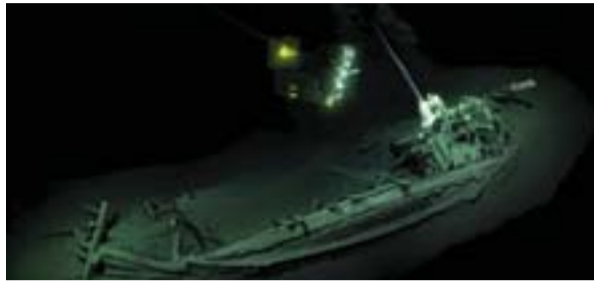




**9** India court eases firecracker ban even as pollution soars



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**28** Bayern edge out AEK to move top of group



# Saudi Arabia signs deals worth \$50bn at investment conference

King, MBS meet Khashoggi son • Kuwait sends top officials • Riyadh pledges \$3bn to Pak



RIYADH: (From left) Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan, Jordanian King Abdullah II, Saudi King Salman, Dubai ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashed Al-Maktoum and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman meet on the sidelines of the Future Investment Initiative FII conference in the Saudi capital yesterday. — AFP photos



Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman poses for a selfie with an unidentified man near Saudi billionaire Prince Alwaleed bin Talal (right) during the conference yesterday.



Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman meets Salah, son of slain journalist Jamal Khashoggi, yesterday.

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's crown prince hailed yesterday a conference that has drawn investment deals worth \$50 billion despite a boycott over the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, declaring the event as "great - more people more money". This year's Future Investment Initiative was overshadowed by the death of the Saudi journalist, a critic of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who vanished after he entered the country's consulate in Istanbul on Oct 2. Yesterday, the Saudi cabinet, after a meeting headed by King Salman, promised to hold to account those who were responsible for Khashoggi's death and those who "failed in their duties" in the case that has provoked an international furor and strained ties between Riyadh and the West.

Prince Mohammed, known as MBS, arrived at the conference late in the day after attending a meeting at which the king received members of Khashoggi's family, including his son Salah and brother Sahel. Many in the audience of over 2,000 clapped or cheered as the prince, the kingdom's architect of its reform drive, entered the main hall, smiling as he sat down. The crown prince, who praised the conference in comments to reporters as he toured the venue and took selfies, will participate in a panel today.

Kuwait's participation in the conference was a chance to get updated about future of regional and global investments, Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf said. The large presence of Kuwaiti public and private institutions shows keenness on making the best use of this event, the largest of its kind in the Arab world, Hajraf said in a statement. The Saudi economy has solid and strong foundations thanks to its huge local market and enormous

potentials for exporting non-petroleum products, he argued.

"For these reasons, we believe that Kuwait's considerable contribution was important to get acquainted with the great and promising investment opportunities and to benefit from the regional and international experiences for the future of investment," he said. Kuwait's official delegation to the event comprises Hajraf, Commerce and Industry Ministry Khaled Al-Roudhan, Governor of the Central Bank Mohammad Al-Hashel and Managing Director of Kuwait Investment Authority Farouq Bastaki.

The event is being held at the opulent Ritz-Carlton, where scores of princes, businessmen and officials were detained in a crackdown on corruption soon after last year's conference ended. Saudi billionaire Prince Alwaleed bin Talal, who was among those detained, appeared at the forum beside MBS, who led the anti-corruption drive.

Energy Minister Khalid Al-Falih assured the conference that the world's top crude exporter was passing through a "crisis of a sort" but would power ahead with economic reforms. The chief executive of Saudi Aramco said the government remained committed to a partial flotation of the oil giant but that the timing would depend on market conditions and other factors. Falih said the murder of Khashoggi was regrettable, adding that "nobody in the kingdom can justify it".

Falih said the OPEC kingpin was ready to boost its crude production and spare capacity to help maintain a balance in the global oil market. He also said OPEC and non-OPEC producers are expected to sign in December an "open-ended"

Continued on Page 24

## Saudi, Bahrain add Iran Revolutionary Guards to terror list

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia said yesterday that it and Bahrain had added Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps and senior officers from its Quds Force to their lists of people and organizations suspected of involvement in terrorism. The Saudi state news agency SPA quoted a statement from the security services as saying Qassem Soleimani, commander of the Quds Force, and the force's Hamed Abdollahi and Abdul Reza Shahlai had been included on the list.

The US Treasury Department alleged in 2011 that

Soleimani, Abdollahi and Shahlai were linked to a plot to assassinate Saudi Arabia's former ambassador to the United States, Adel Al-Jubeir, and imposed sanctions on them. Iran at the time dismissed the accusations as false and demanded an apology from Washington. The office of the Revolutionary Guards and Iran's Foreign Ministry were not immediately available for comment yesterday. The Quds Force is the branch of the Revolutionary Guards that operates abroad.

In Washington yesterday, the US Treasury targeted Afghanistan's Taliban insurgency with sanctions against eight individuals who were designated global terrorists, including two linked to the Quds Force named as Mohammad Ebrahim Owahadi and Esmail Razavi. The Taliban-related sanctions were also imposed by the seven members of the Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC), a US-Gulf initiative to stem finance to militant groups. The center was

established in May 2017 during US President Donald Trump's trip to Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia and the United States co-chair the group and Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates are also members.

