Ipekcioglu, was accused of inciting cannabis use through social media postings as well as song lyrics. He was arrested late last month in Istanbul by anti-narcotics police and his case was seen by rights groups as an example of declining freedom of expression under President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The judge ruled that Ezhe1 had not committed any crime intentionally and ordered him to be acquitted and released immediately. He was due to walk free from the

prison, where he has been held the last three weeks, in the next hours. "We got an acquittal. We can say that justice has been done," the Media and Law Studies Association (MLSA) freedom of speech group, which has followed the case, quoted his lawyer Fuat Ekin as saying. Reports said that he was acquitted within just nine minutes of the trial opening. The Ankara-born songwriter caught public attention with the release of his debut album "Muptezhe1" last year. His music carries the influence of stars like Eminem and 50 Cent. His songs have been viewed millions of times online. — AFP

## 'Incredibles 2' makes heroic N America box office debut

"Incredibles 2," the long-awaited return of a quirky animated superhero family from Disney-Pixar, reigned supreme at the North American box office, raking in a record \$182.7 million in its debut, data showed Monday. It was the highest ever opening for an animated film, easily besting the \$135 million debut of its Pixar stablemate, "Finding Dory" (2016). The sequel picks up the story of the Parr family as matriarch Helen (Holly Hunter) is called upon to help bring the world's hiding superheroes back into the open, and husband Bob (Craig T. Nelson) navigates the day-to-day work of being a homemaker.

Their children Violet (Sarah Vowell) and Dash (Huck Milner) are back again, along with baby Jack-Jack, whose devastating super powers are about to be unleashed. In second place was female heist flick "Ocean's 8," which followed up on a big opening by earning \$19 million in its second week, according to US box office monitor Exhibitor Relations. With an all-star cast led by Sandra Bullock and supported by Cate Blanchett, Anne Hathaway, Helena Bonham Carter, Mindy Kaling and Rihanna, the Warner Bros sequel was Hollywood's latest experiment—after "Ghostbusters" in replacing an all-male cast with female stars. The film

stars Bullock as Debbie Ocean, sister of Danny Ocean (originally played by George Clooney), as she assembles a gang of talented women to plan a seemingly impossible diamond heist from the Met Gala in New York.

Adult comedy "Tag" opened in third place at \$14.9 million. It tells the story of childhood pals (led by Jon Hamm and Jeremy Renner) who keep up a game of cross-country tag for decades, sometimes playing at the oddest of moments. Fourth place went to "Solo: A Star Wars Story," starring Alden Ehrenreich as a young version of the swashbuckling space pilot first played by Harrison Ford. The Disney film took in \$10 million. Fifth place went to R-rated superhero flick "Deadpool 2," with \$8.7 million. Rounding out the top 5 were:

- "Superfly" (\$6.87 million)
- "Hereditary" (\$6.86 million)
- "Avengers: Infinity War" (\$5.4 million)
- "Adrift" (\$2.2 million)
- "Book Club" (\$1.8 million)—AFP



## Paul McCartney turns 76 and teases 'Egypt Station'

Paul McCartney on Monday teased news of "Egypt Station"—presumed to be the title of his next album—as the former Beatle celebrated his 76th birthday. The rock legend on social media released a video of the Pyramids and palm trees swaying in the wind on a sand-colored background set to snippet of ambient music mixed with vehicular traffic. McCartney and his label did not provide further details but speculation immediately grew that he was ready with his next album, which would be his first of new material since 2013.

While McCartney is more known for an interest in India than Egypt, a 1999 painting by the musician and artist was entitled "Egypt Station" and depicted sunflowers and animals under a blue sky. McCartney, who toyed with retirement following the end of The Beatles more than 40 years ago, has shown a burst of energy as a septuagenarian and toured the world for much of 2016 and

2017. In an online fan forum during the latest winter holidays, McCartney said he was putting "finishing touches" on a new album that would likely come out in 2018.

He earlier revealed that he was working on music with Greg Kurstin, the in-demand Los Angeles producer best known for co-writing Adele's mega-ballad "Hello." Despite his stamina, McCartney told Rolling Stone magazine two years ago that it would be "unimaginable—and unseemly" to keep performing when he is 80. The now 76-year-old has also said that he has stopped drinking before concerts so as not to forget his lyrics, instead waiting until after the show to imbibe. — AFP



## Man who drove into concert-goers not a terrorist

A 34-year-old Dutchman who on Monday drove his delivery van into a group of concert-goers, killing one and critically injuring three others, had no terrorist motive, prosecutors said yesterday. The van driver turned himself in on Monday, hours after he hit the visitors to the Pinkpop music festival in the south of the Netherlands.

The white van struck the concert-goers on a street surrounding one of the festival's camping grounds at around 4 am, hours after the headline act, R&B artist Bruno Mars, had performed in front of 70,000 people. Eyewitnesses told Dutch media that they had seen a small group of people sitting in the road shortly before the incident. — Reuters



## Lifestyle | Features



A boy leans on the back of a crocodile at a pond in Bazoule in Burkina Faso, a village which happily shares its local pond with 'sacred' crocodiles. — AFP photos



A boy sits on the back of a crocodile.



A crocodile is fed with a dead chicken attached to a pole at a pond in Bazoule in Burkina Faso, a village which happily shares its local pond with 'sacred' crocodiles.

## Sacred snappers: The village where crocodiles are welcome

Crocodiles may be one of the deadliest hunters in the animal kingdom, but in a small village in Burkina Faso it is not unusual to see someone sitting atop one of the fearsome reptiles. People in Bazoule, around 30 kilometers (20 miles) from the capital Ouagadougou, share their pond with more than 100 of the razor-toothed creatures. "We got used to the crocodiles when we were young, swimming in the water with them and all that," said Pierre Kabore, just a few meters (yards) away from a crocodile feasting on chicken provided by the village. "Now we can always approach them and sit on them—and if you have the courage, you can lie on them too. There's no problem, they are sacred crocodiles. They don't do anything to anyone."

According to local legend, the startling relationship

with the predators dates back to at least the 15th century. The village was in the grip of an agonizing drought until the crocodiles led women to a hidden pond where the population could slake their thirst. "The villagers organized a party to celebrate and thank the reptiles," Kabore said. A celebration known as Koom Lakre is still held every year during which villagers make sacrifices and ask the animals to grant their wishes of health, prosperity and a good harvest. Far from being considered a threat, the crocodiles are deemed to have a mystical connection with Bazoule. "Crocodiles are represented as the soul of our ancestors and if one of them dies, they are buried and even given a funeral as if they were human," said Kabore. "When a misfortune is about to happen in the village, they cry out. Elders are charged with interpreting the cries, and

then make wishes to ward off bad luck."

## Tourism attraction

The unusual contact between man and croc has drawn disbelieving tourists to the village to see for themselves. On their arrival, travellers can buy a chicken which is hung on a stick by a guide and used to entice the crocodiles out of the pond so that visitors can pose with the creatures. "It was nice to watch from a distance but sitting on one was a bit freaky," said Thomas Baspin, a young Frenchman who came to visit his grandparents in Burkina Faso.

"I'm glad I did it—but I'm also glad it's over!" he quipped. Tourism has become a big money-spinner for the impoverished villagers, but a three-year-old jihadist insurgency in Burkina Faso is taking its toll. Ouagadougou has

come under attack three times, most recently in March, when jihadists attacked the military headquarters and French embassy. "We could have more than 10,000 visitors per year but at the moment, there's no more than 4,000 or 5,000," said Raphael Kabore, one of the guides. Global warming is also believed to be having an impact. Rainfall levels are down each year, and the famous pond that is the crocodiles' home is shrinking. When it disappears, will the reptiles once more guide their human friends to a new watery home?—AFP



Models present creations by Prada during the men & women's spring/summer 2019 collection fashion show in Milan.

## Prada redefines youthful elegance with psychedelic flair

Youthful designers injected energy into the third day Sunday of Milan Fashion Week menswear previews for next spring and summer. While the topics of generational and creative change at some of the most-established Milan fashion houses were running in the background, young brands carved out their own space to grow by their own rules.

Some highlights from Sunday's shows, including Milan mainstay Prada alongside younger brands MSGM.

Miuccia Prada says she was "trying to do elegant in a new young way" with her latest menswear collection. At Prada, young does not translate to streetwear, even if there were sneakers. The new plastic square logo on nearly every garment, including the folded turtle neck, was strictly an ironic answer to prevailing trends.

