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## Kuwait mulling plan to cut 1.5 million expats in 7 yrs

### Thousands of job titles of expats with unendorsed or no degrees cancelled



**KUWAIT:** Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received at Dar Salwa yesterday visiting Saudi Royal Court Advisor Prince Turki bin Mohammad bin Fahd. During the meeting, Prince Turki conveyed a verbal message to HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah from Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud regarding bilateral relations and greetings to Sheikh Nasser on his return from a recent treatment trip. — KUNA

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait could soon implement a roadmap to reduce the number of expatriates by at least 1.5 million over the next seven years in a plan that aims at achieving a demographic balance between Kuwaitis and expatriates, a leading newspaper reported yesterday. Citing informed sources, Al-Qabas said that the fatwa and legislative department, the government's legal body, has asked opinions from government agencies on the possibility of setting up a national committee for the organization and management of the demographic structure.

The committee, which was proposed by MPs, will enjoy extensive powers to propose and implement plans to make Kuwaitis 50 percent of the population, with expatriates not exceeding that number. The number of expatriates now is just over 3.244 million and Kuwaitis around 1.4 million, based on figures published by the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI).

Based on current population growth rates for Kuwaitis, they are expected to reach 1.7 million after seven years, the target of the proposed plan. This would mean that the number of expatriates must be equal to Kuwaitis, or 1.7 million. If this equation is to materialize, the number of expats must be reduced by a mini-

um of 1.5 million without even considering natural growth and any future recruitment.

The expected plan also envisions that the number of any foreign community must not exceed 25 percent of the Kuwaiti population. If this item is to be strictly implemented, at least 600,000 Indians and 300,000 Egyptians, the two communities that largely exceed the expected limit, must be among those who will be reduced. The proposal does not explain the mechanism for implementing the cuts and who will be included. It does not mention whether the 120,000 beddons or stateless people will be considered expats. It does not also say if the cuts will involve 650,000 domestic helpers.

Based on previous Kuwaitis attempts, the proposed plan appears to be far-fetched and highly unrealistic, especially to be achieved in just seven years. According to the proposed plan, 10 percent of expatriate employees in the government must be replaced by Kuwaitis every year, in addition to five percent in the private sector, both seemingly unrealistic goals.

Meanwhile, government sources told Al-Rai newspaper the manpower authority has cancelled thousands of job titles of expats working in the private sector in leading positions because some of them were found to be not holding university degrees or their degrees

were neither endorsed by their own countries nor by Kuwait's foreign ministry.

The sources added that the manpower authority recently mandated the presence of the original degree officially endorsed by both the country of origin and Kuwait to renew expats' work permits, especially after the authority found that thousands do not actually hold university degrees or hold unendorsed or unattested certificates. The sources said a considerable number of expats refused to stay in Kuwait and preferred leaving after their job titles were changed, which will greatly help in adjusting Kuwait's demography by only keeping highly-qualified expats in the country without any exceptions.

The manpower authority is also planning to ban issuing permits to expats with university degrees entering Kuwait to work in the private sector unless they have a minimum of 'good' grades, according to informed government sources. Last month, a senior lawmaker said over 30 percent of expats living and working in the country are "not useful", and the government must start practical measures to reduce the number of foreigners. MP Mohammad Al-Dallal told reporters that the large number of expatriates put major pressure on essential services and infrastructure like health, traffic and others.

#### News in brief



#### Two kids killed in accident

**KUWAIT:** The interior ministry's relations and security media department said two children were killed when a vehicle driven by their mother flipped over along Fahaheel Expressway. According to initial reports, on arriving at the scene, paramedics found one child had died and the mother and three other children were in critical condition. The injured were rushed to Adan Hospital, where another child passed away. — Hanan Al-Saadoun



#### Fake cop escapes after fight

**KUWAIT:** An Asian told police he was mugged by a person claiming to be a policeman, who stopped him and asked for his ID, then searched the vehicle and robbed him. The victim said as passersby attempted to catch the suspect, he stabbed him in his right hand with a sharp object, but he was able to grab him and get his money back. The suspect then tried to carjack a vehicle driven by a man with a child on board and threatened him with the knife, but the driver refused to budge. The suspect still managed to escape. The interior ministry said a video of the incident that went viral showed attempts by some expats to avert a crime, save the child and prevent the suspect from escaping. — By Hanan Al-Saadoun

### Kuwait, China sign Silk City, 5 islands MoU

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait and China signed a memorandum of understanding yesterday on forming a mechanism for the development of Silk City and five Kuwaiti islands. The signing ceremony was held at the National Development and Reform Commission's headquarters in Beijing, Kuwait's Ambassador to China Samih Hayat told KUNA. Head of the apparatus for developing the planned Silk City and Boubyan Island Faisal Al-Medlej signed the deal from the Kuwaiti side, while NDRC's Vice Chairman Ning Jizhe signed for the Chinese side, added Hayat.

Prior to the signing, the two sides stressed the importance of boosting

their economies through China's 2013 "Belt and Road" initiative and revival of the historic Silk Road, he said. Kuwait's participation in the Silk Road project reflects HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's strategic "New Kuwait 2030" vision, which aims to transform the country into a financial, commercial and cultural hub at regional and international levels, Hayat said.

Revising the Silk Road project will restore Kuwait's commercial and economic role in the region, especially since the country enjoys a distinctive geographic location, and also contribute to the prosperity of the global economy, added the Kuwaiti diplomat. There is mutual and substantial consensus between the "New Kuwait 2030" vision and the "Belt and Road" initiative to revive the Silk Road and establish commercial, vital and safe zones to serve countries across the land and sea routes, he said.

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**BEIJING:** Head of the apparatus for developing Silk City and Boubyan Island Faisal Al-Medlej and NDRC Vice Chairman Ning Jizhe shake hands after signing an MoU yesterday. — KUNA

### Bloody Iraqi tribal custom is 'terrorism'

**BAGHDAD:** A bloody, age-old custom used by Iraq's powerful tribes to mete out justice has come under fire, with authorities classifying it as a "terrorist act" punishable by death. For centuries, Iraqi clans have used their own system to resolve disputes, with tribal dignitaries bringing together opposing sides to mediate in de facto "hearings". If one side failed to attend such a meeting, the

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**MISHKHAH, Iraq:** Members of an Iraqi clan gather inside a straw tent in this town south of Najaf on Nov 15, 2018. — AFP

### Undersea gas fires Egypt's energy dreams

**CAIRO:** Egypt is looking to use its vast, newly tapped undersea gas reserves to establish itself as a key energy exporter and revive its flagging economy. Encouraged by the discovery of huge natural gas fields in the Mediterranean, Cairo has in recent months signed gas deals with neighboring Israel as well as Cyprus and Greece. Former oil minister Osama Kamal said Egypt has a "plan to become a regional energy

hub". In the past year, gas has started flowing from four major fields off Egypt's Mediterranean coast, including the vast Zohr field, inaugurated with great ceremony by President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi.

Discovered in 2015 by Italian energy giant Eni, Zohr is the biggest gas field so far found in Egyptian waters. The immediate upshot has been that since September, the Arab world's most populous country has been able to halt imports of liquefied natural gas, which last year cost it some \$220 million per month. Coming after a financial crisis that pushed Cairo in 2016 to take a \$12 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund, the gas has been a lifeline. Egypt's budget deficit, which hit 10.9 percent of GDP in the financial year 2016-17, has since fallen to 9.8 percent. Gas production has now hit 184 million cu m a day.

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### Saudi king hosts Iraqi president

**RIYADH:** Saudi King Salman welcomed Iraq's new President Barham Saleh yesterday on his first official visit to the kingdom, amid a warming of ties between the Arab neighbors after years of strain. The king hosted a lunch and "discussed regional developments" with Saleh, the official Saudi Press Agency said, after the Iraqi leader's arrival in Riyadh following a visit to Saudi Arabia's archrival Iran. Saleh, a 58-year-old moderate Kurd elected to the largely ceremonial role last month, was on an

Continued on Page 24



**RIYADH:** Iraqi President Barham Saleh (left) is received by Saudi King Salman in the Saudi capital yesterday. — AFP

## Local

# Crown Prince receives senior state officials at Bayan Palace

## Sheikh Nawaf sponsors 25th Waqf forum

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem at Bayan Palace yesterday. His Highness also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

Moreover, His Highness Sheikh Nawaf received First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior 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 Crown Prince is set to sponsor the 25th Waqf forum, to be organized by the Secretariat General of Al-Awqaf, and themed 'Quarter of a Century in Service of Waqf'. Sheikh Nawaf will be represented at the event by Minister of Justice, Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Fahad Al-Afasi. The event will open today at 9:30 am at the Regency Kuwait Hotel. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem. — KUNA photos



**His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives 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 receives First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.**



**His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives 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 receives Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah.**

## Award ceremony in Kuwait attracts broad Arab participation

**KUWAIT:** Under the auspices of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, an annual prize-giving ceremony known as 'Takreem' was held late on Saturday. Attending the ceremony on behalf of His Highness the Amir, Minister of State for Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah said he was 'honored' to represent His Highness, extending his warmest congratulations to him on winning a 'lifetime achievement' award. The Kuwaiti minister attributed the 'resounding success' of this year's ceremony to the strenuous efforts of the organizers of this noble initiative, thanking His Highness the Amir for acknowledging the success attained by Arabs from all walks of life.

In his speech, the founder of the award Ricardo Karam hailed Kuwait as a 'prosperous and developed nation,' saying with Kuwait as the host nation, this year's edition of the ceremony is all the more special. He expressed his deepest gratitude to His Highness the Amir for organizing a gala that attracted youngsters

from across the wider Arab region, citing a young Iranian woman as among the most prominent award recipients. In words of encouragement directed at Arab youth, he emphatically urged them to aim high and 'look to the stars.'

Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Chairman and the Honorary Council Member Dr Helal Al-Sayer stressed that the honoring of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is an addition to his relentless calls for peace and moderation. The humanitarian acts grants His Highness the Amir the UN's Humanitarian Leader's title. Kuwait is at the forefront of donor countries and fully dedicated to peace in order to save lives and help those in need throughout the world, he added.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah delivered a speech in which he said that the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's achievements covered Kuwait, the Arab and Islamic nations, which have become prominent to the present day. In the meantime, Sheikh Salem Al-Jaber Al-Sabah expressed appreciation to the jury for giving the award for the late Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad.

The ninth session of the initiative honored many success stories, with the cultural creativity award went to Dr Ahmad Mater from Saudi Arabia, the young entrepreneurs award jointly went to Dr Sami Haurani from Jordan and Dr Nadine Hashash Haram from Lebanon.



**KUWAIT:** Minister of State for Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah poses for a group photo with the honorees during the annual 'Takreem' prize-giving ceremony. — Amiri Diwan photo

The humanitarian and civil services award went to Majda Jobran from Egypt while the leading Arab women award went to Fareah Al Saqqaf from Kuwait. The Prize for creativity in education was awarded to Professor Eltahir Ben Akhdar from Tunisia, the award for sustainable environmental development was received by Dr Majda Aboras from Saudi Arabia and the scientific and technological

innovation award for Professor Rachid Yazmi from Morocco.

The international contribution award went to the American Society for Refugees in the Near East (ANERA) - US - and the outstanding business leadership award was to Emile Haddad from Lebanon. Dr Nadia Al-Suqati from Saudi Arabia received the special excellence award while the award for the

life achievement went to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and 'Historical Leader' Award for the memory of late ruler Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad. Since its inception, 'Takreem' has been keen to become a meeting place for distinguished Arab personalities in its field and has become a source of inspiration for the Arab youth. — KUNA

## Oman Embassy's statement on the Sultanate's national day

Oman today is totally different from what it was, as developments that took place in the sultanate since Sultan Qaboos bin Said took over on July 23, 1970 are many, and actions got accelerated in various fields. Health and education services expanded, in addition to taking interest in increasing national production by paying attention to agriculture and financial investment, and benefiting from tourism and other matters.

Bearing this in mind, Ambassador of Oman to Kuwait Dr Adnan bin Ahmad Al-Ansari, on the occasion of Oman's national day, said the sultanate is keen on being open to Gulf countries, especially after the many moves that took place between these countries in order to unify stands.

On Oman-Kuwait relations, Ansari said relations between the two countries started with the tour of Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah towards the end of 1978, when he was Crown Prince and Prime Minister. This trip resulted in astonishing results which reflected the nature of ties that exist in the Gulf community. Oman was among the countries Sheikh Saad visited during his tour. A statement was issued at the end of the visit in which it was mentioned that the two sides discussed the Gulf situation



**Dr Adnan Al-Ansari**

and expressed the need to move quickly. Efforts then came together in order to attain unity in the region, that is determined by religious and national links, and around which the people's wishes revolve. That was the start, and we did not reach and will not reach an end.

Kuwait-Oman relations were able since many years to go beyond the classic nature of relations between brotherly countries, with the care of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said and HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. These relations, due to the joint will to strengthen and develop them so that they keep up with what His Majesty the Sultan and HH the Amir have in deep links and continued respect that expands with its good effects to all aspects and levels of relations between the two countries and people. The visit of HH the Amir of Kuwait last year was the crowning of the strong brotherly ties that link the two countries and Omani and Kuwaiti people at all official and popular levels and in all fields.

Relations and cooperation between the sultanate and Kuwait are moving towards their set goals bilaterally or within the framework of cooperation between GCC countries, as both wise leaderships are keen to move them further and expand their horizons, as well as support them so they can interpret what links the two countries and people of bonds and mutual interests.

Kuwait-Oman relations are based on strong foundations, which make them a model to be followed at the level of relations between brothers. The visit of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah to the sultanate and his talks with His Majesty Sultan Qaboos, that dealt with various topics and matters of interest to both countries and their people, and what the region is going through, has effects on the region's situations as well as the present and future of several brotherly countries and the region in turn as a whole, due to the strong bonds between countries and people of the region and between their interests, security, safety and prosperity in the present and future too. What makes relations between the two coun-

tries more important, as seen by Dr Ansari, is that His Majesty the Sultan and HH the Amir of Kuwait are in agreement with their strong belief in peace and the necessity to solve disputes peacefully and through constructive dialogue and clear compliance with the rules of international dealings, headed by good neighborliness and cooperation with good intentions to achieve joint and mutual interests and non-interference in domestic affairs of other countries under any circumstances or justifications, so that people and countries can build their presence and future according to what they see fit and according to their free choices.

Because there are no differences over such principles and they are backed by all people and international and regional treaties, their interpretation in practical steps in relations between all countries of the region should contribute to bringing them closer and ease reaching agreement between them over various issues, be them existing or probable, to achieve their mutual interest and increasing their individual and joint capabilities to face any existing and probable risks or threats due to what is going on in the region and around. Development and changes must be put by all into consideration.

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos and HH Sheikh Sabah enjoy major regional and international respect at all official and popular levels, and this adds more importance to their vision and their goodwill efforts that are always keen on what enhances the chances of peace, security, stability and closer ties between countries and people of the region.

Dr Adnan reminds of the Arab-European Center of Human Rights and International Law, with its premises in the Norwegian capital Oslo, granting His Majesty Sultan Qaboos the Arab Human Rights Award for 2016 in appreciation of his great efforts and noble contributions in the field of protecting, supporting and strengthening human rights, locally, in Arabia and internationally.

It is also known that the United Nations, through former secretary General Ban Ki-moon, honored HH the Amir

Sheikh Sabah by naming him a 'Humanitarian Leader' on Sept 9, 2014 in appreciation of his efforts, his contribution to humanitarian action and his continued support to UN humanitarian activities and presenting aid to many countries that face humanitarian or natural disasters or suffer from refugees and displaced people as a result of wars, regardless of any geographic, ethnic, religious or political considerations of those countries or people who face problems, and this gained international appreciation from within the United Nations and outside.

Kuwait continues its efforts in this field with several methods, including the presidency of the first and second international donors conferences to support the humanitarian situation in Syria in 2013 and 2014, as many Arab, Muslim and foreign countries benefited from humanitarian aid that backed the efforts of the United Nations in many areas around the world.

As for Oman-Kuwait relations, Dr Ansari said they are moving steadily and respond to the two countries' and peoples' longing, and attaining more power and ability to reach wider horizons due to the continued support of His Majesty the Sultan and HH the Amir of these relations.

As for commercial exchange between the sultanate and Kuwait, Dr Adnan adds that the joint Oman-Kuwait committee is exerting various efforts to expand cooperation between the two brotherly countries in many economic, commercial, education, scientific research, youth, civil service, environment and other various developmental fields, as many agreements exist with MoUs between the two countries over the years. The Oman-Kuwait private sectors carry out an increasing role to support means of investment between the two countries, especially in the commercial and real estate fields among others. Also there are many other avenues and promising opportunities to expand and augment cooperation fields, exchange investment and strengthen fruitful cooperation between the two countries and people to achieve joint and mutual interests between them.

Local

# Italian air force 'Frecce Tricolori' presents air show on Gulf Road

Kuwait to receive first batch of Eurofighters by beginning of 2020



KUWAIT: The acrobatics team of the Italian air force performs during an air show yesterday on Gulf Road. — Photos by Joseph Shagra

By Nawara Fattahova

**KUWAIT:** As part of the Italian Week in Kuwait from Nov 18 to 25, the acrobatics team of the Italian air force - 'Frecce Tricolori' - together with Italian military T346A and Eurofighter F2000-A aircraft, presented an air show yesterday on Gulf Road near the Kuwait Towers.

This extraordinary display was organized by the Embassy of Italy in Kuwait and sponsored by Leonardo, an Italy-based aerospace and defense company. The event was attended by the Chief of Staff of the Italian Air Force Lt Gen Alberto Rosso, Head of Operations at Kuwait Air Force Brigadier Pilot Staff Saif Al-Housaini, Chief of Staff of Kuwait Air Force Lt Gen Khaled Al-Khudher, Deputy Chief of Staff of Kuwait Air Force Abdullah Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah and other officials.

Housaini said the Kuwait air force will receive the first batch of Eurofighters by the beginning of 2020. "The total number is 28 Eurofighter aircraft, which will be delivered in various periods. The Eurofighter deal also includes training pilots and technicians. The Kuwait air force is now benefiting from the graduates of the Ahmad Al-Jaber Air Force College who qualified as pilots and air force technicians," he said.

**About the Italian air show in Kuwait City**

The extraordinary and breath-taking show included the T-346 A, the most advanced trainer aircraft available at the market today, and the Eurofighter Typhoon, the latest-generation multi-role fighter, - both performed by the Reparto Sperimentale Volo (Italian Air Force Flight Test Wing), which is responsible for the study and evaluation of all ground and flight tests of aeronautical weapon systems -, and the Italian Air Force aerobatic team



"Frecce Tricolori", the world's largest and most known acrobatics patrol, with their ten aircraft performing together. Heir of historical acrobatic traditions, this team of the Italian Air Force is well known all over the world for their stunning aircraft stunts, contributing with their prestige to promote and represents the excellence of Italy abroad.

**T-346A**

T-346A is the most advanced jet trainer aircraft available at the market and the only one specifically designed to prepare pilots for new generation aircraft.

In Lecce Galatina Air Base (where the 61st Training Wing is located), Italian Air Force trains cadets from all over the world with an advanced training syllabus based on T-346A, an innovative highly integrated training system

and Live Virtual and Constructive (LVC) Simulation technology. The Italian Air Force, in close cooperation with Leonardo Company, is developing the International Flight Training School which will consolidate the ongoing internationalization offer of Italian training services.

**Eurofighter Typhoon**

The Eurofighter Typhoon is the latest-generation, multi-role fighter with the largest number of orders, aircraft delivered and flight hours worldwide. It is also the fighter aircraft with the best operational safety record. Eight customers (Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Austria, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait and Qatar) have already ordered the Eurofighter Typhoon. Typhoon stems from a collaborative project between Italy, the United



Kingdom, Germany and Spain, which translates in the industrial participation of Leonardo, BAE Systems and Airbus Defense and Space. Leonardo plays a key role in the provision of Typhoon's airframe and provides over 60% of its avionics, including leading the consortia responsible for the aircraft's radar, defensive aids suite and infrared search and track system, which raises Leonardo's program contribution to 36%.

**About Italian Air Force**

The Italian Air Force (ITAF) is responsible for the protection of the national airspace. It operates 24/7, 365 days a year, in order to safeguard national interests both in Italy and abroad, in accordance with the political decisions and both national and international laws and regulations.

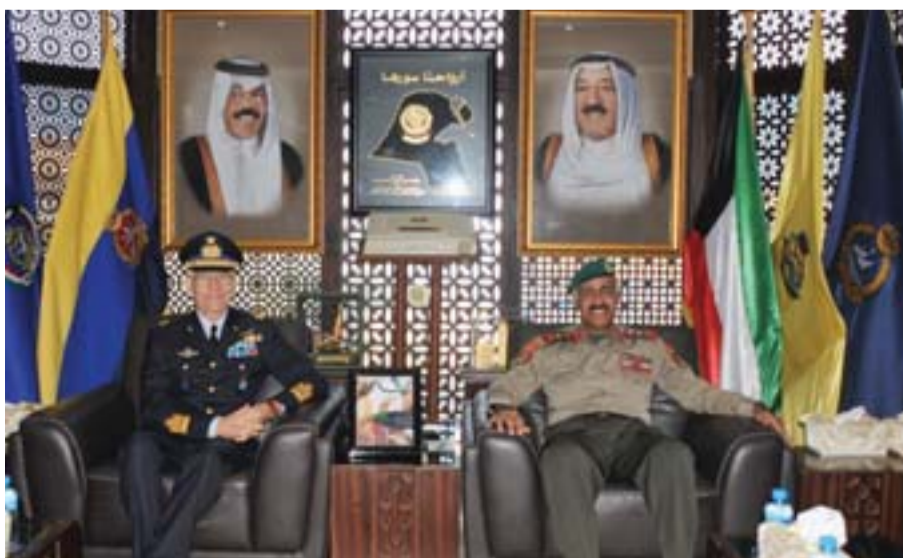
Wings represent the core of the ITAF. Their readiness and operational capabilities are based on highly specialized and trained personnel, together with technologically advanced assets and equipment.

The ITAF is fully integrated with the other Italian Armed Forces and cooperates with National agencies and International Organizations such as NATO and EU.

In order to fulfill its mission and tasks, the ITAF is equipped with the most advanced assets, weapon systems and state-of-the-art technology. Its personnel are trained to the highest standards in order to operate and achieve the required readiness and effectiveness. ITAF training facilities are highly considered and appreciated within the International Community. They host and train many international students and even instructors.



## Army chief meets Italian General

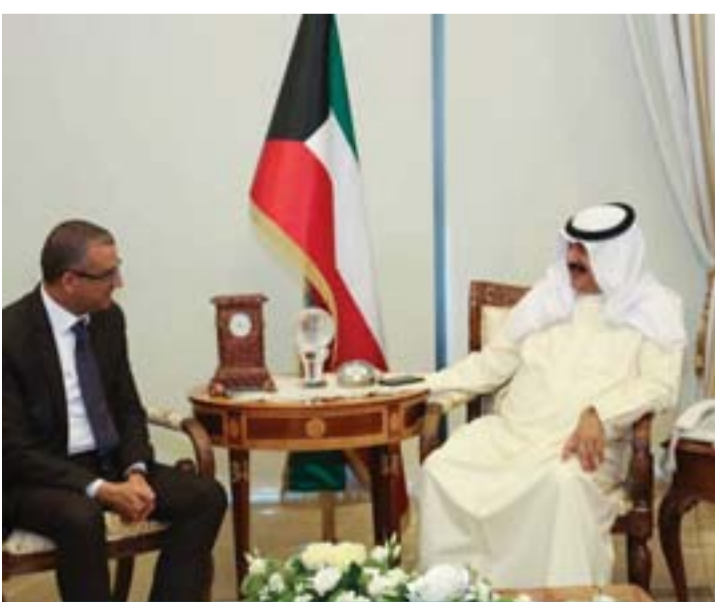


KUWAIT: Chief of the Kuwaiti Army's General Staff Lt Gen Mohammad Al-Khudher meets with the visiting Chief of Staff of the Italian Air Force Gen Alberto Rosso. — KUNA

**KUWAIT:** Chief of the Kuwaiti Army's General Staff Lt Gen Mohammad Al-Khudher and visiting Chief of Staff of the Italian Air Force Gen Alberto Rosso and his accompanying delegation discussed yesterday several issues of mutual interest. They also considered ways of

promoting and developing military relations between Kuwait and Italy, the Kuwaiti army said in a press statement. Kuwaiti Air Force Commander Air Vice-Marshal Adnan Al-Fadhli and Italy's Defense Attache in Kuwait Col Vito Cracas attended the meeting. — KUNA

## Deputy FM hosts Tunisian, Spanish envoys



KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah meets with Tunisian Ambassador to Kuwait Ahmad bin Saghir. — KUNA

**KUWAIT:** Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah yesterday met with Tunisian Ambassador to Kuwait Ahmad bin Saghir on bilateral ties and the latest regional and interna-



Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah meets with Spanish Ambassador to Kuwait Alvaro Rodriguez. — KUNA

tional developments. The Kuwaiti official then received Spanish Ambassador to Kuwait Alvaro Rodriguez, discussing Kuwaiti-Spanish cooperative relations and the current situations in both

regional and international domains. Assistant Foreign Minister for the Deputy Foreign Minister's Office Ambassador Ayham Al-Omar was present at the meeting. — KUNA

## Local

## Photo of the Day



**KUWAIT:** A trainer is seen with his horse during the Fourth Egyptian Horse Championship, which concluded in Kuwait on Saturday. The tournament was organized under the aegis of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as part of the Kuwaiti Arabian Horse Festival. — Photo by Jaber Abdelkhalq (KUNA)

## Info minister highlights strong ties with Greece

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's Information Minister Mohammad Al-Jabri said yesterday that relations with Greece have made much progress in various fields over the years. A deal between Kuwait and Greece over issues of mutual concern has been in place

since 1978. Jabri said amid a meeting with the mayor of the Greek island of Kos Giorgos Kyritsis. Jabri, who also serves as minister of state for youth affairs, went on to say that Kuwait's political leaders are eager to deepen ties with Greece, revealing that Kyritsis has invited him to visit the southeast European nation.

The Greek official said that Athens and Kuwait share many common interests, hailing Kos as an alluring destination among tourists all over the world, citing famed Greek physician Hippocrates as a native of the picturesque island. On the purpose of his visit to Kuwait, he said it aims to ratchet up economic cooperation with the Gulf state, in addition to improving trade ties. — KUNA

## Ooredoo organized 'Beat Diabetes' Awareness Campaign

**KUWAIT:** Ooredoo Kuwait has organized an internal diabetes awareness campaign for its employees in collaboration with the Al-Mutawa Pharmacies; an initiative that reiterates its commitment towards corporate social responsibility.

In collaboration with Al-Mutawa Pharmacies, Ooredoo provided employees to check their blood sugar levels and blood pressure levels by specialized pharmacists at its main headquarters in Kuwait City, with positive participation from its employees.

Mijbil Alayoub, Senior Director of Corporate Communications at Ooredoo Kuwait said: "There is no better feeling than contributing to changing other people's lives, we believe that raising awareness of diabetes is essential in order to ensure proper prevention and treatment."

According to the Federal Diabetes Federation, the number of people with diabetes is expected to rise to 522 million by 2030, three out of four people with diabetes live in low and middle income countries, and diabetes is a leading cause of heart disease, stroke, blindness, kidney failure, and lower limb amputation.

Diabetes is a disease in which the body's

ability to produce or respond to the hormone insulin is impaired, resulting in abnormal metabolism of carbohydrates and elevated levels of glucose in the blood. It is identified by various types: Type 1 occurs when insulin production is inadequate, while Type 2 occurs when insulin is produced adequately but the body's cells do not respond properly to it.

It is worth mentioning that Al-Mutawa Pharmacies is one of the leading pharmacies in Kuwait; it is managed by Ali Abdulwahab Al-Mutawa Commercial Company. Al-Mutawa Pharmacies has more than 25 pharmacies distributed in all Kuwait governorates. It consists of a team of specialized pharmacists who are available 24 hours seven days a week. They have a call center which consists of pharmacists ready to answer any enquiries about treatment.



**KUWAIT:** Information Minister Mohammad Al-Jabri meets with the mayor of the Greek island of Kos Giorgos Kyritsis. — KUNA



## Zajel honor rains emergency committee

**KUWAIT:** Zajel team of volunteers honored the interagency committee on response to heavy rains at a ceremony hosted by the Civil Defense HQ on Saturday. The emergency committee played an exemplary role in alleviating

the impact of the downpour on the country in the recent days, spokesperson of the team Jenan Al-Qana'e said. "Our visit to the headquarters of the committee at the Civil Defense tonight is meant to express gratitude for the members of the committee from various state bodies who helped protect the safety of the public and property," she added. Qana'e noted that her team aims to spread the spirit of voluntary humanitarian action among the Kuwaiti youth guided by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Humanitarian Leader. — KUNA



## Writings found in Kuwait pre-historic: Official

**KUWAIT:** Excavations in Kuwait have found important writings in the Sumerian, Aramaic and Greek Languages, placing Kuwait on historic maps, an official said Saturday. Dr Sultan Al-



**Dr Sultan Al-Duweesh**

of social, cultural, economic and political lives of pre-historic human communities up until the

Duweesh, Director of Antiquities and Museums at the National Council for Culture, Art and Letters (NCCAL), said writings on stones in the Arabian Peninsula "are major evidence about the past, and depict images

Iron Age." He was lecturing about writings and engravings in Kuwait, held on sidelines of Kuwait Book Fair. Writing is one of the greatest inventions which documents historic stages, he said, and excavations found "important writings in Kuwait lands."

Sumerian Language, said Duweesh, documented history of mankind and helped human beings to write their knowledge, science and tradition to convey it to next generations. Sumerian writings, he added, were also found in Dilmun Civilization's sites in Failaka Island in Kuwait and in Bahrain, where hundreds of stamps and stones bearing Sumerian and Akkadian writings. — KUNA

Local

# KOC signs \$1.3 billion contracts to buy over 86 drilling rigs

## Manpower authority launches platform to support SMEs

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) recently signed contracts to buy over 86 drilling rigs, which is the largest order in KOC's history with a total value of \$1.3 billion, company CEO Jamal Jaafar said. He also noted that 30 rigs had already been delivered by the contracted Chinese, American and Italian companies. The rigs were purchased instead of being rented due to the prohibitive daily rental price of \$12,000-\$14,000 per rig, Jaafar explained.

Separately, the Clean Fuel Project Manager at the Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) Shuja Al-Ajmi stressed eight units had been successfully upgraded and operated and that 2,059 connection operations were made in the project in record time.

### Supporting SMEs

The Public Authority for Manpower's public relations manager Aseel Al-Mezyad announced launching a new

service on the authority's website to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Mezyad added that out of its strong belief in developing the role of the private sector in supporting SMEs, the authority built a special website to support these enterprises in collaboration with the planning secretariat general.



### Solid waste

Kuwait Municipality's deputy director for projects Nadiya Al-Shareeda said handling of solid waste was being done according to a scientific strategy including preserving lands and reusing them and building a state-of-the-art plant to process waste, including high-quality incinerators.

for the government failure and then propose solutions. He said that one of the three members of the panel, MP Al-Humaidi Al-Subaie has resigned and the assembly will decide on that.

Meanwhile, Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem said that Kuwaiti-Egyptian relations remain very strong and will remain so. He also defended MP Safa Al-Hashem for strong criticism she received over a controversy regarding a quarrel between an Egyptian woman and four Kuwaiti women. The Egyptian woman claimed she was mercilessly beaten by the Kuwaiti women. MP Hashem came to the defense of the Kuwaiti women and strongly lashed out at attempts by the Egyptian government to interfere.