The Trump administration aims to create a security and political alliance with the Gulf Arab states to counter Iran's influence in the region, especially in Syria and Iraq. Trump withdrew in May from a nuclear deal with Iran that lifted most international sanctions on Tehran in exchange for curbs on its atomic program. Trump said the deal did not address Iran's ballistic missile program, its nuclear activities beyond 2025 or its role in regional conflicts. Saudi Arabia welcomed Trump's decision and said it would work with the United States to address Iran's support of militant groups in the region and its ballistic missile program that is run by the Revolutionary Guards. — Reuters

## Xi inaugurates HK-mainland longest bridge

ZHUHAI, China: China's President Xi Jinping officially opened the world's longest sea bridge connecting Hong Kong, Macau and mainland China yesterday, at a time when Beijing is tightening its grip on its semi-autonomous territories. The 55-km crossing, which includes a snaking road bridge and underwater tunnel, links Hong Kong with the southern mainland city of Zhuhai and the gambling enclave of Macau, across the waters of the Pearl River Estuary.

Continued on Page 24



HONG KONG: An aerial view taken on Monday shows a section of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge (HKZM). — AFP

## Erdogan calls for justice over Khashoggi murder

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan yesterday said that the "savage murder" of journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul was meticulously planned, demanding that all those linked to the killing face punishment. Erdogan had promised that his speech in Ankara would give the "naked truth" about the killing and he gave a host of new details. But he still acknowledged Turkey wanted answers to key questions, including who gave the orders.

Vice President Mike Pence vowed that the United States would "demand answers" from Riyadh. Erdogan outlined the steps taken by what he said was a 15-person team who came from Riyadh planning to kill Khashoggi, including carrying out reconnaissance outside Istanbul and then deactivating security cameras at the consulate. He said that 18 suspects already detained by Saudi Arabia should be extradited to Istanbul to face trial over the killing and called for an investigation into those who have "even the slightest link" to the "savage murder".

But Erdogan did not confirm or even mention some of the most striking claims that appeared in the Turkish press over the last days, notably that Khashoggi's body was cut up into multiple pieces or that there is an audio recording of the murder. The president himself admitted



ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan waves during his party's parliamentary group meeting at the Grand National Assembly yesterday. —AFP

that several questions remain unanswered. "These (15) people, from whom did they get orders? ... We are seeking answers," he asked. "Why when the murder was clear, why were so many inconsistent statements made?"

Erdogan did not mention Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman by name in the speech. But he said he was confident of the full cooperation of his father Saudi King Salman in the probe and vowed full retribution for all those guilty of the "savage murder". "The conscience of humanity will only be satisfied when those who ordered (the murder) and those who carried it out answer for their actions."

Continued on Page 24

## MPs: Citizenship issue must end

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Several lawmakers yesterday gave a cautious welcome to the government's decision to return citizenships to some citizens whose nationalities were revoked several years ago, and called for putting an end to this issue. The government on Monday returned revoked citizenships to nine people including cleric Nabil Al-Awadhi, but not opposition activist Saad Al-Ajmi, who denied that his citizenship was returned. The government has already returned several citizenships revoked from mostly opposition activists. Several others are still waiting.

MP Abdulwahab Al-Babtain described the measure as a step in the right direction but called for swiftly putting an end to this issue and to political tensions in the country, adding that regional turmoil requires unity in the country. Babtain also said that to achieve stability, there must be solid legislation that cannot be misused by the government to issue unilateral decisions that could destabilize the country. He said that the amendment of the administrative court law, which is against the constitution, has become a national duty that all parties must work to achieve. He was referring to a law that prevents courts from looking into citizenship cases because they are considered sovereign issues.

MP Hamdan Al-Azemi said the return of citizenships should be treated on the basis that the government committed a mistake in the past and it was trying to rectify it. The lawmaker said the measure should not dissuade MPs from grilling the premier and ministers. MP Ahmad Al-Fadhl however said HH the Amir should be thanked for taking such a gracious decision to return the citizenships, which should defuse tension ahead of the new Assembly term.

Meanwhile, MP Majed Al-Mutairi warned the foreign ministry yesterday for not exerting full efforts to secure the release of a Kuwaiti citizen who was arrested soon after crossing into Saudi Arabia from the Salmi border point. The lawmaker said the foreign ministry must take all possible measures to ensure that the Kuwaiti citizen returns home safely.

## Local

# Amir receives Supreme Council Chief; Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad

## Prime Minister, Speaker, Foreign Minister meet ICRC President



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Chairman of Kuwait's Supreme Judicial Council and the Cassation Court, and President of the Constitutional Court, Justice Yousef Jassem Al-Mutawaa. — KUNA photos



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with CEO of Kuwait Telecommunications Company (VIVA) Salman Al-Badran.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Al-Mulla Group Abdullah Najib Al-Mulla.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Peter Maurer.