Against previous intentions, elegant at Prada translated into sexy - i.e. short shorts for men - and at times playful - big stuffed aviator hats made for summer despite the decidedly wintery earflaps, mostly in Prada's trademark black vinyl. "I never pronounced sexy in my life. I never wanted Prada to be sexy," but willingly embraced the notion as the rest of the fashion world seemed to resist sexiness in favor of boxy street looks, the designer said.

"You know I am a bit of a contrarian," she said. The looks amounted to basic mix and match, layer or not: Straight trousers, turtle necks, shirts and jackets, and the short-shorts, which Prada called "a miniskirt" for men. Materials included denim and suede. The colors were mostly neutrals.

There was a slightly psychedelic feel to daisy print shirts and fantastic scenes that conjured the animated film version of the Beatles' "Yellow Submarine." Underlining

the message, Prada stripped the showroom bare, put clear plastic sheets on the wall and sat guests on inflatable clear cubes. "Sometimes, it is good to go back to simple things," she said.

## Vitamin injection at MSGM

Massimo Giorgetti's MSGM collection for next spring and summer recalls his youthful 1980s summers in his native Adriatic coastal city of Rimini, a time, the designer said, when the beach crowds never abandoned their fashion sense. And Giorgetti paid homage to classic looks of his adopted home in Milan, where he launched his MSGM brand eight years ago. Giorgetti said he wanted to emphasize his Italian roots while also injecting a dose of 1980s energy. "It's a show that recharges you," Giorgetti said backstage.

The 41-year-old designer made the point quite literally, imitating colorful graphic logos from well-known Italian vitamin brands with the MSGM Milano logo on silky button-down shirts. There was a plethora of 1980s neon colors, bright florals and prints - from Manga volley-ball playing characters to Roger Minick photographs of tourists. Rimini is celebrated in slouchy knitwear with the city's name in rainbow colors, worn with striped denim shorts layered over longer boxers. But also in the tangerine shorts and lime green swimming briefs. For Milan, there were tie-dye knits over colorful print thigh-baring shorts, jeans and color-block hoodies, and pin-striped suits with palm tree shadows and the band logo on the back. — AP



Models present creations by MSGM.



Models present creations by MSGM.



# Classifieds

Wednesday, June 20, 2018



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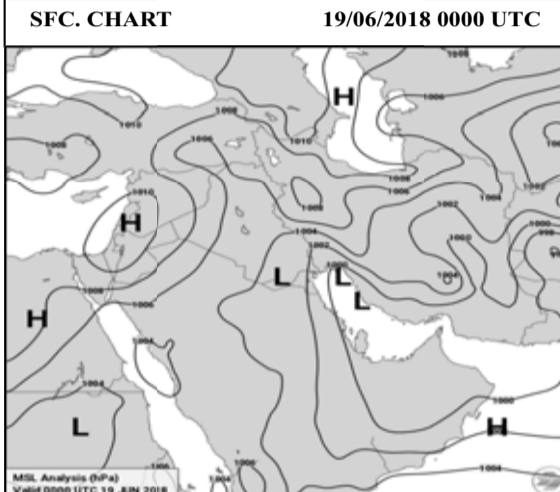
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## Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

**BY DAY:** Hot with moderate to fresh north westerly wind, with speed of 25 - 50 km/h causing rising dust.

**BY NIGHT:** Relatively hot with light to moderate freshening over coastal areas north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 45 km/h.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings		
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 19/06/2018 0000 UTC		
KUWAIT CITY	45 °C	33 °C			
KUWAIT AIRPORT	46 °C	34 °C			
ABDALY	46 °C	30 °C			
BUBYAN	--- °C	--- °C			
JAHRA	47 °C	33 °C			
FAILAKA ISLAND	44 °C	31 °C			
SALMIYAH	40 °C	33 °C			
AHMADI	44 °C	35 °C			
NUWAISIB	46 °C	32 °C			
WAFRA	46 °C	33 °C			
SALMY	45 °C	30 °C			

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Wednesday	06/20	Hot and Dusty	45 °C	35 °C	NW	30 - 70 km/h
Thursday	06/21	Hot and Dusty	44 °C	36 °C	NW	30 - 60 km/h
Friday	06/22	Hot and causing rising dust	43 °C	33 °C	NW	25 - 50 km/h
Saturday	06/23	Hot and causing rising dust	42 °C	33 °C	NW	20 - 45 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	03:13
Sunrise	04:49
Zuhr	11:49
Asr	15:23
Sunset	18:50
Isha	20:22

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	46 °C
MIN. Temp.	35 °C
MAX. RH	24 %
MIN. RH	09 %
MAX. Wind	N 60 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
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Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401

## REQUIRED

A leading MEP company is employing senior qualified and approved personal in following professions:

- 1- Projects Managers (HVAC, PL/FF, Elec).
- 2- Projects Engineers (HVAC, PL/FF, Elec).
- 3- Service & Maintenance Manager / Engineer (HVAC).
- 4- QA/QC Engineer / Personnel (Mechanical).
- 5- Supervisors (HVAC, PL/FF, Elec).
- 6- Document Controls / Secretary.
- 7- Store keeper / Purchasing.
- 8- Time keeper.
- 9- AUTOCAD / BIM Draftsman (Mech - Elec).
- 10- Accountant.
- 11- Administrative / H.R Manager.

### Notes:

- 1- Membership of Kuwait Society of Engineering for engineers is a must.
- 2- Bi-lingual is preferable.
- 3- Ages: 30 - 45 years.
- 4- Driving car (KWT Driving license).
- 5- Transferable Residence.

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I, Amrinder Pal Singh, S/o Bhopinder Singh, holder of Indian Passport No: J2268928 & Civil ID No: 285081606515, hereby change my name to Amrinder Pal Singh Dadyal for all future purpose.  
(C 5400)

I, Inacinha Fernandes Barreto, daughter of Angelo Fernandes, holder of Indian Passport No: M4642005 & Civil ID No: 25801200404, hereby change my name to Inacinha Fernandes hereafter in all my dealings and documents.  
(C 5401)  
13-6-2018

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## DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION



Arrival Flights on Wednesday 20/6/2018				Departure Flights on Wednesday 20/6/2018			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
MSC	405	Sohag	00:05	JZR	779	Jeddah	13:45
JZR	513	Sharm el-Sheikh	00:10	QTR	1078	Doha	13:50
THY	772	Istanbul	00:15	KNE	231	Dubai	13:55
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	KAC	618	Doha	14:10
KAC	102	London	00:50	GFA	221	Riyadh	14:10
JZR	539	Cairo	01:00	SVA	500	Doha	14:15
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	JZR	125	Bahrain	14:15
MSR	618	Alexandria	01:35	FDB	059	Dubai	14:20
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	KAC	364	Colombo	14:20
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	KAC	286	Dhaka	14:25
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	KAC	512	Mashhad	14:25
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:00	JZR	751	Madinah	14:30
JZR	267	Beirut	02:10	KAC	788	Jeddah	14:50
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	KAC	304	Mumbai	15:05
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:05
AEE	956	ATH	02:25	KAC	412	Bangkok	15:10
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30	KNE	529	Jeddah	15:10
THY	768	Istanbul	02:40	OMA	645	Muscat	15:20
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	KAC	562	Amman	15:20
THY	1404	AYT	02:45	KAC	502	Beirut	15:35
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	UAE	857	Dubai	15:45
RJA	648	Amman	03:05	SVA	504	Madinah	15:55
RBG	215	Sohag	03:05	SAW	705	Damascus	16:00
KAC	418	Manila	03:05	JZR	535	Cairo	16:10
KAC	382	Delhi	03:10	MSR	575	Sharm el-Sheikh	16:10
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	QTR	1072	Doha	16:15
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:25	KAC	118	New York	16:20
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	FDB	051	Dubai	16:20
KAC	796	Madinah	03:45	WAN	416	Beirut	16:25
JAI	572	Mumbai	04:00	NIA	361	Alexandria	16:50
KAC	544	Cairo	04:25	KAC	542	Cairo	17:00
JZR	609	Hyderabad	04:30	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30
JZR	1541	Cairo	04:35	JZR	777	Jeddah	17:35
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	JZR	145	Doha	17:35
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	JZR	177	Dubai	17:40
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	WAN	104	Baku	17:40
JZR	603	Mumbai	05:25	QTR	1080	Doha	18:10
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	JZR	483	Istanbul	18:20
KAC	154	Istanbul	05:35	MSR	620	Cairo	18:30
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	RJA	640	Amman	19:00
JZR	561	Sohag	05:55	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05
BAW	157	London	06:10	UAE	875	Dubai	19:05
WAN	342	Sohag	06:20	FDB	063	Dubai	19:10
WAN	338	Alexandria	06:25	KAC	744	Dammam	19:10
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:25	ABY	123	Sharjah	19:20
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:40	KAC	156	Istanbul	19:25
KAC	678	Dubai	06:45	KAC	776	Riyadh	19:35
JZR	505	Luxor	06:55	JZR	189	Dubai	19:40
JZR	143	Doha	07:00	KAC	674	Dubai	19:40
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00	FDB	057	Dubai	19:50
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	10:20	KAC	104	London	20:00
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	KAC	616	Bahrain	20:00
KAC	384	Delhi	08:05	DLH	624	Frankfurt	20:05
KAC	358	Kochi	08:05	OMA	647	Muscat	20:05
JZR	529	Asyut	08:10	KNE	381	Taif	20:10
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	MEA	402	Beirut	20:15
SAW	703	Damascus	08:30	KAC	620	Doha	20:15
WAN	9338	Alexandria	08:45	JZR	803	Tbilisi	20:20
IRC	6552	ABD	08:50	KAC	166	Rome	20:25
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	QTR	1088	Doha	20:40
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	KAC	172	Frankfurt	20:45
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:25	WAN	866	TXZ	20:50
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	KLM	445	Amsterdam	21:00
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	540	Sharm el-Sheikh	21:00
IRM	1188	Mashhad	09:55	WAN	136	Doha	21:15
JZR	787	Riyadh	10:30	UAE	859	Dubai	21:15
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	ALK	229	Colombo	21:15
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:15
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	THY	764	Paris	21:20
JZR	903	Baku	11:10	GFA	219	Istanbul	21:30
WAN	134	Doha	11:10	KAC	564	Bahrain	21:50
JZR	165	Dubai	11:45	QTR	1082	Doha	22:05
IAW	157	Al Najaf	12:00	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:10
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	KAC	786	Jeddah	22:15
RBG	553	Alexandria	12:30	AIC	975	Chennai/Goa	22:25
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	SVA	514	Riyadh	22:30
THY	766	Istanbul	12:45	WAN	118	Bahrain	22:40
CLX	792	Luxembourg	12:45	WAN	502	Jeddah	22:45
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	JZR	185	Dubai	22:50
KAC	239	Amman	13:00	JAI	574	Mumbai	23:00
JZR	357	Mashhad	13:05	MSC	501	Alexandria	23:10
RJA	644	Amman	13:20	MSR	2416	Cairo	23:30
KAC	774	Riyadh	13:30	FDB	071	Dubai	23:35
				JZR	241	Amman	23:40
JZR	776	Jeddah	12:05				
QTR	1075	Doha	12:10				
IAW	158	Al Najaf	13:00				
RBG	554	Alexandria	13:10				
JZR	176	Dubai	13:10				
SAW	702	Dammam	13:30				
THY	767	Istanbul	13:40				
JZR	144	Doha	13:55				
MSR	611	Cairo	14:00				
UAE	872	Dubai	14:15				
RJA	645	Amman	14:15				
WAN	865	TXZ	14:30				
CLX	792	Hanoi	14:30				
FEG	442	Asyut	14:50				
JZR	802	Jeddah	14:50				
KAC	539	Sharm el-Sheikh	15:00				
KAC	673	Dubai	15:00				
K							



# Record 68.5m people displaced worldwide: UN



MOGADISHU: A girl poses in front of her makeshift tent at Tawakal IDP camp yesterday. — AFP

GENEVA: A record 68.5 million people have been forced to flee their homes due to war, violence and persecution, notably in places like Myanmar and Syria, the UN said yesterday. By the end of 2017, the number was nearly three million higher than the previous year and showed a 50-percent increase from the 42.7 million uprooted from their homes a decade ago, according to a report by the UN refugee agency. The current figure is equivalent to the entire population of Thailand, and the number of people forcibly displaced equates to one in every 110 persons worldwide, it said.

"We are at a watershed, where success in managing forced displacement globally requires a new and far more comprehensive approach so that countries and communities aren't left dealing with this alone," said UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi. But around 70 percent of that number are people from just 10 countries, he told reporters in Geneva ahead of the report's launch. "If there were solutions to conflicts

in those 10 countries, or in some of them at least, that huge figure, instead of rising every year, could start going down," he said, calling for more political will to halt the crises driving so many from their homes.

#### Every two seconds

The report showed that 16.2 million people were freshly displaced last year, and included those forced to flee for the first time as well as those who had been previously displaced. This equates to some 44,500 people being pushed out of their homes every day - or one person every two seconds, UNHCR said. Most people flee within their own country, and are defined as internally displaced people, or IDPs. By the end of 2017, there were some 40 million IDPs worldwide, down slightly from previous years, with Colombia, Syria and Democratic Republic of Congo accounting for the greatest numbers. Another 25.4 million people - more than half of them children - were registered as refugees

last year. That is nearly three million more than in 2016, and "the highest known total to date", it said.

Syria's seven-year conflict alone had, by the end of last year, pushed more than 6.3 million people out of the country, accounting for nearly one-third of the global refugee population. Another 6.2 million Syrians are internally displaced. The second largest refugee-producing country in 2017 was Afghanistan, whose refugee population grew by five percent during the year to 2.6 million people. The increase was due mainly to births and more Afghans being granted asylum in Germany, UNHCR said.

South Sudan meanwhile saw the largest increase last year, with the number of refugees fleeing the world's youngest nation soaring from 1.4 million at the beginning of the year to 2.4 million at the end. Grandi said South Sudan was experiencing "a very bad emergency" which had apparently escaped the notice of both the government and the opposition who did not appear to

be "taking seriously the desperate situation of their own people."

#### Most refugees in poor countries

Refugees from Myanmar more than doubled last year to 1.2 million, as a brutal army crackdown forced hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims to pour across the border into Bangladesh. Tuesday's report also highlighted large-scale displacements in Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, and DR Congo among others. And as Israel marks 70 years of independence, there are some 5.4 million Palestinians still living as refugees, it said. Despite the focus on migrant numbers arriving in Europe and the United States, a full 85 percent of refugees are living in low- and middle-income countries like Lebanon, Pakistan and Uganda, Grandi said. Turkey was hosting by far the largest number of refugees, with 3.5 million registered there by the end of 2017, most of them Syrians. — AFP

## Yemen govt forces enter...

Continued from Page 1

Military sources also reported 33 Houthis and 19 soldiers killed in yesterday's battle, bringing the death toll in Hodeida this week to 216 fighters. No civilian casualties have yet been confirmed.

Hodeida's residents are now bracing for what they fear will be devastating street fighting, as tanks and buses carrying uniformed troops roll through the empty streets of the once-bustling city. One resident, who asked not to be identified for fear of arrest, said civilians had been "banned from using their phones to take pictures and are questioned about their movements if they're seen in the streets". The rebels have also begun to dig trenches in the streets, he said.

Fierce fighting in the Hodeida area has already driven 5,200 families from their homes as pro-government forces advanced up the Red Sea coast, according to the UN. The coalition launched a major offensive on June 13, dubbed Operation Golden Victory, to drive the rebels out of Hodeida, now the most intense battlefield in an already brutal war.

"We can hear the sounds of artillery, mortars and sporadic machinegun fire. The Houthis have been using tanks," a resident close to the coastal strip told Reuters by telephone, asking not to be identified. "Water has been cut off to many of the areas near the Corniche area because the Houthis have dug trenches and closed water pipes. Many people are fleeing these neighborhoods and going deeper into the city center." Saudi and UAE state media accused the Houthis of shelling civilian districts. Residents said the Houthi tanks were targeting coalition forces.

Yesterday's battles spread panic among local inhabitants. "My children are terrified. The fighting and the sounds of explosions are everywhere and we are stuck in our house in the district of Rabasa with no running water," Iman, a 37-year-old mother of two, said tearfully. "What have we done for all of this?" Mohamed Sharaf, 44, a civil servant, said he had sent his entire family to Sanaa, the Houthi-held inland capital, several days ago and he was getting ready to leave himself. "There is death and destruction everywhere in this city."

Since Saudi Arabia, the UAE and their regional allies intervened in Yemen in 2015, there have been multiple rounds of UN-brokered peace talks, but they have all failed to achieve any breakthrough. UN envoy Martin Griffiths has been holding talks in the rebel-held capital Sanaa since Saturday to seek concessions from Houthi leaders that might avoid all-out fighting in the streets of Hodeida. Griffiths appears to have failed to make a breakthrough.