## Educator wins patent for reducing persistent fever

**KUWAIT:** The Chairman of Department of Environmental Technology Management in College of Life Sciences at Kuwait University Dr Bader Al-Enezi has earned a patent from the United States Patent and Trademark Office for inventing a device designed to reduce persistent fever. The new invention aims to reduce body temperature to normal ranges for a long period of time and medication intake as well without the need for a constant supervision. Enezi said in a press statement yesterday. The device would contribute significantly to reducing costs and efforts, in addition to treating numerous patients, the Kuwaiti professor said. It is also convenient and suitable for use in homes, clinics, and hospitals, he added. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Two people were injured in a three-car collision reported on the Sixth Ring Road late Saturday night. Firefighters used special equipment to free the injured men who were trapped in their wrecked vehicles. An investigation was opened to reveal the cause of the accident. — By Hanan Al-Saadoun

## Inspectors seize 2,600 batteries with fake labels

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's Ministry of Commerce and Industry's inspectors seized 2,600 batteries because the importer was changing labels of country of origin with fake ones before selling them. The importer changed labels of vehicle and truck batteries that show the country of origin with fake ones in a warehouse in Industrial Shuwaikh, the ministry said in a statement Saturday. Ministry teams have been inspecting shops and warehouses in Industrial Shuwaikh and succeeded in discovering the fake labels, it added. It urged people to call 135 if they believed the product they bought was fake, stressing the importance of keeping the invoice. — KUNA

## Farmers to be compensated for rain damage

By Meshaal Al-Enezi and Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Farmers affected by the recent heavy rains will be compensated for any damage based on government instructions, Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) Director Sheikh Mohammed Al-Yousif Al-Sabah said yesterday. Speaking on inaugurating the second heritage exhibition of creative Kuwaitis at Kuwait Zoo, Yousif said PAAAFR is working on building a new zoo in Jahra over a

total area of 1.4 million square meters.

### Flying gravel

The relations and security information department said social media posts warning motorists not to move their vehicles if their windows are shattered by flying gravel and call police to lodge a complaint are untrue. The traffic department had earlier said it will not issue tickets to vehicles if their windows are broken by gravel. Those who publish false social media claims face legal action, it warned.

### Patent rights

Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan issued a ministerial decision reducing the fees paid for patent rights registration by 50 percent for entrepreneurs already registered with the National Fund for SME Development.



**KUWAIT:** PAAAFR Director Sheikh Mohammed Al-Yousif Al-Sabah participates in the second heritage exhibition of creative Kuwaitis at Kuwait Zoo. — KUNA

Legalese

## Rainfall damage



By Attorney Fajer Ahmed

**K**uwait has been blessed with a lot of rainfall this year (yes, it is a blessing in its own way). I know that although the rain brings a lot of good with it, it can also be a cause of destruction for many. Some families have been left with damaged houses, vehicles and other valuable possessions. Today I am answering legal questions regarding the rainfall.

### Suing the government

**Questions:** Do I have the right to sue the government for damages to my possessions?

**Fajer:** Many readers have been asking this question, and to be honest, I found this question weird at first. Rain is an act of God, yet there have been discussions on suing the government for the damages because of the poor infrastructure in certain areas. This depends on a few things.

If your house is damaged because of the poor infrastructure or the roads or an error from the government, for example, no sewage facilities, then you could possibly sue for damages. If the house is damaged because of poor construction by the contractor, ie not to the specifications requested, then you can claim for damages and compensation from the contractor.

With the above said, before bringing a claim to court, you will first need prove that your house was actually damaged - this cannot be just with photos. You will need to go to a police station and ask them to come and see the damage and 'file' it - this will assist you in filing your case in court. The same applies to damaged cars.

### B2B agreement

**Question:** I own a business and signed a B2B agreement with another business. I am supplying products to the business, but I could not do so last week because of the rainfall. The business is asking for compensation because of the loss they suffered on the day that I could not supply them with goods. Do they have the legal right to do so?

**Fajer:** Under law, natural disasters or impediments are referred to as force majeure, or may be referred to acts of God. In other words, they are events that are unforeseen and cannot be controlled, and therefore obligations under a contract are exempted. Heavy rainfall can be seen as force majeure.

I hope everyone stays safe and that everyone understands that the government is doing everything it can, including the police force and other governmental entities, to ensure everyone's safety.

For questions or queries, please email us at [info@tl-legal.com](mailto:info@tl-legal.com).

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# International

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2018



'Moral panic' grips Indonesia's LGBT

## Australia surf lesson turns bloody after shark attack

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PARADISE: US President Donald Trump views damage from wildfires in Paradise, California. President Donald Trump arrived in California to meet with officials, victims and the 'unbelievably brave' firefighters there, as more than 1,000 people remain listed as missing in the worst-ever wildfire to hit the US state. — AFP

## 'Sad' Trump visits fire-wracked California

### 76 killed; more than 1,200 listed as missing

PARADISE: President Donald Trump has expressed sadness at the devastation caused by fires in a California town, but persisted in his controversial claim that forest mismanagement was responsible for the tragedy, which has killed 76 and left more than 1,200 listed as missing. "This is very sad," Trump said after surveying the remains of Paradise, where nearly the only people out on the road were emergency services workers, surrounded by the twisted remains of a community incinerated by the flames.

"They're telling me this is not as bad as some areas; some areas are even beyond this, they're just charred," he added after looking at a street lined with melted cars, tree stumps and the foundations of wrecked houses. The deadliest and most destructive wildfire in California's history, the so-called Camp Fire, has now claimed 76 lives after authorities on Saturday confirmed five more victims. The blaze has devoured an area roughly the size of Chicago, destroying nearly 10,000 homes and more than 2,500 other buildings. In Chico, near Paradise, Trump met with firefighters and other first responders at a makeshift headquarters.

Senior fire officials recounted how quickly the blaze spread, complicating evacuation efforts, as Trump studied

a huge map spread across a table showing where fires continue to burn. Reviving an earlier controversy, Trump repeated his claim that California had mismanaged its forests and was largely to blame for the fires. "I'm committed to make sure that we get all of this cleaned out and protected, (we've) got to take care of the forest, it's very important," Trump said in Paradise. Days ago Trump threatened to cut federal funding to California over its alleged "gross mismanagement" of forests.

#### Fire haze

Brian Rice, president of California Professional Firefighters, called Trump's earlier remarks "ill-informed", noting the federal government had cut spending on forest management. Asked if he believed climate change had played any role in the fires, Trump again pointed to the forest "management factor" and insisted that his "strong opinion" remained unchanged. Trump has long been skeptical of man's role in global warming despite mounting scientific evidence that the burning of fossil fuels is heating the planet and leading to more extreme weather. The inferno erupted November 8, laying waste to Paradise in the northern foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains and

sending thousands fleeing. The Camp Fire and another huge blaze have created a serious smoke problem across vast areas of the country's largest state. When Trump stepped out of Air Force One at Beale Air Force Base north of capital city Sacramento, the sun struggled to cut through haze so dense it covered the base like a fog. More than 1,200 people were listed as missing from the Camp Fire, according to a list issued Saturday by the Butte County Sheriff. Sheriff Kory Honea has said there could be duplicate names and some people who had escaped could be unaware they were listed as unaccounted for. More than 300 people recorded as missing have already been found. The Republican president was accompanied on his visit by son-in-law Jared Kushner and chief of staff John Kelly.

#### Living in tents

They were met on the tarmac by Governor Jerry Brown and Governor-elect Gavin Newsom, both of them Democrats in a state that leans strongly that way. As they drove through the state, several signs thanked Trump for coming but one called him a "moron". Roslyn Roberts, 73, who fled from her home in Paradise, said she voted for Trump but disagreed with his views about forest manage-

ment. "I would tell him that this fire has nothing to do with forest mismanagement."

Thousands and thousands of homes got destroyed with no trees around," she said at a shelter set up by the American Red Cross in a church. In Chico, volunteers had erected a tented encampment for evacuees. The Camp Fire has burned 149,000 acres (60,000 hectares) and was 55-percent contained late Saturday, California's fire service said. Authorities said 47,200 people had been evacuated because of the fire and nearly 1,200 were living in shelters.

Much of the work is now focused on Paradise, where many retirees were unable to get out in time. Rescuers with sniffer dogs have been conducting house-to-house searches. Three other people have died in southern California in a blaze dubbed the Woolsey Fire, which engulfed parts of Malibu and destroyed the homes of several celebrities. That inferno, about two thirds the size of the Camp Fire, was 84 percent contained Saturday as Trump surveyed the damage at well-to-do homes there. California's tragedy touched the heart of Pope Francis in Rome, where on Sunday he sent out "a special prayer... to those affected by the fires that are ravaging California." — AFP

## Cyclone death toll hits 33 in southeast India

NEW DELHI: The death toll from a cyclone that battered India's eastern coast has reached 33, a disaster official said yesterday, as authorities assessed the damage caused by the powerful storm. Cyclone Gaja, which packed winds of up to 120 kilometers (75 miles) per hour, had barreled into Tamil Nadu state after hitting the coast on Friday. Thousands of trees were felled by winds that destroyed homes and hundreds of thousands were forced to flee to shelters.

"So far 20 men, 11 women, and two children have died due to the cyclone," said an official with the state disaster management authority, who asked not to be named as he was not authorized to speak to media. "As of now 177,500 people are housed in over 351 camps. Thousands of trees have been uprooted and livestock has also been badly affected," he said. Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswami, who has announced compensation of \$14,000 each to the families of victims, said most deaths were caused by flooding, house collapses and electrocution.

Hundreds of emergency workers have been pressed into service to restore roads and power cables, as the full scale of the disaster becomes clear. A Navy helicopter and



NAGAPATTINAM: Indian residents clear away fallen trees near the train station in Nagapattinam in India's southern Tamil Nadu state after a cyclone struck the region. — AFP

two ships have joined relief efforts in the state, the local government said. India's weather department said the cyclonic depression had moved westwards Saturday into the neighboring Kerala state before continuing into the Arabian Sea.

Gaja is the second major storm to hit

India's east coast in recent weeks. Cyclone Titli battered Odisha state in October, killing at least two people. Storms regularly hit southern India between April and December. Last year, Cyclone Ockhi left nearly 250 people dead in Tamil Nadu and Kerala states. — AFP

## India's elephant hospital cheers animal activists, draws tourists

MATHURA: At India's first hospital for elephants, opened last week in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, 49-year old Asha placed her left foreleg on a stool for a doctor to attend to an injury while visitors filmed it all on their mobile phones. The facility, armed with facilities such as wireless digital X-Ray, thermal imaging, ultrasonography, tranquilization devices and quarantine facilities, has not only come as a respite to the elephants but is also attracting local and foreign tourists.

Elephants are an important part of India's culture and are prominently displayed in festivals and processions in the south of the country. They are also used as tourist attractions at several forts and palaces in the northern and western regions. The hospital, inaugurated on Friday in the Hindu holy town of Mathura, is spread over 12,000 square feet and is designed to treat injured, sick or geriatric elephants. "I think by building a hospital we are underlining the fact that ele-

phants need welfare measures as much as any other animal," Geeta Seshamani, co-founder of Wildlife SOS, the non-profit behind the hospital, told Reuters TV.

"That captive elephants are not meant to be used and abused but instead have to be given the respect which an animal needs if you are going to be using the animal." While elephants are revered as a cultural and religious symbol in India, they are also ill-treated by their unschooled mahouts and often fall victim to electrocution, poaching, train accidents and poisoning, animal rights activists say. India's elephant population fell to 27,312 in 2017 from 29,391-30,711 in 2012, government data shows.

Hundreds of elephants across India, which accounts for more than half of Asia's elephant population, are held in captivity and sharp metal hooks are often used to pinch and tease them into subordination. The hospital, on the banks of the Yamuna River, is close to an elephant conservation and care centre run by Wildlife SOS that is home to 22 elephants. Elizabeth Ritson, a tourist from Australia, said she was glad there was now a dedicated hospital for elephants in India. "Look at them, they are so much happier and when you see the abuse that they have been through, the horrible shackles that were put on their feet and to see them all healed up, it's just really nice," she said. — Reuters

International

# Swimmer killed by stingray; 2 mauled by sharks in Australia

## Australia surf lesson turns bloody after shark attack

**SYDNEY:** A swimmer died after a rare suspected stingray attack off an Australian beach while another two people were mauled in separate shark encounters this weekend. The 42-year-old's death came more than a decade after world-renowned "Crocodile Hunter" Steve Irwin was killed when a stingray barb punctured his chest while he was filming on the famed Great Barrier Reef. The man was in waters off Lauderdale Beach some 23 kilometers (14 miles) from Hobart in the southern island state of Tasmania Saturday when he "sustained a puncture wound to his lower abdomen... possibly inflicted by a marine animal", police said.

He was brought onto the beach by friends but suffered a heart attack and was unable to be resuscitated, police added. "It's consistent with (a stingray injury) but further investigation and examination of the deceased may be able to give a bit more of a concrete fact on that," Tasmania Police Senior Constable Brett Bowering told the Sunday Tasmanian. "It's a pretty traumatic incident to see." Commonly found in tropical waters, stingrays rarely attack humans but

their barbs, at the end of their tails, are coated in toxic venom which they use to defend themselves when threatened.

### Two attacks

In the first shark attack of the weekend, a man taking part in a surf lesson off the east coast suffered serious cuts after an encounter on Saturday. The 24-year-old was wading waist-deep in waters off Seven Mile Beach some 130 kilometers (81 miles) south of Sydney when he "felt a forceful lashing motion against his legs", New South Wales Ambulance said.

He had "significant cuts and haemorrhage as well as several puncture wounds to his wetsuit and right leg... and cuts to his hand", NSW Ambulance duty opera-

tions manager Inspector Jordan Emery told reporters Saturday.

The beach was closed and authorities sought to identify the shark species involved. That attack was followed by another on Sunday off the north coast, when a teenage boy was bitten on his arm and leg while spearfishing, police said. The 17-year-old was spearfishing from a vessel off the coast of Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory when he sustained "significant injuries" to his arm. St John Ambulance told national broadcaster ABC.

"Obviously there's quite a large amount of bleeding that's occurred," St John Ambulance's Craig Garraway said. He said shark encounters in the NT were unusual, adding: "I've been around a long time and I'll be honest, I can't remember

a shark attack." The two attacks are the sixth and seventh off Australian beaches in two months, amid public debate about how to reduce the risk of encounters between sharks and the growing number of people using the ocean for leisure. Australia has one of the world's highest incidences of shark attacks, but fatalities remain rare.

There have been 13 "unprovoked" shark attacks off the vast continent's coast this year, including one death after a swimmer was mauled by a shark in the Whitsunday Islands in early November, according to data from Sydney's Taronga Zoo. There were 15 attacks—one fatal—last year, and 17 encounters and two deaths in 2016, the data showed. New South Wales hosted an international conference with marine experts in 2015 after a sharp increase in attacks across Australia that year to 22, including the death of a Japanese surfer after his legs were torn off by a shark. The state, Australia's most populous, has trialed non-lethal measures such as aerial drones to track shark movements and "smart" drum lines that alert authorities to their presence. —AFP



13 'unprovoked' shark attacks off coast this year

## Coalition hits back over civilian deaths in east Syria

**BEIRUT:** The US-led anti-jihadist coalition hit back yesterday at reports its air strikes on an Islamic State group holdout in eastern Syria had killed civilians, appearing to blame their deaths on regime forces. The jihadist IS group overran large swathes of Syria and neighboring Iraq in 2014, declaring a "caliphate" in territory it controlled, but has since lost most of it to various offensives.

In war-torn Syria, multiple offensives have now whittled down territory IS once controlled to a small pocket in the eastern province of Deir Ezzor on the Iraqi border. A Kurdish-led alliance backed by the coalition is battling to expel IS from that holdout on the eastern bank of the Euphrates, while Russian-backed regime forces have been fighting the jihadists west of the river. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitor said coalition strikes on Saturday killed 43 people, including 36 family members of IS fighters in the village of Abu Al-Husn in the jihadist pocket.

But the coalition denied that its air raids there had killed any non-combatants. The US envoy for the coalition, Brett McGurk, on Sunday appeared to blame

regime forces stationed "across the river" for the civilian casualties. "Reports of civilian casualties attributed to coalition strikes are false. All other forces should cease uncoordinated fires from across the river immediately," he said on Twitter. In a statement late Saturday, the coalition reported 19 coalition strikes on IS targets "free of civilian presence" between late Friday and Saturday afternoon in the jihadist enclave, which includes the town of Hajin.

### 'Other actors'

The coalition's "initial assessment following the strikes is that there was no evidence of civilians near the strikes", it said. But the coalition "detected a total of ten additional strikes in the same area of Hajin that did not originate from the coalition or partner forces", it added. It called "on all other actors to cease uncoordinated fires across the Euphrates". The Observatory said regime forces and IS fighters exchanged fire across the river on Saturday, but pro-government shelling did not hit Abu al-Husn.

The Britain-based war monitor says it obtains its information from sources inside Syria, and determines who carries out air strikes according to type, location, flight patterns and munitions involved. The US-led international coalition has consistently denied reports by the Observatory in recent weeks that its air raids have killed civilians. It says it takes allegations of civilian casualties seriously and investigates each one thoroughly. Syria's war has killed more than 360,000 people since it started in 2011



**QAMISHLI:** Fighters from the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), participate in a military parade during the funeral of a fellow fighter, killed during a military mission, in the Kurdish-controlled city of Qamishli in northeastern Syria. —AFP

with the brutal repression of anti-government protests.

Since 2014, the US-led coalition has acknowledged direct responsibility for over 1,100 civilian deaths in Syria and Iraq, but rights groups put the number much higher. The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, who are backed by coalition air strikes, launched an assault to seize the eastern pocket of Hajin from IS in September. The SDF assault was slowed by a fierce jihadist fightback, and then briefly put on hold to protest Turkish shelling of Kurdish militia positions in northern Syria. An SDF commander on Saturday said his forces were

advancing cautiously due to "fields of landmines, trenches, tunnels and barricades set up by IS".

To the southwest, regime forces on Saturday regained control of a volcanic plateau between the provinces of Damascus and Sweida on Saturday after weeks of fighting. Pro-government fighters regained control of Tulul al-Safa "after IS fighters withdrew from it and headed east into the Badia desert", Observatory chief Rami Abdel Rahman said. The withdrawal likely came "under a deal with the regime forces" after weeks of encirclement and air raids, he said. —AFP

## CAR militia leader 'Colonel Rambo' extradited to ICC

**BANGUI:** A former militia leader in the Central African Republic nicknamed "Colonel Rambo" was on Saturday extradited to The Hague to stand trial for war crimes and crimes against humanity at the International Criminal Court. Currently a lawmaker, Alfred Yekatom's extradition was the first of its kind from the CAR. Former army officer Yekatom, 43, was the target of US sanctions in 2015 for suspected attacks against Muslims, civilian deaths, and for using child fighters.

After being elected to parliament in 2016, he was arrested in October for opening fire inside the legislature while its new president was being elected. ICC chief prosecutor Fatou Bensouda welcomed the extradition, saying it "advances the cause of justice in the Central African Republic" and promising that she would continue to pursue her "quest for truth and justice". Pierre Brunisso from the International Federation of Human Rights watchdog added that it sent "a strong message to the leaders of armed groups". "Those who think they can claim an amnesty at the negotiating table are mistaken," he said.

The ICC said Yekatom would be tried for "alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity" carried out by so-called anti-balaka militias. The court launched an investigation in September 2014 into crimes committed in the country since 2012. A three-judge bench of the Hague-based court's pre-trial chamber issued an arrest warrant against Yekatom last Sunday. "The Chamber is satisfied that the overall supporting evidence is sufficient to establish reasonable grounds that Yekatom bears criminal responsibility," the judges said in the warrant, made public by the ICC late on Saturday.

This included acts of murder, torture, deportation and using child soldiers younger than 15 years in the anti-balaka group between December 5, 2013 and August 2014. In continuing violence however, a Tanzanian peacekeeper died late Friday after an attack on a UN base and a priest was found burned to death, the UN and Catholic Church said after sectarian clashes that claimed nearly 40 lives. The soldier died of injuries sustained in the raid on the base in Gbambia in the country's west, the UN mission MINUSCA said.

### Revenge attacks

An armed group called Siriri, created this year by Fulani cattle herders, operates in the area. Led by a man named



**BANGUI:** Members of the armed forces arrest Central African MP Alfred Yekatom aka 'Rambo' (center), who represents the southern M'balke district former militia leader, after he fired the gun at the parliament in Bangui. —AFP

Ardo Abba, its purported aim is to thwart attacks by cattle rustlers. The UN said the group had attacked Gbambia in mid-June. A Tanzanian UN peacekeeper died that month after Siriri staged an ambush in the region. Meanwhile, the priest's charred body was recovered in the central town of Alindao, Father Mathieu Bondobo, vicar-general of the main cathedral in Bangui said.

On Friday, the UN said 37 deaths were confirmed in Alindao—including that

of another priest—while 20,000 people were affected by the violence. "Thousands" were forced to flee. The bloodletting began Thursday when Christian militiamen killed Muslims, prompting revenge attacks during which a church was set ablaze. Alindao is a stronghold of the Union for Peace in CAR (UPC), a Muslim militia. It has witnessed chronic fighting in recent months that has also killed other UN soldiers and a humanitarian aid worker. —AFP

## N Korean new 'tactical' weapon test highlights military modernization

**SEOUL:** North Korea's claim last week that it had tested an unidentified "ultramodern tactical weapon" highlighted its desire to upgrade its conventional arms and reassure its military even as talks are under way to end its nuclear program, analysts said. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un witnessed the test of a newly developed tactical weapon that could serve as a "steel wall", state media reported on Friday, without giving

details of the weapon.

It was Kim's first observation of a weapons test this year and could complicate already stalled nuclear talks with the United States, although Washington and Seoul downplayed the development in an apparent effort not to derail negotiations. Experts say the test was part of Kim's initiative to shift the mainstay of the conventional military power from a nearly 1.3 million-strong army to high-tech weapons.

"This is sort of like the North Korean version of military reform," said Choi Kang, vice president of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies in Seoul. "If we have to find an underlying message to the outside world, it's 'Don't underestimate us, we are modernizing too.'" New advanced weapons might be even more crucial if the country were to abandon at

least some of its nuclear arsenal. Although heavily-sanctioned Pyongyang is easily outspent in defense funding by Seoul and Washington, the North's forward-deployed troops, guns and multiple-launch artillery rocket systems (MLRS) pose a significant threat to the allies.

The North Korean military has nearly 5,500 MLRS, 4,300 tanks, 2,500 armored vehicles, 810 fighter jets, 430 combatant vessels and 70 submarines, according to a 2016 assessment by the South's defense ministry. The Centre for Strategic and International Studies said last week it has identified at least 13 undeclared missile bases inside North Korea. The Washington-based think tank has also said Pyongyang has been developing hovercraft units for its 200,000-strong special forces as part of the military modernization drive. —AFP

## Panama inmates build confession boxes for papal visit

**PACORA:** Amid swirling sawdust and the smell of fresh paint, the inmates of a grim Panamanian prison are diligently preparing for the upcoming visit of Pope Francis, hoping for forgiveness and praying for freedom. The sound of nails being deftly hammered into wood mingles with music in the makeshift workshop of the overcrowded La Joya prison, northeast of Panama City. Around 30 inmates are busy making confession boxes that will be used by pilgrims to confess their sins to priests during the pope's January 22-27 visit to mark the Catholic World Youth Day festival. A painting on one of the walls at the entrance to La Joya seems oddly prophetic: "God impacts your life, let yourself be led to him." Inmates like Felix Salinas hold out hope that a papal visit will impact their lives in some concrete way.

"I would ask him to give me a chance. A pardon at least. Because that is what we all want here," said Salinas, a 50-year-old driver locked up here since 2015. Justino Hernandez, 62 and a devout Catholic, is particularly looking forward to the papal visit, the first to the Central American country since the late John Paul II made the trip in 1983. "The most important thing is to tell him that we are all entitled to a second chance and to freedom, that he gives us the chance to get out of this place," he said. Hernandez is prepared to ask the pope's forgiveness "as many times as he wants."

The pope's agenda has yet to be finalized, and though he has visited prisons before, there has been no suggestion that he will visit the inmates of La Joya. The 9,700 inmates packed into La Joya is double the prison's capacity. Conditions here have been condemned by human rights organizations. From 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, the prisoners cut out traced designs from wood panels, assemble crosses and then sand, paint and upholster the confessionals, under an instructor's watchful eye. It's unpaid work, but most detainees hope their reward will come from Francis noticing their handiwork, or at least being told about it, and then pardon them—failing that, a papal blessing.

### Surpassing expectations

The brightly painted confessional booths will be set up in a so-called "Park of Forgiveness," an area of the capital's Omar Park that will be dedicated to WYD activities. Most of the detainees have never done this kind of work before but it has been such a success that the prison has received orders to make 70 information kiosks and to prepare food bags for pilgrims.

Sharon Diaz, deputy head of the Penitentiary system, told AFP that the project—rewarded by a day's deduction from inmates' sentences for every two days worked—has surpassed expectations. "They have taken on this task not only in a personal way but in a spiritual way too, and the surprising thing about this initiative is that these are people deprived of freedom who don't profess the Catholic faith, and yet have still been enthusiastic," said Diaz. The project's supervisor Luis Vega said "there are no complications with them. They are very cooperative." —AFP



**North Korean leader Kim Jong Un (center) visits the Taegwan glass factory at an undisclosed location in North Korea. —AFP**

## International

# Macron and Merkel meet amid WWI centenary debate on Europe's army

## France, Germany present a united front in countering global turmoil

**BERLIN:** The leaders of France and Germany meet in Berlin yesterday to jointly remember the victims of European wars, presenting also a united front in countering global turmoil stoked by the mercurial US President Donald Trump. President Emmanuel Macron will visit France's former enemy turned key EU partner from 1000 GMT for a wreath-laying ceremony on its Day of Mourning for victims of war and tyranny, a parliamentary address and talks with Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Macron and Merkel are both committed pro-Europeans and internationalists who have resisted rising populist, eurosceptic and anti-immigration forces in Europe and Trump's isolationist 'America First' stance. During their second meeting in a week, the pair will likely delve deeper into the idea of a future European army, a proposal that has raised Trump's hackles. As the world has remembered World War I, which ended a century ago this month, Macron has repeatedly invoked its horrors to drive home his message that rising nationalism around the globe is again destabilizing the world.

He has suggested building a future European army as a symbol of a united continent. The proposal has been backed by Merkel although Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte on Friday said France and Germany were jumping the gun, asserting that the continent's safety could be guaranteed only through NATO. Tomorrow the US leader mocked both European powers by tweeting that "it was Germany in World Wars One & Two - How did that work out for France?" and adding that "they were starting to learn German in Paris before the US came along".



### Joint army plan faces tricky questions

#### Weakened leaders

A week after world leaders attended the Armistice centenary events in Paris, Merkel and Macron are also due to meet again one-on-one to resume their dialogue on ways to boost the EU. Since their joint cabinet meeting on Europe in June, challenges have piled up, with Brexit nearing and a budget conflict escalating between Brussels and Italy. The talks also come at a time when both leaders are politically weakened, reducing the traditional driving power of the Franco-German engine at the heart of the bloc. As Trump gleefully tweeted days ago, Macron's once stellar approval ratings have dropped off into the mid-twenties.

And Merkel, after 13 years in power, has in recent weeks announced the beginning of the end of her reign, by declining to stand again as leader of her centre-right Christian Democrats (CDU). She has vowed to serve out her fourth term, which runs until 2021, but many observers expect Merkel could be brought down earlier by infighting within her CDU or the unhappy three-party coalition she leads. All this has made substantial reform initiatives by the Franco-German

power couple even less likely. There is already much frustration in Paris about Merkel's perceived foot-dragging on Macron's bold reform plans, especially forging a euro-zone with a major common budget and finance minister.

#### Tricky questions

The joint army plan too faces tricky questions, among them post-war Germany's traditional reluctance to send combat troops abroad, and the fact that it is the parliament that must approve military missions. The



**BERLIN:** French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel leave after a press statement prior to talks yesterday at the Chancellery in Berlin. —AFP

next major political test for both Macron and Merkel will be European Parliamentary elections in May, when their centrist parties will do battle with populist and far-right forces. Macron's trip to Berlin first sees him join President Frank-Walter Steinmeier at 11:00 am at the "Youth for Peace" event where youngsters will present "100 ideas for peace".

From 11:30 GMT Macron, Steinmeier and Merkel will attend the ceremony at the Neue Wache, a neoclassical

former Prussian military guardhouse that serves as Germany's Central Memorial for the Victims of War and Dictatorship. At 12:30 GMT Macron delivers a speech in the glass-domed parliamentary chamber of the Bundestag, housed in the historic Reichstag building that still bears the scars of World War II. When Macron again meets Merkel at the chancellery at 14:10 GMT, they will deliver statements to the media but not give a joint press conference. —AFP

#### News in brief

##### Floods, landslides kills 12

**HANOI:** Flash floods and landslides killed at least 12 people in central Vietnam, officials said yesterday, as hundreds of troops were dispatched to clean up destroyed villages and washed out roads. Heavy rains pounded the central Khanh Hoa province over the past few days as tropical depression Toraji blew in from the South China Sea, triggering landslides that wiped out houses and destroyed a small reservoir. At least a dozen people have been killed so far while a search was ongoing for several others, an official from the provincial disaster office told AFP, refusing to be named. "We have mobilized hundreds of army troops to help people restore lives and clean up damaged roads," he said. The main highway linking north and south Vietnam was temporarily blocked and some railway routes were interrupted, while images on state media showed destroyed houses buried under debris and vehicles submerged in floods. —AFP

##### Bomb kills 3 in Pakistan

**QUETTA:** A bomb blast yesterday killed three paramilitary soldiers and wounded four others in Pakistan's troubled southwest, officials said. The incident happened in Margat area on the outskirts of Quetta, the capital of oil and gas-rich Balochistan province. "An improvised explosive device planted along the road went off as a vehicle of Frontier Corps (FC) passed by, killing three soldiers and wounding four others," an FC spokesman told AFP on condition of anonymity. Balochistan is regularly hit by homegrown militancy and sectarian violence. Violence in Pakistan has however dropped significantly since the country's deadliest-ever militant attack, an assault on a school in the northwestern city of Peshawar in 2014 that killed more than 150 people, most of them children. —AFP

##### WWII-era plane crashes

**WASHINGTON:** A World War II-era fighter plane crashed on Saturday into a Texas parking lot, killing a veteran and one other person, local media and officials said. The US National Transportation Safety Board said it was investigating the crash of "a North American P-51D" in the city of Fredericksburg. The P-51 Mustang served in the Pacific and other theaters of World War II, as well as during the Korean War. Fredericksburg is home to the National Museum of the Pacific War, which said on Twitter that there were two victims, one of whom was a veteran. "At this time we have no further information," the museum tweeted. According to the museum website, an outdoor show about the "equipment and weapons" used in the Pacific theater, including a battle re-enactment, was to take place Saturday. Attempts to reach the museum for further comment were not immediately successful. —AFP

##### 'World Day of the Poor'

**VATICAN CITY:** Pope Francis railed against social inequality yesterday, lamenting "the din of the rich few" drowning out the voice of the needy, as he marked the second "World Day of the Poor". At a mass attended by about 6,000 poor people at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, the pope noted that "injustice is the perverse root of poverty". "The cry of the poor daily becomes stronger but heard less, drowned out by the din of the rich few, who grow ever fewer and more rich," he said ahead of a lunch at the Vatican for 1,500 destitute people and their helpers. "Let us ask for the grace to hear the cry of all those tossed by the waves of life," the pope said. "It is the cry of all those forced to flee their homes and native land for an uncertain future. It is the cry of entire peoples, deprived even of the great natural resources at their disposal... while the wealthy few feast on what, in justice, belongs to all." —AFP

## Migrants stalled at US border, mull work offers

**MEXICALI:** Hundreds of migrants from a caravan of Central Americans were stalled at the US-Mexico border on Saturday, where a handful said they welcomed recent Mexican offers of employment in the face of a hostile US reception. The Mexican government last week reiterated job offers to the migrants, saying that those who obtained legal status could occupy thousands of vacancies, most of them in the country's "maquiladoras," doing factory work. Since arriving at the border last week, they have been denied entry through the gates linking Mexico to the United States.