National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem meets with President of the ICRC Peter Maurer.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday Chairman of Kuwait's Supreme Judicial Council and the Cassation Court, and President of the Constitutional Court, Justice Yousef Jassem Al-Mutawaa. His Highness the Amir also received His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad, as well as Chairman and Director General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Sheikh Mubarak Al-Duaij Al-Sabah.

In the meantime, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Peter Maurer

and his accompanying delegation. National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem also received Maurer and his delegation later yesterday, in a meeting that was also attended by Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Essa Al-Kandari.

Moreover, Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah held a separate meeting with Maurer, during which they discussed close cooperative relations between Kuwait and the ICRC and future fruitful cooperation. Sheikh Sabah Al-



### Premier meets VIVA, Mulla Group CEOs

Khaled lauded the ICRC's humanitarian efforts to support disaster-hit people around the world, along with its role in helping find Kuwaiti prisoners of war and missing Kuwaitis in Iraq since 1991. In this regard, he called for more efforts to put an end to this significant humanitarian case.

The ICRC chief appreciated Kuwait's pioneering and distinguished regional and international humanitarian role in supporting disaster-hit people under the leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. He said the ICRC is look-

ing forward to promoting cooperation with Kuwait to achieve humanitarian goals, while speaking highly of Kuwait's relentless backing to the ICRC's humanitarian activities. The meeting was attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah, Assistant Foreign Minister for the Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister's Affairs Ambassador Sheikh Dr. Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah and several other senior officials of the Foreign Ministry.

Also yesterday, His Highness the Prime Minister received CEO of Kuwait Telecommunications Company (VIVA) Salman Al-Badran and VIVA's Chief Corporate Affairs Officer Issam Al-Asousi for VIVA's tenth anniversary. Furthermore, His Highness the Prime Minister received Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Al-Mulla Group Abdullah Najib Al-Mulla. — KUNA

## \$5.2 billion US trade to Kuwait in 2017: Official

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The US Embassy in Kuwait is organizing two weeks of activities to mark the sixth annual Discover America event. The activities will start on October 26 and run through November 9, 2018. Discover America is organized by the US Foreign Commercial Service Office in collaboration with the Public Affairs section of the US Embassy in Kuwait.

During a press conference held at the embassy, Commercial Councillor Jeff Hamilton said the Discover America event will highlight US brands, food, film, music, education, business knowhow and tourism. "Discover America started from Kuwait six years ago and expanded to other GCC countries except Saudi Arabia, and we are happy with this expansion," he said.

Hamilton added that Kuwait is a significant partner of the United States, and the embassy will continue to promote the United States as a trusted and profitable destination for further investment. "Our investments and trade reflect the deep ties between our two countries. Our US trade of goods to Kuwait was over \$5.2 billion in 2017. US services such as education, tourism and medical care were valued at over \$2 billion in the same year. As for the trade from Kuwait, it's \$3 billion," he said.

He noted that in 2017, more than 14,500 Kuwaiti students went to the US for further studies, and Kuwaitis entered the United States more than 87,000 times for tourism. "There are approximately 200 US companies in Kuwait. They are present in most sectors, including oil and gas, defense, architecture, healthcare and automotive. Many Kuwaiti companies own US franchises here as well and we will witness the opening of American cafe BJ's," he said. He added seminars will be held on "How to buy an American franchise" and "How to supply to the US military based in Kuwait". A seminar on American tourism will also be held, where an officer will speak about visa requirements.



KUWAIT: Commercial Councillor Jeff Hamilton (left) and Press Attache Heather Ward attend a press conference organized by the US Embassy in Kuwait yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Press Attache Heather Ward announced that the first event on Discover America 'Fun Run' has sold out, as more than 300 people signed up for the event that will take place at Boulevard in Salmiya on Friday. "Discover America is the best way to strengthen the relationship between the two countries. To promote a healthy lifestyle, we organized the fun run. A bicycle ride will also be held at Kuwait University's Shuwaikh campus," she said.

She added that the movie "First Man" about Neil Armstrong, the first man to walk on the moon, will be screened at Vox Cinema at The Avenues. There will also be a film screening of the Academy Award winning film Patton at Yarmouk Cultural Center. Ward said many companies participating in Discover America have expressed their support through special promotions and discounts at several American restaurants and retail stores.

## Mexican tourism presentation held at National Library

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: As part of Mexican Cultural Week, the tourism promotion council of Mexico held a presentation on Mexican tourism at the Kuwait National Library on Monday. It was presented by Arintzi Junuen Mendez Garcia, Director of the Mexico Tourism Board in Madrid. The Mexican Cultural Week is held in cooperation with the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters and the Kuwait National Library.

The presentation showed some of the treasures Mexico has. "Mexico has a large diversity that makes it a unique destination. Mexico is the sixth most visited country in the world with over 39 million tourists yearly. It's the second country with most diversity in the world, fourth with the most natural resources, sixth with most heritage sites, and eighth with most natural heritage sites," stressed Mendez.

According to the presentation, most popular luxury hotel brands are present in Mexico. "These hotels provide the highest standards of quality and service with Mexican cultural style. There are many top international hotel brands, and these are just some of the many luxury hotel brands. Furthermore, the best spas in Latin America are located in Mexico," she added.