Griffiths told the UN Security Council by videoconference on Monday that he was hopeful a first round of preliminary talks could take place next month, according to two diplomats present at the closed-door session. But the UN envoy flew out of Sanaa yesterday without making any comment to journalists. The Yemeni government and its allies have insisted that the Houthis must fully withdraw from the city and turn over the port to UN supervision. The rebels have so far agreed only to share control of the port with the United Nations.

The Gulf Arab states accuse their regional arch rival Iran of smuggling arms to the rebels through the port, a charge Tehran denies. The coalition held a press conference in Abu Dhabi yesterday to display what it said were explosives used by the Houthis in Yemen, including landmines and improvised explosive devices described by one UAE official as "a fraction of what the coalition has seized". — Agencies

suddenly but over a long period of time to allow authorities to improve English language courses and provide intensive courses to those hoping to study abroad.

But pro-government MP Ahmad Al-Fadhli charged that lawmakers opposed to the decision are doing so for electoral purposes to satisfy their voters. Fadhli praised the decision and said it will improve the level of education, and regretted that 22 MPs including six with doctorate degrees have opposed the decision for election purposes.

In a related development, Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Hind Al-Sabeeh said yesterday that a number of new private sector companies have been referred to the public prosecution on charges of visa trading. The minister said that a number of court rulings had been issued against visa traders and some of the rulings have become final. She said that a decision setting new percentages for Kuwaiti employment in various private sector fields is ready and awaiting final approvals before being issued.

## Kim meets Xi following Trump summit

BEIJING: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un briefed Chinese President Xi Jinping yesterday on his historic summit with US President Donald Trump, a visit that underscores Beijing's efforts to remain at the center of fast-moving nuclear diplomacy. Kim's third trip to China since March comes as Beijing tries to strengthen its role as a mediator between the US and its neighbor, where it claims compelling security and economic interests. The North's leader, who is believed to have landed in the Chinese capital yesterday morning, met Xi at the ornate Great Hall of the People. He was given a full ceremonial welcome, including a military revue and a gaggle of adoring children shouting out welcomes.

Kim "felt thanks for and highly praised China's promotion of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and its important role in protecting the peninsula's peace and sta-

bility," state-run CCTV said. North Korea "hopes to work with China and other concerned parties to promote and establish a solid, long-lasting peace mechanism on the Korean Peninsula and make joint efforts to achieve a lasting peace on the peninsula." For his part, Xi told Kim he "wants North Korea and the US to carry out the results of their leadership summit" in Singapore on June 12, the report said.

Trump and Kim pledged in a joint summit statement to "work toward the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula". The United States relies on China to enforce UN economic sanctions against the North, giving Beijing potential leverage in its looming trade war with Washington. "I think that North Korea can be another card Beijing can play to win leverage in negotiations with Washington," Yang Moo-jin, professor at the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul, told AFP.

In addition to discussing last week's Singapore summit, Kim was expected to ask China for help in easing the sanctions in return for his pledge to denuclearize, according to Wang Dong, an international relations expert at Peking University. "The Chinese and North Korean leaders are carrying out consultations on how to jointly move the Korean nuclear issue forward," Wang said. — AFP

## Russia, Saudis push for hike...

Continued from Page 1

Algeria have opposed such a move. Three OPEC sources told Reuters a technical panel - the organization's economic commission - met on Monday to review the market outlook and forecast strong global demand for oil during the rest of 2018. "If OPEC and its allies continue to produce at May levels then the market could be in deficit for the next six months," one of the sources said.

Some countries including Algeria, Iran and Venezuela said at the panel meeting that they still opposed an output increase, one of the sources said. Demand growth has surprised market watchers on the upside in the past two years, with annual increases exceeding 1.5 percent. Global oil consumption is expected to hit 100 million bpd next year. Novak said that if a decision were taken this week to raise output, OPEC and its allies could meet again in September to review the impact and fine-tune production policy.

The energy ministers of Kuwait, Angola and the United Arab Emirates declined to comment yesterday when arriving in Vienna, where the 14-member OPEC is headquartered. On Monday, Ecuador's oil minister Carlos Perez predicted a difficult OPEC meeting. "There are other countries that do not want to reduce the cuts ... It's going to be a difficult ... a tough meeting," Perez said in the Austrian capital.

OPEC's second- and third-largest producers, Iraq

and Iran, have said they would oppose output increases on the grounds that such moves would breach previous agreements to maintain cuts until the year-end. Both countries would struggle to increase output. Iran faces renewed US sanctions that will impact its oil industry and Iraq has production constraints. Two OPEC sources told Reuters that even Saudi Arabia's Gulf allies Kuwait and Oman were against big, immediate increases in output. One OPEC source said the Saudi-Russian proposal of a 1.5-million-bpd increase was "just a tactic" aimed at persuading fellow members to compromise on a smaller rise of around 0.5-0.7 million bpd.

Saudi Arabia and its Gulf allies have the capacity to raise output. Russia has also said that limiting supply for too long could encourage unacceptably high output growth from the United States, which is not part of the production agreement. Yesterday, the head of Russia's second-largest oil firm Lukoil, Vagit Alekperov, said global production cuts should be halved and that Lukoil could restore its oil output levels within two to three months.

Commerzbank commodities analyst Carsten Fritsch said that given big differences in the positions of OPEC members, the Friday meeting was likely to be tough. "Unanimity is needed for any OPEC decision. This recalls the June 2011 meeting, when OPEC was unable to agree on an increase in production to compensate for the outages ... in Libya," Fritsch said. "That meeting ended without any joint declaration. The then Saudi Oil Minister Ali Al-Naimi described it as the worst OPEC meeting of all time." Adding to the tensions, Iran and Venezuela continued to insist that OPEC on Friday debate US sanctions against the two countries, but the organization's secretariat has rejected their requests. — Reuters

## CSC confirms 'no change' in 7-hour...

Continued from Page 1

between students who went to public schools and those who studied at English-language private schools.

MP Khaled Al-Otaibi wondered yesterday how the ministry can make the test obligatory for students and even demanded certain passing percentages before these students take up language courses. The lawmaker demanded scrapping the decision immediately and warned that it will lead to a major political crisis because it lacks the basic principles of justice and equality, adding that the decision will simply deprive public schools students of their right to study abroad. Otaibi said that such decisions are not implemented



Sports



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# England have a new prince and his name is Harry Kane

## Remarkable World Cup debut for Kane

**VOLGOGRAD:** Harry Kane rose emphatically to the World Cup challenge in England's opening match against Tunisia, scoring a last-gasp winner to give Gareth Southgate's side lift-off in Russia. It was a remarkable World Cup debut for Kane, who bore the added pressure of the captain's armband and the weight of a nation on his 24-year-old shoulders.

Critics were sharpening their pencils. He had never won a trophy with Tottenham. He had never scored in a major tournament. He had failed to find the net in four appearances at Euro 2016 and in the big Champions League matches against the likes of Real Madrid.

Kane, scorer of a remarkable 59 Premier League goals in the past two seasons, was even goaded by a Russian reporter in the pre-match press conference about his lack of silverware. "Maybe I'll be sitting here in four weeks with the big gold one," he quipped back.

He had a score to settle and all he needed was two opportunities on Monday at the Volgograd Arena, just two strikes on target. He scored both, the second in breathless fashion with a clever, composed, far-post header as the clock ticked past 90 minutes to give England a precious 2-1 win.

On the biggest stage of all, it had taken him just 11 minutes to open his account as England swept forward in waves. John Stones's header was clawed out by goalkeeper Mouez Hassen and the ultimate poacher Kane

was there to volley home the rebound sweetly. "It was him who was always there at the right time," admitted Tunisia coach Nabil Maaloul, whose defenders had spent most of the match wrestling Kane to the ground to keep him quiet.

Tunisia lost track of Kane only twice from set pieces in 91 minutes. It cost them two goals, and the match. "He is the optimal striker," said Maaloul. Kane was less enthused about his treatment, but knows he is a marked man and can expect more of the same as the tournament progresses.

### COMPELLING STATS

"I was a bit disappointed by the referee not saying anything on corners, I couldn't get them off me," Kane said. "But all we can do is get on with the game." Kane largely disappeared for the 80 minutes that separated his goals, but he has that indefinable quality that elevates great strikers above the rest—he will always, somehow, find a way to earn one last chance, and one is generally all he needs. "In the back of our minds, we thought that it could be one of those days where it doesn't go our way," Kane admitted after the match.

"But that's why you work so hard, so you can go to 90-plus minutes to win a game. We got lucky and we got the goal in the end." He is now on the path to joining the company of England World Cup legends.