Dozens of the mostly Hondurans waited in lines to bathe and washed clothes sullied from 2,600 miles of relentless travel. Several members of the caravan, which left the crime-racked city of San Pedro Sula, Honduras, on Oct 13, told Reuters they would be willing to stay put in Mexico rather than face rejection across the border. "If we had work, we would stay. This has been very tiring," said Orbelina Orellana, a 26-year-old Honduran mother of three,

waiting at the Alfa and Omega shelter in the city of Mexicali, which borders Calexico, California. "I cry a lot and not be able to feed them as I'd like," Orellana said of her children. "I just want an opportunity."

Briefly stalled by Mexican riot police on a highway crossing between two southern Mexican states late last month, a dozen migrants told Reuters they rejected such offers, preferring to try their luck in the United States. But on Saturday, some said that thinking had changed. "We had the idea to cross to the United States, but they told us it will be nearly impossible," said Mayra Gonzalez, 32, traveling with her two children. "We cannot starve as we wait to find out if they'll give us asylum. Better to work, by the grace of God, here in Mexico."

In a sharp reversal of longstanding US policy, President Donald Trump's administration last week began enforcing new rules that curtail asylum rights for anyone who arrives without documents at the US border. Trump earlier this month deployed almost 6,000 troops along the long US border with Mexico. As they wound north through Mexico, the migrants were helped along by local authorities and residents who offered food, clothing and even free rides on daily treks that averaged 30 miles a day,

## Democrat concedes to Republican in Florida governor race

**MIAMI:** Democrat Andrew Gillum announced Saturday he was conceding his hard-fought race for Florida governor to his Republican rival, Ron DeSantis, vowing to keep fighting until he wins an election. Gillum, who was aiming to become the state's first black chief executive, had vowed to keep in the race until every single vote was counted. The race had gone to a recount, with results due by a Sunday deadline, as has a narrow Senate race between outgoing governor Rick Scott and incumbent Democrat Bill Nelson. "I want to congratulate @RonDeSantisFL on becoming the next Governor of the great state of Florida," tweeted Gillum. "We are going to keep fighting. We will keep working. And in the end, I believe that we will win. I am so thankful to each and every one of you."

Florida produced some of the nation's

closest results in the November 6 midterm elections, including DeSantis's apparent narrow victory over Gillum. "I can tell you, this has been the journey of our lives," Gillum said in a video posted on Facebook alongside his wife, R. Jai. For the Senate race, unofficial results show incumbent Nelson trailing Scott by about 12,600 votes out of more than 8.2 million cast, or 0.15 percentage points. That narrow margin triggered a hand recount of problematic ballots, such as those where a voter filled in bubbles next to the names of Nelson and Scott.

Results are scheduled to be certified tomorrow. Trump has repeatedly charged that Florida's elections were marred by vote fraud, but state and local authorities have said there is no evidence of wrongdoing. In the neighboring state of Georgia, Democrat Stacey Abrams, who was aiming to become the country's first ever black female governor, conceded to Republican Brian Kemp, Georgia's secretary of state. They only had about a single percentage point between them. She contemplated further legal action in the race, but her



**MEXICALI:** Zaira Fonseca from Honduras (left) cries while looking for her lost son in a shelter, in Mexicali, Baja California state, Mexico. —AFP

much of it on foot. But that welcome became noticeably frostier as the caravan reached the border.

In Tijuana, a city long accustomed to a population of migrants in transit, deportees and US pleasure-seekers, a clutch of local residents last week threw rocks at the migrants, telling them to go home. But some said the Central Americans could help boost the local

economy. "We are not against migration," Ulises Araiza, President of the Association of Human Resources of Industry in Tijuana, told Reuters. "We know the situation that these people face in their country. But we also favor order so as to integrate them into the labor sector, because only in Tijuana do we have a demand in the maquiladora industry for 5,000 people." —Reuters



**Florida Democratic gubernatorial nominee Andrew Gillum**

legal burden would have proven extremely steep. In her concession speech on Friday, she cited hours-long lines at polling sta-

tions, thousands of voter registrations frozen before the election, and polling sites shuttered. —AFP

## 'We'll come back for you': US fires split families, pets

**CHICO:** Steve Cox pets and cuddles Ernie, his 10-year-old English bulldog, before leaving him at a shelter. Cox lost his home in California's devastating wildfires, and now they have to part. "Don't you worry Ernie, I am not gonna let you down. We'll come back for you," Cox whispers. He has been staying at a hotel but it doesn't take pets. For a week, Cox tried to take care of Ernie in the back of his pickup

truck. But now, as Cox tries to get his life back on track, he thinks Ernie would get better care at one of three animal shelters in northern California's Paradise area where the so-called Camp Fire has claimed 76 lives and left more than 1,000 unaccounted for. In this rural area, which had many horses, one shelter is for large animals. Then there are two small facilities where helpers are working with dogs, cats, chickens, rabbits, turtles and even swans.

Ernie is walking with a bit of trouble after an operation on an abscess in one of his front legs. Cox says the dog is lazy, though, so he thinks Ernie will adapt quickly to the separation by sleeping a lot. The main shelter was set up in the city of Chico's airport, near Paradise, where rescue and firefighting operations have been based. Animals saved by firefighters are dropped off there to be cared

for. One woman arrives desperate, her hands trembling. She pulls out an envelope of photos of her cats and dogs. "Please, let me in and see, I might find them," she begs in a tearful voice.

When the fire began to threaten Paradise, Cox was headed home from the doctor with his wife. He could have stopped but instead kept going, to rescue Ernie and two other smaller dogs he has. "They are family. I couldn't just leave them. We had 10 minutes to leave," he recalls. Cox, who lived there since 1973, said he lost two houses, and many pieces of furniture that his father had left him, in the blaze which virtually wiped the entire community from the map. "I have a big question mark above my head. I don't know what I'll do," he says, his face showing exhaustion. —AFP



International

# 'Moral panic' grips Indonesia's vulnerable LGBT community

## Hardline rhetoric and a string of arrests spark fears

**JAKARTA:** Indonesian Budi Ahmad used to live openly as a gay man without fear of becoming a target for violence in the world's biggest Muslim-majority nation. Not any more. The country of 260 million is in the grip of a moral panic, with critics saying the vulnerable LGBT minority is being used as a political punching bag in the run-up to 2019 elections. Hardline rhetoric and a string of arrests have raised fears among the community. "There could be more persecution and we're scared that the public might become vigilantes," said Ahmad, who agreed to speak to AFP using a pseudonym. The 29-year-old, from a small town in the province of West Sumatra, said family and friends in the tight-knit area have long been aware of his sexual orientation.

But he said the public mood was turning increasingly ugly and he was now confronted with deepening hostility. "People look at me wherever I go these days. Some avoid me," said Ahmad of his non-traditional masculine image. "Now when I go to withdraw money from the ATM, for example, there are people staring at me. It never used to be this bad." Indonesia's LGBT community has always been vilified as immoral. But the recent police crackdown - including authorities hosing down a group of transgender women in what they called a "mandatory bath" - comes against the backdrop of a recent lurch toward religious conservatism.

The shift, led by increasingly powerful hardliners, has dented Indonesia's reputation for moderate Islam. Last week, thousands of anti-LGBT demonstrators marched outside the capital Jakarta, as some local politicians called for carte blanche to detain and "rehabilitate" members of the minority. Several mosques in West Java were recently urged by the local government to conduct sermons on the dangers of homosexuality. And Indonesia's biggest Muslim organization - the 80-million-member Nahdlatul Ulama - has called for a clampdown on same-sex relations.



### LGBT minority used as political punching bag

Indonesia's Executive Director.

#### 'Cynical political gain'

Concerns have been aggravated by president Joko Widodo selecting a conservative cleric, known for his disparaging views of the gay community and other minorities, as his running mate for next year's elections. A poll this year showed nearly 90 percent of Indonesians felt "threatened" by the LGBT community, while a 2013 Pew survey said 72 percent of Indonesian Muslims supported replacing the secular code with Islamic law, which bans gay sex. "(The elections) could mean an uptick in politicians scapegoating... people for cynical political gain," said Human Rights Watch researcher Kyle Knight.

"The verbal threats politicians issue can quickly metastasise into physical attacks." Police arrested at least 300 suspected LGBT people last year - a record - mostly under an anti-pornography law as homosexuality and gay sex are legal in Indonesia. This month, 10 people described as "suspected lesbians" were arrested in West Sumatra, following the detention of another eight lesbians and transgender people in October. "This situation is alarming as the hateful abuses by law enforcement bodies... are seen as a normal practice by many people," said Usman Hamid, Amnesty International



**BOGOR:** Thousands of anti-LGBT demonstrators marching in Bogor, outside the capital Jakarta, fanning fears that authorities would beef up their crackdown in response, as some officials call for carte blanche to arrest and 'rehabilitate' LGBT people. —AFP

Authorities have also taken aim at social media, arresting two men for links to a LGBT community Facebook page. Google in January pulled one of the world's largest gay dating apps from the Indonesian version of its online store in response to government demands.

#### 'This is wrong'

The latest crackdown can be traced back to 2016 when Indonesia's higher education minister Mohamad Nasir called for LGBT student groups to be banned from universities, and the defense minister criticized gay and trans rights activism, Human Rights Watch said.

Since then, police have raided nightclubs, saunas, hair salons, hotels and even private homes in pursuit of LGBT people. Gay people have been publicly flogged in Aceh under the province's Islamic legal code. Local police there made global headlines when they arrested a dozen transgender people and publicly humiliated them by chopping off their long hair and forcing them to wear men's clothes. But there are few hopes that Widodo or other senior officials vying for re-election will protect a widely hated minority, said HRW researcher Andreas Harsono. "We need leaders who have the courage to say this is wrong." —AFP

## Three killed in blast in India's Punjab state

**AMRITSAR:** Three people were killed in a grenade attack on a prayer congregation in India's Punjab yesterday which left some 20 others injured, police said. Around 250 followers of the Nirankari spiritual group, who are considered heretics by most Sikhs, had gathered for morning prayers in Amritsar district when two men arrived and threw the explosive at them.

"Three people have died and 15-20 are injured," senior police officer Surinder Pal Singh Parmar told reporters. The attack triggered a security alert across the state as it gears up for a major Sikh festival.

A witness said the attackers were wearing white and had covered themselves in shawls. "Someone threw an object which flew past my neck. The explosion happened immediately," the witness told News18 network. "Everyone started running. There was a lot of smoke." —AFP

## Stealth crackdown: Chinese censorship extends to Twitter

**BEIJING:** Despite being blocked in China, Twitter and other overseas social media sites have long been used freely by activists and government critics to address subjects that are censored on domestic forums-until now. As Beijing presses a campaign to throttle any remaining voices that stray from the Communist Party narrative, it is extending its reach to foreign sites outside of its "Great Firewall" of internet censorship. People in China can use virtual private network (VPN) software to circumvent Beijing's controls and access blocked foreign sites. But fearful that the platforms could be used to coordinate political activity, the authorities have launched a stealth crackdown over the past year.

Chinese activists and other Twitter users say they have been pressured by police to delete sensitive tweets. It's a "silent slaughter", said Yaxue Cao, founder of human rights site China Change. In some cases, Chinese authorities may be getting access to and deleting accounts themselves. Last Friday, Cao reported that the Twitter account of Wu Gan, a Chinese activist sentenced last December to eight years in prison for subversion, had been suddenly deleting more than 30,000 posts representing years of political critique and commentary. A Chinese Twitter user

who requested anonymity told AFP that he was taken in by police over tweets critical of the Communist Party. After being held at a police station overnight, the user was made to hand over login information and watch police delete the tweets. "You don't know what kind of crime they'll sentence you with. There's no due process, so you feel scared," said the Twitter user, who was forced to write a letter of repentance and warned against further tweeting. "Once they threaten you, you'll do what they say." Twitter declined to comment when contacted by AFP.

#### Online clean-up

Under President Xi Jinping, China has increased scrutiny of social media platforms and sought to restrict access to VPN software. Authorities have not launched a full crackdown on VPNs, however, because both Chinese and foreign companies need them to do business. On Monday, the Cyberspace Administration of China said it had "cleaned up" 9,800 accounts on Chinese social media platforms like messaging app WeChat and the Twitter-like Weibo that it accused of spreading "politically harmful" information and rumors. The internet regulator also chastised the sites for negligence and "irresponsibility". Chinese Twitter users have been targeted before-one was arrested in 2012 for joking about a building collapsing on a political meeting.

But the recent police activity indicates a more concerted clampdown, triggered by an exodus of users from censored platforms that has resulted in a stronger Chinese Twitter presence, said writer and activist Li Xuewen. "It's the latest trend," said Li, who was detained in 2017 over an

online memorial to Liu Xiaobo, the Nobel Peace laureate and rights activist who died of liver cancer in police custody last year. "Naturally, Twitter would become the target of the next round of attacks." Last month, Li received a call from police at his parents' home in central Hubei province.

They said "higher-ups" had sent orders to find him and ask him to delete tweets. Wen Tao, a friend of Chinese dissident artist Ai Weiwei, said he too was approached by police last month over his tweets and had heard of many similar stories. "Activists (on Twitter) can communicate with each other and also to the outside world, in particular the Western media," said Emily Parker, a former journalist in China who wrote about its online activists in her 2014 book "Now I Know Who My Comrades Are". "Beijing is concerned about tools that could facilitate online organization. It's thus not surprising that Twitter would get on authorities' radar."

Some Twitter users are let off with a warning, while others are told to delete tweets. But the police pressure could have a ripple effect as hollowed-out accounts or farewell tweets posted by activists under duress could cause others to self-censor. "It is a huge setback for researchers and anyone who cares about the struggles of contemporary Chinese society," Cao wrote on China Change, describing Twitter as an "open diary" for Chinese dissidents. Li said he plans to cut back his Twitter activity, since "speaking out these days is useless anyway". A user in southern Guangxi province, who was told to delete his tweets in September, said he is now cautious about what he posts. "If I'm not careful, I'll be asked to 'drink tea' again," he told AFP, using a common euphemism for being called in by police. —AFP

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## A year after Mugabe's fall, Zimbabwe yearns for upswing

Zimbabwean businessman Munya Chihota's face lights up when he recalls taking part in a march last year with tens of thousands of people calling for then-president Robert Mugabe to step down. The march came after the military had briefly taken over, and days before Mugabe was forced from power on November 21 in what the veteran leader described as a coup d'état. "There was so much joy," 41-year-old Chihota told AFP, describing the outpouring of excitement as Zimbabweans waved flags and placards and sang songs urging an end to the nonagenarian strongman's 37-year hold on power.

"We were all there. Young, old, black, white. There was a collective sense of hope that, after the hardships we had endured as a nation, things were going to change," he said. "The general feeling was that the system had to go." But Chihota now looks back on those euphoric times with mixed emotions. "Unfortunately only an individual and a few of his hangers-on were removed, and the system remained in place."

Mugabe, who held power since independence from British colonial rule in 1980, presided over Zimbabwe's decline from a regional power with huge potential, to a ruined country from which millions fled. Many hoped his fall would mark a new era for the country and a re-birth of its economy, but Chihota says business at his plastic manufacturing firm is at its slowest since he started eight years ago. "A lot of things have turned out bad," he said. "This is definitely not what we expected."

### Elation turns to disillusion

Mugabe maintained his stranglehold on power by using brutal tactics, deploying security forces to crush opponents and rivals. Finally last year, when he reached the age of 93, a long-brewing succession battle burst into the open. The military, fearing that Mugabe's wife Grace, now 53, was being lined up to take over from him, sent tanks into the streets, seized control, and forced the president to resign. The army top brass ushered in close ally Emmerson Mnangagwa, whom Mugabe had sacked as vice president weeks before.

Like Chihota, 24-year-old job-seeker Belina Mlilo recalls the heady days of Mugabe's ouster with a sense of growing disillusion. Having marched for Mugabe's ouster, she now realises: "We made the mistake of thinking that Mugabe was the only problem." "We were used as pawns in the fight between (ruling party) ZANU-PF factions and now they don't care about us." Mlilo has been unemployed since leaving college six years ago.

Mnangagwa, who secured his hold on power by winning disputed elections in July, had pledged to revive the economy, attract foreign investment, and create jobs. But the dire financial problems of the Mugabe era haunt the new reality. Unemployment is estimated at over 90 percent, and the economy has been cut in half since 2000 when many white-owned farms were seized. Banks without cash, a government without money to spend, and inflation above 20 percent in October - Zimbabwe's suffering shows no signs of ending.

### 'Still waiting'

"We are still waiting for investors to come, for jobs to be created, and for prices to come down," said economist John Robertson. "The president has made inroads by arresting some people who were guilty of corruption - but the repercussions of (Mugabe's) policy decisions are still with us and the government has not changed that." Shortages of basic goods have created a thriving black market, with some prices rising 200 percent in recent months. A litre of cooking oil can be sold for as much as \$12 on the street compared to the retail price of \$3.70.

Hopes that the July 30 election would mark a new chapter for Zimbabwe were quickly dashed when soldiers opened fire on protesters in Harare even before the results of the presidential race were announced. Six people were killed - triggering global outrage and undermining efforts to re-brand Mnangagwa, a veteran 76-year-old ZANU-PF loyalist, as a fresh face.

The election result was also engulfed by accusations of fraud and opposition supporters and activists have since complained about constant harassment. "If anything, things are getting worse," said Ibbo Mandaza, head of the Southern African Political and Economic Series Trust think-tank. "Mnangagwa had the opportunity to redeem his reputation but this has not happened. The election shootings and the rigged vote blew away that chance."

ZANU-PF defends Mnangagwa's first-year record. "There has been pronounced freedom and democracy," party spokesman Simon Khaya Moyo insisted. "The economy is also showing signs of growth with many foreign businesses interested in investing. We have had hordes of foreign tourists. Those are clear signs that things have changed." The opposition Movement for Democratic Change disagrees. "Shortages continue unabated and the government continues to intensify the suffering of people," spokesman Jacob Mafume said. — AFP



## Modi turns heat up on central bank gov

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government turns up the heat on the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor to do its bidding ahead of next year's general election it is getting the central bank's board to take on a much more powerful role, according to government officials and board members. Now stacked with government nominees who can be counted on to support the administration, the board is being transformed from having a passive advisory role into a body that can exert pressure for policy change. Some economists fear it could threaten the bank's independence.

Two board members told Reuters that government pressure for easier lending policies is likely to become abundantly clear at today's board meeting - the first to be held since the extent of a deep rift between the RBI and the government became public knowledge. With the election due by May, and voters concerned about weak farm incomes and whether enough jobs are being created, Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is keen to stimulate the economy and sees the RBI's hawkish stance as a barrier, said government officials and BJP allies.

The government has been pressing the Mumbai-based RBI and Governor Urjit Patel to accede to a range of demands that could help to boost demand. They include making it easier and cheaper for small businesses to borrow, easing lending curbs on 11 state-run banks which had debt and capital adequacy issues, and providing more liquidity to shadow lenders. They also want the government to have access to surplus reserves the RBI has built up - money that could be used for the administration's populist programs including boosts to rural wages, fuel subsidies and buying crops at a guaranteed minimum price. The RBI has hit back by questioning whether the government wanted to destroy its autonomy and warning that when this happened in Argentina in 2010, financial markets took fright.

### Spearheading push

In the past week there have been signs of an uneasy truce as some government officials indicated they didn't want Patel to resign and would allow some issues to be kicked down the road. But at the same time, Modi sup-

porters have made it clear they want major policy change, and a senior finance ministry official said some government backers on the board had been given the green light to push hard at today's meeting.

Spearheading that push is new board member S Gurumurthy, a confidante of Modi's. He is an accountant and columnist who was until recently co-convenor of the Swadeshi Jagaran Manch, the economic wing of the Hindu nationalist Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, which is the fountainhead of the BJP. In a speech last week,

whether India was meeting an inflation target. It consists of three RBI officials and three government-appointed members, with the RBI governor having the casting vote.

### 'Nationalist vision'

Modi supporters are confident newly appointed members of the RBI board with a "nationalist vision" could over time press it to cut interest rates, transfer surplus funds to the government and ease bank lending curbs. The RBI board will seek more accountability from the governor, said Ashwani Mahajan, who is co-convenor of the Swadeshi Jagaran Manch. "Now the RBI will be functioning in a more prudent manner looking at the specific needs of the country," he said. Provided Modi gets re-elected, the RBI board could ensure a greater role for banks "in the social and economic transformation of the country," he added.

### Packed the board

Modi has packed the RBI board in the past few months with people with links to his party and economists who favor greater government influence over the RBI. In August, Gurumurthy and Satish Marathe, a former banker who was in the student wing of the BJP, were named to the board. And last month, the government appointed retired bureaucrat Revathy Iyer and Sachin Chaturvedi, head of a Delhi-based think tank, while removing Nachiket Mor, who was close to RBI officials.

It means that of 18 current members, five come from the government bureaucracy, two are finance ministry officials, and two have close links to Modi and the BJP. Four have a business background, and the other five are Patel and his four deputy governors. Previously, the RBI would usually propose new board members or the government would at least consult the governor before nominating members. Under Modi, there has hardly been any consultation, said one former official directly aware of the appointment process. In a sign of the marathon meeting that could be in store, the last board meeting on Oct 23 ran for eight hours, taking up only two out of 12 agenda items, one member said. The rest will be discussed today, this person said. — Reuters



### PM stacks bank board with allies

Gurumurthy lashed out at the RBI's restrictions on bank lending, saying it was damaging the economy. "We are a bank-driven economy...in a bank-driven economy if you restrict the banks, you are restricting the economy, you are restricting the flow of funds into the economy," he said.

Under the colonial era RBI Act, the government can give the bank directions after consultations with the governor. That law establishes the primacy of the RBI board to do "all acts and things" subject to government directions. It also empowers New Delhi to dismiss any board member - including the governor. In practice, the government has never invoked those sections of the act. For many decades, RBI governors have enjoyed operational freedom, though they have traditionally worked closely with the government, said an official directly aware of such consultations.

The board also doesn't have direct influence over interest rate policy. In 2016, Modi agreed to establish a monetary policy committee to set interest rates based on

## Fiery mailboxes and dogs in bags: Fleeing Calif wildfire

Nicole Montague and her 16-year-old daughter Destiny noticed a red glow on the horizon as they drove to school in Paradise, California, that Thursday morning. They did not think much of it as they had seen fires nearby in the past. Since they had not heard any warnings, they shrugged it off. But within minutes mass panic broke out, said Nicole Montague, 45. They gathered their nine dogs and a few belongings as the trailer park they live in burst into flames. "As we were driving out, the mailboxes were on fire," Nicole said. "All you could hear were big booms and those were (neighbors') propane tanks starting to explode."

California's deadliest ever wildfire, the innocuous-sounding "Camp Fire," swept into Paradise early on Nov 8, as a rapid-moving, wind-fueled disaster that has left at least 76 people dead and more than 1,276 missing. The flames moved so fast that some of the victims died in their cars in a chaotic evacuation as gridlock formed on the two exit routes out of town. Through sheer luck or quick thinking, many of the survivors only barely managed to escape.

Retirees Julie Walker and her husband, Lane, had lived in Magalia, a northern suburb of Paradise, since 2003. When the fire threatened their house, the Walkers avoided traffic jams by taking to back roads. They said they knew a route out because they spend a lot of time exploring in their Jeep. So when the fire came, the Walkers led a caravan of relatives and neighbors out to safety along dirt roads that circumvented the traffic jam. "They did not know what to do," Julie said of those overtaken by the wildfire while trying to escape. "The fire was on us immediately."



Tents are seen pitched in a field next to a Wal-Mart parking lot where Camp Fire evacuees have been staying on Nov 16, 2018 in Chico, California. — AFP

### 'I don't think I'm going to make it'

David Wigham, 51, who splits and sells firewood to support himself, smelled smoke when he woke up early on Nov 8. Assuming it was far away, he went back to sleep. He awoke hours later to a world turned red. Embers were blowing in through his front door as he tried to stuff his Chihuahua, Dee Dee, into a backpack. "I thought we were going to spontaneously combust," Wigham said. His pickup truck was aflame, so he fled on foot. Three different strangers gave him rides and eventually he made it south to the town of Oroville.

When the Montagues were certain they were going to die, Nicole called her husband Eric, who was trying to flee in a separate vehicle, to say goodbye. "I said, 'Honey I don't think I'm going to make it out of here. I love you,'" she recalled. Cars around them caught fire. People behind them on the road got out of their cars, with some fleeing on foot and some jumping into other people's cars to try to escape.

It took them five hours to drive 16 km to Chico, where 15 members of the family are staying in a one-

bedroom apartment with nine dogs. Others would have died on the spot without help. Betty Myers, 89, wheelchair-bound and diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, was among some 50 residents of an assisted-living facility in Paradise who were evacuated in a caravan of vehicles, Myers' son Ron Rohde said by phone from the San Francisco area.

Fires surrounded them on the road and the sky turned black. One vehicle was abandoned because it was about to run out of gas and they had to try at least two escape routes before making it out. When Rohde finally reached his mother in Redding, California, she was in bed at a hotel. "Most of the staff lost their homes. They had to worry about their own families, yet they focused on getting those 50 people out to safety," Rohde said.

Not only could his mother not have escaped by herself, Rohde said, but her Alzheimer's left her unaware of the danger. "She was sitting in the car saying, 'Oh those are nice lights,' waving at people," Rohde said he was told. "When I asked her a couple days later what she thought of the fire, she said 'What fire?'" — Reuters

## Business

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KUWAIT: Warba Bank CEO Shaheen Al-Ghanem addresses a press conference yesterday.— Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

# Warba Bank to raise capital through IPO

## In Kuwait's first electronic IPO on Nov 25, 50% of bank's shares will be on offer

By Nawara Fattahova

**KUWAIT:** Warba Bank is raising its capital on Nov 25 through an initial public offering (IPO). On this occasion, the bank held a press conference yesterday to explain the goals of the offer and the bank's expectations from it.

"This will be the first electronic IPO held in Kuwait's history in cooperation with Kuwait Clearing Company. We have set up a special website for the IPO, where the number of shares will be mentioned. The offering is for up to 50 percent of the total shares, but interested buyer can demand more shares online," CEO of Warba Bank Shaheen Al-Ghanem said during the conference.

There will be two categories of buyers. "Those who will buy up to 16,500 shares will be able to pay through K-Net and will receive a message and an email confirm-

ing the completion of the buying process. In case of an interest to buy more than 16,500 shares, the system will print a document with the number of demanded shares and the directions to follow. These include going to his bank to transfer the payment for the demanded shares to Warba Bank's account. They will then receive another document of payment which they will take to KCC to complete the process," he added.

The record growth achieved by the bank over the last two years has prompted it to go for an amendment to increase capital. "We expect to complete the growth percentage, so we need to raise the capital in addition to supporting the bank's growth objectives. We expect growth mainly from our financial portfolio," stressed Ghanem.

"The Central Bank of Kuwait issued new regulations

last week on consumer and housing loans that raised the limit from KD 15,000 to KD 25,000 for consumer loans, and maintained the housing loan at KD 70,000 - a total of KD 95,000, which brings more opportunities. We also hope that the government will continue offering more projects in the oil sector. We closed some outstanding deals in financing oil projects, and we hope to continue in this field," he concluded.

Chief Financial Officer Khaled Hafez said that the bank was founded in 2010 - just after the economic crisis - with limited capital, "when the smallest bank at that time had double our capital". "The capital of any bank is related to the ability to compete in financing, and we

succeeded to grow very well since 2010. Our assets grew by around KD 2 billion; last year we scored high growth and were ranked as the third-largest among Kuwaiti banks assets-wise and financing portfolio-wise," he pointed out.

"The upcoming capital raising amendment will support our competing ability to enter new sectors, finance more clients and boost our growth trajectory. In the third quarter of 2018, the rate of return on shareholders' equity crossed 6 percent in a very short period, which is a great achievement. Furthermore, we are working on having more positive reserves to be able to give dividends by 2019," explained Hafez. The price of the share issue is low to attract buyers. "The share issue price is 180 fils, while the average price is 230 fils, which should attract investors and encourage them to buy," he added.

## APEC's future in doubt after costly summit failure

**PORT MORESBY:** With Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin absent and leaders unable even to agree a joint statement, some critics are questioning whether the annual APEC summit is still worth the effort.

"Expectations are low and probably won't be fulfilled anyway." That was the brutal if prescient pre-summit prediction of William Reinsch, an analyst at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

The two-day gathering in Papua New Guinea was almost five years in the making, cost untold millions of US dollars and required the deployment of at least one battleship and three cruise liners.

And after all that, leaders came away with little more than three family photos and a loud shirt unlikely to be worn again. The grouping was born three decades ago as a way of promoting trade liberalization. But that cause has fallen out of vogue and Port Moresby was little more than a different venue for another China-US bonfire.

For the first time ever, the leaders failed to produce a joint summit declaration—usually a technocratic exercise in fudging differences, overstating agreement and promising great things to come.

It is a heartbreaking result for host Papua New Guinea, which was making its debut on the international stage—at no insignificant cost. Prime Minister Peter O'Neill's government—not much larger than a municipal

authority in most developed countries—visibly struggled with hosting such an enormous enterprise.

It dealt with more than 21 delegations, each numbering in the dozens if not hundreds who needed to be fed, housed and watered and ferried round a city not exactly designed for armor plated motorcades. Papua New Guinea officials forgot to provide lighting for a leaders' photo opportunity, outside, at night and at another they put their own flag upside down.

### 'Big show'

They also suffered enormous pressure from much more powerful countries. Chinese officials on one occasion reportedly demanded that hundreds of red flags for Xi Jinping's state visit be kept up. In another instance, the police had to be called to prevent officials from Beijing storming the foreign minister's office. China denies the incident.

But the summit's failure was hardly the fault of rookie stagecraft. Skipping the leaders' scheduled coffee break on the last day wasn't going to provide enough time to sort through the defining strategic rivalry of our time.

"I feel sorry for Papua New Guinea, this was their big show" said Euan Graham, executive director of La Trobe Asia, describing a diplomatic minnow caught in the crossfire of the world's two largest economic and military powers. Papua New Guinea did benefit from the rivalry and chequebook diplomacy of the two powers, winning new investments in energy, electricity and infrastructure.

O'Neill, like other small power leaders, also got images of himself mixing with global big hitters. That will elevate his stature at home and may help when election time comes round.

Executive director of the APEC secretariat, Alan



PORT MORESBY: International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Christine Lagarde (third left) sits next to Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte (center) during a session at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit in Port Moresby yesterday.— AFP

Bollard said the organisation was about more than the annual shindig. "APEC is more than just a leaders' meeting, but a place for economies to incubate ideas throughout the year," he said.

US officials hope that next year will bring Trump's return, but it may matter little if protectionist and

nationalistic trends persist and the United States and China continue butting heads.