There are many more entertainment activities. "Tourists can try the experi-

ence of swimming with sharks, flying on balloons or visiting various archeological sites. They can have a delicious dinner in the sky. Furthermore, we offer the best for shopping lovers. Also, we have special events such as Formula 1 and a wide variety of adventure experiences," she pointed out.

Mexican cuisine is very popular worldwide. "Out of the 50 world's best restaurants, 13 are located in Mexico. We have many popular dishes that are well-known internationally. We use one of the hottest chilies in the world," explained Mendez.

Mexico has attractive traditions too. "The Day of the Dead is held from the end of October till the beginning of November, and it was recognized as a world heritage event by UNESCO. Candles, flowers, and images are used during this activity to remember the dead by their families. It has become one of the main tourist attractions," she added. Mexican Ambassador to Kuwait Miguel Angel Isidro said the Mexican Embassy in Kuwait issues around 600 visas annually. "But the number of visitors from Kuwait to Mexico is higher and reaches around 2,000 annually, as many Kuwaitis travel there from the United States with their American visas. For those who don't have a US visa, they can easily obtain a visit visa to Mexico from our embassy in one day," he said.



Arintzi Garcia (left) presents a memento to Kuwait National Library's General Manager Kamel Suleiman Abduljaleel (center), in presence of Mexican Ambassador Miguel Angel Isidro.

## FM meets new Sierra Leone envoy

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received yesterday the newly-appointed Ambassador of Sierra Leone to the State of Kuwait Haja Ishata Thomas. Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled welcomed Ambassador Thomas to Kuwait, wishing her the best of luck during her tenure. The meeting was attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah and a number of senior Foreign Ministry officials. — KUNA



## Local

# Committee finalizes investigation report on military academy cadet's death

## Report defines charges facing 15 personnel subjected to investigation

By A Saleh and Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: A committee formed by First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah to investigate the death of a cadet at Ali Al-Sabah Military Academy announced completing its final report, including recommendations made pending the return of the minister to make his final decision. In this regard, security sources said that aside from the recommendations, the committee's report defined the charges facing 15 personnel subjected to investigation according to direct or indirect precipitation of the cadet's demise in any way. The report further indicates that the committee listened to testimonies by academy officers, personnel and cadets, in addition to revising medical reports.

**Lawyer required**  
Following the unraveling of an investigation of a female employee because of violating the proceedings law, the



### Final decision pending minister's return

administrative court yesterday mandated various ministries and state departments to allow employees subjected to investigations to have a lawyer attend the

investigation with them.

#### KD 150 bribe

Kabd police arrested an Asian man for offering a policeman a KD 150 bribe to release his brother, who had been arrested at a Kabd ranch for violating residency visa laws. Security sources said the policeman pretended to agree and reported the matter to his commander.

#### Overdue debts

Well-informed sources said the finance ministry is currently setting a new plan to collect overdue debts from individuals and private companies, adding that the total amount of debt is KD 1.4 billion. The sources added that the plan involves contacting the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) to suspend transactions with companies and co-ops that delay pay-

ing their debts, noting that MoCI has stopped providing the concerned co-ops with supply rations, which forced them to pay their debts.

In other news, MoCI launched a new integrated package of Kuwait Business Center (KBC), companies sector and commercial licenses services through the KBC website. A statement MoCI issued on this regard stressed that a large segment of citizens benefit from the new services that include founding new firms, issuing licenses, company adjustment, commercial registers, individual licenses and vending trucks. The statement added that the new services are mainly designed to reduce the number of manual transactions at ministry departments and use automated services in a bid to improve the business environment with the ultimate goal of turning Kuwait into an attractive destination for investors.



Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah

## Fire under control at Sulaibiya industrial zone: KFSD

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Firefighters were able to control a fire that broke out in chalets at a cement plant in the industrial zone of Sulaibiyah, the Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) Public Relations and Information office said Monday. In a press release, KFSD said a report was received at 8:00 pm of a fire in an area of approximately 1,500 square meters, and firefighting teams were dispatched from the Sulaibikhat, Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, Mishref and Support Stations. The fire broke out in four chalets containing offices and furniture for factory workers, the statement said, adding firefighters started to put the fire out and contain it from all directions. The fire was extinguished without causing any injuries, however an investigation to the cause of the fire was open.

Meanwhile, the KFSD Public Relations office said that the Hilali and Madina fire stations responded to a call about a fire in the interior ministry operations building at dawn yesterday. The fire was in the outer building of the center, with one person trapped inside, who was freed and handed to paramedics who took him to hospital. The fire then was put out. The firemen were led by Col Fahd Al-Ajmi and Col Bashar Al-Nafe from Hilali and Madina centers respectively.

Separately, the interior ministry's public relations department said a mock evacuation was conducted at Saleh Al-Ruwayeh intermediate school in Ardiya, in which several field sectors participated. It added the evacuation was successful and was conducted in record time. The exercise is part of the training program conducted by the civil defense on educating school teachers and students on how to act during crises.



KUWAIT: Flames coming out from chalets at a cement plant in the industrial zone of Sulaibiyah.



Fire engines are seen outside the interior ministry operations building where a fire was reported at dawn yesterday.