The last man to score twice for England in a World Cup match was 1986 Golden Boot winner Gary Lineker,

“But all we can do is get on with the game”



**VOLGOGRAD:** England's forward Harry Kane (L) and England's coach Gareth Southgate (R) attend a press conference in Volgograd, on the eve of the Russia 2018 World Cup Group G football match between Tunisia and England. — AFP

against Cameroon in Italia 90. And in one match Kane now has doubled the World Cup goals tally of England's record scorer Wayne Rooney, who played in the 2006, 2010 and 2014 tournaments.

Kane's stats are compelling: he has eight goals in the six games he has worn the England armband, 11 in his past eight games for the Three Lions. "If he hadn't scored, I'd be answering questions about his ability to

score in tournament football," said Southgate, almost tired of people doubting Kane's ability.

"The only thing he hasn't done now is score in August. He's moved every other barrier, and I'm personally delighted for him." There will be harder battles ahead, Belgium lie in wait after Panama on Sunday. But Monday was a dream start for Harry, England's new prince. — AFP

## Spain rally behind David De Gea as questions swirl over goalkeeper's form

**KRASNODAR:** Spain players are rallying behind goalkeeper David De Gea as they prepare for their second group game at the World Cup against Iran in Kazan today. De Gea endured an evening to forget in Spain's opening match against Portugal on Friday, committing a howling error to allow Cristiano Ronaldo to score his second goal on the way to a hat-trick in the 3-3 thriller in Sochi.

Ronaldo scored from all three of Portugal's attempts

on target against the Manchester United goalkeeper and suddenly new coach Fernando Hierro has found himself having to defend the 27-year-old. "We don't doubt him and he doesn't doubt himself either," said Hierro after La Roja kicked off their Group B campaign.

"I embraced him. We know goalkeeper is a special position, with a special psychology, and we have no doubts. Honestly," added Hierro, hastily promoted to the role as coach last week after Julen Lopetegui's shock sacking on the eve of the tournament.

On the whole, the Spanish performed well in their first outing, especially considering the upheaval of the days before the game, and the underwhelming results of the other pre-tournament favourites put the Portugal draw in a more positive light.

But De Gea's form has to be a matter of real concern. It was his error that gifted Switzerland a goal in a 1-1 friendly draw just before Spain departed for Russia, and now-after one game-they have already conceded one goal more than in the whole of their triumphant 2010 World Cup campaign. Iker Casillas was in goal then, the

icon who De Gea succeeded and to whom he will always be compared.

"Only those of us who put on the gloves and go out on the field know how difficult it is," the man himself said. "The coach is with me, it was an error and these things can happen." It is not the first time De Gea has found himself in the eye of a storm at such a time—shortly after being promoted to the role of first-choice goalkeeper for Euro 2016, he found himself embroiled in a sex scandal. There were allegations that he had organised a party at which two women were forced to have sex with two footballers, although he was later cleared of any wrongdoing. The affair resurfaced recently when Pedro Sanchez, the new Spanish Prime Minister, came to Spain's training camp to give a speech before their departure for Russia.

De Gea refused to applaud the Socialist leader, remembering criticism from Sanchez. Spain's sports press have not been slow to criticise the 30-times capped goalkeeper for his recent blunders, but Hierro's squad have given him their backing. — AFP

## Argentina's Messi seeks redemption against Croatia

**NIZHNY NOVGOROD:** Stung by his failure to score a penalty and avert a disappointing draw against Iceland, Argentina's brilliant forward and captain Lionel Messi would love to make amends in their World Cup Group D match against Croatia tomorrow. But the Croatians go into the game in ebullient mood after a comfortable 2-0 win over Nigeria, and will look to add to the frustrations of Messi who has failed to replicate the glories of his Barcelona career on the international stage.

Having led Argentina to an agonising final defeat by Germany four years ago, Messi turns 31 in a few days and may be playing his last World Cup. He would need to win it to rival fellow great Diego Maradona for the eternal love of his compatriots.

Croatia coach Zlatko Dalic has unashamedly turned to midfielder Ivan Rakitic - a team mate of Messi's at Barcelona - for ideas and tactics to stop him. "I will use all the information I can," he said, declaring Rakitic his temporary "assistant" before the game. "There is no perfect way to stop Lionel Messi ... he is the greatest player in the world. But while one excellent player can make a great result, a great team does the job much better ... We will go into the game a little bit more relaxed than them."

Those who followed closely Argentina's shaky qualification for the World Cup were not so shocked by the result against Iceland, and do not expect them to roll over Croatia despite their abundance of individual talent.

For reasons hard to fathom, they have looked ponderous and lacking in creative thrust throughout coach Jorge Sampaoli's year in charge despite boasting Messi and other big names like Paulo Dybala, Gonzalo Higuain, Sergio Aguero and Angel Di Maria. "We will learn from what happened and we have to have the strength to win the next game," Sampaoli said after the Iceland defeat, seeking to stir his team into collective greatness. Nevertheless, it is 32 years since Argentina last won the World Cup and 25 since their last silverware, the Copa America in 1993.

Croatia themselves are not short on top-quality players. As well as Rakitic, they also have the talented Luka Modric in midfield, and towering hitman Mario Mandzukic up front. With their strongest squad for years and in pole position in the group, Croatia dream of rivaling the glories of 1998, when they reached the World Cup semi-finals and finished third after a 2-1 win over the Netherlands in the playoff. — Reuters

## Russians, foreigners seek love at WCup

**MOSCOW:** During an afternoon at a Moscow park, Argentina fan Augustin Otelo is counting not the number of goals his team has scored in the World Cup but the number of phone numbers he has collected from Russian girls. "Four!" boasts the 26-year-old engineer dressed in his country's blue and white stripes as he competes with his friends to see who can get the most phone numbers. Otelo said he hopes his "exotic factor" will help him "find love" in the Russian capital.

"We don't know what to do between matches, so we thought we could try to get to know the Russian people better," he said. The Argentinians are flicking through selfies on their phones of Russian girls posing on the popular dating app Tinder.

"There's a lot of competition because of the number of men who have come to Russia for the World Cup," Otelo said. "And very few girls speak English or Spanish." But the language barrier has not stopped Russians and thousands of foreign football fans from mixing on the streets of Moscow, despite conflicting messages to Russia's female population from politicians. On the eve of the World Cup,

Communist lawmaker Tamara Pletneva warned Russian women that flings with visiting football fans could leave them raising children "of another race" alone. "We should be giving birth to our own children," said Pletneva, who leads the lower house of parliament's family, women and children committee.

Another Russian MP, Mikhail Degtyaryov from the ultra-nationalist LDPR party, took the opposite view. "The more love stories we have connected to the World Cup... the more children are born, the better," he said.

The Kremlin said World Cup romances are personal choices. "Russian women can probably manage their own affairs. They are the best women in the world," Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

### 'LIKE HOLIDAY ROMANCES'

One 25-year-old woman, who gave her name as Maria S., said she had been "impatiently" waiting for the World Cup because it "multiplies opportunities to meet with foreigners." "That is probably its main advantage," said the brunette, who took English classes ahead of the games.

Her friend, Lyubov, who speaks three languages aside from Russian fluently, called the World Cup an "asset". "Usually I have two dates a week and now I have four. I have to say no to some," the young woman said, delighted.

Neither of the two friends has any illusions about the fact that their dates will return to their home countries when the World Cup ends. "It's a bit like holiday romances, except that we will stay here," regrets Lyubov.



**SAMARA:** Two Russian girls sit in an open courtyard at the Glory Square in Samara on June 15 during the Russia 2018 FIFA World Cup football tournament. — AFP

Aside from her romantic endeavours, Maria has tasked herself with another mission: to "change Russia's image." "Tourists come here with clichés in their heads. I think they expect to see easy women dressed provocatively. I would like to change this cliché," the arts student said.

In May, the Argentinian Football Association published a manual offering tips on "how to get lucky with a Russian girl." It was widely condemned as sexist and the federation's head later apologised for it.

### 'FLIRT ZONE'

Moscow's World Cup fan zone, built on the doorstep of the city's iconic main university, has become a "flirt zone," joked the free Russian paper Metro. When a Brazil fan kissed the paper's young correspondent on the cheek, it said, his compatriot joked: "It's OK: he wants you in his bed like

everyone else." For older Russians, such romances are reminiscent of other major international events in Moscow, such as the 1980 Olympic Games hosted by the USSR during the Cold War. Pletneva, the Communist lawmaker, said the Games were followed by an uptick of births of mixed race children which she called "a sad example."