"APEC's founding vision was already fraying," said Graham. "But the failure to agree a communique is a final death knell for a pan-Asia-Pacific trade framework." — AFP

## Business

# New Renault Megane R S launches in Middle East

## New generation 1.8 liter turbo engine and dual clutch EDC automatic gearbox

**KUWAIT:** Renault Middle East launched the highly anticipated Renault MEGANE R.S. into the market. As the newest member of the MEGANE family, this vehicle sets the benchmark within the C-segment sport market offering an unrivalled driving experience both on and off the racetrack.

With motorsports in its genes, the Renault MEGANE R.S. comes complete with a new generation 1.8 litre turbo engine delivering 280hp and 390Nm. Equipped with a chain-driven timing system, the state-of-the-art engine also boasts reduced CO2 emissions and fuel consumption. Just like a race car, the Renault MEGANE R.S. also comes with a Dual Clutch EDC Automatic gearbox and steering wheel-mounted gearshift paddles to withstand greater torque and revs while providing a smooth, reliable drive.

When it comes to the chassis and suspension system, the Renault engineers have exceeded all expectations by introducing 4CONTROL technology on the new MEGANE IV R.S. This four-wheel steering system is a world first in the segment, delivering outstanding agility on tight turns and impressive cornering stability at high speeds.

The New MEGANE R.S. alludes to Renault's competitive racing heritage in its design, with a wide air

intake in the front bumper incorporating an F1-style front blade as well as the specially developed Tonic Orange color, sculpted body sides, 3D honeycomb-pattern grill mesh and a multi-reflector LED lighting system. Inside, drivers can enjoy unparalleled comfort with spacious seating, luxurious upholstery and Aluminum pedals with a specially-designed gearshift lever.

Harnessing cutting-edge technology, the Renault MEGANE R.S. features an outstanding audio system (engineered in conjunction with Bose(r)) and a completely revised R.S. monitor and touchscreen tablet displaying key settings from acceleration, braking, steering wheel angle, 4CONTROL system, temperature control and pressures. Driver aids such as emergency braking assist, overspeed alert, blind spot warning and easy park assist are also in place for total peace of mind and safety.

Commenting on the arrival of the all new MEGANE R.S., Marwan Haidamous, Managing Director, Renault Middle East, said: "The Renault MEGANE R.S. has been eagerly awaited by sports driving enthusiasts in the Middle East who look for high performance, comfort and a dynamic aesthetic. The MEGANE R.S. is for everyday use and the cutting-edge technologies that the new model brings, will definitely meet our customers' demand in the Middle East."



### State-of-the-art technology to boost versatility



### NBK Money Markets Report

## Brexit turbulence at an all-time high

In a shift of sentiment, the US and China have intensified efforts to strike a truce at the G20 that would curb their trade war. US President Trump and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping have agreed to discuss trade during the upcoming G20 meeting, which starts on November 30 in Argentina.

Since the two trade partners have a lot to work out, markets are managing their expectations. Even if the current tariffs are not rolled back, any signal of trade war ceasefire would be viewed in a positive light.

Meanwhile, reports indicate that US trade representative Robert Lighthizer has told some industry executives that the next tranche of tariffs is already on hold. This would mean the US would hold off on increasing tariffs from 10 percent to 25 percent on \$200 billion of Chinese goods. Moreover, the US administration could also revisit their earlier intention to impose tariffs on an additional USD267 billion of Chinese goods.

#### Auto tariffs attract EU retaliation

At the same time, the US is also negotiating trade terms with the European Union. Last week, the trump administration hit the brakes on auto tariffs after top US officials expressed skepticism about the plan. The auto tariffs are at the center of the US-EU trade rift. Without delays, the EU's trade chief said Brussels was "ready" to retaliate against US products if Washington slapped tariffs on cars.

#### US inflation

US inflation picked up after two months of declines. Consumer prices increased 2.5 percent from a year earlier, while the core figure came in at 2.1 percent. With inflation hovering close to the Fed's target, the US central bank is unlikely to change its view and is expected to move ahead with its gradual pace of interest rate hikes. The current probability of a December rate hike reached 71 percent.

Furthermore, retail sales also bounced back, beating analysts' expectations. Headline retail sales increased 0.8 percent m/m in October, according to the Commerce Department. This is compared to expectations of a 0.5 percent increase.

#### Oil prices under fire

Meanwhile, oil prices came under pressure after the US surprisingly granted waivers to both China and India, Iran's two main oil-buying customers. Initially, the notion of Iranian oil supply disappearing from the market ignited an oil rally that spurred talk of triple digit oil prices. Turmoil in Venezuela and OPEC production cuts also added fuel to fire. Markets traded oil all the way up to 4 year highs as they priced in supply concerns.

Now however, the tide seems to have shifted as oil prices face the sixth consecutive week of falling prices. The record output in the US is placing significant downward pressure, with oil inventories there soaring 10 million barrels last week. This, coupled with the waivers, has spurred talks of an oversupply in the market. In fact, OPEC is now reported to be considering fresh cuts to support prices. As a result, oil recouped some of its losses towards the end of the week.

#### Brexit fallout

With four months until Brexit day, when Britain will officially exit the EU, political turmoil continues to plague the UK. The British Prime Minister Theresa May, tasked with overseeing the Brexit process and securing the best deal possible for the UK as it exits the European Union, has pro-



visionally agreed a Brexit withdrawal deal with her European counterparts. This may seem like positive news at first, after all- both parties have been working on a deal since the 2016 referendum. However, that was not nearly the case. Both the public and their elected representatives balked at the provisional text.

For this provisional deal to pass, it needs to be approved by parliament. This seems extremely unlikely at the moment. On top of the public backlash, members of May's cabinet have started to resign, most notably the Brexit secretary. As has been the case throughout the life of this Brexit dilemma, the future looks bleak for the British economy.

#### Possible outcomes

Now, a second referendum might be on the cards, which many believe is needed to see if public opinion has shifted in any way after getting a taste of Brexit. What is also increasing in likelihood is a vote of no confidence for Prime Minister May. This, in turn, could lead to an early general election if the Tories cannot choose a new leader and form a new Government.

#### Effect on FX market

As one would expect, the British pound fell sharply during the aftermath. Sterling suffered its worst day in more than two years on Thursday, losing 1.7 percent of its value against the greenback.

#### UK economy

Disappointing UK retail sales figures raised concerns that the economy is losing momentum. This makes it the second consecutive month where retail sales have fallen. Consumer spending is needed to help power the economy as businesses cut back on investment ahead of the final stage of the Brexit negotiations.

Meanwhile, UK inflation remained steady last month as slowdowns in food, clothing and transport price increases were offset by rises in utility bills and the cost of fuel. The Office of National Statistics stated that consumer prices were 2.4 percent higher than a year earlier. The figure slightly missed analysts' expectations of 2.5 percent.

#### EU economy

Eurozone growth fell to 0.2 percent m/m, or 1.7 percent y/y, the lowest figure in more than four years. Nevertheless, ECB president Mario Draghi reiterated the central bank's positive view on the region's economic outlook. Draghi believes that the region's labor market is strong enough to boost growth and leave price pressures at a level where the ECB can consistently hit its inflation target of just under 2 percent.

#### Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar  
USD/KWD opened at 0.30365 yesterday morning.

## Burgan Bank announces winners of Yawmi account draw

**KUWAIT:** Burgan Bank announced yesterday 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. Tareq Jassem Mohammad Alqattan
2. Sameerah Khudhair Alshammari
3. Elias Fahad Kikash
4. Ibrahim Ahmad Abdulmaqsoud Saleem
5. Abdulstar Abdulsamad Taqi Alsafar

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.

### Bayt.com weekly report

## Time for a promotion?

There comes a time in every employee's life where they feel that they need to take their next career step, or as it's called professionally: ask for a promotion. Reasons behind asking for a promotion differ from an employee to another. Whether it is an ambition for moving up the career ladder, seeking a better income, looking for a new opportunity, being dissatisfied with where you are currently, or just finding your current position not challenging enough, it's absolutely your right to ask for a promotion.

When you think about promotions, two major questions should pop up in your mind: How do you know it's time for a promotion? And, how can you ask for a promotion? To help you figure this situation out, here are a few points presented by Bayt.com's career experts.

#### How to know it's time for a promotion?

You might feel a bit skeptical about whether or not you deserve a promotion at a certain point in your career. You might find yourself asking some questions such as: "Why should I get a promotion while X person doesn't?" Or even "Am I really doing something that deserves getting a promotion for?" Don't worry, here are some of the signs that indicate that you are due for a promotion:

#### 1- You've managed to master your job with passion

Many employees think of their tasks and duties as a checklist: a bunch of items to quickly get over with. As a result, they often skip performing their job with passion and truly showcasing their full potential. Aside from mastering your job and being comfortable with everything you deal with, a real passion for the job means that you put your 100 percent capacity into it. Think of your job as a challenge you should excel in everyday and do it with love and nothing else.

If you feel like you've been working with passion and have grown to perfect your various responsibilities, then you're most likely ready for a promotion.

#### 2- You're always looking forward to the next challenge

A lot of people settle for whatever daily tasks they are faced with, some don't even like challenges at all and cherish their comfort zone, while others are constantly on the hunt for their next challenge.

If you belong to the latter group, then you know how uninspiring it is to stick to your comfort zone and perform the exact same duties for years. Are you always looking five steps ahead and can't wait to take on the next big thing? Then that on its own might be why you deserve that promotion.

#### 3- You're walking an extra mile

Having a job means that you have a defined set of tasks and responsibilities that make up your daily routine. Now, most employees stick to these tasks and perform them from start to finish. While there is absolutely nothing wrong with doing that, if you're looking for a promotion within your company, you have to do a little bit more. You should show your full potential, take on more responsibilities, or - even better - start your own initiatives and projects.

If you already find yourself in a situation where you perform more than what's asked of you, walking an extra

mile to juggle different tasks, and performing outside your limited job description, then it's a good sign to ask for a promotion.

#### 4- Your work is already at the next level

As established earlier, having a set of tasks and duties doesn't mean you should make them your limit. You might not be asked to help out others in performing their overdue tasks, volunteer to take that heavy responsibility everyone else is avoiding, or even find a solution for an obvious problem everyone faces. However, if you ever find yourself that superhero who have truly grown their job and their tasks to extend beyond their current job title, then that's a very good indicator that you are ready to move up the career ladder.

#### How to ask for a promotion?

Okay, so since you've reached this point in the article, then you probably already know it's time to get yourself a promotion. But the question now is how to ask for one. Everyone knows that that can be a rather stressful step to make, but remember that if you don't put the effort needed, you will never get the desired outcome. So, here are the steps that you can follow to help you ask for a promotion in a professional and, hopefully, successful way.

#### 1- Plan your requirements

Once you decide on the suitable time to take your next step and ask for a promotion, you'll need to develop a plan. Think ahead of time of the needs and requirements that you're aiming for when asking for a promotion. What is it that you want exactly? Is it a title change? A raise? Moving to a more senior level? Managing a team? Or changing the department altogether? You should have all the answers ready before you go ahead and make that move.

When you plan these requirements, you should also make room for negotiation. It is very rare that you'll get exactly what you ask for. So, be ready to give and take.

#### 2- Pick the right time

You know your company more than anybody else. In case your company is facing a difficult financial situation, struggling to survive the harsh market, or even not making any profit, then you know that this might be a wrong time to bring up your promotion request. In order to guarantee that you land what you want, you should wait for a good moment. Don't rush things, and most importantly, don't worry; you'll get what you deserve. It's just a matter of having some patience, which you surely have.

#### 3- Talk to your manager directly

In most companies, your direct manager is the decision maker when it comes to promotion and salary matters. Going around and talking to other employees and managers who have no direct connection to getting you a promotion is no good. Actually, this might harm your chances more than anything else. The only person you have to talk to in this case is your direct manager. Ask for a meeting to talk through this matter and specify that you'd like to discuss your career direction so that your manager knows what to expect.

#### 4 Follow up

After you're done with the meeting, make sure to write down all the points you agreed on. Whether you got the promotion right away, or were promised that you'll get one very soon, send out an email mentioning all the minutes of your meeting to your manager. You might want to ask them if you should loop in the HR Manager or not. In case there were some HR procedures you'll have to go through, or some extra responsibilities you have to undertake, don't just leave it up in the air, document everything and follow up as needed.

## Al-Tijari announces winner of Al-Najma prize program

**KUWAIT:** Commercial Bank of Kuwait announced the winner of the weekly draw as follows :-

Weekly draw prize KD 5,000- Minor Sayed Mohammad Abdullah Hassan Ali

The draw was conducted in the presence of Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative Latifa Al-Jean.

The bank stated that the account prizes this year is featured by the highest cash prize and diversity of prizes throughout the year clarifying that Al-Najma Account will offer weekly prize of KD 5,000 & monthly prize of KD 20,000 and a semi-annual prize of KD

500,000 in addition to the grand prize (the biggest prize in the world) of KD 1,500,000 for which the draw will be held in January 2019. Al-Najma Account can be opened by depositing KD 100, and customer should maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 to be eligible to enter all draws on Al-Najma Account prizes. As for the chances of winning, the more balance a customer maintains in Al-Najma Account, the more chances the account holder will get to win, where each KD 25 will give the customer one chance to win, the account also offers additional benefits like the ATM card, a credit card against customer's account and all CBK banking services that customer can enjoy.

Now CBK existing customers can open Al-Najma Account through Al-Tijari Online and enter all draws without visiting the Bank's branch. However, CBK non-customers can submit an account opening application via the Bank's website where the Bank's Sales Unit will call them to arrange a visit to the customers to complete the account opening formalities.

Business

# Stunning Muscat International Airport welcomes the world

Spectacular grand opening shines spotlight on a flourishing aviation industry



MUSCAT: The grand opening of the Muscat International Airport.



**MUSCAT:** It was an unforgettable evening of Omani pride and celebration as stunning Muscat International Airport welcomed the world to its grand opening. The event, held under the patronage of Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmud Al-Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Oman's Council of Ministers, was a spectacular visual expression of Oman's rich heritage and diverse cultural tapestry, and set the scene for the Sultanate's ambitious vision for the future of its aviation industry.

Commercially opened in March this year, Muscat International Airport is one of the cornerstones in Oman's tourism strategy to attract more inbound travelers from around the world. As the main gateway to its capital, Muscat, and a stepping stone to the country's pristine beaches, coastline and interior regions, the ultra-modern airport welcomed 11,419,791 million passengers between January and September, 2018—a 9.8 percent increase over the same period last year.

Oman's Minister of Transport and Communications, Dr Ahmed Al-Futaishi, reflected on the airport's role as an enabler to the tourism sector as the country continues its

push to become one of the leading tourist destinations in the Middle East. With new airports, strong government spending and a nationwide effort to support and facilitate tourism and transportation, the Sultanate of Oman is turning this safe, secure and sunny country into one of the world's premiere travel destinations. Plans call for growing the number of passengers to 40 million per year by 2040, and developing the country's flagship airline – Oman Air – into the #1 destination airline in the Middle East and North Africa.

The inauguration coincides with the Sultanate's upcoming National Day celebrations and was attended by key figures from Oman's government, influential leaders from the aviation and tourism sectors, and senior executives from Oman Aviation Group and its subsidiaries Oman Air, Oman Airports, and Oman Aviation Services. OAG supports and enables companies in the tourism sector, or that work in related areas, creating an integrated value chain that links aviation, tourism and logistics across the country. Safe, secure, increasingly well connected domestically and internationally, the



Sultanate can now offer its vast range of natural and cultural attractions to curious visitors from around the planet. These include impressive UNESCO cultural heritage sites like the Bahla Fort, Bat, Al-Khutm and Al-Ayn archeological sites, as well as the ancient city of Qalhat. In a land of sun-drenched deserts, turquoise seas and

multi-colored coastal reefs, the Sultanate also boasts natural attractions tailored to discerning travellers' tastes. From trekking, hiking and camping in its deserts and mountain regions to scuba diving, jet skiing and snorkeling along its coasts, there's something for everyone, 365 days a year.

## Get up to 10% cashback when using NBK Visa credit cards

**KUWAIT:** The National Bank of Kuwait continues with the End of Year Cashback Campaign, which was launched in October and enabled customers to enjoy up to 10 percent cashback on purchases made locally or internationally using their eligible NBK Visa Credit Card.

Available for NBK Visa Platinum, Visa Signature and Visa Infinite Credit Cardholders, the cashback campaign is valid on purchases made at retailers in the following categories: duty free, restaurants, airlines and hotels. Customers also benefit from the campaign when they use their card to pay for their telecom bills, and entertainment services such as cinemas, OSN, BeIN and Netflix. Customers will get up to 10 percent cashback when they use their card locally and internationally on selected merchants as follows: Telecom bills 10 percent, entertainment services 5 percent, duty free 3 percent, restaurants 1 percent, airline 1 percent, and hotels 1 percent. "We are pleased with the positive feedback received to date for our End of Year Cashback Campaign. In addition to the many advantages offered by the NBK Visa Credit Cards, customers can benefit even more from their card when using it at the selected retailers," explained Hanadi Khazal, Chief Marketing Officer, Consumer Banking Group, National Bank of Kuwait. "The campaign continues until the end of this month, so NBK Platinum, Signature and Infinite Cardholders can still avail of this opportunity."

Khazal added, "NBK Credit Cards offer unique features and benefits that meet the lifestyle of customers, including the NBK Rewards Program, in addition to exclusive offers launched all year long for the holders of these credit cards. This year included unique campaigns and valuable prizes as part of our commitment in providing the best and safest banking experience for our customers."

NBK Visa Credit Cards have many features and benefits that include the NBK Rewards Program with more than 800 partner outlets across Kuwait, free access to international airport lounges, free travel insurance, NBK Secure Shopping, free valet parking, concierge services and exclusive promotions.



Hanadi Khazal

## Kalyan Jewellers patrons meet the Badshah of Bollywood Shah Rukh Khan

**KUWAIT:** Kalyan Jewellers, India's trusted and leading jewellery brand organized a special event for over 800 loyal customers to meet and greet Shah Rukh Khan – the Badshah of Bollywood. This day-long invitation only event was held at the Grand Hyatt by Kalyan Jewellers to thank its loyal patrons from across Kuwait, Oman and the UAE.

Shah Rukh Khan welcomed all the guests along with TS Kalyanaraman, Chairman and Managing Director, Rajesh Kalyanaraman, Executive Director, Ramesh Kalyanaraman, Executive Director, Kalyan Jewellers. Overwhelmed by the excitement and love of his fans present, Shah Rukh interacted with the guests, answered various questions and also took selfies on stage.

TS Kalyanaraman, Chairman and Managing Director, Kalyan Jewellers said, "We have always placed customers at the forefront of all our initiatives and this is no different. The love, encouragement and endearment that we receive from our patrons have been unprecedented and this meet and greet event with Shah Rukh Khan is a small gesture of appreciation from us. There are die-hard fans of King Khan among our customers who were very pleased to meet him in person and we are delighted to have played a small role in facilitating this happiness".

The special customer event included engaging activities such as spot quiz and singing etc. The winners took selfies onstage with Shah Rukh Khan and also received Kalyan Jewellers gift vouchers.



Reacting to the fervor of his fans, Shah Rukh Khan said, "For me the best moment of my life is the present moment and right now my best moment is to be among all of you wonderful people. I am very happy to be a part of this amazing Kalyan Jewellers event and I thank them for bringing me close to you all. Dubai is like home and I love coming here. I am also very pleased to meet my fans all the way from Kuwait and Oman. I wish Kalyan Jewellers all the best in creating more such customer centric events that brings us closer to our fans and gives us an opportunity to interact with them," said Shah Rukh Khan.

"Kalyan Jewellers has always made me feel very

comfortable and I enjoy being a part of them and their events. I am always looking forward to team up with Kalyan Jewellers. I would also like to highlight that every time one buys a jewellery from Kalyan Jewellers, it is not just a piece of jewellery that you own but also the best wishes of Kalyan Jewellers that comes with the ornament," added Shah Rukh.

The Kalyan Jewellers meet and greet event witnessed over 800 loyal customers who had come in full force to meet their favorite Bollywood star Shah Rukh Khan. Kalyan Jewellers patrons were also flown down from Kuwait and Oman on an all-expenses paid trip to attend this special customer event.

## Bumper-to-Bumper new full service branch for all car makes now in Salwa

**KUWAIT:** It is a great news for the residents of Salwa and nearby areas. Needless to visit the industrial areas for any maintenance of their cars. With the opening of the new BTB service center at Alfa fuel station. The center is located behind the cooperative society, where customers can drop their cars at the center for the necessary maintenance, go shopping and then come back and pick up their cars.

The new center is the 12th branch in the BTB network. It provides many services including quick serv-

ice, quick lube and tire services. The new center serves its growing customer base every day of the week except Fridays, from 9:00 am until 6:30 pm gathering a team of highly experienced and customer friendly staff with the latest equipment to ensure customer satisfaction.

Founded in 1980, BTB started as quick-service shops that specialized in replacing and repairing exhaust systems. Five years later in 1985, the brand BTB was created as a unique concept in the Kuwaiti market. Today, BTB's clear mission is to exceed expectations by offering the best in car maintenance and spare-parts services, for both individual customers and corporate owners. But what makes BTB truly stand out is the highly trained team of technicians and professionals, who collectively provide an unprecedented level of support for all car makes through state-of-the-art equipment and auto maintenance knowledge.

As one of the strongest local brands in the country, with more than 160,000 vehicles serviced each year,

in one of 160 service platforms in 12 service centers throughout the country, BTB provides customers with total convenience and peace of mind, dealing with all car makes and models. At BTB, the customer comes first and each center is designed with the customer's comfort in mind, including free wireless access, a spacious lounge area and much more.

Indeed, choosing BTB service centers means turning over your car to a crew of specialized technicians who operate the most advanced equipment and analyzing tools to produce a highly detailed report and an accurate estimate of total cost of repair. To top it off, BTB service centers offer genuine spare parts for all car makes, as well as warranties for parts and labor.

BTB service centers are strategically located throughout Kuwait including Sharq, Fahaheel, Shuwaikh and Jahra, and are also integrated in Alfa Petrol Stations in Shaab, Agaila, Shuwaikh and South Surra, as well as the newly opened branches in Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) stations: Al-Ardiyah, Al Jahra and Ishbiliya.

Business

# Record-breaking 7,500 runners take part in 'Gulf Bank 642 Marathon'

Kuwait's largest sporting event sees 1,500 international runners



Gulf Bank and Pro-Vision team at the award ceremony

KUWAIT: 'Gulf Bank 642 Marathon', witnessed record numbers this Saturday, with 7,500 runners representing over 66 nationalities taking part. Enthusiasm for the event reached an all-time high, with all 4 categories selling out in advance of the day. Kicking off at 7.30am, excitement was in the air, and in spite of the recent heavy rainfall, the sun was shining and Souq Sharq buzzed with anticipation.

Starting and ending at Souq Sharq, the route saw runners make their way along Gulf Road, past the Grand Mosque and Souq Al Mubarakiya, where the vendors' excitement added to the incredible atmosphere of the day. Then, depending on the distance category (5km, 10km, 21km, or 42km) runners continued on a tour of Kuwait's landmarks, from Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center to the Kuwait Towers, before crossing the finish line.

In an interview, Ahmad Al-Amir, Assistant General Manager for External Communications, Gulf Bank, stated, "This year's edition of the 'Gulf Bank 642 Marathon' was an unparalleled success. The atmosphere was electric, with participants flying in especially for the race, and arriving as early as 6.00am to take part in the race. When we first met the Pro-Vision team, we saw two young Kuwaitis with an incredible vision and the determination to succeed. That vision, our partnership, and the incredible support we've received throughout the years has resulted in an incredible event that Kuwait can be proud of. The marathon is an initiative that Gulf Bank holds close to its heart, the perfect demonstration of our commitment to social responsibility, alongside our commitment to the country."

**Awards ceremony**

Following the day's events, male and female winners were invited to an exclusive awards ceremony, taking place in Al-Shaheed Park. Attended by marathon part-

ners, sponsors, and supporters, guests were entertained with a surprise appearance by "Al-Sheyab", who performed a comedy skit on sports. This was followed by speeches by Gulf Bank CEO Tony Daher and Pro-Vision Sports CEO Ahmed Al-Huzami. The evening ended with the official awards ceremony, with both male and female winners collecting monetary prizes for their achievements.

**Partnership with Kuwait Red Crescent Society**

Each year the Marathon partners with a leading group to raise awareness of an important issue. This year, Gulf Bank Marathon 642 partnered with Kuwait Red Crescent Society to bring medical aid to those who are unable to afford medical treatment. All donations made will go towards the provision of medical devices such as, pacemakers, cochlear devices, hearing aids, electric wheelchairs and stents.

Interview with Ahmed Al-Huzami, CEO of Pro-Vision Sport Management: "When we first approached Gulf Bank, we had a vision to create a successful sporting event that would place Kuwait firmly on the international sporting map. Year after year, we have watched the 'Gulf Bank 642 Marathon' exceed our expectations,

becoming one of the most exciting events on Kuwait's sporting calendar. We are truly proud to be a part of such an incredible and unique event. The marathon is Kuwait's only accredited road race, holding accreditation from the Association of International Marathons and Distance Races (AIMS), meaning it serves as qualifying events for major international marathons. Thank you to everyone involved in making this year's event a success and we look forward to continuing on this journey with Gulf Bank."

**Marathon entertainment**

There were a number of surprises in store on the day of the race, with popular radio station 88.8FM Kuwait Pulse and their hosts broadcasting live from the race village. Gulf Bank had the village abuzz with excitement, and the crowd eager for a chance to take part in the infamous 'Catch the Cash' game. Exclusive to Gulf Bank, the game saw participants answer a series of question, with those correctly answering them entering the box to catch as much cash as possible within a time limit. With over 30 booths in the village, there was a huge variety of entertainment available.

**Special appearances**

As well as a number of special appear-



Gulf Bank CEO and team

ances from leading social media influencers, Kuwait's soccer legends made a special appearance at the marathon, attracting crowds and adding to the excitement of the day. We would like to thank Saad Al-Hooti; Fathi Kameel; Jasim Yacoub; and Salah Al-Hasawi for coming out and inspiring everyone.

**Sponsors, supporters and partners**

Gulf Bank and Pro-Vision Sports Management would like to thank the Kuwait government and governmental agencies and private companies whose contributions and support were integral to the day's success. A special thanks to the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Information, Kuwait Municipality, Ford, Extreme Sports, Kuwait Airways, Public Authority of Sports, Souq Sharq, Kuwait Red Crescent Society, Dasman Diabetes Institute and all other partners and supports.

**Corporate social responsibility**

Corporate social responsibility forms an important component of Gulf Bank's mission and goals. One of the key pillars

of the bank's CSR programs is health and fitness. As a country with high obesity and diabetes levels, Gulf Bank has committed to raising awareness of the issue as well as increasing the sporting culture and participation levels. The largest sporting event in Kuwait, the 'Gulf Bank 642 Marathon' is also an opportunity for Gulf Bank to inspire their employees. This year's race saw 400 employees take part in the day, with over 245 total volunteers. Volunteers included employees, as well as the general public.

Gulf Bank continues to be a leader in corporate social responsibility initiatives and remains strongly committed to giving back to our beloved country and to all the people of Kuwait. To find out more about the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon, visit [www.gulfbank642marathon.com](http://www.gulfbank642marathon.com) or @GulfBank642 on Instagram. Donate now to help raise much-needed funds for those suffering from chronic illness or disabilities through the official website of the Red Crescent Society <https://donation.krcs.org/kw/en-US/Campaign>

## Putting Kuwait on the International Sporting Map

KUWAIT: The marathon has placed Kuwait on the map for international sporting events. It is the only road race in Kuwait to have received accreditation from the Association of International Marathons and Distance Races (AIMS).

The biggest sporting event in Kuwait, the marathon acts as a qualifying race for international marathons, this year's 'Gulf Bank 642 Marathon' attracted runners from around the world. Over 66 countries were represented.



An aerial shot of the marathon



Crowd on the bridge

### GULF BANK 642 MARATHON WINNERS FEMALES

5 KM			10 KM		
1 <sup>st</sup>	Amal Al Roumi	0:21:50,2	1 <sup>st</sup>	Oksana Raita	0:36:04,5
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Gayron Berman	0:22:13,3	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Latifa Essarekh	0:36:43,7
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Lulu Al Askar	0:22:31,0	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Asmaa Mahmoud	0:41:43,9
21 KM			42 KM		
1 <sup>st</sup>	Kateryna Karmanenko	1:21:03,7	1 <sup>st</sup>	Lucy Wanjiku Ndungu	2:52:33,2
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Renata Hoppova	1:33:12,8	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Evelina Shamarova	3:19:10,3
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Hannah Farrell	1:41:06,7	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Stephanie Innes-Smith	3:48:02,2

### GULF BANK 642 MARATHON WINNERS MALES

5 KM			10 KM		
1 <sup>st</sup>	Sulaiman Al Kandery	0:16:44,7	1 <sup>st</sup>	Willy Mnangat	0:30:34,5
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Sultan Al Dhanhani	0:17:22,3	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Abdulrahman Al Kandery	0:31:07,2
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Yaqoub Al Rashidi	0:17:51,4	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Taras Salo	0:31:23,3
21 KM			42 KM		
1 <sup>st</sup>	Philip Ekwom	1:06:52,6	1 <sup>st</sup>	Anouar El Ghouz	2:20:19,4
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Samuel Ekutan	1:07:03,3	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Ahmed Bakry	2:29:33,9
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Aziz Al Khamis	1:23:52,7	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Hassan Ali	2:40:35,1

# Romania could challenge Russian iron grip on Europe's energy

## Untapped reserves under the Black Sea attract oil and gas majors

BUCHAREST: Romania, one of the EU's poorest members, could emerge as an unlikely challenger to Russia's iron grip on eastern Europe's energy supply thanks to vast oil and gas reserves waiting to be tapped, experts say.

Its hydrocarbon riches already give Romania a high degree of energy self-sufficiency, but there are many more untapped reserves under the Black Sea, attracting the attention of the world's oil and gas majors. Some, including US giant ExxonMobil and Austria's OMV Petrom, have started drilling in the Black Sea. "Romania's position as a potentially significant gas producer in this region is unique and the resources here may pose a threat to what has been mostly a Russian monopoly," said Mark Beacom, CEO of Black Sea Oil & Gas, a company owned jointly by the Carlyle Group and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

But the energy majors have put their ambitions on hold after Bucharest passed legislation that will tax revenues from offshore drilling and stipulate that half of output must be reserved for the domestic market—even though the country still lacks much of the infrastructure needed to distribute and consume it.

Romania currently produces about 10.5 billion cubic meters of gas each year, largely onshore, and consumes 11-12 billion cubic meters, making it almost completely independent from Russian gas unlike its eastern European neighbors. According to varying estimates, further untapped reserves of between 170 and 200 billion cubic meters lie deep in the Black Sea that could be extracted by 2040.

That represents the equivalent of Romania's total annual consumption for 15 years, and four years' consumption of a country such as France.

It was the former communist leader Nicolae Ceausescu who first launched an off-



This picture shows the gas drilling platform "Ocean Endeavour" on the Black Sea, Romania's deep waters where ExxonMobil and OMV Petrom explored. Romania, one of EU's poorest members, could emerge as an unlikely challenger to Russia's iron grip on eastern Europe's energy supply thanks to vast oil and gas reserves waiting to be tapped, experts say. —AFP

shore drilling project in the Black Sea 50 years ago. And now Romania could "become a regional hub and contribute to Europe's energy security," the Energy Ministry told AFP.