## Kuwaiti, French chiefs of staff discuss cooperation

PARIS: Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Lt Gen Mohammad Al-Khodhr met in Paris on Monday with his French counterpart Gen Francois Lecointre to discuss defense cooperation. The meeting explored ways to draw on the French experience while developing the military simulation center of the Kuwaiti army, according to a statement by the department of moral guidance and public relations of the Kuwaiti Defense Ministry. Lt Gen Khodhr, leading a military delegation, visited the military simulation center of France where they were briefed on the role of the center in refining the military strategies on operational, training and professional levels. They were accompanied by Kuwait Ambassador to France Sami Al-Sulaiman, according to the statement. — KUNA



PARIS: Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Lt Gen Mohammad Al-Khodhr meets with his French counterpart Gen Francois Lecointre. — KUNA

## KAPP approves consortium for wastewater project

KUWAIT: Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP) announced yesterday approval of a consortium of Germany's WTE Wassertechnik GmbH Group and Kuwait's International Financial Advisors to implement and expand the Umm Al-Hayman Wastewater Treatment Project and its related works. KAPP has called the consortium to sign a commitment contract in accordance with Law No. 116 of 2014 on partnership between state and private sectors, the authority said in a press statement.

KAPP and the Ministry of Public Works (MPW) will jointly sign a commitment contract with the project's winning investor in order to pave the way for establishment of a public joint-stock company to build, operate, and manage the project for 28 years according to a partnership agreement with the Ministry.

The authority's announcement is based on its Higher Committee's decision on October 14, it said, adding the project is part of the country's development plan that aims to reduce the negative impacts resulted by increased wastewater production in the environment.

The government also tends, through such projects, to enhance the country's infrastructure, boost its development, and build a sustainable national economy based on fairness. It also aims to prepare an appropriate investment environment through providing investment opportunities to the private sector and citizens, whose share in the project's capital has been allocated at 50 percent, said KAPP.

The Umm Al-Hayman Project will involve the design, financing, building, testing, commissioning, operation, maintenance and transfer of wastewater treatment plant with a capacity of 500,000 m3/d. It can be expanded in the future depending on flow ability to such a final capacity of 700,000 m3/d. The project's objectives include the improvement of the overall state of infrastructure in Kuwait's water and wastewater sector, in addition to ensuring the standard of sanitary services in the country adheres to both international and local environmental guidelines and best practices. — KUNA

## Strong winds kill man in Wafra

KUWAIT: An Indian man was killed when the corrugated metal room he was in collapsed due to strong winds. Police and firemen responded to the scene in Wafra along with paramedics. The metal sheets were removed and the victim's body was recovered. Forensic experts inspected the scene then handed the body to the coroner.

#### Eavesdropping device

A female citizen found an eavesdropping device in her car and gave it to police after filing a complaint. The woman told police that while looking for personal belongings, she was surprised by a small device with a telephone chip in it, and discovered it was an eavesdropping device. A security source said the details on the chip were recorded to identify the owner, who will be questioned.

#### Car stolen

Detectives arrested a Kuwaiti woman for stealing a female motorist's car that was left with the engine running in front of a pharmacy. The suspect is also being questioned to find out if she has other similar offenses. A citizen left her car running, and when she returned, the car was missing, so she went to the police and complained. Detectives reviewed security cameras of shops around the pharmacy and noticed a woman loitering, who walked towards the running car, got in and drove away. The car was later spotted in front of a house, so they kept it

under surveillance until a woman got in it. Detectives then arrested her and began questioning her.

#### Suicide prevented

Police and firemen stormed a hotel room in which a citizen had locked himself in while threatening to commit suicide. Police received a call about the man's actions, so they went to the hotel and tried to talk to him. He said he was discharged from the interior ministry's service 20 years ago and was not able to return to his job because of cases against him. When talks failed, firemen were called in. The door was broken and the citizen was arrested.

#### Policeman insulted

A citizen insulted a policeman following an argument over a traffic violation. The citizen was pulled over and when the policeman asked for his ID, he objected, argued and was taken to the police station.

#### Drunk brothers arrested

Two drunken brothers beat their neighbor while shouting insults. The victim called for police's help, so police went and found the two were under the influence of alcohol. Both were arrested.

#### Fight

Two citizens were questioned after fighting in a car repair shop. A citizen whose car was being repaired noticed another man asking the mechanic to check his car immediately, so the mechanic asked him to wait. The man did not like this and argued with him, so the first citizen intervened and things escalated to exchanging blows. The two went to the police station and both were charged accordingly. — Translated by Kuwait Times from Al-Rai

## Common agenda 'beneficial' for GCC: Commerce Minister

RIYADH: Kuwait's Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan said yesterday that finding a common economic agenda for Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and international partners was beneficial for both sides. Speaking on the sideline of Saudi Arabia's Future Investments Initiative event, minister Roudhan affirmed that more economically-oriented events in the region would enhance business knowledge for local and foreign investors. The huge turnout at the Future Investments Initiative by significant number of GCC and foreign business personnel and officials reflected the importance of the event, said the Kuwaiti minister. The GCC markets are one despite the minor differences in regulations, said Minister Roudhan who affirmed foreign investors were welcomed to pursue various business opportunities offered by the countries of the region.