Yelena, 51, remembers the 1985 International Youth Festival in Moscow, when she fell in love with Giorgos, a young Greek man. "We were 19, we spent three days together and then he left. We wrote to each other for several months: I had to ask my friend to translate his letters from English. Then we stopped," she remembers. "Today there are new technologies, it's not the USSR anymore and it is easy to travel," she said. "The young people who meet each other at the World Cup can stay together." — AFP



## Sports



# France wary of Peru as they seek second Group C win

## Victory against Peru could send France into knockout phase

**YEKATERINBURG:** After struggling to beat Australia in their opening World Cup Group C game, France will not be relishing the challenge of facing Peru tomorrow as they have often struggled to make an impact against Latin American opposition.

In their last 12 World Cup matches against Latin American teams, France have won four—including beating Brazil in the 1998 final—drawn four and lost four. They defeated Australia 2-1 to go top of the group while Peru, in their first finals since 1982, lost 1-0 to Denmark.

But the results do not say how France stuttered and they do not show how Peru looked inspired even though they lacked efficiency. “I don’t think France like to play against South American teams. With our style of play, our way to hold the ball, I think we can cause them trouble,” said full-back Miguel Trauco.

France centre back Raphael Varane added: “We know that they’re an opponent who will put a lot of intensity on everything they do. “We will need to be aggressive and solid.” To achieve that, coach Didier Deschamps could hand a starting spot to Blaise Matuidi, who can be an imposing presence in midfield.

Matuidi replaced Corentin Tolisso in the opening match, bringing steel to the midfield instantly. “Blaise came on showing that he was a leader,” said midfielder Paul Pogba. “He reacted the way the coach wanted him to. For a usual starter who had been sat on the bench,

maybe for his last World Cup, he showed he was an example to follow.” Although they lacked pace and creativity against Australia, France were the only team among the title favourites to win their opening game. While defending champions Germany were unexpectedly beaten by Mexico, Spain, Brazil and Argentina were all held to draws.

Hence victory against Peru could send France into the knockout phase with one game to spare. In contrast, Peru will have to take risks as they seek their first win in Russia and that strategy could give France some space to hit them on the break, using the pace of Kylian Mbappe and Antoine Griezmann.

Ousmane Dembele started against the Socceroos but he could sit on the bench with Olivier Giroud debuting at the front of the attacking line. “It could be like against Colombia so we know what to expect,” said Giroud referring to their 3-2 defeat by the South Americans in a friendly international in March.

France will no doubt be hoping for a better result. Peru, who beat France 1-0 in their only meeting in a friendly in 1982, will rely heavily on striker Paolo Guerrero, who was a substitute against Denmark.

The 34-year-old, whose doping ban was frozen just before the World Cup, is a likely starter against France after he impressed with his footwork when he came off the bench in Peru’s opening match. — Reuters

“ We need to be aggressive and solid ”



**MOSCOW:** This combination of pictures created on June 17, 2018 shows Russia’s coach Stanislav Cherchesov at the Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow (L) and Egypt’s coach Hector Raul Cuper at the Ekaterinburg Arena in Ekaterinburg. Russia will play Egypt in their Russia 2018 World Cup Group A football match at the Saint Petersburg Stadium in Saint Petersburg today. — AFP

## Germany WCup games are now finals: Neuer

**VATUTINKI:** Germany captain Manuel Neuer said yesterday that his side’s two remaining World Cup group games are now effectively finals and revealed frank words were exchanged in the team camp as the holders fight to stay in the tournament.

The World Cup holders are under intense pressure ahead of Saturday’s second Group F game against Sweden in Sochi and the South Korea match next Wednesday in Kazan after suffering a shock 1-0 defeat to Mexico on Sunday. “From now on, we only have finals. The players have to show what they can do, but I am convinced that we can do it,” Neuer said. Pre-World Cup talk from the German camp was about becoming the first team since Brazil in 1962 to successfully defend the title.

Now the worry is whether Joachim Loew’s team can even reach the last 16. “Complaining about what happened doesn’t change anything, we all know that,” said Neuer. “We have to try to put this behind us as quickly as possi-

ble,” Neuer revealed that head coach Loew spoke at length during an emergency team meeting after the poor display in Moscow and that the players did not hold back in giving their opinion.

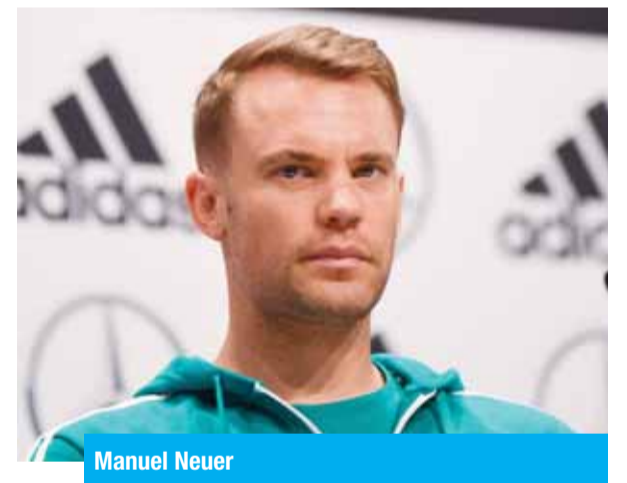
### ‘WE DIDN’T MINCE WORDS’

“There was a length team meeting,” said Neuer. “We didn’t mince words, because we want to make things better against Sweden. “We talked a lot, such meetings are good, it’s a liberating feeling and the outlines came from the coach. “We are our harshest critics. “It was a wake-up call and there has never been such strong communication within the team as after the game against Mexico. “We won’t need a second wake-up call. “We want to reach the knock-out stages and the team believes that we can do it.”

Die Mannschaft was slammed by the German media for a dreadful first-half performance when their defence was brutally ripped apart by Mexico’s counter attacks.

Neuer says all the stops will be pulled out against Sweden. “Every player must ask himself, ‘am I ready to give everything?’” said Germany’s shot-stopper. “In terms of the performance, I don’t think we need to change players.” Despite the captain’s insistence that the current team can pull it off, former internationals and pundits in Germany are demanding that Loew drops Mesut Ozil and Sami Khedira after both had woeful displays against Mexico.

Neuer revealed that the players took their frustrations



Manuel Neuer

out in Monday’s closed training session. “It went off, the players who weren’t involved on Sunday really threw themselves into it,” he said. Neuer revealed that even before Loew called for crisis talks, the players were already sorting out issues amongst themselves.

“Since no one shirks responsibility, we had already talked a lot after the game, on the bus and at every meal,” he said. — AFP

**WORLD CUP 2018**

**Matches Today's**

Portugal	15:00	Morocco
Uruguay	18:00	Saudi Arabia
Iran	21:00	Spain

## Denmark must improve to overcome dogged Aussies

**SAMARA:** Denmark’s talisman Christian Eriksen knows his side must rediscover the attacking dynamism of their qualifying campaign if they are to follow up on their opening victory over Peru with a win against Australia in Samara tomorrow.

The Danes secured three valuable points with a 1-0 win over Peru in Saransk but were under pressure for much of the game. They now head to Samara knowing a win over Australia will put them in the driving seat to qualify from Group C.

Tottenham Hotspur midfielder Eriksen, who provided the assist for Yussuf Poulсен’s winner, admitted Denmark didn’t produce the attacking football that yielded 20 goals in qualifying. “We certainly weren’t at our best,” Eriksen said after the win over Peru.

“Peru were well-organised and they made it hard for us. But it is not always necessary to play amazing football to win. “You don’t get many chances at a World Cup and it was nice to see that we can actually also win even though it wasn’t great to look at.”

Denmark will be without midfielder William Kvist, who sustained suspected fractured ribs in the first half against Peru. He will likely be replaced by Ajax’s Lasse Schone against the Australians. The Socceroos thrive in the role of underdog, and this was certainly the case in their 2-1 loss to France in their Group C opener on Saturday, when they conceded both a penalty and a goal to VAR decisions.

They won’t be the favourites in Samara, either, but after coming so close against the French, Coach Bert van Marwijk only had positive words for his players.

“One of the most positive things is that we showed guts and we could be ourselves. The next game is another game, but it gives us confidence,” he said. His players have also bought into the message in the wake of the loss.

“The team had tremendous guts, we just couldn’t get ourselves over the line,” said defender Trent Sainsbury. “We were almost perfect.” Van Marwijk may be tempted to turn to veteran Tim Cahill.

Looking to score at his fourth World Cup, or Daniel Arzani, the youngest player at the tournament, for further attacking options. A win for Denmark would all but secure a place in the last-16 for the first time since 2002, depending on the result of France against Peru later on Thursday.