### Russian stranglehold

Russia is one of the biggest suppliers of oil and gas to Europe, a stranglehold that the West has long tried to break in view of recurring geopolitical tensions between the former Cold War foes.

In the 2000s, a dispute between Russia and Ukraine left Europeans shivering in the middle of winter when Russian giant Gazprom cut supplies to the West.

"The volume of (offshore) reserves can turn Romania into the main EU gas producer,

after the UK leaves the bloc," Razvan Nicolescu, a consultant with Deloitte told AFP.

To capitalize on this, authorities have started work on the Romanian stretch of the BRUA pipeline, a 479-kilometre (308-mile) artery, partly financed by the European Commission, that will also cross Bulgaria, Hungary and Austria, and transport gas from the Caspian and Black Seas to Central Europe.

But the plan can only proceed "if the gas companies decide to go ahead with their investments," Nicolescu said. And therein lies the catch. In October, the Romanian parliament passed a law introducing progressive taxation on revenues from offshore drilling and stipulating that half of the gas produced must be sold on the local market. —AFP

## Macron popularity dips as French fuel tax revolt simmers

PARIS: Emmanuel Macron's popularity took a further hit in recent weeks, according to a poll yesterday, as fuel tax protests rumbled on across France in the latest sign of discontent with the president's economic reforms.

Only 25 percent of those questioned in an Ifop poll between Nov. 9 and 17 said they were satisfied with Macron, down from 29 percent in October, according to the survey of almost 2,000 people published in the Journal du Dimanche (JDD). Macron, who came to power 18 months ago vowing to reshape the economy and overhaul institutions, has brushed off slumping ratings to push through a series of reforms, including a loosening of laws governing hiring and firing.

His government introduced fuel tax hikes to encourage drivers to embrace less-polluting cars, touching a nerve with voters in rural areas in particular as the extra cost began to bite in October when global oil prices surged. Angry motorists and other demonstrators, many accusing Macron of being out of touch with ordinary people, blocked roads across France on Saturday in a grassroots campaign dubbed the "Yellow Vests" that drew nearly 288,000 protesters.

Some were still maintaining blockades on highway sliproads, tolls and roundabouts yesterday. Saturday's demonstra-

tions sparked run-ins with frustrated drivers trying to get around stoppages, and more than 400 people were injured, 14 of them seriously, Interior Minister Christophe Castaner said.

A woman protester died when she was accidentally hit by a panicked driver at one blockade. At least 157 people were taken into police custody. In a separate Ifop poll in the JDD on Sunday, 62 percent of those surveyed said the government should prioritize policies to help household incomes even if it meant advancing more slowly in an environmentally friendly energy transition plan.

Environment Minister Francois de Rugy said the government, which last week sought to placate motorists with subsidies for the worst off, would not back down on its fuel tax plans. These are set for another hike in January including on diesel, the most commonly used fuel in France.

"I would prefer to announce tax cuts but we need levers to fight climate change," he told Europe 1 radio and CNews television in a joint interview yesterday. Macron's popularity has sunk to as low as 21 percent in other polls recently, after a torrid summer marked by a scandal over the violent conduct of the president's former security adviser and the departure of several ministers. — Reuters

**GULF BANK 642 MARATHON**

**7,500 THANK YOU'S**

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## Health &amp; Science

# An on-orbit servicing: The new type of space industry

## 'Equivalent to a AAA servicing truck in geostationary orbit'

WASHINGTON: Imagine an airport where thousands of planes, empty of fuel, are left abandoned on the tarmac. That is what has been happening for decades with satellites that circle the Earth. When satellites run out of fuel, they can no longer maintain their precise orbit, rendering them useless even if their hardware is still intact.

"It's literally throwing away hundreds of millions of dollars," Al Tadoros, vice president of space infrastructure and civil Space at a company called SSL, said this month at a meeting in the US capital of key players in the emerging field of on-orbit servicing, or repairing satellites while they are in space. In recent years, new aerospace companies have been founded to try and extend the lifespan of satellites, on the hunch that many clients would find this more profitable than re-launching new ones.

In 2021, his company will launch a vehicle — as part of its Robotic Servicing of Geosynchronous Satellites (RSGS) program — that is capable of servicing two to three dozen satellites in a distant geostationary orbit, some 22,000 miles from Earth where there are about 500 active satellites, most in telecommunications. This unmanned spacecraft will be able to latch onto a satellite to inspect it, refuel it, and possibly even repair it or change components, and put it back in the correct orbit. Tadoros describes it as "equivalent to a AAA servicing truck in geostationary orbit." And "it's financially a very, very big opportunity," he adds.

Telecommunications giant Intelsat, which operates 50 geostationary satellites, chose a different option and signed a contract with Space Logistics, a branch of Northrop Grumman, for its MEV, a "very simple system"

vice president Ken Lee told AFP is much like a "tow truck." When it launches in 2019, the spacecraft will attach itself to a broken down satellite, and reposition it in its correct orbit. The MEV will stay attached and use its own engine to stay in orbit.

### Too much debris

On-orbit servicing could also help cut down on the perplexing problem of mounting space debris. Of the 23,000 space objects counted by the US military, just 1,900 are active satellites. The rest — which move at speeds of some 12-19,000 miles (20-30,000 kilometers) per hour — includes nearly 3,000 inactive satellites, 2,000 pieces of rockets (such as the second stages of rockets) and thousands of fragments produced by two key events: the deliberate missile explosion of a Chinese satellite in 2007, and the 2009 collision of an Iridium satellite with an aging Russian one.

No short term solution has been identified for small-scale space junk, but some companies would like to be able to remove defunct satellites from orbit. Since 2008, France has required satellite operators to take steps to "deorbit" their spacecrafts by programming them to re-enter Earth's atmosphere in 25 years so that they burn up, according to Laurent Francillout, head of space security at the French National Center for Space Studies (CNES).

When it comes to satellites in geostationary orbits, their end-of-life option is to go farther from Earth to a "graveyard orbit" 200 miles further away. "We are trying to promote these principles" in other countries, Francillout said. A small Japanese company founded in 2013, Astroscale, is developing a system to



approach and capture space debris and broken satellites. Though it doesn't have a clientele yet, director of operations Chris Blackerby anticipates the business would be "very viable." A test launch is planned for 2020.

Airbus's future "Space Tug," planned for 2023, is being built to grab old satellites and push them down to 125 miles above Earth so

they burn up. The problem of space junk is only getting worse. The number of satellites in space has already risen 50 percent in five years, according to the Satellite Industry Association, and growth continues. Meanwhile, debate is roiling in the United States over the need for better international regulation of space traffic, aimed at avoiding

accidents and managing future conflicts. "We don't want the Wild West," said Fred Kennedy, director of the Tactical Technology Office at DARPA, the technological research arm of the Pentagon, noting that the United States, with its fleet of military satellites, is keen to establish sound practices beyond the boundaries of Earth. — AFP

## Meditation helps conflict veterans with PTSD: Study

PARIS: Transcendental meditation — the practice of effortless thinking — may be as effective at treating PTSD in conflict veterans as traditional therapy, US researchers said Friday, in findings that could help tens of thousands deal with their trauma. Post traumatic stress disorder, a debilitating condition that can lead to psychosis, bipolar disorder or suicidal and homicidal thoughts, affects an estimated 14 percent of US veterans who serve in Iraq or Afghanistan.

The most common treatment for PTSD is a process known as prolonged exposure psychotherapy, which forces sufferers to re-experience traumatic events by confronting their memories of the conflict. Researchers from three US universities decided to look into whether more everyday techniques, which help civilians lower their stress levels and increase focus and productivity, would work on traumatized veterans. They tried 203 former servicemen and women with PTSD, most of whom were receiving medication for their symptoms, and randomly assigned them courses of transcendental meditation, prolonged exposure therapy or a specialized PTSD health education class.

They found that 60 percent of veterans who did 20 minutes of quiet meditation every day showed significant improvement in their symptoms, and more completed the study than those given exposure therapy. "Over the past 50 years, PTSD has expanded to become a significant public health problem," Sanford Nidich, of the Maharishi University of Management Research Institute, told AFP. "Due to the increasing need to address the PTSD public health care problem in the US, UK and worldwide, there is a

compelling need to implement governmental policy to include alternative therapies such as transcendental meditation as an option for treating veterans with PTSD."

Transcendental meditation involves effortlessly thinking of an idea or mantra to produce a settled, calmer state of mind — scientists call it "restful alertness". Unlike exposure therapy, meditation can be practiced at home, takes up relatively little time, and researchers say it would be significantly cheaper than current treatment techniques. It also avoids forcing combat veterans to relive their trauma in a bid to get better. "Transcendental meditation is self-empowering, and can be practiced just about anywhere at any time, without the need for specialized equipment or ongoing personnel support," said Nidich, who was the lead author of the study published in The Lancet Psychiatry journal.

### 'Gave me my life back'

The main problem with existing PTSD treatment, according to Nidich, is that forcing veterans to relive their trauma means many never finish the courses. Exposure therapy, although officially approved as a treatment by the US Veterans' Association, is ineffective in up to 50 percent of patients and drop-out rates range from 30-45 percent.

"New treatments, including options not involving exposure to the traumatic experience, are needed for veterans who do not respond to treatment or drop-out due to discomfort," said Nidich. One study participant, a 32-year-old navy veteran whom authors identified only as Ms K, said learning the meditation technique had "given me my life back." After being diagnosed as having suffered sexual trauma while on military service, her symptoms worsened until she drank to excess every night and sought to avoid human interaction. After the transcendental meditation course, "I began to come out of my nightmares and face the battle I had ahead," she said. She added she had since applied for a job in a hospital. Researchers said further studies were needed to see if meditation could be a long-term aid for PTSD sufferers. — AFP

## Kaspersky Lab supports 'Paris Call' for trust and security in cyberspace

DUBAI: Kaspersky Lab is proud to be an early supporter of the Paris Call for trust and security in cyberspace that was unveiled at the Paris Peace Forum on November 12 by President Emmanuel Macron, and Foreign Affairs minister Jean-Yves Le Drian. We thank the French authorities for launching this project, which should contribute to improving worldwide cybersecurity and stability in the face of growing mistrust.

The Paris Call lays out several important principles and guidelines for international cybersecurity. In particular, it recognizes the responsibilities of key private sector actors in improving trust, security and stability in cyberspace, and encourages initiatives aimed at strengthening the security of digital processes and products across the supply chain. It also promotes broad digital cooperation and a multi-stakeholder approach to build confidence, capacity and trust.

The Call connects with Kaspersky Lab's championing of international cooperation on cyber issues and the need to counter the risk of balkanization. Online crime is borderless; and so must be the world's response. We cannot fight back if we are isolated and fragmented. Shared intelligence and public-private partnerships, for instance through

cooperation between national police forces and cybersecurity companies, are necessary to ensure stronger protection for all.

The solution is also to become more transparent and to give stakeholders proof that they can trust cybersecurity. We have started already through our Global Transparency Initiative (GTI), a program designed to build trust, accountability, assurance and resilience. Within the GTI framework, we are relocating some of our infrastructure to Switzerland — starting from November 13, 2018, when we begin to process suspicious and malicious files shared by users in Europe, in Zurich, and open the doors of our first Transparency Center in the city. More data and processes, and more regions, will follow. Together with national entities such as the French government and our cybersecurity colleagues across the world, we will continue to push for open collaboration and open doors in cyberspace.

Eugene Kaspersky, CEO of Kaspersky Lab comments: "I'm very glad to see the wheels are turning to international cyberspace cooperation. The Paris Call for Trust and Security in Cyberspace announced by the French authorities is a very positive shift given the atmosphere of growing mistrust that the cybersecurity industry is experiencing now. This Call recognizes the responsibilities of leaders of the private sector in improving trust, security and stability in cyberspace. That's exactly what our efforts have been focused on lately in many of our company's initiatives — to become more transparent, to prove our trustworthiness, and, as we love to do, become pioneers of a new industry standard. We'll undoubtedly continue to push for cooperation in the industry and open doors in cyberspace, and it's great to feel supported in this mission!"

# CLINIC PAGE



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- ◆ Management of benign and malignant vocal cord lesions.
- ◆ Vocal cord augmentation.
- ◆ Treatment of spasmodic dysphonia.
- ◆ Adenotonsillectomy using latest techniques.
- ◆ Thyroid surgery.
- ◆ Surgery for the deviated nasal septum.
- ◆ Endoscopic sinus surgery.
- ◆ Treatment of allergic rhinitis.
- ◆ Treatment of snoring.
- ◆ Treatment of vertigo.

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**IC INTERNATIONAL CLINIC**  
Member of the Society of American Gastrointestinal & Endoscopic Surgeons (SAGES)  
Higher specialization in Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary surgery & Organ Transplantation  
Member of many prestigious surgical societies.

- ◆ Day case surgeries
- ◆ Minor surgeries (lipoma, sebaceous cyst, ingrowing nail)
- ◆ Diagnosis, treatment and follow up of all surgical emergencies
- ◆ Hemorrhoids, fistula & anal fissure surgeries
- ◆ Surgery for morbid obesity (sleeve, gastric bypass)
- ◆ Breast surgeries
- ◆ Hernia repair
- ◆ Thyroid & adrenal surgeries
- ◆ Surgery for reflux disease
- ◆ Cholecystectomy & laparoscopic appendicectomy
- ◆ Liver, pancreas & bile ducts surgeries

**Dr. Hani Haider**  
General Surgery Consultant  
http://www.international-clinic.com Tel: 1886677 ic\_kwt

**Scope of Clinical Practice:**

- ◆ General & Laparoscopic Surgery
- ◆ Single Port Surgery
- ◆ Treatment of Colo-Rectal Diseases, Including Colorectal Cancer
- ◆ Surgical Treatment of Inflammatory Bowel Abscess
- ◆ Treatment of Perianal Fistula & Complex Perianal Fistula (complications)
- ◆ VAAFT Procedure (Treatment of Fistula through Fistuloscope)
- ◆ Treatment of Irritable Bowel Symptoms
- ◆ Colonoscopy & Gastroscopy
- ◆ Stomach Balloon Insertion & removal
- ◆ Bariatric Surgery - Lap Sleeve Gastrectomy
- ◆ Gallstones & Abdominal Hernias Surgery
- ◆ Colonic Hydrotherapy & Fecal Incontinence Treatment
- ◆ Laparoscopic mini bypass
- ◆ Transanal minimally invasive surgery

**Academic Certificates, Trainings & Fellowships:**

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

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

**daralshifa**  
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**DR. FAHAD AL-MUKHAIZEEM**  
Consultant Pediatrician

Consultant Pediatrician-Canadian & American Board in Pediatrics-Canadian Board in Pediatric Emergency

**Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368**  
Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St.1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B

**DR. WALEED S BUHAIMED**  
Consultant of General Surgery  
Laprosopic and Bariatric Surgery

**Academic Certificates - Training**

- ◆ Kuwait Board of General Surgery.
- ◆ (IFSO) member .
- ◆ Faculty member of (BEST).
- ◆ Member of Kuwait Surgical Association.

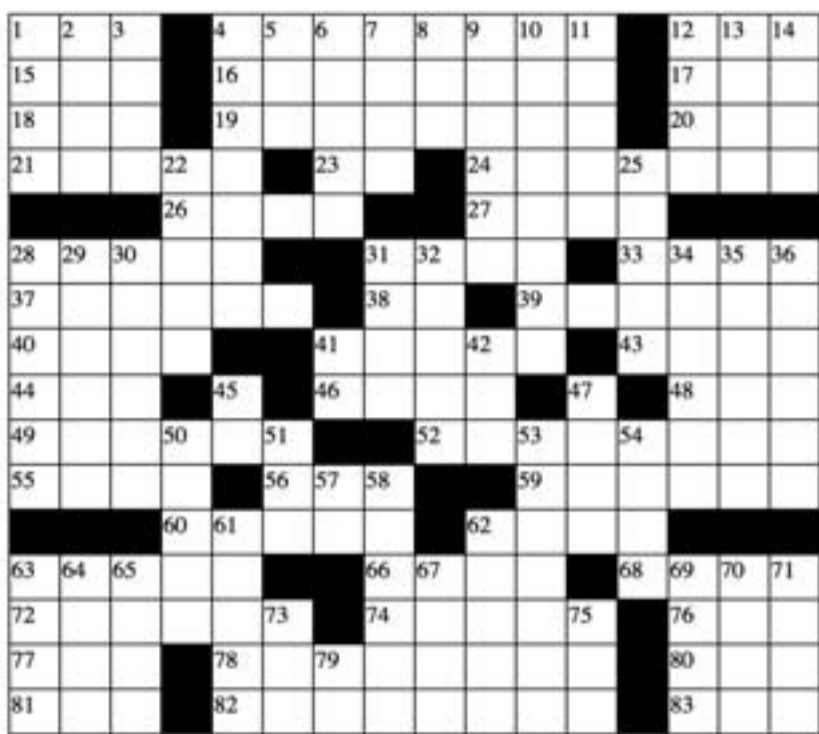
**Scope of clinical Practice.**

- ◆ Bariatric surgeries.
- ◆ Gallbladder stones surgeries.
- ◆ Abdominal wall and hernia surgeries.
- ◆ G.I. surgeries.
- ◆ Thyroid and para - thyroid surgeries.
- ◆ Anal surgeries.

email: wbuhaimed@gmail.com Tel.: 965 22269411/ Mob.: 965 99212228 Jabriya, 4th Ring Road, Block 1A Floor 9 - Clover Center Mazaya Building

Stars

CROSSWORD 2063



ACROSS

1. Any triangular fore-and-aft sail (set forward of the foremast) v 1.
4. Of or relating to theism.
12. A belief (or system of beliefs) accepted as authoritative by some group or school.
15. A sweetened beverage of diluted fruit juice.
16. In football.
17. Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
18. The 26th letter of the Roman alphabet.
19. An open automobile having a front seat and a rumble seat.
20. Resinlike substance secreted by certain lac insects.
21. City in northwestern Jordan.
23. A soft silvery metallic element of the rare earth group.
24. The apse of a Christian church that contains the bishop's throne.
26. Cancel, annul, or reverse an action or its effect.
27. Make an etching of.
28. A series of things depending on each other as if linked together.
33. A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
37. Of or relating to the aorta.
38. The azimuth of a celestial body is the angle between the vertical plane containing it and the plane of the meridian.
39. An island in the Aegean Sea in the Saronic Gulf.
40. A magic power or magic spell.
43. A primeval personification of air and breath.
44. A Kwa language spoken by the Yoruba people in southwestern Nigeria.
46. (pathology) An elevation of the skin filled with serous fluid.
48. Not divisible by two.
49. A member of the eastern branch of the Sioux.
52. So great in size or force or extent as to elicit awe.
55. United States humorist who wrote about rural life (1818-1885).
56. Airtight sealed metal container for food or drink or paint etc.
59. Pierce with a sharp stake or point.
60. Any of various large keen-sighted diurnal birds of prey noted for their broad wings and strong soaring flight.
63. Sour or bitter in taste.
66. A city in east central Texas.
68. Noisy talk.
72. A high-crowned black cap (usually made of felt or sheepskin) worn by men in Turkey and Iran and the Caucasus.
74. 100 agorot equal 1 shekel.
76. The cry made by sheep.
77. Being one more than two.
78. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
80. Electronic warfare undertaken under direct control of an operational commander to locate sources of radiated electromagnetic energy for the purpose of immediate threat recognition.
81. A nucleic acid consisting of large molecules shaped like a double helix.
82. A large estate in Spanish-speaking countries.
83. A unit of length of thread or yarn.

DOWN

1. Empty rhetoric or insincere or exaggerated.

ed talk.

2. The content of cognition.
3. Fermented alcoholic beverage brewed from malt and hops.
4. New World flycatchers.
5. 10 hao equal 1 dong.
6. (Greek mythology) The Muse of lyric and love poetry.
7. Severe diabetes mellitus with an early onset.
8. A caustic detergent useful for removing grease.
9. A nervous restrained laugh.
10. Of or relating to inertia.
11. Of or relating to or containing cerium especially with valence 4.
12. An Eskimo hut.
13. The act of scanning.
14. (trademark) A liquid that temporarily disables a person.
22. The capital of Ecuador.
25. God of wealth and love.
29. A pipe with a long flexible tube connected to a container where the smoke is cooled by passing through water.
30. (Hindu mythology) The most important of the princes in the Bhagavad-Gita to whom Krishna explains the nature of being and of God and how humans can come to know God.
31. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
32. A member of the Nahuatl people who established an empire in Mexico that was overthrown by Cortes in 1519.
34. Evergreen Australasian tree having white or silvery bark and young leaves and yellow flowers.
35. Of or at or relating to an anode.
36. The appendage to an object that is designed to be held in order to use or move it.
41. A soft gray ductile metallic element used in alloys.
42. A dark-skinned member of a race of people living in Australia when Europeans arrived.
45. A light strong brittle gray toxic bivalent metallic element.
47. Acute ulceration of the mucous membranes of the mouth or genitals.
50. Someone who is regarded as contemptible.
51. A graphical recording of the cardiac cycle produced by an electrocardiograph.
53. Rabbits and hares.
54. Moving quickly and lightly.
57. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
58. Himalayish language spoken in the Kathmandu Valley of Nepal.
61. Cause to be embarrassed.
62. Fruit of the oak tree.
64. (Old Testament) Cain and Abel were the first children of Adam and Eve born after the Fall of Man.
65. English essayist (1775-1834).
67. American novelist (1909-1955).
69. Norwegian mathematician (1802-1829).
70. (law) A comprehensive term for any proceeding in a court of law whereby an individual seeks a legal remedy.
71. God of love and erotic desire.
73. An accountant certified by the state.
75. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
79. A radioactive element of the actinide series.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Has it ever occurred to you that even if you don't achieve all your goals, you're still better for trying? Compare yourself with people who admit defeat before they even get out of bed in the morning -- you have a lot to be proud of. Your past efforts might not have taken you exactly where you wanted to be today, but they took you in the right direction. The rest of the journey might be laborious, but it will eventually lead to its proper conclusion.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Let your outrageous impulses go wild today -- don't rein in any urges you have to kick up your heels and get a little bit crazy. And if people are watching, they won't laugh at you. If anything, they'll be inspired by how you march to the beat of your own drummer. Your irreverent behavior will catch people off guard, and this will cause them to reevaluate some of their viewpoints and ideas. Real change can come only when you're in on the conversation.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

In your quest to have everyone like you right now, you could be very influenced by people who might not have your best interests at heart. It's time for you to get comfortable with the fact that you cannot be everyone's friend. No one can be liked by everyone -- not even someone as charming and generous as you! It's more important to follow your heart and do what you think is right than to follow the fashions of the day.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

The money issues you've been struggling with recently will get a lot easier today, either because of another person's generosity or because you just don't care as much anymore. Money is not the center of your life right now -- nor should it be. You understand what truly matters in life, and you know that money can't buy it. This doesn't mean that you can have a cavalier attitude about money, of course -- but it does mean that you can choose not to worry.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

It's not empty compliments or flattery that have helped build your ego to the heights it's at now -- hard work and bravery have! Your growing self-esteem does not depend on other people. Wield your confidence without hesitation, especially if someone tries to knock you down a peg or two today. As long as you are respectful of other people, defending your position is the right thing -- even a noble thing -- to do.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

The details of your day-to-day life don't have to overwhelm you -- what you need is a new way to organize your life. Investigate all your options with an open mind today. Maybe something spiritual, like yoga or transcendental meditation, is all you need to put things in order. Maybe you need to invest in a cutting-edge techno-gadget. Or the answer might be as simple as paring down all your activities to give yourself some more breathing room.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Today someone's brilliant one-liner will do more than tickle your funny bone; it will ignite a tiny spark in your heart. Not everyone realizes how having fun can lead to having a romance -- though you've always understood the connection, haven't you? Your ideal mate is likelier to be someone who makes you smile than someone who makes you swoon. Remember this when you're considering which crushes to pursue. Hold off on accepting an invitation from anyone who's coming on too strong.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Your home is usually your refuge from the world, but recent events could be causing some problems in that area. If it's a matter of physical problems or disrepair, make all the phone calls and arrangements necessary to start mending things. If the problems are more in the realm of emotions or relationship troubles, today you need to start a conversation about them. You will quickly find a solution.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

There are many different types of communication to choose from, so why not choose one that is a little bit out of the ordinary today? It will get you noticed by people who have good taste and innovative minds. Let your creativity go wild, and don't be afraid to surprise anyone -- after all, who doesn't like a surprise? If you want to send an email to a friend, why not make it a poem? And you can sing into a phone just as easily as speak into it.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Someone you know is very excited about a new idea or project, but after taking a closer look at what this person wants to do, you're going to see quite a few holes in the plans. It's okay if you're wary of this new scheme -- in fact, it's essential. You need to be the voice of reason. Use your tact and charm to prompt a reassessment and some fine-tuning. This person needs a dose of reality, and you are just the person to supply it.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Get ready to have a great day! A lot of positive energy is circulating between you and your friends right now, and you all will be feeding off of the good vibes you're sending to one another. This is a wonderful day for parties, shopping trips and fun dinners in restaurants that have good sound systems. Don't fight the urge to dance if it overtakes you -- your moves will make you the star of the dance floor! Do not take anything too seriously.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Sometimes your dreams are just silly surreal plays that your subconscious performs at night -- not prescient visions of the dangers your future holds. So if disturbing images have been keeping you from having a good night's rest lately, don't be alarmed. And don't let bad dreams lead to more stress -- or you'll have a self-fulfilling prophecy on your hands. You may not have a lot of control over your dreams, but you do control your life.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Les Misérables

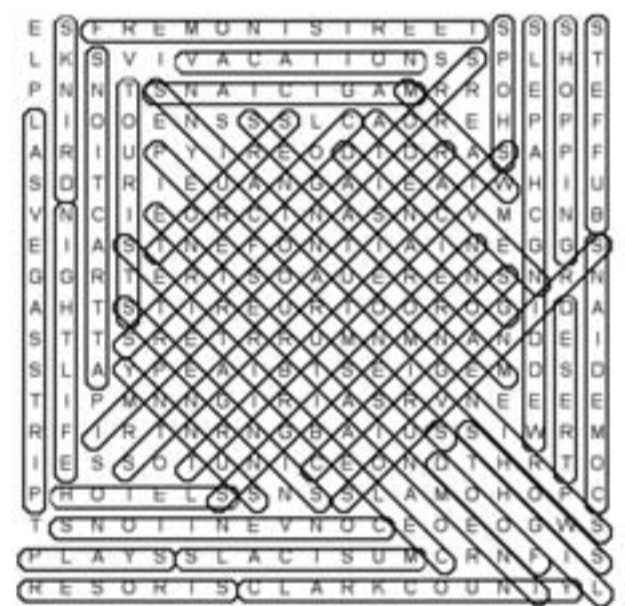
Find and circle all of the names and items from the novel Les Misérables. The remaining 47 letters spell a secret message.



- |               |                  |                |             |
|---------------|------------------|----------------|-------------|
| ARGOT         | FACTORY          | MARIUS         | REVOLUTION  |
| AZELMA        | FANTINE          | MAYOR          | RUE PLUMET  |
| BARRICADES    | FEANCE           | MERCY          | SEWERS      |
| BISHOP MYRIEL | FRANCS           | MONTFERMEIL    | SOLDIERS    |
| BREAD         | FRENCH           | NOVEL          | STUDENTS    |
| CONVENT       | GAVROCHE         | PARIS          | SUICIDE     |
| CONVICT       | GORBEAU HOUSE    | PATRON-MINETTE | THE SEINE   |
| COSETTE       | INKKEEPER        | PRISON         | THENARDIER  |
| DOLL          | INSPECTOR JAVERT | RECONCILIATION | VICTOR HUGO |
| ENJOURAS      | JEAN VALJEAN     | REDEMPTION     | WEDDING     |
| EPONINE       | JUNE REBELLION   |                |             |

Yesterday's Solution

Las Vegas



- |              |                 |             |                  |
|--------------|-----------------|-------------|------------------|
| ATTRACTIONS  | ENTERTAINMENT   | NEON SIGNS  | SINGERS          |
| BUFFETS      | FOOD            | NEVADA      | SOUVENIRS        |
| CASINOS      | FREMONT STREET  | NIGHTLIFE   | SPRING MOUNTAINS |
| CELEBRITIES  | HOTELS          | PERFORMERS  | SUNNY            |
| CLARK COUNTY | IMPERSONATORS   | PLAYS       | TOURISTS         |
| COMEDANS     | LAS VEGAS STRIP | RESORTS     | TOURS            |
| CONCERTS     | LIGHTS          | RESTAURANTS | TRIBUTE ACTS     |
| CONVENTIONS  | MAGICIANS       | SHOPPING    | VACATION         |
| DESERT       | MARRIAGES       | SHOPS       | WARM             |
| DINING       | MUSICALS        | SHOWS       | WEDDING CHAPELS  |
| DRINKS       |                 |             |                  |

The hidden message is: ELVIS PRESLEY IMPERSONATOR



Daily SuDoku



very hard

Yesterday's Solution



medium

# Lifestyle

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2018



Performers and musicians parade through the streets of Todmorden, bearing giant lantern puppets and hundreds of paper lanterns for the Lamplighter Festival in Todmorden, northern England. The annual Lamplighter Festival features a lantern parade, fire performers, street bands and illuminated installations throughout the market town. — AFP

## 'Picasso' stolen in Rotterdam possibly found in Romania

One of seven paintings stolen six years ago from a museum in The Netherlands as part of a spectacular art heist may have been found in Romania, the public prosecutor in Bucharest said yesterday. Seven masterpieces by Picasso, Monet, Gauguin, and Lucian Freud were stolen from the Kunsthall Museum in Rotterdam in 2012 in a raid that lasted only three minutes. Dutch media at the time called it "the theft of the century". Public prosecutor Augustin Lazar confirmed to AFP that Romanian authorities were in possession of a painting that "might be" one of those stolen from the Kunsthall Museum, adding it needs to be further examined.

Sources told AFP that experts are checking if the canvas is Picasso's "Harlequin Head". A Dutch foreign affairs ministry spokesperson said the painting's "authenticity must now be established". Four Romanians were jailed for the heist in 2014, and ordered to pay 18 million euros (\$20.5 million at today's rates) to the paintings' insurers. One of the group, Olga Dogaru, told investigators she had burned the paintings in her stove in the sleepy village of Carcaliu in eastern Romania in a bid to protect her son, Radu, when he could not sell them.

She later retracted the statement. Investigators have previously said the paintings were destroyed after the



In this file photo an empty space is seen where a painting by French artist Henri Matisse was stolen at the Kunsthall museum in Rotterdam, a day after seven masterpieces were stolen in a pre-dawn heist. — AFP photos

thieves failed to find a buyer. The paintings had been on loan to the museum for a show to celebrate its 20th anniversary by the Triton Foundation, set up to look after the art collection amassed by Dutch investor Willem Cordia, who died in 2011. — AFP



In this file photo a cameraman is seen as an image featuring stolen paintings from the Rotterdam Kunsthall Museum is presented during a press conference at the National History Museum of Romania in Bucharest.

## Missing St Mark mosaic finally returns to Cyprus

One of the last missing pieces of Byzantine art stolen from Cyprus in the 1970s was handed back this week by a renowned, and proud Dutch art investigator. Arthur Brand said Friday he handed back the sixth century depiction of Saint Mark during a private ceremony at the Cypriot embassy in The Hague. For Brand, dubbed the "Indiana Jones of the art world" because of his exploits to recover stolen works, the handover was a highpoint in his life-long interest in the Byzantine saint—and the result of a nearly two-year chase across Europe.