The Future of Investments Initiative kick-started in the Saudi capital Riyadh yesterday with a wide participation of global experts in artificial intelligence and digitization. In his opening speech to the event, head of Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund (PIF) Yasir Al-Rumayyan revealed that 10 percent of the



Khaled Al-Roudhan

Saudi sovereign wealth fund's assets were of international nature while the remaining percentage belonged to the Kingdom.

PIF is eager to improve international assets to around 50 percent by 2030, equaling the number of local assets, affirmed Rumayyan who indicated that Saudi Arabia was eager to expand its non-oil production to include more commodities. He added that Saudi Arabia was focusing now on developing its tourism and entertainment sectors, noting that Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth fund had invested around 50 to 60 percent to attract foreign investments.

The Future Investments Initiative, in its second edition, will continue until October 25 with the participation of 135 speakers from 140 global institutes. The event is held in partnership with 17 international institutes and programs. — KUNA

## Local

## Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Thick clouds cover the sun over Kuwait City yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

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## Time ripe for cultural exchanges with China: Official

**SHENZHEN:** Cultural ties between the wider Arab region and China should be on par with political and economic relations, said Kuwait News Agency's (KUNA) Editor-in-Chief Saad Al-Ali yesterday. Heading a Kuwaiti delegation amid a visit to the world's most populous nation, Al-Ali, who is also the Deputy Director General for KUNA's Editorial Sector, said it is time to reach out to Beijing on the cultural and educational fronts. He pinpointed His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's recent visit to China as the catalyst that helped reinvigorate bilateral relations, hoping for "more progress" in cultural and educational ties. KUNA's editor-in-chief expressed his admiration over the meteoric growth the Chinese port city of Shenzhen has witnessed in the span of a few years.

The Kuwaiti contingent were warmly welcomed by China Development Institute's (CDI) Vice President Qu Jian, who said that the Chinese organization is capable of transforming the most desolate of places into industrial hubs. He added that the Chinese



China Development Institute's Vice President Qu Jian

institute is 'willing and able' to contribute towards Kuwait's development plans, citing a number of huge infrastructure projects the country has in store. Kuwait enjoys various advantages, chiefly, its strategic location and warm ties with the world's superpowers, Qu added, describing the Gulf state as among the most stable and safe in the region. Liu Rongxin, CDI's Executive Director for Regional and Development Planning, hailed the Chinese organization as among the prominent research bodies in the world, having earned global accreditation for its work. She went on to say that, the Chinese research body has had positive experiences in Kuwait and the Gulf region, helping draw up economic plans for countries all over the globe. — KUNA

## Burgan Bank hosts 'Job Shadow' in collaboration with INJAZ

**KUWAIT:** As a sought-after career destination that seeks to develop the skills and expertise of future leaders in the market, Burgan Bank recently hosted a 'Job Shadow' program in collaboration with INJAZ-Kuwait. Through the latest skills-building program, Burgan Bank aims to create a highly educated generation of ambitious and driven professionals. The 'Job Shadow' Program offers school students the opportunity to explore different business sectors through a series of workshops and field visits that are presented by the respective heads, professionals, and business owners.

INJAZ-Kuwait is a private sector driven, non-profit organization that works on developing and building business and entrepreneurial skills of private middle school, high

school and university students, with the help of qualified and dedicated volunteers from the private sector. This initiative falls under the KIPCO Group's commitment to train 1,000 students over the next two years, until June 2020. KIPCO first partnered with INJAZ-Kuwait in 2016 with volunteers hailing from within the company and its subsidiaries, including Burgan Bank.

Through the aid of the bank's Human Resources Department and their coordination with other internal departments, thirty eight students, all majoring in International Business from the Australian College of Kuwait explored individual sectors, departments and the overall banking realm. Attended by the representatives of the Learning and Development Center, Financial Institution Department, Corporate Banking, Customer Experience Management, and International Operations Office, the students were further inducted on the banks corporate culture, organizational objectives, and goals through an interactive session of Q&As to benefit each academically. Burgan Bank has a long-standing commitment to enhance the potential of the Kuwaiti youth through innovative educational and skills-building platforms, enabling human development and career progression for the benefit of the present and future generations.



Local

# Korea's Incheon proud to be selected to operate Terminal 4



Passengers board their flight at the new Terminal 4.



KUWAIT: Kwang Soo Lee, Project Manager at Terminal 4, Kuwait International Airport, speaks to Kuwait Times. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: Kuwait Airways' new Terminal 4 (T4) launched operations recently. Incheon, a Korean-based airport firm, won a five-year contract for the management, operation and safety of Terminal 4, as mandated by the Kuwaiti aviation authority. Speaking to Kuwait Times, Kwang Soo Lee, Project Manager at Terminal 4, Kuwait International Airport said his company has been operating Incheon airport in Seoul, which has been voted and recognized as a premier airport for several years.

"We are very happy to be selected as your terminal operator for the next five years. We started operations in late August, and we are honored and proud that the Kuwaiti aviation authority selected us to operate Terminal 4," he said. "Usually operation starts after the full completion of construction and system integration, however, in T4 facilities, this was not the case. We faced many challenges in this regard, especially that our company did not construct the airport and systems, but day by day we are witnessing tangible improvements in general."