Australia, who are playing in their fifth World Cup finals, need a positive result to maintain realistic hopes of qualifying for the last-16 for the second time in their history. — Reuters

## Luis Suarez seeks WCup redemption as he reaches 100 caps

**NIZHNIY NOVGOROD:** For a player who has made so many headlines at the World Cup, it is appropriate that Luiz Suarez will make his 100th appearance for Uruguay at football’s biggest tournament. Barring any last minute disasters the Barcelona striker will reach his century of games for the Celeste today when they play Saudi Arabia in Rostov-on-Don in Group A’s second round of matches. The match should be routine and could secure Uruguay’s passage to the knockout stage, but with Suarez football fans know that very few things are mundane.

The last two World Cups have seen Suarez exit in ignominy. In 2010, the forward was sent off after making a last minute “save” against Ghana, which helped avoid defeat and saw the South Americans progress to the last four. The incident became so infamous it got its own Wikipedia entry—Suarez even described it as the best save of the tournament—but that was nothing to what happened four years later. In 2014, he was banned from all football for four months and fined after biting Italy’s Giorgio Chiellini, the third biting incident of his career. Uruguay players have hit out at the way Suarez was subsequently treated by the footballing authorities, but their protests have garnered little empathy outside the country.



**ROSTOV-ON-DON:** Uruguay’s forward Luis Suarez kicks the ball during a training session at the Rostov Arena in Rostov-On-Don yesterday, on the eve of the Russia 2018 World Cup Group A football match between Saudi Arabia and Uruguay. — AFP

Suarez is a player loved and loathed in equal measure: his on-field behaviour has been questionable but not so his talent. Despite the ever-present controversies, the 31-year-old is Uruguay’s record goalscorer, scoring 51 times in 99 matches.

Five of those have come in the World Cup and despite a sluggish start in Uruguay’s 1-0 opening game win against Egypt, the match against a weak Saudi Arabia side may offer him the chance to celebrate his centenary in style. Uruguay may make changes to midfield, bringing in Carlos Sanchez and Cristian Rodriguez ahead of Nahitan Nandez and

Giorgian De Arrascaeta today. Saudi Arabia still smarting from their opening day 5-0 drubbing by Russia, could make wholesale changes as they desperately try to stay in the tournament. The Saudis preparations were jolted by a mid-air mishap on Monday when the plane carrying them to Rostov suffered a fire in one of its engines. The aircraft landed safely after what one of the Saudi players called a “simple malfunction”. “It was a small fire in one of the engines, the right engine, but the plane landed safely,” association president Ahmad Al Harbi told Saudi sports TV channel RSA. — AFP





## SNIPPETS



## Poland's mishaps help Senegal claim first African victory

### Win takes Senegal top of Group H with three points

**MOSCOW:** Senegal became the first African team to win a match at the 2018 World Cup yesterday when they beat Poland 2-1, helped by two shocking errors in the European side's defence.

Poland defender Thiago Cionek stuck out a leg and deflected Idrissa Gueye's wayward shot into the net in the 37th minute before goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny rushed recklessly out of his area and allowed M'Baye Niang to nip in and score into an empty net on the hour.

Szczesny may have been caught out because Niang was having treatment on the touchline and re-entered the pitch as the ball was played backwards to the Poland goalkeeper by Grzegorz Krychowiak.

Krychowiak headed Poland's goal in the 86th minute. The win took Senegal top of Group H with three points, along with Japan who also beat Colombia by the same score. Colombia and Poland are both without a point. It was a relief for Africa after Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria and Tunisia all lost their opening games.

Poland's record scorer Robert Lewandowski got little change out of a well-drilled Senegal defence, led by Kalidou Koulibaly, and they sorely missed key defender Kamil Glik, still recovering from a training injury sustained two weeks ago.

"I'm satisfied with my players, really proud of them. I think they arrived with a lot of determination, they have worked hard," said Senegal coach Aliou Cisse. "I think it is really a generation that deserves a lot of credit and respect." The first half hour was a sorry affair strewn with misplaced passes from both sides and neither of the danger men, Lewandowski and Senegal's Sadio Mane, saw much of the ball. The first shot on target produced the first goal as Senegal went ahead in the 37th minute.

Niang won a challenge with Lukas Piszczek, burst down the left and found Mane who in turn slipped the ball to Gueye. The midfielder's shot appeared to be going wide until the hapless Cionek stuck out a leg and deflected it past Szczesny.

Lewandowski sprang into life five minutes after



**MOSCOW:** Poland's midfielder Grzegorz Krychowiak (R) scores a header during the Russia 2018 World Cup Group H football match between Poland and Senegal at the Spartak Stadium in Moscow yesterday. — AFP

half-time as he won possession, burst clear and was up-ended by Salif Sane. He took the free kick himself and although he managed Poland's first shot on target, it was saved by Khadim N'Diaye.

Poland appeared to be coming back into the game until the most embarrassing moment of the World Cup so far. Krychowiak sent a long ball back from deep inside the Senegal half, Szczesny rushed out of his area to collect the pass but Niang stole in to score to Polish disbelief.

Krychowiak partially made amends with his goal but it was too late for the disappointing Poles. "Second goal - I do not know," said Poland defender Michal Pazdan. "The player ran in, he was behind the side line of the pitch. There are no such situations on a daily basis."

"But it does not change the fact that we lacked concentration at the beginning of the second half, because it seems that we could have played a different game, if they hadn't scored the second." — Reuters

## Kyrgios ruins Murray's Queen's Club comeback

**LONDON:** Andy Murray endured a frustrating return from his injury nightmare as the former world number one was beaten 2-6, 7-6 (7/4), 7-5 by temperamental Australian Nick Kyrgios in the Queen's Club first round yesterday.

Murray gave an encouraging display in his first competitive match in 11 months after finally recovering from the hip problem that required surgery in January. But the 31-year-old Scot couldn't secure a fairytale comeback as Kyrgios recovered from first set accusations of 'tanking' (losing without trying to win) to knock out the five-time winner of the Wimbledon warm-up event. Finally back on court for the first time since a Wimbledon quarter-final defeat against Sam Querrey 342 days ago, Murray had low expectations of his return after several aborted comeback attempts. But the two-time Wimbledon champion, whose ranking has plummeted to 156, will have taken heart from the way he competed, even if there were signs of rust in his shot-making and movement at times.

Kyrgios has been accused of tanking in the past when matches have slipped away with little effort. And just days after the world number 21 almost beat Roger Federer in Stuttgart, he sabotaged himself with a series of bizarrely loose shots in the first set.

Former British player Andrew Castle, commenting on the match for the BBC, said: "This

is a tank from Kyrgios. 'He's just hitting the ball as hard as he can. That's fine but don't expect us not to call it because it is.'"

Despite that helpful contribution from his good friend, Murray gradually ran out of steam and Kyrgios found his composure to seal his first win over the Scot at the sixth attempt. "I was thinking how great it was to see Andy back. I asked if he is was okay at the end of the match and he was," Kyrgios said.

"He came out really good and I kind of expected that. Regarding my own style, I've been entertaining since I was kid. 'I've got bad and good things but I'm never going to change.' Watched by wife Kim and mum Judy, Murray was given a rousing reception as he walked onto the court and responded with a bashful wave to the crowd.

Murray had described his protracted rehabilitation, which featured only two exhibitions outings since Wimbledon last year, as the toughest spell of his career—a painful period of absence he said had reaffirmed his love for the sport. All the demons from those anxious medical updates and gruelling hours in the gym could finally be exorcised as Murray traded ground-strokes with Kyrgios from the baseline before capping the first point of his return with a cathartic forehand winner.

When Kyrgios tried an optimistic half-volley from the baseline, Murray scampered to the net to meet with a superb winner that proved his desire remains as strong as ever. Murray's returns were driving Kyrgios to distraction—not that he needs much excuse to lose focus—and a double fault gave the three-time Grand Slam champion the first break for a 4-2 lead. With Kyrgios apparently complaining about his fitness and blasting a series of wild second serves, Murray finished the first set with ease. — AFP

## England post new ODI record total of 481-6

**NOTTINGHAM:** England broke their own all-time record for the highest total ever scored in a men's one-day international when they posted 481 for six Australia at Trent Bridge yesterday. When Alex Hales, who already had a hundred to his name, hoisted Jhye Richardson for six in the 46th over it meant England had broken their previous world record total of this level—also set at Trent Bridge—of 444 for three against Pakistan in 2016.