"This is a very special piece that's more than 1,600 years old. It's one of the last and most beautiful examples of art from the early Byzantine era," said the art sleuth. He showed AFP the mosaic hours before it was handed back. The Cypriot embassy and Church of Cyprus declined to comment when asked about the mosaic and the Cypriot Department of Antiquities did not respond to phonecalls.

### 'Greatest moment'

After getting a tip from a prominent London art dealer, Brand travelled to Monaco in August. Through a series of intermediaries—including several in the underground world—Brand finally traced the missing mosaic to an apartment in the upscale city-state. "It was in the possession of a British family, who bought the mosaic in good faith more than four decades ago," Brand told AFP. "They were horrified when they found out that it was in fact a priceless art treasure, looted from the Kanakaria Church after the Turkish invasion," Brand said. The family agreed to return it "to the people of Cyprus" in return for a small fee to cover restoration and storage costs, he added.

A week ago, Brand—who was working with the Church of Cyprus—returned to Monaco to collect the treasure, said to be worth five to 10 million euros (\$5.7-\$11 million). "It was one of the greatest moments of my life," the detective said. In 2015, Brand won world fame after finding two massive bronze statues made by Nazi sculptor Joseph Thorak that are referred to as "Hitler's Horses". He made headlines again a year later for helping to recover five stolen masterpieces from a criminal group in the Ukraine.

### Looted art

Religious artifacts including mosaics were hewn from the church walls in northern Cyprus following an invasion by Turkish forces in 1974. They included a set

of mosaics taken from the Panayia Kanakaria church, about 105 kilometers (65 miles) northeast of Nicosia. Many pieces ended up in the underground world of art smuggling and went missing for many years, while the Cyprus government and church campaigned ceaselessly to recover them.

"The mosaics of Kanakaria are of immense importance in Christian art and world culture," said Maria Paphiti, a former department head at British auction house Christie's. The ensemble "is among a handful of artworks that escaped the menace of Byzantine iconoclasm" in the eighth and ninth century, Paphiti, an art historian and world authority on Byzantine art told AFP.



Dutch art detective Arthur Brand poses with the missing mosaic of St Mark, a rare piece of stolen Byzantine art from Cyprus, in a hotel room in The Hague. — AFP

### 'Last missing pieces'

Twelve mosaic fragments have been returned so far, notably one depicting the Apostle Andrew—which Paphiti discovered among a collection of artworks in 2014. In 1989, four fragments depicting the upper part of Christ, two apostles and an archangel were handed back after a high-profile case in Indianapolis. Most of the mosaic fragments were recovered between 1983 and 2015, Paphiti said, but some pieces are still missing, including the lower part of Christ's body. "This is truly one of the last outstanding pieces to be returned," said Brand. "It is incredible to think that this piece of art survived for so long. It's part of the Cypriot peoples' soul," he added.

St Mark is expected to return to the Mediterranean island within the coming days. German police made a major breakthrough in the recovery of stolen Cypriot art in 1997 when they raided the home of convicted Turkish art dealer Ayden Dikmen in Munich. Cyprus has been divided since 1974 when Turkey invaded and seized its northern third in response to an Athens-engineered coup to unite the island with Greece. — AFP

## Lifestyle | Gossip



## Mariah Carey sets song deadline

**M**ariah Carey doesn't like to "rush" having to perform 'All I Want For Christmas Is You'. The 48-year-old singer knows she'll spend most of December singing her 1994 festive classic so she made a "rule" not to play or listen to holiday songs until after the Thanksgiving celebrations. She said: "I have this rule where I try to get through Thanksgiving, I don't like when people rush it because once I start I don't stop until after New Year's." The 'Distance' singer also admitted she's amazed that fans managed to get her 2001 soundtrack album 'Glitter' back to number one in the iTunes chart thanks to

their #JusticeForGlitter campaign. She told Jimmy Fallon: "The fact that 'Glitter' even came back is a thing. Whoever thought it was going to get to number one all these years later? But it is a good album and the fans made it happen. "I had nothing to do with it. The Lambily got behind it. ... it's a movement, it's bigger than me." Mariah admitted she doesn't like performing songs from the record because it represents a "tough" time for her that almost "ruined" her life. She said: "Actually #JusticeForGlitter was directed at me because I never do songs from that soundtrack. "It almost ruined my life. It was a tough time when

it came out, it was a whole thing, a drama I don't want to get into because it will change the mood." Mariah - who recently revealed she suffers from bipolar disorder - checked into hospital for medical and psychiatric care shortly after the album's release, following a bizarre promotional appearance on MTV's 'Total Request Live' that saw her launch into a lengthy monologue about therapy, take off her t-shirt to reveal a skimpy halter top and push an ice cream cart.

## Paul Weller wants to work with Robert Plant



**P**aul Weller wants to duet with Robert Plant. The 'Changingman' hitmaker is thinking ahead to his new album and has been in talks with the Led Zeppelin rocker to appear on a track, but his friend will only do so if the song is "out there". Asked if there'll be any guests on his next album, he said: "It's too early to say. I'd love to do a track with Robert Plant though. We've spoken about it. He says it would have to be pretty out there and I agree with him." The former Jam frontman hopes his next album will be "groundbreaking" but he's unsure who he'll enlist to appear on it as yet. In an interview with the new issue of Uncut magazine, he explained "As you're working on a song, it suggests someone's voice or instrument or whatever. The song decides those things, much as they decide how the album is going to go. I want to do something really groundbreaking - but I don't know if it's possible any more. Maybe we've all learned too much." The 60-year-old musician - who has grown-up kids Natt and Leah from his marriage to Dee C. Lee, daughter Dylan with make-up artist Lucy Halperin, Jasmine, 17, and Stevie Mac, 13, with ex-girlfriend Samantha Stock and twins Bowie and John-Paul, six, and 16-month-old Nova with his wife Hannah Andrews - would like to get into the recording studio now but has put his plans on hold because of his family commitments. Weller - who released his 14th studio album 'True Meanings' in September - said: "I'm at the demo stage. I've got eight pieces on the go - whether they'll all make it or not, I don't know. But I can't stop writing ... I'd be quite happy if I was going into the studio next week to start working on a new album but I can't, for family reasons. So it's about finding a balance. Trying to stay on the creative tip but at the same time, doing my family duties as well. It's plate spinning."

## Tweedy would reunite with Girls Aloud for £10m

**C**heryl Tweedy says Girls Aloud would only reunite for £10 million. The 35-year-old singer insisted that she has no plans to reunite with her former girlband - comprised of Sarah Harding, Nadine Coyle, Nicola Roberts and Kimberley Walsh - but admitted that £10 million for her charity The Prince's Trust Cheryl's Trust Centre could change her mind. Cheryl told The Guardian: "It's not going to happen. It wouldn't take anything, it's just not going to happen." However, when the interviewer said: "[Hypothetically] I've got 10 million quid and I'd like to give it to The Prince's Trust Cheryl's Trust Centre in exchange for one Girls Aloud reunion," Cheryl couldn't resist. She said: "Well, for 10 million pounds..." However, she then clarified: "You do know I meant 10 million for each of us, right?" Cheryl calls Girls Aloud's legacy as "having good pop songs, for a good chunk of time" and revealed she, Nicola and Kimberley had to fight for their hit single 'The Promise' to be released. She said: "As we left, some guy said to us: 'We'll do it your way, but you're committing career suicide.'" 'The Promise' went on to become 2008's fastest-selling single. Although Cheryl insisted she no longer cares about having number one singles, she admitted that if her comeback flops she would walk away from her pop career as it would not be worth being away from her son Bear, whose father is her former boyfriend Liam Payne. The 'Love Made Me Do It' hitmaker said: "Is it bad, if I say that if I get another No 1 that's great, and if I don't that's fine? If it goes in at 80, it's time for me to move on with my life. I'm not going to jump around working hard and spending time away from my son for that. Is the juice worth the squeeze?"



## Wolf Alice's awards guilt

**W**olf Alice felt "guilty" about winning the Mercury Prize. The 'Beautifully Unconventional' hitmakers - comprised of Ellie Rowsell, Joff Oddie, Joel Amey and Theo Ellis - were awarded the prestigious accolade for their second LP, 'Visions of a Life', in September and though they were "proud" to be recognized, they were quickly "deflated" following a backlash that accused the panel of making a "safe" choice. Ellie said: "It's hard. Because winning was great-we celebrated. I felt proud. Then you read all these things and you deflate. I felt guilty. 'I'm sorry I won this, please give it to someone else.' And I don't want to do that." And the quartet don't understand why they were seen as the "safe" choice and think they were actually chosen because they represented a middle ground that wasn't too mainstream to be obvious or so leftfield that the vote would alienate the public. Joff recalled in an interview with the Sunday Times Culture

magazine: "People were angry. They thought we were the safe option." Ellie - who was on the 2016 judging panel - added: "But the safe option is always the left-field choice, because nobody can be angry. They go, 'Oh, it's nice to give them a boost!' " But Joff mused: "I don't know. The award was in a position of losing public interest had they done that again." Ellie admitted: "We were the middle thing. So, basically, we didn't win because we were good. But critics were more annoyed with the prize than with us. Wolf Alice - whose debut album 'My Love is Cool' was nominated for the 2015 Mercury Prize - beat off the likes of Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds, Arctic Monkeys, Florence and the Machine, Lily Allen, and Jorja Smith to be crowned the winners of the iconic award.

## Taron Egerton doesn't want Bond

**T**aron Egerton doesn't want to play James Bond. The 29-year-old actor shot to fame as trainee spy Gary 'Eggsy' Unwin in 'Kingsman' - a role he reprised in sequel 'Kingsman: The Golden Circle' - and admitted that's made the iconic role "less appealing" to him, though he would still be "honored" to be approached for the franchise. He said of the possibility of playing Bond: "Because I made my name in a spy-thriller franchise, it holds less appeal. Of course if Barbara Broccoli or whoever might be replacing her called, I would be honored, but..." But Taron is a big fan of the Bond films and looked to them for his research on 'Kingsman'. He said: "Moore is my favorite Bond. I think we borrowed more from him than any other." The 'Robin Hood' actor admitted having to diet for his role in 'Kingsman' was "hell" and he doesn't think he could have the discipline to be a full-time action star like 'Logan' actor Hugh Jackman or 'Captain America's' Chris Evans. He told the Sunday Telegraph magazine: "The bit I find horrific is not being able to eat. The training I love, always have, always will. Cardio just makes me feel great afterwards. I've already been today. "But it's hell when I'm doing Kingsman because I love food for comfort, and beer for socializing and I can't do that at all. "Those guys like Hugh Jackman and Chris Evans, who do it professionally year-round, they don't eat. "They have days when they're just on chicken and veg." Taron has made a number of movies with his 'Kingsman' director Matthew Vaughn - who produced his upcoming Sir Elton John biopic 'Rocketman' - and admitted he feels he owes his career to the filmmaker. He said: "Matthew, he does my head in! "Yes, I will reluctantly say I love him with every fibre of me. He and I have spent the best part of the last five years together and I will never escape the feeling that I owe him everything, because I do."



## Florence Pugh: All actresses have been asked to lose weight

**F**lorence Pugh thinks it's "virtually impossible" to find an actress who hasn't been asked to lose weight for a role. The 'Little Drummer Girl' star was told to shed the pounds when she first tried to find work in Hollywood and she admitted she finds the movie industry "scary" because of the ways "lines can get crossed". She said: "It would be virtually impossible to find someone who hasn't been asked to [lose weight]. Part of what's so scary is that in this industry you are expected to play dress up and so many lines can get crossed if you're in the wrong hands." But despite her demoralizing experience, Florence learned a lot from her stint in the US. She explained: "I came away knowing exactly what work I did and didn't want to do and that was a big, grown-up realization." The 22-year-old actress has no interest in poorly-written female roles of little substance she said: "I can't stand characters who don't know what they're doing or why they're there - if they're just on their husband's arm, it kills me." Florence also found working on 'King Lear' alongside Dame Emma Thompson and Emily Watson "empowering". She recalled: "During the Me Too breakthrough, I was hanging out with Emma Thompson and Emily Watson - two people I've looked up to my entire life. Talking to those women was so empowering." When it comes to her work, Florence looks for something familiar in the characters she plays. She explained: "I always try to find something of my family or friends in a character because that's how I get to know her."

## Danny Trejo wants to be in Breaking Bad film

**D**anny Trejo wants to appear in the 'Breaking Bad' spin-off movie. The 74-year-old actor portrayed drug runner and DEA informant Tortuga - who was infamously killed when his duplicity was uncovered and his severed head attached to a tortoise - in the second season of the show and returned for a flashback in the seventh that explained the events leading up to his death, and while his alter ego was killed off, he thinks it would "be fun" to get involved in creator Vince Gilligan's new big screen project. He told 'ET Live': "That would be fun. That was a great [experience], the whole thing. "We did the Tortuga part and it was accepted so well, they called me back and we did the back story." Danny has also been working with director

Robert Rodriguez on his 'Machete Kills' sequel, 'Machete Kills in Space' and promised the finished film will be "amazing". He teased: "Robert is cooking up some unbelievable stuff right now. "It's amazing. We have to be holding on to somebody's guts, jumping out of a window." Bryan Cranston, who played the AMC series' anti-hero, cancer-stricken chemistry teacher-turned-drug baron Walter White, recently insisted he had no idea what the upcoming movie is about - but admitted he'd be on board if he was asked. He said: "Yes, there appears to be a movie version of 'Breaking Bad'. "But I, honestly have not even read the script. So I couldn't tell you." Though the 'Why Him?' star isn't involved as of yet, Gilligan did make him aware of the film, which has the tentative title, 'Greenbrier', and will follow "the escape of a kidnapped man and his quest for freedom". He added: "I have not gotten the script. I had not read the script, so there's a question of whether we'd even see Walter White in this movie! Think about that one." And the 62-year-old star admitted he would jump at the chance to reprise his role should the screenwriter ask him. He said: "I would, absolutely [be in it]. "It's Vince Gilligan. If Vince Gilligan asked me to do it, sure, absolutely. He's a genius." Though not much is known about the movie, Cranston teased that it will allow some of the other characters' journeys to be completed. Praising Gilligan, he added: "It's a great story, and there's a lot of people who felt that they wanted to see some sort of completion to some of these storylines that were left open. "This idea, from what I was told, gets into at least a couple of the characters who were not completed as far as their journey. "I can't wait to see all those people again ... even if I just come by to visit!" - Bang Showbiz



Lifestyle | Fashion

# Iman felt 'pressure' to lose baby weight

Chanel Iman felt "pressure" to shed her baby weight quickly. The 27-year-old model gave birth to her daughter Cali Clay - whom she has with her husband Sterling Shepard - on August 10, and has said she was so desperate to get back to work on photoshoots that she felt pressurized into getting her pre-pregnancy body back as quickly as she could. She said: "I felt a little bit [of pressure], just because I wanted to work! I just love being on set. So I wanted to get back into the groove of things." The beauty says she's still working on her body, but thinks she's "almost back" to her regular weight. She added: "It doesn't happen overnight. I am still working hard on fitness, and almost back to normal."

But despite being desperate to get back to work, NFL star Sterling, 25, says both he and Chanel hate to leave Cali's side when it comes to work commitments. He said: "We don't like to leave her at all. I am usually the one that's away and it's kind of tough on me, but we Facetime, so that helps out. She looks dead at the camera! And I just made her laugh for the first

time the other day. We were cracking up. It was so funny." To which Chanel added: "She smiles and coos when she hears her daddy's voice because he talked to her when she was in the womb." And the three-month-old tot is already a little fashionista, as Chanel is making sure to deck her out in custom items from the NFL shop so she can both look cute and support her father.

Speaking to People magazine, Chanel said: "When Cali's watching her daddy [play games], we always put her in the cutest New York Giants onesies I get from the NFL Shop. She is his biggest fan, so I like to style her up and make her look cute for the games. "Sometimes she wears like little New York Giants baby bows. We have a lot of custom stuff we got from the NFL Shop website and then we put her last name on it and Sterling's number - her onesies with her daddy's name on the back." — Bang Showbiz

Chanel Iman



# Ralph Lauren to get royal title

Ralph Lauren is set to be honored as the first ever American fashion designer to receive a KBE from Queen Elizabeth II. The 79-year-old iconic fashion mogul will be honored as Honorary Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (KBE) for his services to fashion and philanthropy, making him the first ever American designer to receive such an honor. Ralph will be awarded the title during a ceremony next year, by a representative of 92-year-old British monarch Queen Elizabeth II. The award is fitting for the designer, as his work has been frequented by famous stylish royals, including the late Princess Diana, Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge, and Meghan, Duchess of Sussex.

Antony Phillipson, British Consul General to New York and Her Majesty's Trade Commissioner for North America, said in a statement: "I warmly congratulate Ralph Lauren on this award that recognizes these efforts and achievements over the past 50 years." On top of his fashion powerhouse, Ralph has also been a prominent philanthropist with a commitment to helping cancer patients access quality health care, and has set up several Ralph

Lauren Centers in the US and London to help with cancer care.

Whilst the designer may be the first to receive a KBE in his industry, he isn't the first American to have been awarded the honor, as in previous years the likes of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, President Ronald Reagan, President George H.W. Bush, Angelina Jolie, Steven Spielberg, Bill and Melinda Gates, and many more celebrities have all been honored as well. Ralph recently celebrated his 50th anniversary in the fashion industry with a star-studded show and party in Central Park, which included a stunning runway collection and a speech from Oprah Winfrey. — Bang Showbiz



Ralph Lauren

# BioFashion Show



Models present creations by Colombian designers made with organic elements during BioFashion Show, on November 17, 2018 in Cali, Valle del Cauca department, Colombia. BioFashion is an environmental initiative that seeks to create awareness about the preservation and management of natural resources where new designers develop dresses made with living plants, flowers and organic elements.—AFP



Kelsey Merritt

# Kelsey Merritt's mascara secret

Kelsey Merritt wore drugstore mascara to her Victoria's Secret Fashion Show casting. Although the 22-year-old model - who is the first Filipino woman to ever walk in the Victoria's Secret show - walked the iconic catwalk in \$918 worth of beauty products, she revealed the cosmetics she wore to her audition were far less expensive and included Maybelline's Falsies Black Drama mascara to achieve her eye look. In a video for Vogue, Kelsey talked her fans through her everyday beauty regime and the star began prepping her skin by mixing moisturizer and sun cream, she then applies coconut

oil to her entire body, noting that it's important to "listen to what your skin needs".

As for her go-to skin products, Kelsey uses a liquid low coverage foundation - so she doesn't cover up her freckles - and she confessed to wearing a shade darker than her skin tone. She said: "I love looking bronze and sun-kissed, so I usually use a shade darker than my skin tone." The brunette beauty finishes her face by lightly contouring and then applying concealer, although she admits that it's important not to have too much coverage on her face. She explained she wants

her makeup to: "Bring out my best qualities — not cover them up." In keeping with Kelsey's natural look, she finishes her regime with a light dusting of Charlotte Tilbury Beach Lip & Cheek Stick and bronzer, a touch of Charlotte Tilbury K.I.S.S.I.N.G Lipstick, clear brow gel, a shade of golden glitter eyeshadow and finally the Falsies Black Drama mascara. Another top tip from Kelsey is to keep an aloe plant near your bathroom and use the gel from the plant to nourish your scalp and dry ends of your hair.

## Lifestyle | Features



David Ruff (right), researcher of nautical archaeology, poses onboard the Ina Virazon II vessel, used for an underwater research expedition headed by Institute of Nautical Archaeology of Texas, at the port of Sazan Island, Albania. — AFP photos



Amphoras from the 4th century BC and found underwater in Butrint are displayed at Albania's National Archeological Museum in Tirana.



The Ina Virazon II vessel, used for an underwater research expedition headed by Institute of Nautical Archaeology of Texas, is anchored at the port of Sazan Island, Albania.



Amphoras from the 4th century BC and found underwater in Butrint are displayed.



An amphora from the 4th century BC and found underwater in Butrint is displayed at Albania's National Archeological Museum in Tirana.



An amphora from the 4th century BC and found underwater in Butrint.

## Looters plunder Albania's sunken treasures

Albania's long underexplored coastal waters have become a hotspot for treasure hunters scooping up ancient pottery, sunken ship parts and other shell-encrusted relics that have lain on the seabed for centuries. The 450-kilometre (280-mile) coastline, which is lapped by the Adriatic and Ionian seas, was off-limits under the communist regime which ruled the Balkan state until 1990, with orders to shoot anyone caught diving without authorization. But today its waters are open, luring archaeologists but also looters eager to plumb the new territory and sell their finds on the art and metals markets.

"Much of this wealth resting at the depth of 20-30 meters (66-99 feet) is easily accessible without any special equipment and has almost completely disappeared without a trace," said Albanian archaeologist and art historian Neritan Ceka, among those calling for urgent measures to protect the underwater heritage. While diving at the beginning of the 1980s under communism, archaeologists and soldiers were permitted—he was one of the first to see for himself the seabed treasures, he said. "I saw extraordinary richness, amphoras (terra-cotta jugs), pottery, archaeological objects which are no longer there today," he added. Teams of European and Albanian divers "have started to loot in a barbaric way", he lamented.

### 'Big profits'

Expeditions carried out since 2006 by the US-based RPM Nautical Foundation have found some 40 shipwrecks along Albania's coastline, including vessels dating back to the 7th century BC and naval ships from World War I and II. Hundreds of Roman-era amphoras—used to store wine, olive oil and other goods on trade vessels—are also clustered on the sea floor, covered in marine plants. Experts say that without a full inventory, it is impossible to know how many of the artifacts have been plucked from the

seabed and sold on the international art trafficking market.

The market overall generates a global turnover of more than \$4 billion (3.5 billion euros) a year, according to Auron Tare, who chairs UNESCO's scientific and technical advisory body on underwater cultural heritage. "But what is certain: a treasure hunt below the seas can bring in big profits," said Moikom Zeqo, an underwater archaeologist who helped discover a 2nd-century BC Roman ship carrying hundreds of amphoras.

### Art and steel

The vases can be sold for up to 100 euros in Albania, where they are on display in some high-end restaurants, or auctioned for much greater sums in London and other art capitals. Other prized discoveries have been ferried home by foreign divers and placed in various private museums around the world, such as the bell of an ill-fated Austro-Hungarian ship, the SS Linz, that sunk off Albania's northwest coast with 1,000 passengers on board after striking a mine in March 1918. "These objects (from the SS Linz), exhibited in a private museum in Austria, must be returned to Albania," said Tare, who also heads the Albanian Center for Marine Research.

Divers are also going underwater to strip early 20th century warships for their high-quality steel. Steel produced before any nuclear explosions happened in the world is especially lucrative, as it lacks any trace of radioactivity and can be used for sensitive medical devices and other scientific equipment. "To skin the hull and remove it from the seabed, the looters use dynamite," said Ilir Capuni, a researcher and professor at the University of New York Tirana. He has seen the plunder firsthand.

Back in 2013, Capuni helped discover a Hungarian-Croat steamer, the Pozsony, that sunk off the coast of Durres in 1916 after strik-

ing a mine. But four years later, "we found that there was almost nothing left of it," said Capuni. A similar fate has befallen the Italian medical ship Po, which was struck by a British torpedo in 1941 off the coast of southeastern Vlore. Benito Mussolini's daughter Edda Ciano, who was aboard the ship as a nurse, survived. Its algae-covered hull was miraculously intact when it was first discovered but has since been dismantled in places and emptied of valuable objects, such as the bell, compass, telegraph, lights and dishes. Bought firsthand for 5,000 euros, some parts have been resold since to collectors for 20 times that amount, Capuni said.

### Underwater museum

In June, authorities passed a law classifying the shipwrecks as cultural monuments and requiring strict licensing for diving teams. Police are also working with Interpol to trace and return stolen objects, said criminal police director Eduart Merkaj, although so far there have been no concrete results. One dream shared by Albanian and foreign experts is to create an underwater museum, such as the one that exists in the Turkish city of Bodrum, that would protect the artifacts and draw tourists. "The time has come to build an underwater museum, laboratories and a specialized center," says Luan Perzhita, director of Albania's Archaeological Institute.

But the high costs of such a project remain a barrier, with only 30,000 euros allotted in the state budget this year for archaeology. "Albania has never had the luxury or awareness to understand the great importance that this wealth represents for the country's history and for Mediterranean civilization," said Tare. Even though, he added, the waters still contain "more treasures that have not yet been discovered". — AFP

## From Afghanistan to the Outback: Refugees ditch Australia's overcrowded

A Hazara refugee who now calls the Australian outback home, Ali named his new venture the "Afghan Friendship Restaurant", a tribute to the warm welcome he says he received after moving to the town of Griffith five years ago. The 44-year-old father of three is among a growing number of refugees and migrants to Australia who have opted to live in the bush rather than among the bright lights, hustle-bustle and astronomical prices of Sydney or Melbourne. The word "friendship" hovers over Ali's head in bright red lettering while he cooks lamb skewers, his face a picture of concentration as the rich wafts of fragrant smoke lure in hungry customers.

in around 14,000 refugees annually, with one-off exceptions to allow additional asylum-seekers, such as a recent scheme for 12,000 Syrians and Iraqis. But harsh asylum policies against boat arrivals and high-profile incidents of racism have given the country a reputation as inhospitable to non-white immigrants. There's been a spike in anti-immigration sentiment, according to the Lowy Institute think tank, despite the overall intake of migrants-capped annually at 190,000 — remaining stable. Lowy's annual poll found that for the first time this year, more than half the Australians surveyed said the number of migrants was "too high"—up from 40 percent in 2017. The poll's authors said the shifting attitudes could reflect a lurch to the right, particularly as conservative politicians call for intake cuts amid urban pressures.

### 'Crying out for people'

Rapid demographic changes in Australian cities over the past decade have caused disquiet as residents grapple with congestion and high house prices. Yet at the same time many regional towns are "crying out for more people", according to population and cities minister Alan Tudge. His government is proposing that new arrivals live in smaller towns for a few years, in the hope they would make it their home. Critics say the policy is not enforceable, and add that migrants would struggle to integrate into rural populations amid language and cultural differences.

But that is not what Jock Collins at the University of Technology Sydney, who is currently surveying 250 recently arrived families from Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan, has found. Collins says many migrants have positive feedback to share after being settled in smaller towns.

In addition to job opportunities and a supportive environment—"where the town goes out of its way to welcome refugees"—the presence of other migrant communities can ease the transition, Collins says. "A lot

of regional and rural towns are losing populations and in particular, the young people are leaving... so immigration can help fill that gap." Some immigrants also find it difficult to adjust to the busy rhythms of city life, making smaller towns an easier fit. Incentives like extended family visas—which the conservative government has been cutting back on in favor of younger working-age migrants—could also attract and keep refugees in the bush.

### Crocodile Ali

One success story is Mingoola, a small rural township in New South Wales, on the border with Queensland, that was slowly dying as its population aged. Desperate for an injection of new blood, the town finally found a match with refugees from rural east Africa who were struggling in Sydney. Similar praise has been heaped on Nhill, a town four hours' drive from Melbourne that's boomed since local poultry firm Luv-a-Duck found a Karen community, a minority group persecuted in Myanmar, willing to move there.

Eight years on, business is booming and the Karen now make up 10 percent of Nhill's 2,000-strong population. "From a position of decline, these towns are now thriving," says Jack Archer of the Regional Australia Institute, which is pushing for a national strategy instead of isolated efforts to match needy towns with job-seeking migrants.

Back in Griffith, refugee entrepreneurs are boosting local jobs. Ali's restaurant employs another refugee and a migrant from Malaysia, while his wife also helps with the cooking. In more than one way, Ali is altering visitor flows between cities and rural towns. One couple have travelled from Sydney three times to eat at the restaurant. It's "for the soup", he says, "they like my soup and because of that they come here." — AFP



Photos above and below show the "Afghan Friendship Restaurant" in Griffith, a tribute to the warm welcome Hazara refugee Ali says he received after moving to the town five years ago.



Hazara refugee Ali cooking kebabs in his 'Afghan Friendship Restaurant' in Griffith, a tribute to the warm welcome he says he received after moving to the town five years ago.



This photo shows Hazara refugee Ali speaking to AFP in his "Afghan Friendship Restaurant" in Griffith, a tribute to the warm welcome he says he received after moving to the town five years ago.

It is the first-ever Afghan eatery in Griffith—a six-hour drive west of Sydney—and a far cry from the pie and chips staples of the Australian bush. "I suggest to all of my friends, especially Afghan people, to come to Griffith, because here's very friendly," Ali, who asked that his surname not be used to protect family still in Afghanistan, tells AFP during a break from cooking. "Also we can find a job as well, because the population is not too much."