Incheon won the contract in May 2018, then was immediately told to begin operations a few months later. "We prepared for the opening as they told us they wanted T4 to

be operational as soon as possible," Lee said. "We hired people from Incheon Airport - around 40 experienced security and management staff were selected to run T4 immediately. Without them, it would have been impossible to operate. Since we have knowledgeable people, we hired and trained more staff locally. Now we have around 500 personnel running T4," he said.

T4 is small compared to Incheon airport, which has a capacity of 70 million passengers per year. "T4 in Kuwait is expected to receive 4.5 million passengers annually, so it is very small compared to Incheon. But lesser capacity means lesser stress from the management's side," Lee added.

On August 15, 2018, T4 started operations with four daily return flights to Dubai that eventually increased to eight flights a day. Flights to Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries started at T4 from September 30, 2018 with 30 flights per day. On October 10, 2018, flights to other Arab countries began, and flights to Europe were launched on October 21, 2018. By November, T4 will be fully operational with the launch of flights to Southeast Asian countries and the Indian Subcontinent.

"Kuwait Airways flights bound to New York will remain in Terminal 1 until further notice, since they have additional safety

measures implemented on that route. We are not saying that we have lapses in security checks - we follow all airport safety standards. We would not be voted among the top airports in the world if we didn't, but they have a strict approval policy, and that's the key for us as well," he said.

According to Lee, comparing the facilities to Incheon airport or any other airport is not right, since those have their own uniqueness in terms of facilities. "Imagine 70 million passengers against 4.5 million passengers of T4. It cannot be compared. We are going to run the terminal until 2023. After 2023, we don't know if we will be chosen to operate the other terminal - it's the decision of the Kuwaiti aviation authority," he said.

Incheon started operations in Seoul with only 33 million passengers yearly - passenger numbers are now 70 million after 20 years. Lee said among 1,500 airports around the world, Incheon airport is ranked sixth, and was named Best Airport in the World for 12 consecutive years. The company also operates Irbil airport in Iraq. Incheon is also among the top consulting firms in Indonesia and the Philippines. Incheon has led changes and innovations with different services and passenger oriented operations and has proven itself as a 'world class airport' for many years.

## Kuwait Plane Spotters Team spreads aviation culture

KUWAIT: Kuwait Plane Spotters Team is considered the first of its kind within the Gulf region, with the aim to shed more light on the field by participating in international aviation fairs. President of the team Adawiya Al-Abduljaleel said yesterday that the voluntary group was established in 2016 and includes six photographers. She explained that their main goal is to spread the culture of aviation through their lenses:

by taking photos of everything that is related to airplanes. She added that the team had the approval of the Chairman of Civil Aviation Authority Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah to permanently display their photos at the transit hall of Kuwait International Airport. Abduljaleel noted that the team took part in several aviation exhibitions in Kuwait, Dubai and Bahrain. — KUNA



Kuwait Plane Spotters Team's booths at various international and national exhibitions.

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NATO to show muscle in massive exercises

Flashpoint Indian temple closes without admitting women

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RIYADH: A picture taken on Monday shows portraits of Saudi King Salman and his son Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman displayed one day before the Future Investment Initiative FII conference began. — AFP

# Saudi formidable PR machine shows cracks

## Killing of exiled journalist triggers outrage



ISTANBUL: A combo of frame grabs taken from a police CCTV video allegedly shows in the first image (left) Saudi Arabian journalist Jamal Khashoggi arriving at the Saudi Arabian consulate in Istanbul on October 2, 2018, and in the second image (right), a man leaving the Saudi Arabian consulate with a fake beard and wearing a similar outfit to that worn by Khashoggi on October 10, 2018 in Istanbul. — AFP

WASHINGTON: When the United States was attacked on September 11, 2001 by 19 hijackers - 15 of them from Saudi Arabia - the kingdom switched into lobbying overdrive, determined to preserve a critical relationship. After devoting well over \$100 million to influencing Washington, the oil-rich state is facing a PR crisis it didn't see coming - US lawmakers who once eagerly hobnobbed with Saudi princes, and institutions that were once only too happy to accept Riyadh's money, are looking to distance themselves. The killing of exiled Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi - a regular presence on the Washington think tank circuit who died after entering the kingdom's consulate in Istanbul - has led to outrage at a level unseen in years against the kingdom.

Lawmakers have proposed once-unthinkable actions such as suspending arms sales to Saudi Arabia, the largest buyer of US weapons, and expelling the kingdom's ambassador, although major repercussions look unlikely for now as President Donald Trump has called for preserving ties. The Saudis had earlier looked confident of their lobbying might in Washington. In March, the Senate narrowly defeated a proposal to end US support for the Saudi-led campaign against rebels in Yemen, which according to the United Nations has killed thousands of civilians.