Hales eventually holed out for 147 on his Nottinghamshire home ground after opener Jonny Bairstow had made 139. Eoin Morgan, England's ODI captain, became the country's highest run-scorer in this format during a 21-ball fifty—the fastest by any England batsman in terms of balls faced—on his way to 67. At one stage it seemed 2019 World Cup hosts England might become the first side in the 4,011 match history of men's ODIs to score 500. But their chances of achieving that feat effectively ended when Hales and Morgan were dismissed off successive deliveries to leave them 459 for five off 47.3 overs.

Australia captain Tim Paine, who won the toss, used eight bowlers but was unable to stem the torrent of runs. An Australia attack missing injured Ashes-winning fast bowlers Mitchell Starc, Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood, were smashed to all corners of Trent Bridge with medium-pacer Andrew Tye's nine wicketless overs costing 100 runs. England lead this five-match series against world champions Australia 2-0. — AFP

## Honda Alghanim sponsors Kuwait Youth Basketball Tournament 2018

**KUWAIT:** In line with its plan to support Kuwaiti youth and out of its firm belief in the necessity of building their capacities in all different fields, Honda Alghanim, the exclusive distributor of Honda cars, motorcycles and marine equipment in Kuwait, sponsored the second Kuwait Youth Basketball Tournament held at Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) between May 24 and June 3, 2018.

Honda Alghanim's sponsorship to this sports event came as part of its ongoing strategy "Honda Powers Dreams", which aims to empower youth regarded as the country's greatest wealth. Furthermore, the company does not only seek to satisfy its customers with an innovative line of products, but strives as well to create a valuable and lasting social impact and heritage for everyone, especially the next generation, bringing a little sunshine into people's lives and sharing with them their happiest moments.



First launched in 2017, the Kuwait Youth Basketball Tournament is an annual event that encourages young people aged between 15 and 21 years old to practice sports in a competitive atmosphere during the holy month of Ramadan. Competing teams can also include two players over that age to add more experience to the

game. The tournament, which witnessed the friendly participation of professional players split into eight teams, concluded with "Greatness" scooping up a win over "Elite Squad" scoring 70 over 61 in the final game. The winning team was crowned the Kuwait Youth Basketball Champions.



**25** England have a new prince and his name is Harry Kane



**26** France wary of Peru as they seek second Group C win



**27** Poland's mishaps help Senegal claim first African victory



SAINT PETERSBURG: Egypt's defender Ali Gabr (C) controls the ball during the Russia 2018 World Cup Group A football match between Russia and Egypt at the Saint Petersburg Stadium in Saint Petersburg yesterday. — AFP

## Russia sour Salah's return from injury

### Hosts Russia on brink of knockout stage after win over Egypt

**SAINT PETERSBURG:** The return of Mohamed Salah from injury couldn't prevent World Cup hosts Russia virtually sealing their place in the last 16 by beating Egypt 3-1 yesterday. An own goal by Egypt captain Ahmed Fathy opened the floodgates on a sodden night in Saint Petersburg before goals from Denis Cheryshev and Artem Dzyuba furthered Russian hopes they can defy pre-tournament expectations with a deep run into the latter stages.

Salah did net Egypt's first goal at a World Cup since 1990 from the penalty spot after he had been hauled down 17 minutes from time, but it was too little, too late for the Pharaohs. Russia will be guaranteed a place in the last 16 and Egypt eliminated unless Saudi Arabia beat Uruguay today.

Salah was making his first appearance since injuring his left shoulder when falling heavily after being dragged to

the ground by Real Madrid captain Sergio Ramos in the Champions League final just over three weeks ago.

His presence in the starting line-up after sitting out Friday's 1-0 defeat to Uruguay provoked a feverish excitement from the thousands of Egyptian fans that poured into the 65,000-capacity Saint Petersburg stadium to almost even up the numbers in the stands with the hosts.

However, Russia had enjoyed a far more positive start in thrashing Saudi Arabia 5-0 to snap a seven-game run without a win heading into the tournament and their greater confidence showed early on.

Aleksandr Golovin and Cheryshev were at the heart of most of Russia's best moves against the Saudis and both came close to breaking the deadlock with long-range strikes. Salah looked far from the player who scored 44 goals in his debut season for Liverpool and former Chelsea

left-back Yuri Zhirkov wasn't afraid to test his fitness with a series of robust challenges.

But Zhirkov's best piece of defending was a last-ditch tackle that prevented Salah a simple tap in at the back post. It took 40 minutes for the Premier League's Golden Boot winner to have an attempt on goal as the ball fell kindly on the edge of the area, but even on his favoured left foot his effort curled beyond Igor Akinfeev's far post.

Shorn of Salah at his best and facing the hosts, Egypt had an uphill task as it was without gifting Russia the initiative as they did in calamitous fashion at the start of the second-half. There appeared little danger when Roman Zobnin's off-target shot dribbled towards goal, but under pressure from Dzyuba, Fathy threw an outstretched right leg towards the ball and turned it into his own net.

Having got the bit of luck they needed, Russia showed

they have the quality to trouble more fancied nations with a brilliantly worked second that was swept home by Cheryshev for his third goal of the World Cup from Mario Fernandes's cross.

Three minutes later it was 3-0 as the towering 6ft 4in (1.96 metre) Dzyuba demonstrated quick feet to free himself inside the area before slotting low past a helpless Mohamed El-Shenawy. The Video Assistant Referee (VAR) system proved its worth to give Egypt a glimmer of hope when referee Enrique Caceres had initially awarded a foul outside the box rather than a penalty when Salah was pulled by Zhirkov.

Salah smashed the 10th penalty of the tournament into the roof of the net, but it was little consolation as Russia took a huge step towards the knockout phase of a World Cup for the first time 32 years. —AFP

## Japan sink 10-man Colombia in historic win for Asia

**SARANSK:** Japan upset 10-man Colombia 2-1 in a dramatic match yesterday to become the first Asian side to beat South American opponents at the World Cup. Asian teams had managed three draws in 17 matches against South American sides but the four-times Asian champions made their extra man count after Colombia midfielder Carlos Sanchez became the first player to get a red card in Russia.

His sending-off in the third minute, for a deliberate handball, was the second fastest in World Cup history after Uruguay's Jose Batista was dismissed after 55 seconds against Scotland in 1986. Shinji Kagawa scored from the resulting penalty to give Japan the lead in the Group H match.

Juan Quintero's clever low free kick in the 39th minute gave Colombia the equaliser but Yuya Osako leapt above his marker to head a corner into the net for Japan's 73rd-minute winner. "To lose one player in the three minutes to lose such a crucial player, is not an easy thing," Colombia's Argentine coach Jose Pekerman told reporters.

With Colombia ranked 16th in the world and Japan 61st, the South Americans were expected to win. It was also sweet revenge for Japan, who were thumped 4-1 by the same opponents in Brazil 2014, but they wasted plenty of chances to kill the game off earlier. Kagawa and Osako went close in the first half but failed to increase their lead.

"I told them at halftime to keep moving, get the advantage in positioning," Japan coach Akira Nishino said. "It was good we could deprive the front players of their stamina. It's the result that counts. Luck is important but it's not going to do the job."

### SUPERIOR NUMBERS

With Japan dominating the midfield with their superior numbers, Pekerman opted to sacrifice Juan Cuadrado around the half hour mark to send on defensive midfielder Wilmar Barrios. That allowed Colombia a foothold in

the match and their all-time leading scorer and captain Radamel Falcao came more into the game. Falcao, making his World Cup debut after missing the last tournament in Brazil due to injury, showed his hunger when he stretched full length to get his foot to an overhead cross but did not have the power to beat the goalkeeper.

Genki Haraguchi's foul on Falcao earned Colombia a foul on the edge of the box and Quintero fired a low free kick under the leaping wall. Japan goalkeeper Eiji Kawashima reacted late and failed to stop the ball from crossing the line.

Colombia continued to trouble Brazil with quick attacking movements but as the minutes passed they lost stamina and playing 90 minutes with a man down proved too big a mountain to climb. In a last throw of the dice, Pekerman introduced James Rodriguez, who did not start due to a calf problem, in the 59th minute but the Golden Boot winner in Brazil was unable to change the course of the match. "Without doubt we were expecting something different, we were hoping to start with a victory," Pekerman said. "It's unfortunate for the people of Colombia who came here with high hopes. This is obviously going to leave us with a bitter memory." — Reuters



SARANSK: Colombia's forward Falcao (C) and Colombia's defender Oscar Murillo (top centre) head the ball past Japan's defender Yuto Nagatomo (L) during the Russia 2018 World Cup Group H football match between Colombia and Japan at the Mordovia Arena in Saransk yesterday. — AFP