A nation of immigrants, nearly half of Australia's 25-million-strong population was either born overseas or has at least one parent born abroad. The country takes

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Monday, November 19, 2018

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## Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

**BY DAY:** Sunny with light to moderate freshening at times north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 40 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

**BY NIGHT:** Cool with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 12 - 38 km/h.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings		
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 18/11/2018 0000 UTC		
KUWAIT CITY	24 °C	18 °C			
KUWAIT AIRPORT	23 °C	15 °C			
ABDALY	23 °C	13 °C			
BUBYAN	---- °C	---- °C			
JAHRA	24 °C	16 °C			
FAILAKA ISLAND	23 °C	17 °C			
SALMIYAH	24 °C	18 °C			
AHMADI	23 °C	17 °C			
NUWAISIB	25 °C	15 °C			
WAFRA	23 °C	15 °C			
SALMY	22 °C	11 °C			

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Monday	11/19	Clouds will increase gradually with a chance for scattered rain later on	23 °C	15 °C	NW	10 - 32 km/h
Tuesday	11/20	Clouds will decrease gradually with a chance for scattered rain	22 °C	14 °C	NW	12 - 35 km/h
Wednesday	11/21	Sunny	24 °C	17 °C	NW-VRB	08 - 32 km/h
Thursday	11/22	Partly cloudy to cloudy with a chance for scattered rain later on	24 °C	14 °C	VRB-SE	12 - 38 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:51
Sunrise	06:13
Zuhr	11:33
Asr	14:32
Sunset	16:52
Isha	18:12

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	23 °C
MIN. Temp.	17 °C
MAX. RH	96 %
MIN. RH	66 %
MAX. Wind	N 43 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
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PIA	22422493
	22421044

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### Flight Schedule

### DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Monday 19/11/2018					Departure Flights on Monday 19/11/2018				
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time		Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	
JZR	406	Kochi	00:10	KAC	364	Colombo	14:30		
JAI	572	Mumbai	00:15	KAC	286	Dhaka	14:30		
JZR	254	Amman	00:40	GFA	221	Bahrain	14:40		
KAC	503	Beirut	00:45	KAC	618	Doha	14:40		
JZR	734	Cairo	00:50	SVA	500	Jeddah	14:45		
KAC	102	London	00:50	KAC	412	Bangkok	15:00		
THY	772	Istanbul	00:50	KNE	529	Jeddah	15:05		
JZR	722	Alexandria	00:55	KAC	788	Jeddah	15:10		
PGT	858	Istanbul	00:55	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:15		
DLH	625	Dammam	01:25	JZR	222	Riyadh	15:30		
RJA	642	Amman	01:35	KAC	562	Amman	15:35		
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50	OMA	645	Muscat	15:35		
IGO	1757	Kochi	01:55	KAC	304	Mumbai	15:40		
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	UAE	857	Dubai	15:45		
QTR	1086	Doha	02:40	JZR	732	Cairo	15:50		
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:55	SYR	341	Damascus	16:00		
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	SAW	705	Damascus	16:00		
MSR	612	Cairo	03:05	KAC	118	New York	16:05		
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	ABY	127	Sharjah	16:05		
JZR	502	Lahore	03:35	JZR	212	Jeddah	16:25		
QTR	1076	Doha	04:00	KAC	542	Cairo	16:30		
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	KAC	502	Beirut	16:30		
KAC	418	Manila	04:25	QTR	1072	Doha	16:35		
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	FDB	051	Dubai	16:40		
DHX	170	Bahrain	04:35	JZR	114	Doha	17:10		
FDB	069	Dubai	05:00	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15		
KAC	382	Delhi	05:05	GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30		
JZR	404	Hyderabad	05:10	JZR	214	Jeddah	17:45		
KAC	1544	Cairo	05:10	JZR	104	Bahrain	17:45		
THY	770	Istanbul	05:10	UAE	875	Dubai	18:00		
JZR	112	Doha	05:25	FDB	063	Dubai	18:15		
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	05:30	JZR	124	Dubai	18:20		
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	MSR	620	Cairo	18:30		
KAC	344	Chennai	05:50	QTR	1080	Doha	18:30		
JZR	402	Mumbai	06:05	KAC	744	Dammam	19:00		
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:10	ABY	123	Sharjah	19:25		
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:10	KAC	156	Istanbul	19:30		
KAC	204	Lahore	07:10	KAC	616	Bahrain	19:30		
BAW	157	London	07:10	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:30		
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:35	FDB	057	Dubai	19:50		
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	KAC	776	Riyadh	19:50		
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00	KNE	381	Taif	20:00		
KAC	358	Kochi	08:05	KAC	620	Doha	20:15		
UAE	855	Dubai	08:35	OMA	647	Muscat	20:20		
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	AZQ	4565	Baku	20:30		
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	QTR	1088	Doha	20:35		
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	674	Dubai	20:35		
QTR	1070	Doha	09:45	DLH	624	Frankfurt	20:45		
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	174	Munich	21:15		
AXB	395	Kozhikode	10:50	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:20		
JZR	702	Asyut	11:05	ALK	229	Colombo	21:20		
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	11:10	MEA	402	Beirut	21:20		
JZR	116	Doha	11:10	KAC	164	MXP	21:25		
MSC	415	Sohag	11:15	KAC	168	Paris	21:30		
JZR	122	Dubai	11:20	KAC	188	Dubai	21:30		
QTR	1074	Doha	11:35	UAE	859	Dubai	21:35		
JZR	216	Jeddah	11:45	GFA	219	Bahrain	21:45		
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	KLM	445	Amsterdam	21:50		
JZR	714	Sohag	12:35	KAC	564	Amman	21:55		
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	KAC	162	Geneva	21:55		
MSR	610	Cairo	13:10	JAI	574	Mumbai	22:00		
QTR	1078	Doha	13:35	QTR	1082	Doha	22:05		
KAC	774	Riyadh	14:00	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:15		
RBG	553	Alexandria	14:05	AIC	975	Chennai/Goa	22:25		
IRA	667	Esfahan	14:10	KAC	622	Doha	22:30		
KNE	231	Riyadh	14:10	SVA	502	Jeddah	22:45		
FDB	059	Dubai	14:20	JZR	786	Jeddah	22:45		
KAC	672	Dubai	14:25	MSC	501	Alexandria	23:05		
				JZR	128	Dubai	23:15		
				FDB	071	Dubai	23:45		

# Giant Damien Hirst sculptures catch eye at Qatari hospital

DOHA: Fourteen giant bronze sculptures by British artist Damien Hirst graphically charting the moment of conception to birth greet patients arriving at an \$8-billion hospital in the Gulf state of Qatar. The vast open-air installation, named "The Miraculous Journey", shows a fetus growing in the womb and culminates with a 14-m sculpture of a naked baby just after birth. The monumental work is the centerpiece of an impressive modern art collection at the Sidra Medicine Hospital, officially opened this week in Doha, that would be the envy of many galleries around the world.

"We believe it reflects very much the mission of Sidra, taking care of the healthcare of woman and babies," said Layla Ibrahim Bacha, art specialist with the government-supported Qatar Foundation, which owns most of the artwork. "I think it's perfect for the location, as you can see a lot of people are taking pictures. I think it's becoming iconic."

Among the 65 works at the specialty facility for children's and women's health are pieces by high-profile international names and artists from across the Arab world, including Qatar. A fourth-floor outpatient clinic is decorated with a neon installation entitled "I Listen To The Ocean And All I Hear Is You" by Tracey Emin, one of Hirst's ground-breaking contemporaries from Britain. Bacha says

the art was chosen with "very specific themes" in mind. "They are not meant to be decorative, they are meant to be more creating debates, helping with the patient to keep calm," she said.

Syrian artist, Jaber Al-Azmeh, whose pictures hang in the hospital, told AFP that it makes him "smile" to imagine his photographs on display in a place where new lives are starting. Sidra began receiving its first patients in January and last month successfully conducted Qatar's first conjoined twin separation surgery. Energy-rich Qatar has become a major buyer of contemporary art. It is seeking to portray itself as one of the most progressive states in the region against the backdrop of a bitter standoff with Gulf rivals led by Saudi Arabia.

But that does not mean there has not been some controversy over the Damien Hirst works towering outside the hospital. The sculptures were originally unveiled in Oct 2013 but then covered from public view until recent weeks. The official reason was to protect them from ongoing building work on the hospital, but they were concealed after a social media outcry. "We are not expecting everyone to like them. We are not expecting everyone to understand them," said Bacha. "This is why they are there to actually create this element of debate, this element of thinking." — AFP



DOHA: Workers operate on "The Miraculous Journey", an art installation by artist Damien Hirst, outside the Sidra Medical & Research Centre on their unveiling yesterday. — AFP

## Questions over APEC after costly summit failure

PORT MORESBY: With Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin absent and leaders unable even to agree a joint statement, some critics are questioning whether the annual APEC summit is still worth the effort. "Expectations are low and probably won't be fulfilled anyway." That was the brutal if prescient pre-summit prediction of William Reinsch, an analyst at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. The two-day gathering in Papua New Guinea was almost five years in the making, cost untold millions of US dollars and required the deployment of at least one battleship and three cruise liners.

And after all that, leaders came away with little more than three family photos and a loud shirt unlikely to be worn again. The grouping was born three decades ago as a way of promoting trade liberalization. But that cause has fallen out of vogue and Port Moresby was little more than a different venue for another China-US gunfight. For the first time ever, the leaders failed to produce a joint summit declaration - usually a technocratic exercise in fudging differences, overstating agreement and promising great things to come.

It is likely to be a disappointment for host Papua New

Guinea, which was making its debut on the international stage - at no insignificant cost. Prime Minister Peter O'Neill's government - not much larger than a municipal authority in most developed countries - visibly struggled with hosting such an enormous enterprise. It dealt with more than 21 delegations, each numbering in the dozens if not hundreds who needed to be fed, housed and watered and ferried round a city not exactly designed for armored motorcades. Papua New Guinea officials forgot to provide lighting for a leaders' photo opportunity, outside, at night and at another they put their own flag upside down.

They also suffered enormous pressure from much more powerful countries. Chinese officials on one occasion reportedly demanded that hundreds of red flags for Xi Jinping's state visit be kept up. In another instance, the police had to be called to prevent officials from Beijing storming the foreign minister's office. China denies the incident. But the summit's failure was hardly the fault of rookie stagecraft. Skipping the leaders' scheduled coffee break on the last day wasn't going to provide enough time to sort through the defining strategic rivalry of our time.

"I feel sorry for Papua New Guinea, this was their big show" said Euan Graham, executive director of La Trobe Asia, describing a diplomatic minnow caught in the crossfire of the world's two largest economic and military powers. Papua New Guinea did benefit from the rivalry and chequebook diplomacy of the two powers, winning new investments in energy, electricity and infrastructure. O'Neill, like other small power leaders, also got images of



PORT MORESBY: Leaders pose for a "family photo" during the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit yesterday. — AFP

himself mixing with global big hitters.

Executive director of the APEC secretariat, Alan Bollard said the organization was about more than the annual shindig. "APEC is more than just a leaders' meeting, but a place for economies to incubate ideas throughout the year," he told AFP. US officials hope that next year will

bring Trump's return, but it may matter little if protectionist and nationalistic trends persist and the United States and China continue butting heads. "APEC's founding vision was already fraying," said Graham. "But the failure to agree a communique is a final death knell for a pan-Asia-Pacific trade framework." — AFP

## Bloody Iraqi tribal custom...

Continued from Page 1

rival clan would fire on the absentee's home or that of fellow tribesmen, a practice known as the "degga ashairiya" or "tribal warning".

But in an age when Iraq's vast rural areas and built-up cities alike are flooded with weapons outside state control, the "degga" may be deadlier than ever. A recent dispute between two young men in a teashop in the capital's eastern district of Sadr City escalated to near-fatal proportions, leaving a 40-year-old policeman with a broken hip and severely damaged abdomen. His cousin Abu Tayba said the policeman was "wounded by a stray bullet during a 'degga' on a nearby home". "Weeks after the incident, he's still in hospital, hovering between life and death," Tayba told AFP.

Even in Baghdad, disputes often involve machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades, the city's military command warned a top Iraqi court recently. That body, the country's Superior Magistrate Council, issued a decision last week classifying "deggas" as "terrorist acts" - and therefore warranting the death penalty - because of their impact on public safety. A few days later, it announced it would take legal action against three people accused of targeting a home in Al-Adhamiyah, north of Baghdad, with the deadly custom.

In Iraq, a country of 39 million people, clan origin and family name can carry weight in securing a job, finding romance, and gathering political support. They can also interfere in the work of the state, as tribal structures in some areas can be more powerful than government institutions. Last year, Iraq's tribes and the ministries of interior and justice pledged to work closer together to impose the law, but "deggas" seem to have hindered such cooperation.

Raed Al-Fraiji, the head of a tribal council in the

southern province of Basra, told AFP the warnings have become commonplace. "This happens every day. Yesterday it happened twice. The day before, three times," he said. "Two months ago, a domestic dispute between a husband and wife turned into an armed attack on the husband's home. The exchange of fire killed one person and wounded three." Fraiji said tribal influence and practices were growing because the state was seen as unreliable. "For an Iraqi citizen, the law has become weak. Meanwhile, tribes impose themselves by force. Iraq is like a jungle - so a citizen will turn to a tribe to find solutions to their problems."

The country has been ravaged by years of conflict since the US-led invasion in 2003 that removed strongman Saddam Hussein and led to the rise of militias. A decade later, the Islamic State group overran much of Iraq and was only ousted from its urban strongholds across the country late last year. Years of instability have left many of Iraq's communities flush with weapons and largely out of the state's reach, contributing to a preference for tribal mediation methods.

"The government is responsible for the increase in tribal conflict and of 'degga' cases," said Adnan Al-Khazaali, a tribal leader in Baghdad's Sadr City. "Most of the young men today are armed and even the security forces cannot stand in their way." Tribal leaders and government officials alike are clinging to the hope that the new ruling could change things. "These incidents are continually happening, and are often causing casualties," interior ministry spokesman Saad Maan told AFP. "Court rulings and their implementation," Maan said, could be the only way to secure peace.

Back in Basra, the head of the local human rights commission estimated around a dozen people were wounded or killed in "deggas" last year. "These incidents threaten social peace," said Mahdi Al-Tamimi. "It's sad and worrying, and cannot be eliminated without a solid and effective law." But Fraiji, known in Basra for his relatively progressive views, feared the court's ruling would not be enough to take on Iraq's powerful clans. "The decision will only remain ink on paper if the security forces do not enforce it on the tribes," he said. — AFP

Kuwaiti islands, Hayat noted, adding the two countries' leaderships have always expressed their keen interest to match their initiatives and make Kuwait a major commercial center and a base for a network of railways which starts from China and passes through Central Asia and Gulf states. The Kuwaiti envoy indicated the next few days will see continued communication and mutual high-level visits by Kuwaiti and Chinese officials to implement what had been agreed upon between HH the Amir and Chinese President Xi Jinping during the Amir's recent visit to China. — KUNA

## Kuwait, China sign Silk City...

Continued from Page 1

Senior Chinese officials offered their full, practical and transparent cooperation on ways to benefit from the economic advantages of Silk City and the five

## Undersea gas fires Egypt's...

Continued from Page 1

Having met its own needs, Cairo is looking to kickstart exports and extend its regional influence. It has signed deals to import gas from neighboring countries for liquefaction at installations on its Mediterranean coast, ready for re-export to Europe. In September, Egypt signed a deal with Cyprus to build a pipeline to pump Cypriot gas hundreds of kilometres to Egypt for processing before being exported to Europe. That came amid tensions between Egypt and Turkey - which has supported the Muslim Brotherhood, seen by Cairo as a terrorist organization, and has troops in breakaway northern Cyprus.

In February, Egypt, the only Arab state apart from Jordan to have a peace deal with Israel, inked an agreement to import gas from the Jewish state's Tamar and Leviathan reservoirs. A US-Israeli consortium leading the development of Israel's offshore gas reserves in September announced it would buy part of a disused pipeline connecting the Israeli coastal city of Ashkelon with the northern Sinai peninsula. That would bypass a land pipeline across the Sinai that was repeatedly targeted by militants in 2011 and 2012. The \$15-billion deal will see some 64 billion cu m of gas pumped in from the Israeli fields over 10 years.

Independent news website Mada Masr reported that

## Saudi king hosts Iraqi...

Continued from Page 1

overnight visit at the invitation of the Saudi monarch, an Iraqi official said.

Separately, Iraq's Foreign Minister Mohammed Ali Al-Hakim, who is part of Saleh's delegation, held talks in Riyadh with his Saudi counterpart Adel Al-Jubeir, officials said. Ties between Sunni-ruled Saudi Arabia and Shiite-majority Iraq have been looking up in recent months, after years of tense relations.

After former dictator Saddam Hussein's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, Riyadh severed relations with Baghdad and closed its border posts with its northern neighbor. But a flurry of visits in recent months between the two countries has indicated a thawing of ties. In Oct 2017, Saudi budget airline flynas made the

Egypt's General Intelligence Service is the majority shareholder in East Gas, which will earn the largest part of the profits from the import of Israeli gas and its resale to the Egyptian state. Kamal said he sees "no problem" in that, adding that the agency has held a majority stake in the firm since 2003. "That guarantees the protection of Egyptian interests," he said. Ezzat Abdel Aziz, former president of the Egyptian Atomic Energy Agency, said the projects were "of vital importance for Egypt" and would have direct returns for the Egyptian economy. They "confirm the strategic importance of Egypt and allow it to take advantage of its location between producing countries in the east and consuming countries of the West", he said.

The Egyptian state is also hoping to rake in billions of dollars in revenues from petrochemicals. Its regional energy ambitions are "not limited to the natural gas sector, but also involve major projects in the petroleum and petrochemical sectors," said former oil minister Kamal. Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources Tarek El-Molla recently announced a deal to expand the Midor refinery in the Egyptian capital to boost its output by some 60 percent.

On top of that, the new Mostorod refinery in northern Cairo is set to produce 4.4 million tonnes of petroleum products a year after it comes online by next May, according to Ahmed Heikal, president of Egyptian investment firm Citadel Capital. That alone will save the state \$2 billion a year on petrochemical imports, which last year cost it some \$5.2 billion. Egypt is also investing in a processing plant on the Red Sea that could produce some four million tonnes of petro-products a year - as well as creating 3,000 jobs in a country where unemployment is rife. — AFP

first commercial flight from Riyadh to Baghdad in 27 years. Iraq is seeking economic benefits from closer ties with the wealthy kingdom as it looks to rebuild after the defeat of the Islamic State (IS) group. Riyadh is keen to develop relations with Baghdad to counter the influence of regional rival Iran in Iraq.

"Both literally and figuratively, Iraq finds itself stuck between two competing neighbors: Saudi Arabia and Iran," columnist Abdulrahman Al-Rashed wrote in the leading Saudi daily Arab News yesterday. "The tripartite relationship... is tangled and complex," he wrote. "It remains to be seen how senior officials in Iraq decide they want to define this relationship and deal with the two governments."

Iran has been highly influential in Iraq since the toppling of Saddam in 2003, and it was a key partner in pushing back IS. But Iran has also been accused of interference that has caused factionalism and poor governance in Iraq. Saleh made his first official visit to Tehran on Saturday, where he met his Iranian counterpart Hassan Rouhani in a bid to boost bilateral trade. — AFP



## Sports

# Ireland down world champions N Zealand for historic home win

## Ireland claim 11th successive home win, second victory under coach Joe Schmidt

**DUBLIN:** Six Nations holders Ireland beat world champions New Zealand for the first time at home on Saturday, winning a frenetic contest 16-9 in Dublin. A converted Jacob Stockdale try-his 12th in 14 Tests-proved the difference as the hosts came out on top in the clash between the two top-ranked teams in the world.

For Ireland, who claimed an 11th successive home win, it was their second victory under New Zealander coach Joe Schmidt in four meetings with the All Blacks, having recorded their first-ever in Chicago in 2016.

"We showed real character out there today," said Ireland captain Rory Best. "The difference to two years ago here in Dublin (a 21-9 loss) is we didn't score any tries. Today we did. "I am so proud of the boys." All Blacks skipper Kieran Read said there were no excuses. "The Irish were too good for us," Read told RTE. "They defended really well." The Irish were pinned back inside their five-metre line early on but produced tackle after tackle-prop Cian Healy making five in around 90 seconds-and eventually excellent work by Josh van der Flier won the hosts a penalty to clear.

Ireland then took the game to the All Blacks with New Zealand-born Bundeek Aki-who had sung his adopted country's anthem in Gaelic with great gusto-prominent in their attacks. Eventually the pressure told and Read strayed offside, with Johnny Sexton slotting over the penalty to give the home side a 3-0 lead in the 11th minute.

Ireland had spoken all week about how important it was not to make mistakes, even deep inside All Blacks territory, and they paid the price when Best spilled the ball inside the visitors' 22. A long kick back upfield by Ben Smith resulted in Rob Kearney ultimately being penalised and Beauden Barrett converted the penalty to level the match.

The Irish, though, had their opponents rattled and forced the Kiwis into infringement after infringement in

a desperate effort to keep them out. One of those led to Sexton's delightful chip over the defence which saw Kearney touch the ball down, but the try was ruled out on review as he lost control of the ball.

However, Sexton kicked the penalty for 6-3 as the game neared the half-hour mark. Within a minute the visitors were level as Barrett, having waited till his 71st Test to drop his first goal against England last week, landed another.

But it was all Ireland in attack and the All Blacks were so unnerved that referee Wayne Barnes had to warn Read that the next player to incur his ire would be yellow-carded after they committed their seventh offence of the half.

Sexton chose to kick and converted it for a 9-6 half-time lead. The All Blacks had a golden opportunity to turn the game around five minutes into the second half when Read charged down Stockdale's ambitious chip, but the rangy No 8 knocked on.

The New Zealand scrum were being steam-rolled by the Irish and coach Steve Hansen rang the changes only eight minutes after half-time, removing all of his front row. Their first job was to stand behind the posts as Stockdale found that if you keep probing, things can come off.

He received the ball from Aki and then chipped, out-stripping the defence to collect it before barging over despite Aaron Smith's desperate tackle.

It brought him a mobbing from his team-mates and regular first-choice scrum-half Conor Murray-who has not played all season due to a neck injury-to his feet while watching on from a box in the stadium.

Sexton converted brilliantly for 16-6. The All Blacks hit their straps at last but time and again the Irish repelled them, with Peter O'Mahony preventing a certain try by getting back to gather Barrett's brilliant grubber kick.

O'Mahony forced another turnover a few minutes



**DUBLIN:** Ireland's lock James Ryan (C) is tackled by New Zealand's number 8 Kieran Read (L) and New Zealand's scrum-half Aaron Smith during the rugby union test match between Ireland and New Zealand at the Aviva stadium in Dublin on Saturday. —AFP

later and had his team-mates pumping their fists in the air and the Irish fans launching into song.

Barrett added a penalty to put the visitors a con-

verted try away from a draw, but such was the stoutness of the Irish defence, the world champions came up short. —AFP

## Somalia holds first boxing competition since civil war

**MOGADISHU:** Somalia has held its first boxing competition in more than three decades, with young fighters in the conflict-torn nation dreaming of a career in international rings. The three-day lightweight boxing competition that wrapped up yesterday took place in the capital Mogadishu, where athletes squared off in a ring set up on a basketball court surrounded by ruined buildings that bore witness to the country's long conflict.

The fighters were cheered by dozens of enthusiastic residents of the capital, many of whom had never seen or heard of boxing before in a country where football and basketball are far more popular, even before the war when such competitions were rare.

"Boxing in Somalia stopped after the civil war and it is now reviving with the fact that the country is recovering from the war," said Awil Gelle Ahmed, deputy chairman of the country's national boxing federation.

The last Somali competition he could recall was in 1982. "There are significant changes which affect the political and security situation of the country and this competition is part of the changes."

Ahmed said the competition involved four teams of two people, all from Mogadishu as "we don't have access to other regions in the country." The winner was 21-year-old Mustafa Mohamed Nur, who told AFP: "This was a big day for me, I have become the first Somali to win a boxing competition inside the country since the civil war."

Another fighter, 21-year-old Abdiasiz Ali Shirad, said



**MOGADISHU:** Somali boxers fight in a ring installed at the Wish Stadium in Mogadishu on November 15, 2018. Somalia has held its first boxing competition in over three decades, with young boxers in the conflict-torn nation dreaming of a career on the international stage. The three-day light-weight boxing competition, which wrapped up yesterday, took place in the capital Mogadishu. — AFP

he had begun boxing in 2014. "I want to become like Mohamed Ali and Malik Hawkins so that I can be a national boxer, this is my ambition and I want make my dreams come true," he said. Somalia collapsed into civil war in 1991 and since then has endured successive rounds of conflict involving clan-based militias, foreign armies and, latterly, Al-Qaeda affiliated jihadists the Al-Shabaab who stage regular deadly attacks on the capital. Because of the conflict, many Somali athletes com-

pete internationally for adopted nations. Britain's most successful track athlete Mo Farah was a Somali refugee, and title-winning female boxer Ramla Ali and her family fled Mogadishu during the war.

"I'm very happy to see this development which was missing for a long time. Now that the boxing competition is back I think our boxers can compete with counterparts worldwide," said spectator Mohamed Ahmed Abdulahi. — AFP

## ACK hosts Socceros visitor

**KUWAIT:** Former Australian National Football player, Luke Casserly, spent time at the Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) during a visit by the Socceros team to play a friendly match against Kuwait.

Whilst at ACK, Casserly held a coaching clinic with members of the ACK Football team and spoke about his own experiences as a national player. When asked what was the best match he ever played, Casserly replied "Australia against the Czech Republic around year 2000. They were ranked no. 2 in the world and, also for us; it was the strongest Australian team because we had so many players playing in different countries. So to be involved in a team with the very best players and to play against the number 2 team in the world was my best match."

Casserly was also asked about the experiences of the Australian National team at the World Cup 2018 in Moscow. He replied, "It was an incredible experience. We had many Australian fans at the World Cup so the tournament was fantastic. We felt really disappointed at the end of the tournament because of the manner in which we played; we felt we deserved more than 1 point; however, we came last in the group. We played so well against France who won the tournament and to lose 2 to 1 against them was very tough. It was mixed feelings; it was great to be a part of the event but we were a bit disappointed that we didn't do as well as we were hoping to." Looking ahead to Doha 2022, Casserly commented that he had been to Doha previously and they have some fantastic facilities. He continued, "I haven't seen everything that has been put in place for the World



Cup. The World Cup is in December so I think the temperature is going to be okay. We have played the Asian Cup in Doha in January 2011 and the weather was fine. So, I think it's going to be fine."

Accompanying Casserly on his visit to ACK was the Australian Ambassador to Kuwait, His Excellency

Jonathon Gilbert. When asked about his own sporting interests, Ambassador Gilbert mentioned, "I played football as a goal keeper but I also played another Australian game which is Cricket." The ambassador said that he hoped the Australian team would make further visits to Kuwait in the lead up to Doha 2022.

## Thompson in control at LPGA Tour Championship

**MIAMI:** Lexi Thompson fired a four-under par 68 on Saturday to take a commanding three-shot lead over Nelly Korda in the LPGA's season-ending Tour Championship in Naples, Florida. Thompson made four of her five birdies on the back nine at Tiburon Golf Club to put herself in position for a first win of 2018. "Golf is all about momentum," said Thompson, who can expunge the memory of a missed two-footer that cost her victory here last year. "I just tried to keep the same attitude as I did the last two days," said Thompson, adding that having her brother, Curtis, on her bag had kept things relaxed.

"He's always cracking jokes out there," she said. "It's been a nice, relaxing week just having him on the bag and having all my family and friends out here supporting me." A victory would extend Thompson's streak to six straight LPGA seasons with at least one win. Her 16-under total of 200 put her three clear of Korda, who had eight birdies in her five-under 67. It was a further three shots back to Spain's Carlota Ciganda, who had three birdies without a bogey in her three-under 69.

World number one and defending champion Ariya Jutanugarn goes into the final round 10 adrift, but she's still in position to claim the \$1 million bonus for winning the LPGA's Race to the CME Globe season-long points chase for the second time in three years.

The 22-year-old from Thailand, whose three titles this year include her second major at the US Women's Open, is already assured of claiming Player of the Year honors. She's also closing in on the Vare Trophy for lowest scoring average in 2018.

"I did a pretty good job," Ariya said after a round that featured five birdies but was marred by a double-bogey six at the 11th. "I didn't think about that at all," she added of the Globe race. "Yesterday I (thought) about that too much, worrying about that."

Meanwhile, Charles Howell kept his bid to end an 11-year PGA Tour title drought on track Saturday, firing a two-under par 68 for a one-stroke third-round lead in the RSM Classic. Howell started the day with a three-shot cushion, and pushed the lead to five with two early birdies.

But two back-nine bogeys on the par-70 Seaside course in Sea Island, Georgia, left him little breathing room. His 16-under par total of 196 put him one clear of veteran Jason Gore and rising rookie Cameron Champ, who both carded four-under par 66s.

Webb Simpson carded a 63 to share fourth along with Ryan Blaum, who signed for a 65. Howell is a two-time winner on the PGA Tour, but his most recent trip to the winner's circle came at Riviera in 2007.

Since then he has notched 53 top-10s and six second-place finishes. It has been even longer since 44-year-old Gore claimed his lone PGA title, in 2005. Since then he has seen his career disrupted by back trouble, but he is making the most this week of a sponsor's exemption and played the back nine on Saturday in five-under with three birdies and an eagle at the par-five 15th.

Champ, the big-hitting 23-year-old who won his first title at the Sanderson Farms Championship last month, seized his share of second place with a birdie at 18, where he stuck his second shot less than three feet from the pin.

His seven birdies on the day included four in a row from the seventh through the 10th, and a birdie from a greenside bunker at 15. — AFP

## Sports

# Spinners help England end 17-year wait in Sri Lanka

## Leach, Moeen spin England to series win over Sri Lanka

### SCOREBOARD

End of match scoreboard in the second cricket Test between Sri Lanka and England in Kandy yesterday:

**England 1st innings** 290 (J. Buttler 63, S. Curran 64; D. Perera 4-61)

**Sri Lanka 1st innings** 336 (R. Silva 85, D. Karunaratne 63; J. Leach 3-70, A. Rashid 3-75)

**England 2nd innings** 346 (J. Root 124, B. Foakes 65, R. Burns 59; Dananjaya 6-115, Perera 3-96)

**Sri Lanka 2nd innings** (overnight 226-7)

D. Karunaratne c Foakes b Rashid	57
K. Silva st Foakes b Leach	4
D. de Silva c Jennings b Leach	1
K. Mendis lbw b Leach	1
A. Mathews lbw b Moeen	88
R. Silva c Root b Moeen	37
N. Dickwella c Stokes b Moeen	35
D. Perera lbw b Leach	2
A. Dananjaya not out	8
S. Lakmal (capt) b Moeen	0
M. Pushpakumara c and b Leach	1
Extras (b5, lb4)	9
Total (all out: 74 overs)	243

Fall of Wickets 14-1 (K. Silva), 16-2 (de Silva), 26-3 (Mendis), 103-4 (Karunaratne), 176-5 (R. Silva), 221-6 (Mathews), 226-7 (D. Perera), 240-8 (Dickwella), 240-9 (Lakmal), 243-10 (Pushpakumara)

Bowling: Anderson 5-2-12-0, Leach 28-2-83-5, Moeen Ali 19-2-72-4, Adil Rashid 17-1-52-1, Root 5-0-15-0.

Result: England win by 57 runs

England take winning 2-0 lead in three-match series

**PALLEKELE:** Spin duo Moeen Ali and Jack Leach combined to end England's 17-year wait for a test series victory in Sri Lanka after bowling the tourists to a 57-run victory in the second Test yesterday.

Moeen struck twice in three deliveries and Leach completed his maiden five-wicket haul as the tourists took a little over 30 minutes on the final morning to seal victory and take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-test series. Sri Lanka resumed on 226 for seven, needing 75 to keep the series alive after their opening loss in Galle, but were all out for 243 as England completed their first away series win in tests since beating South Africa at the beginning of 2016.

The England side led by Nasser Hussain were the last to register a series victory in Sri Lanka in 2001 and Joe Root's men arrived in the country winless in their last 13 tests away from home. Their last series victory in Asia was in India six years ago and not many would have bet on England to win with a match to spare against Sri Lanka, who defeated South Africa 2-0 at home in July.

"We said we are going to come out here and play bold cricket, we were quite courageous at times and everyone's really bought into that. We are seeing the rewards now," Root said at the post-match presentation. "We have to keep looking to improve. We have seen this team grow in the last six-eight months. We are not the finished article, we want to get to number one at some point. "We have to be consistent to do that, in all parts of the world and on different surfaces."

For the first time in a test match, spinners claimed 38 wickets with Leach and Moeen sharing 14 between them on a turning track at Pallekele. Sri Lanka's stand-in captain Lakmal was the only quick to pick up a wicket while the other was a run out. It was also the first time since 1973 in Karachi that no seamer took a wicket in a test for England.

When play resumed yesterday, Sri Lanka's hopes of squaring the series rested entirely on wicketkeeper Niroshan Dickwella, who was unbeaten on 27 overnight. The hosts managed to keep the England



**KANDY:** England's Moeen Ali (2nd L) celebrates with his teammates after dismissing Sri Lanka's captain Suranga Lakmal (L) during the final day of the second Test match between Sri Lanka and England at the Pallekele International Cricket Stadium in Kandy yesterday. — AFP

spinners at bay for 15 minutes while picking up singles to advance towards their target but Moeen broke their resistance by dismissing Dickwella, who was caught at slip by Stokes for 35.

The off-spinner then sent back Lakmal for a duck two deliveries later before Malinda Pushpakumara spooned a catch straight back to left-arm spinner Leach. "It was a brilliant test match," said Root, who was named player of the match for his brilliant 124 in the second innings.

"We were very good for the whole game. At times we were under pressure and we responded really well

to that. (I) couldn't be more proud of the guys." Sri Lanka batted well in both innings but Sam Curran's counter-attacking 64 in the first innings and Root's century under pressure in the second made the difference for England.

"Sri Lanka played brilliantly in both innings," added Root, after registering his first away series victory as captain. "At times we lost clusters of wickets but we stayed very calm and managed to find ways to get back in the game and get the control back in our favour."

The third and final test of the series will start on Friday in Colombo. — Reuters

## Shastri says India 'taking no prisoners' in Australia

**BRISBANE:** Coach Ravi Shastri vowed yesterday India will "take no prisoners" in their quest to win a Test series in Australia for the first time, but cautioned against underestimating the struggling home team.

India play four Tests and three one-day internationals from early December, with three Twenty20s before that, starting in Brisbane on Wednesday.

Despite Australia's form nosediving since the ball-tampering scandal in South Africa in March resulted in bans for Steve Smith and David Warner, the former spin great doesn't believe they have lost their aura.

"I don't think so," he said. "I always believe no team is weak at home. "We might have three or four players not playing when a team comes to India but God forbid if anyone says it is a weak Indian team because you will be surprised."

Shastri didn't want to be drawn on Australia's new "friendlier" approach to playing cricket under Justin Langer, which has seen them tone down the confrontational style that brought them so much success.

But he has instructed his team to play hard but fair. "We will be taking no prisoners, but are focusing on our game rather than what is happening outside," he said.

South Africa captain Faf du Plessis, who has fed off the Australian "in-your-face" attitude in recent years, urged them last week not to totally abandon this aspect of their game. His Indian counterpart Virat Kohli is another who has thrived previously on the combative rivalry.

Shastri did not believe the hosts' new, polite approach would affect his skipper. "He won't take his foot off the gas that is for sure," he warned.

"He loves coming to Australia, he's passionate about his game and the pitches here suit his style of play." While India have maintained home recent supremacy with a thrashing of the West Indies in Tests (2-0), ODIs (3-1) and T20s (3-0), they have not been as dominant away.

They lost 2-1 in Tests to South Africa and were then outplayed in England 4-1. "It's about seizing the moment. If you look at those Test matches (overseas), the scoreline doesn't really tell you the whole story," said Shastri.

"There were some very tight Test matches and we lost some big moments badly which cost us the series. "It could have been just an hour in a session over four days which made all the difference-you have to learn from that." — AFP

## Hasan, Yasir set Pakistan on victory path in first Test

**ABU DHABI:** Medium pacer Hasan Ali and leg-spinner Yasir Shah took five wickets apiece to set Pakistan on the victory path on the third day of the first Test against New Zealand in Abu Dhabi yesterday. Hasan took his maiden five-wicket haul with 5-45 while Yasir finished with 5-110 — his 14th five-wicket feat in an innings-as New Zealand collapsed from 220-4 to 249 all out soon after tea.

That left Pakistan with 176 to win the Test and at close they were 37-0 with Imam-ul-Haq on 25 not out and Mohammad Hafeez unbeaten on eight, needing another 139 to win with all ten wickets in hand and two days to play. With the Sheikh Zayed Stadium pitch not worrisome for batting Pakistan has high hopes of enforcing a 1-0 lead in the three-match series while New Zealand can take heart from the fact that Pakistan lost a Test here against Sri Lanka by 21 runs after set 136 to win last year.

Bradley-John Watling with 59 and Henry Nicholls with 55 had defied Pakistan in the post lunch session with a fighting stand of 112 for the fifth wicket but Yasir took four wickets off just 15 balls to bring his team back into contention. Pakistan took the second new ball with the total at 201-4 soon after tea and Yasir had Nicholls caught beautifully by wicketkeeper Sarfraz Ahmed and then in his next over trapped Colin de Grandhomme leg-before for three.

Nicholls hit three boundaries in his 171-ball resistance-packed knock. An over later, Yasir ended Watling's 145-ball defiance with a leg-before and then bowled Neil Wagner for nought. Watling had five boundaries in his knock.

Hasan then wrapped up the innings by bowling Ish Sodhi for 18 and Trent Boult caught off a miscued drive for nought to improve on his previous best figures of 4-51 against England at Lord's in May this year.

## Dominant Ogier rules world rally for sixth year

**COFFS HARBOUR:** Dominant Frenchman Sebastien Ogier clinched his sixth world rally title yesterday in a gripping final race of the year at Australia, denying Belgian Thierry Neuville and Estonia's Ott Tanak maiden crowns.

In one of the closest seasons of recent times, the M-Sport Ford driver came to Coffs Harbour with a three-point cushion over Hyundai's Neuville and 23 in front of Toyota ace Tanak. All he needed to do was stay ahead of the Belgian and in touch with Tanak over the three days of frantic driving along dusty and slippery roads.

The experienced campaigner and his co-driver Julien Ingrassia did just that, getting an early edge when Neuville lost 40 seconds on day one after blowing a tyre. When Neuville swiped a bank and ripped a wheel from his car and Tanak clipped a tree, forcing their retirements as they took risks in a desperate bid to make up time on Sunday afternoon, the title was his before the rally finished.

Toyota (368 pts) won the constructors championship ahead of Hyundai (341), M-Sport Ford (324), and Citroen (237). Ogier admitted he drove some of the stages Sunday "like my grandma would do", knowing any mistakes could be costly at a race won by Finnish Toyota driver Jari-Matti Latvala, 32.5secs ahead of New Zealand's Hayden Paddon in a Hyundai.

"It's been an incredible season, so tough, and this is so emotional," said the Frenchman, who finished fifth in Australia. "I am so proud of what I have achieved and so proud of our team. We've had an amazing journey together." He has now won six titles in a row to move within three of the greatest driver ever, fellow Frenchman Sebastien Loeb, who claimed nine on the trot between 2004-2012. It was his last race for Ford ahead of a switch next year to Citroen on a two-year deal.

He was part of the Citroen team between 2008-11 before decamping to Volkswagen between 2013-16 when he won four world titles, and then M-Sport Ford where he won his fifth and sixth.

The rain that had been forecast for the region finally arrived early Sunday, leaving the forest roads treacherously slippery, as overnight leader Tanak found to his cost, sliding into the trees on stage two of the day.

He lost 12 seconds with teammate Latvala taking the overall lead in a race that the Estonian had to not only win but also claim bonus points in the event-closing stage to have any hope of



**ABU DHABI:** Pakistani captain and wicketkeeper Sarfraz Ahmed (L) and Asad Shafiq (C) celebrate after bowling out New Zealand batsman Neil Wagner (R) during the third day of the first Test cricket match between Pakistan and New Zealand at the Sheikh Zayed International Cricket Stadium in Abu Dhabi yesterday. — AFP

New Zealand were in danger of losing the Test today after three quick wickets fell in the space of just 22 runs in the first session with Hasan taking two in the same over. But Watling survived a leg-before decision on review after umpire Bruce Oxenford raised his finger off Bilal Asif for 15. Watling took full advantage of the reprieve and added 67 in the second session without losing a wicket.

It was Hasan who brought Pakistan back in the first session. Hasan, who had opener Tom Latham yesterday, trapped a dangerous looking Taylor leg-before with a sharp incoming delivery for 19 and then had Jeet Raval caught

behind by wicketkeeper Sarfraz Ahmed for 46. Raval had added 86 for the second wicket with Kane Williamson who made 37. Raval hit five boundaries in his 120-ball knock. Resuming at 56-1 New Zealand had pinned hopes on their skipper Williamson. But it was Raval who smashed two boundaries and then took a single off Mohammad Abbas to take New Zealand into the lead. But just 12 runs into the lead Williamson was bowled by leg-spinner Yasir Shah to a ball that beat the batsman's push and removed the bail. The second Test is in Dubai (November 24-28) and the third in Abu Dhabi (December 3-7). — AFP



**COFFS HARBOUR:** Ford driver Sebastien Ogier of France (R) and co-driver Julien Ingrassia (L) celebrate with team principal Malcolm Wilson (C) after Ogier won his sixth world rally title after finishing fifth on the final day of the World Rally Championship (WRC) Rally Australia near Coffs Harbour yesterday. — AFP

eclipsing Ogier.

The measured Frenchman was taking no risks, unlike Neuville who touched a bank while pushing hard and then had exhaust trouble in morning action. Despite this he managed to chip away at the lead, but it was ultimately futile. The Belgian needed to haul back 39 seconds over the final three stages but he stopped on the third-last

stage with damage to his car, and when Tanak failed to finish the penultimate stage, Ogier was champion. "We've been giving everything and took some risks to try to get the title," said Neuville. "We had nothing to lose anymore. In SS22, the conditions were really bad. We went wide, clipped a tree, damage our car and had to retire." — AFP

## Sports

# Lightning blow 4-goal lead, beat Flyers 6-5 in overtime

## Pavelski, Dell lead Sharks in shutout of Blues

**PHILADELPHIA:** After Tampa Bay blew a four-goal lead in the third period, Anthony Cirelli scored in overtime to give the Lightning a 6-5 road victory against the Philadelphia Flyers on Saturday afternoon. Cirelli battled for the puck behind the net and fired in his fourth goal at the 1:47 mark for the win after Tampa Bay initially wasted a 5-1 lead. Brayden Point scored twice, Adam Erne had a goal and two assists and Nikita Kucherov had two helpers. Cedric Paquette and Tyler Johnson also scored for the Lightning, who won their second straight game. Louis Domingue made his third straight start in goal and had 40 saves. James van Riemsdyk scored his first goal and had two assists, and Travis Konecny scored twice for the Flyers. Sean Couturier also scored, and Wayne Simmonds tied the game 5-5 with 3:32 left in the third period.

### RED WINGS 3, DEVILS 2 (OT)

Dylan Larkin scored with 51 seconds remaining in overtime, and Detroit rallied from a two-goal deficit to down host New Jersey. Larkin won a faceoff in his own zone, then scored from the right circle on a 2-on-1 situation off a pass from Anthony Mantha. Luke Glendening and rookie Michael Rasmussen scored the regulation goals for the Wings, who have won five of their last six. Jonathan Bernier made 38 saves. Pavel Zacha scored his first goal this season for the Devils. Blake Coleman had the other New Jersey goal while Keith Kinkaid made 27 saves.

### SABRES 3, WILD 2

Jason Pominville kept Buffalo's winning streak alive in dramatic fashion, scoring with just 90 seconds remaining for a comeback win at Minnesota. The Sabres have won five straight games, their longest winning streak since March 2012. Pominville, Jake McCabe and Rasmus Dahlin each had a goal and an assist for Buffalo. After missing the Wild's last game due to illness, Zach Parise marked his return to the lineup by scoring four minutes into the first period. The goal was the 341st of Parise's career, giving him the most goals of any Minnesota-born player in NHL history.

### SENATORS 6, PENGUINS 4

Matt Duchene had two goals and an assist, and Mark Stone scored twice as host Ottawa topped reeling Pittsburgh. Brady Tkachuk and Cody Ceci also scored for Ottawa, which won for the third time in four games. Craig Anderson stopped 31 of 35 Penguins shots. Kris Letang, Zach Aston-Reese, Matt Cullen and Patric Hornqvist scored for Pittsburgh, which is 1-7-1

in its past nine games. The Penguins' Matt Murray gave up three goals on 10 shots before he was replaced by Casey DeSmith, the third time Murray has been pulled in his past six starts.

### BLUE JACKETS 4, HURRICANES 1

Cam Atkinson produced a hat trick slightly more than midway through the game as Columbus defeated host Carolina. Atkinson's third goal came on a power play with 8:40 remaining in the second period. Atkinson, who also provided an assist, has 12 goals this season. The Blue Jackets have compiled a seven-game points streak (5-0-2). Sebastian Aho scored for the second game in a row for the Hurricanes, who are 2-5-2 across their last nine games. Before that, Aho had gone 12 straight games without a goal.

### RANGERS 4, PANTHERS 2

Vladislav Namestnikov scored the go-ahead goal early in the second period for host New York, which ended the game with three unanswered goals in beating Florida. Filip Chytil, Brendan Smith and Chris Kreider also scored for the Rangers, who have won three of four and gathered at least one point in eight of their last nine games (7-1-1). Mike Hoffman and Aaron Ekblad scored in the first period for the Panthers, who have lost two straight following a five-game winning streak. Goalie Henrik Lundqvist made 39 saves in earning the 438th win of his career, which vaulted him into sole possession of seventh place on the NHL's all-time list. Lundqvist, who entered the night tied with Jacques Plante, is seven wins away from tying Terry Sawchuk for sixth place.

### PREDATORS 5, KINGS 3

Calle Jarnkrok delivered his first career hat trick, and Ryan Ellis had two assists as Nashville rallied in the third period to win over visiting Los Angeles. The Predators, who lead the Western Conference, trailed in the third period to the last-place Kings, who were on the second night of their first back-to-back games of the season. Jarnkrok's three goals doubled his season total to six, and he took over late, scoring a power-play goal at 5:44 of the final period before delivering a shorthanded goal at the 11:54 mark to give Nashville the lead for good.

### BRUINS 2, COYOTES 1

A pair of early first-period goals by Jacob Forsbacka Karlsson and Jake DeBrusk held up thanks to a 32-save performance by goalie Jaroslav Halak as Boston topped



**NEWARK:** Luke Glendening #41 of the Detroit Red Wings skates against Damon Severson #28 of the New Jersey Devils on Saturday in Newark, New Jersey. The Red Wings defeated the Devils 3-2 in overtime. — AFP

host Arizona. It did not matter that the Bruins were without a couple of key players in Patrice Bergeron and Zdeno Chara. They continue to dominate the Coyotes, having won 13 consecutive meetings. The Coyotes last beat the Bruins on Oct. 9, 2010. Forsbacka Karlsson, one of Boston's rookies, stunned the home crowd when he opened the scoring just 72 seconds into the affair with his first NHL goal. Brad Richardson scored his sixth goal of the season for Arizona, which leads the team. The Coyotes have won just two of their last seven games (2-4-1).

### CANADIENS 3, CANUCKS 2

Jonathan Drouin's seventh goal of the season led visiting Montreal to a win over Vancouver. Drouin paced the Canadiens' attack with a goal and assist. Carey Price started in goal for Montreal and stopped 36 of 38 shots. Jacob Markstrom, who was in Vancouver's net, made 28 saves on 31 shots in defeat. The result extended a five-game winless streak for Vancouver (0-4-1), which entered the game with a 5-2-0 record on home ice. This was its first home game, following a subpar 1-3-2 road trip.

### FLAMES 4, OILERS 2

Elias Lindholm scored twice in the third period, and David Rittich made 24 saves as Calgary completed yet another comeback to defeat visiting Edmonton. Alex Chiasson and Connor McDavid each scored for the Oilers before the Flames' latest rally began. Derek Ryan put Calgary on the board with a power-play goal at 16:23 of the second period, and Sean Monahan tied the game at 2:40 of the third period. Lindholm then tallied twice to complete the comeback, including an empty-netter for his team's league-best 32nd third-period goal of the season. Edmonton's Mikko Koskinen stopped 33 shots in defeat.

### SHARKS 4, BLUES 0

Joe Pavelski scored two goals, and Aaron Dell stopped 30 shots for his first shutout of the season to lead San Jose to victory over visiting St. Louis. Erik Karlsson and Evander Kane each had a goal and an assist. Logan Couture finished with three assists and Timo Meier added two assists for San Jose. It was the fourth career shutout for Dell as the Sharks won for the third time in the last four games. Chad Johnson, who blanked San Jose 4-0 on Nov. 9 in St. Louis, had 25 saves for the Blues. — Reuters

## Portugal hold off Italy to reach Nations League semi-finals

**MILAN:** European champions Portugal became the first team to qualify for the Nations League semi-finals on Saturday after holding Italy to a 0-0 draw at the San Siro. The Portuguese—despite the absence of Cristiano Ronaldo—progressed with one match to play, and are sure to finish top of Group A3, with Italy's hopes in the tournament over.

Poland had already been relegated to League B. Roberto Mancini's Italians needed a win to keep their hopes of advancing to the final four next June alive, but despite pushing Portugal for over an hour in front of 73,000 spectators at the San Siro, could not find a way through. Instead, they earned a goalless draw which echoed the stalemate against Sweden a year ago that ended their hopes of reaching the World Cup in Russia. "It's really satisfying to reach the final phase of this competition," said coach Fernando Santos.

"But it was a very difficult match, above all the first half when I have to admit we had a lot of difficulties." Portugal host

Poland tomorrow in Guimaraes, in a match that has no significance for either side.

But Santos insisted: "The final match against Poland will be important because it will be in front of our supporters, who are always with us. "We have to have a great match and to win." Santos' side had beaten Italy 1-0 in Lisbon and withstood early pressure from the hosts with Lorenzo Insigne and Ciro Immobile both going close in the first half. Portugal threatened after the break as William Carvalho was denied by Gianluigi Donnarumma and substitute Joao Mario fired over the bar.

"I think we played an excellent match but we didn't manage to score which is an important detail," said Mancini. "We dominated Portugal and then had a drop in tempo after 70 minutes, which is only to be expected, as we can't play in their half for 90 minutes.

"Even if we're disappointed at not winning I think we have everything and little by little we're going to also put the attack into place," added Mancini after Italy maintained their record of never having been beaten at the San Siro. Italy captain Giorgio Chiellini celebrated his 100th Italy cap, exactly 14 years to the day since his debut against Finland. Insigne forced a save from Rui Patrício after five minutes firing in from a distance with the Portuguese goalkeeper clearing into the path of Immobile. But the Lazio forward sent the rebound over the crossbar, with Alessandro Florenzi also sending an effort wide from an angle. Former AC Milan defender Leonardo Bonucci, whistled by the crowd every time



**MILAN:** Italy's midfielder Marco Verratti (R) holds off Portugal's midfielder Bernardo Silva (C) during the UEFA Nations League group 3 football match Italy vs Portugal at the San Siro Stadium in Milan on Saturday. — AFP

he touched the ball after moving back to Juventus this season, headed onto the side-netting from a free-kick. Federico Chiesa came close on 53 minutes after a cross from Cristiano Biraghi following good work from Marco Verratti but the Portuguese defence cleared. "I think we're on the right path, as we controlled it for 70 minutes with a lot of great play and chances, but we must make more of our scoring opportunities," said

defender Chiellini, who is the Azzurri's top scorer with eight goals. "We worked so hard and then in the final half-hour we were exhausted, which took away sharpness and meant we were risky at the back. "We've got the foundations, we dominated the reigning European champions and the issue of not scoring goals will improve with time." Italy play a friendly against the United States in Genk tomorrow. — AFP

## Slalom titan Hirscher wins Alpine opener

**LEVI:** Austrian star Marcel Hirscher scraped into first place after a dramatic second run in Levi, finishing in 1:51.04 during the opener of this year's Alpine ski world cup. Hirscher, gunning for a record eighth consecutive crystal globe, ended 0.09 seconds ahead of Norway's Henrik Kristoffersen, who claimed silver in the giant slalom at this year's Winter Olympics.

After a strong start Hirscher lost some time in the final sector of the descent but held on to clinch the win from Kristoffersen. But the defining moment in the race was a cruel last-minute twist in the fortunes of the French team. Both Clement Noel and Victor Muffat-Jeandet looked set for a podium finish before missing the same gate, metres from the finish line, within minutes of each other.

Both climbed back up and finished the course, ending in 26th and 25th place

respectively. Noel, the 21-year-old rising star who placed fourth in slalom in Pyeongchang, ended his first run in third place in 54.65 seconds. The win is the third at Levi for Austria's titan of the slalom Hirscher, after 2013 and 2016, and a hoped-for start to the season where the 29-year-old will look to build on his seven consecutive world cup overall wins. Hirscher, whose wife gave birth in October, said after the race: "Last year's summer preparation was very special and this year as well. Last year, injured, and this year, carrying our little son through the living room." The traditional winner's trophy at Levi, inside the Arctic circle, is a reindeer, which is kept and looked after in Lapland throughout the year.

The winner announced that this year's animal will be christened Mr Snow, alongside his previous reindeer Leo and Ferdinand. Sunday's race marks the opening of this year's men's world cup season after the giant slalom at Soelden, Austria was cancelled due to heavy snowfall in October. Fears that the lack of snow in Levi this autumn could lead to the Finnish stage also being called off proved unfounded after organisers covered the course with snow stored from last spring.

Yesterday's women's race was delayed



**LEVI:** Winner Marcel Hirscher of Austria and the prize reindeer Mr Snow stand on the podium after the men's FIS Alpine Ski World Cup slalom race in Levi, Finland, yesterday. — AFP

while wardens shortened the course due to blustery, head-on winds at the top.

Extremely icy conditions at the Arctic resort on Sunday morning led the course setters to relocate the gates away from the steepest part of the slope.

"Today it was not an advantage to start early, that's for sure," Kristoffersen said after his first run. "But that's life." Last year's winner at Levi, Germany's Felix Neureuther, announced on Saturday he would not race because of a broken thumb.

## Scotland close on Nations League promotion by thrashing Albania

**PARIS:** Bournemouth winger Ryan Fraser scored his maiden international goal as Alex McLeish's Scotland thrashed 10-man Albania 4-0 in Shkoder on Saturday to close in on promotion from Nations League C.

The Scots will secure top spot in Group C1 and a Euro 2020 play-off place if they can beat Israel at Hampden Park tomorrow. "I had a good feeling about it and I felt if the players brought their performance level to the game then it would be positive and that's how it turned out," Scotland manager McLeish told Sky Sports.

Fraser scored an excellent individual goal to give the visitors a 14th-minute lead, latching onto the ball after Ryan Christie won possession, before cutting inside and curling the ball into the far corner to continue his fine form this season.

Scotland were handed a man advantage midway through the first half as Mergim Mavraj was sent off for head-butting Christie. McLeish's men were awarded a penalty shortly before the interval when Stuart Armstrong's free-kick struck an arm in the Albanian wall, and Sheffield Wednesday striker Steven Fletcher stepped up to net for his country for the first time since September 2016.

Scotland made the most of the wide-open spaces available to them in the second half, with Christie sending Celtic winger James Forrest clear to loft in his first international goal 10 minutes after the restart.

Fraser turned provider in the 67th minute as his cutback was expertly flicked into the air and volleyed into the corner by Forrest. The 27-year-old Forrest has now scored 11 goals in all competitions for club and country this term.

"James has been there or thereabouts in the last couple of years for Scotland," McLeish added. "He's won a lot of caps. He's been in great scoring form for his club and he continued that which was marvellous to see."

Earlier on Saturday, Kosovo took a big step towards reaching the qualifying play-offs for the Euros with a 5-0 thrashing of Malta. Bernard Challandes' side, who were only given UEFA membership in 2016, sit top in Group D3 and will secure promotion and a play-off place if they can avoid a home defeat against Azerbaijan in their final game on Tuesday. Vedat Muriqi got the Kosovans off to a flying start with a 15th-minute opener in Ta' Qali, and any Maltese hopes of a comeback were ended by Benjamin Kololli's strike with 20 minutes remaining. — AFP

**25** Somalia holds first boxing competition since civil war



**26** Spinners help England end 17-year wait in Sri Lanka



**27** Portugal hold off Italy to reach Nations League semi-finals



## England reach Nations League final four

England scores twice in last 12 minutes to seal dramatic 2-1 victory over Croatia



LONDON: England's midfielder Jesse Lingard (C) clears the ball off the line during the international UEFA Nations League football match between England and Croatia at Wembley Stadium in London yesterday. — AFP

**WEMBLEY:** Harry Kane fired England into the Nations League semi-finals as Gareth Southgate's side scored twice in the last 12 minutes to seal a dramatic 2-1 victory over Croatia yesterday.

England were on the brink of relegation to the second tier of the competition after Andrej Kramaric gave Croatia the lead against the run of play in the second half at Wembley. But Southgate's vibrant young side pulled off a stirring escape act in the closing stages to gain a measure of revenge for their World Cup semi-final defeat against Croatia earlier this year.

Jesse Lingard came off the bench to poach England's equaliser and captain Kane was on hand to turn in the winner with five minutes left. England's fightback took them to the top of Group A4, above Spain and relegated Croatia, and they can look forward to playing in the last four in June next year.

It was a cathartic moment for England, who have made

a habit of suffering painful defeats against Croatia, with this year's World Cup woe following the 2007 loss that cost them a place at Euro 2008.

More importantly, the performance provided further tangible proof that Southgate is building a team capable of challenging for the major prizes after years of underachievement. England's appearance in the semi-finals of the Nations League, which are set to be held in Portugal next June, offers another chance to reach their first major final since 1966. Following the 3-2 Nations League win over Spain in Seville last month, this tournament has been a serious statement of intent from Southgate's team and they will go into 2019 with great expectations.

From start to finish, England were the dominant force, although they were fortunate to escape when Ante Rebic shot over after Jordan Pickford fumbled Fabian Delph's backpass. Kane slipped a perfectly-weighted pass through to Raheem Sterling and the Manchester City winger's blis-

tering pace sent him clear of the Croatia defence.

With only Lovre Kalinic to beat, Sterling let Croatia off the hook as he directed a hesitant shot straight at the keeper. England kept probing intelligently, with the speed of Sterling and Marcus Rashford providing their main threat. Delph's pass sparked a frantic sequence, forcing Kalinic to dash out of his area to head away from Sterling. When Kalinic's clearance fell to Kane, the England captain's effort was headed off the line by Tin Jedvaj. The rebound fell to Kane, but Kalinic, by now back in his goal, used his legs to foil the Tottenham striker with a last-ditch save. It was more of the same at the start of the second half, but once again England couldn't find the killer touch.

That profligacy looked as though it would prove fatal when Croatia snatched the lead after 56 minutes. Kramaric was allowed time and space to turn in the area and the Hoffenheim forward took full advantage, clipping a shot that deflected off Eric Dier and looped over

Pickford's despairing dive. Southgate responded by sending on Lingard and the change reaped an instant reward as England equalised in the 78th minute. Joe Gomez's long throw was flicked on by John Stones and Kane prodded past Kalinic, leaving Lingard with the simple task of tapping in from virtually on the goal-line.

England's deserved winner arrived in the 85th minute. Ben Chilwell curled over a teasing low free-kick and Kane timed his run to perfection, guiding his shot past Kalinic from close-range.

Kane's first goal in eight games for England sparked a wild celebration from Southgate, who leapt into the air as he punched the air on the touchline. Kane had joked with his fiancée this week that he would cry if England ever win a trophy, but he couldn't guarantee he would weep when they get married. Thanks to their thrilling comeback, England could bring a tear to Kane's eyes in the Finals next year.—AFP

## Butler's OT winner dwarfs Kemba's 60

**CHALOTTE:** Jimmy Butler hit a buzzer-beating 3-pointer in overtime Saturday night, allowing the Philadelphia 76ers to overcome a 60-point explosion by Kemba Walker for a 122-119 victory over the host Charlotte Hornets. The point total was a career-high for Walker, a Hornets franchise record and the first of 60 or more in the NBA since James Harden dropped 60 on Orlando last January. After rallying from a late 10-point deficit in regulation, the Hornets found themselves down 119-114 with 1:14 left in overtime before Walker hit a jump shot and Jeremy Lamb converted a three-point play for a tie with 34.7 seconds to go. Willy Hernangomez then stole a Ben Simmons pass, but Butler blocked a Walker jumper, setting up his own offensive heroics.

### MAVERICKS 112, WARRIORS 109

Rookie Luka Doncic hit the go-ahead hook shot with 70 seconds left, and host Dallas halted a 10-game losing streak to Golden State with a dramatic victory. Doncic scored 24 points and helped the Mavericks win their fourth straight when he gave Dallas a 109-108 lead. Dallas then got stops as Kevin Durant missed a hook shot on the next possession and a fadeaway with 23.8 seconds left, and Klay Thompson missed a baseline jumper with 10.6 seconds left. Durant led all scorers with 32 points on 11-of-

22 shooting but faltered in the fourth quarter. He was 1-of-7 in the final 12 minutes as the Warriors lost for the third time in four games and also dropped consecutive games for the 11th time under coach Steve Kerr.

### PELICANS 125, NUGGETS 115

Anthony Davis had his second consecutive 40-point game as host New Orleans held off Denver. Davis, who had 43 points one night earlier, led five Pelicans in double figures as the team won for the fifth time in its last six games. Julius Randle came off the bench to score 21 points and grab 10 rebounds, Nikola Mirotic had 20 points and 10 rebounds, Jrue Holiday overcame foul trouble to score 19 points and E'Twaun Moore added 13. Nikola Jokic had 25 points and 10 rebounds to lead the Nuggets, who lost for the fifth time in their last six games. Gary Harris scored 24, Juan Hernangomez had 20 points and 11 rebounds, Monte Morris came off the bench to add 13 and Jamal Murray scored 11.

### MAGIC 130, LAKERS 117

A big second quarter helped host Orlando snap Los Angeles' four-game win streak. Orlando made six 3-pointers in the second quarter and outscored the Lakers 37-22 in the period. The Magic turned what was a six-point deficit into a 62-53 halftime lead. Nikola Vucevic and D.J. Augustin both scored season-highs for the Magic. Vucevic had 36 points and 13 rebounds, and Augustin added 22 points. LeBron James did not play for the Lakers in the fourth quarter and finished the game with 22 points, seven assists and four rebounds.

### JAZZ 98, CELTICS 86

Donovan Mitchell scored 28 points to power visiting

Utah past Boston. Mitchell also tallied six assists one night after he took some criticism for tallying zero assists against Philadelphia. The second-year guard had scored 31 points while taking 35 shots against the 76ers. Ricky Rubio added 20 points while Rudy Gobert chipped in 12 points and nine rebounds for the Jazz. Kyrie Irving scored 20 points and collected eight rebounds to lead the Celtics. Boston shot just 38.5 percent from the field against the Jazz, including 5-of-33 from 3-point range.

### ROCKETS 132, KINGS 112

James Harden and Chris Paul combined for 58 points and 17 assists while Clint Capela recorded a double-double as host Houston continued its torrid play with a rout of Sacramento. Harden finished with 34 points and eight assists, while Paul made 6 of 8 from 3-point range and had 24 points and nine assists as the Rockets won their fourth straight and their seventh in their last nine games. Capela posted 23 points on 11-of-14 shooting, plus 16 rebounds. Kings guard and Houston native De'Aaron Fox scored 19 points, while his backcourt mate Buddy Hield had 23 points and seven rebounds. Sacramento has dropped five of seven games following its surprising 6-3 start to the season.

### Raptors 122, Bulls 83

Fred VanVleet scored 18 points on 7-for-11 shooting in his first career start in 126 NBA games, and Toronto posted its largest road win in franchise history with a rout of Chicago. Danny Green finished with 17 points and made all seven of his shots. Serge Ibaka (16 points), Pascal Siakam (12) and Lorenzo Brown (10) also scored in double digits for the Raptors, whose 39-point margin of victory fell five points shy of their all-time high. Antonio Blakeney led the

Bulls with 13 points off the bench. Jabari Parker and Justin Holiday contributed 12 points apiece for Chicago, which dropped its fourth game in a row.

### THUNDER 110, SUNS 100

Paul George and Steven Adams combined for 13 points in a 17-4 flurry to open the second half as Oklahoma City pulled away for a win at Phoenix. George logged a 32-point, 11-rebound double-double, while Adams went for 26 points and 10 rebounds, helping the Thunder beat the Suns for the third time this season. TJ Warren had a team-high 23 points for the Suns, who have lost five of their last six.

### CLIPPERS 127, NETS 119

Danilo Gallinari scored a season-high 28 points, and Tobias Harris added 27 as Los Angeles overcame a 15-point deficit for a win at Brooklyn. The Clippers did not get their first lead until Lou Williams hit three free throws with 8:21 left to make it 102-101. After five ties, Montrezl Harrell snapped a 110-110 deadlock by driving to the rim for an emphatic slam. The Clippers won their fourth straight. Jarrett Allen scored a career-high 24 points, but the Nets lost for the fourth time in five games.

### PACERS 97, HAWKS 89

Bojan Bogdanovic picked up the slack after an injury to Victor Oladipo, scoring 22 points to lead Indiana past visiting Atlanta. The Pacers played most of the game without Oladipo, who left after only four minutes with a sore right knee. Oladipo, who had seen his streak of 20-point games end at 13 in his last start, scored only two points before departing. It was the seventh straight loss for the Hawks. Atlanta was led by Jeremy Lin with 16 points and Kent Bazemore with 13. — Reuters