Soon afterward, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, a

33-year-old who had billed himself as a reformer, triumphantly visited the United States where he met figures ranging from Trump to talk show queen Oprah Winfrey. "A lot of Americans don't really know much about Saudi Arabia. It's not a big destination for travel, for a lot of reasons, and it was easy for PR firms to fill that role," said Ben Freeman, director of the Foreign Influence Transparency Initiative at the Center for International Policy. "I think what happened is that this case really brought it home," he said. "Jamal Khashoggi was living here and I think a lot of journalists took this personally in that one of their own was attacked."

### Whooping powerful

Even if the values of the austere Muslim state would seem alien to most Americans, Saudi Arabia has penetrated Washington's power-centers by opening its checkbook to influential think tanks, wooing journalists and hiring former senior politicians who stand to earn more money as lobbyists. Among those former lawmakers, according to legally required

filings with the Justice Department, are Norm Coleman, a former Republican senator from Minnesota, who signed a \$125,000-a-month deal this year to represent the Saudi embassy, and Buck McKeon, until 2015 the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, whose firm is paid \$50,000 a month by Riyadh. Neither responded to requests for comment.

CNN's chief Washington correspondent Jake Tapper, one of the most visible US television journalists, tweeted that the Saudi embassy contacted him after his favorite football team, the Philadelphia Eagles, qualified for this year's Super Bowl and offered to fly him to see the championship game as its guest. He said he declined. "But I wondered: who said yes?" Since Khashoggi's disappearance, at least four lobbying firms have said that they will no longer represent Saudi Arabia. Among those terminating involvement is leading lawyer Theodore Olson, who argued for former president George W Bush before the Supreme Court and whose firm would have pocketed at least \$250,000.—AFP



### Oil-rich state faces PR crisis

## German Islamic State 'shoemaker' pleads to come home from Syria

RMELAN: From northern Syria, Muslim convert Sufyan is imploring his native Germany to take him back, having been captured years after joining the Islamic State group's so-called "caliphate". His beard neatly buzzed, Sufyan is one of hundreds of foreigners held by the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) in war-torn Syria, accused of fighting for IS. The 36-year-old insists he was not a fighter, but a misguided civilian making orthopaedic shoes and prosthetics in IS territory.

"I am not Jihadi John, I am not Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, I am not Adnani," said Sufyan, listing IS's infamous British executioner, its elusive chief, and its now-dead spokesman. "I just made limbs," added the pale-skinned Sufyan, who refused to give his real name and said he was from Stuttgart in southwest Germany. He was selected to speak to AFP by the YPG, who detained him around a year ago and were present during the interview.

They have refused to try accused foreign fighters in their custody, urging Western countries to take them back. Some foreign governments have agreed to do so, but most are reluctant. The US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces are holding several alleged German IS members, including

Mohammad Haydar Zamar, a Syrian-born German national accused of helping plan the September 11 attacks. Berlin is not known to have repatriated anyone, but Sufyan hopes he, his Syrian wife and their son can start afresh in Germany. "People make mistakes and I was naive," he said, dressed in a yellow hoodie with a side zip, cargo pants, and black beanie. "I just want to go back to my old life."

### 'I didn't fight'

Speaking in near-fluent English peppered with Arabic words, Sufyan recounts his winding journey to what he thought would be a pious life under Islamic rule. In 2014, IS declared a "caliphate" across large parts of Syria and neighboring Iraq. The following year, Sufyan travelled across Europe and Turkey, finally crossing into Syria in March 2015, four years into the Syrian war.

Once inside, he says, IS shuffled him among safe houses for weeks alongside Australians, Central Asians, and Russians. He was given one month of military training and assigned to a battalion, but claims he never fought. "I didn't fight and I didn't kill anyone," he said. "I never killed any person in my life."

Instead, Sufyan was hired at a hospital in IS's de facto Syrian capital Raqqa, using his 12 years' experience as an orthopaedic shoemaker. "They teach me over there prosthetics. Until I came to YPG, I was doing this job... making prosthetic and orthopaedic shoes," he said.



Sufyan

In 2016, he married a Syrian woman from northwest Idlib, and they had a son. They stayed in Raqqa until YPG-led forces surrounded the northern city in 2017, forcing them to flee to the IS-held eastern town of Mayadeen. Sufyan took up the same work there until Mayadeen came under attack, this time by the Russia-backed Syrian regime. He said he had grown embittered towards IS by then and decided to pay a smuggler to bring him and his family to a YPG checkpoint. "I was not ready to kill someone or to die, so I decided to go out," said Sufyan. "Everyone was running away."

### 'New start?'

A year later, Sufyan lives separated from his wife and son, who are detained in a Kurdish-run camp. He desperately wants to be reunited with his family. Kurdish authorities say they have in their custody around 900 male foreign IS members, 550 women and around 1,200 children from 44 countries. According to a European Parliament report in May, Germany estimates there are 290 children with claims to German citizenship in Iraq and Syria. "If I can come back to Germany and if Germany want to punish me, I will accept this, to stay in prison," Sufyan said. "I hope it will not be a long sentence, because I miss already my wife and my son," he said.

He hopes to study or open his own business in his homeland, for which he has renewed appreciation since meeting Syrians who "see Germany as something like a paradise on earth". "I know Germany is a country with a lot of 'rahma' with a lot of people. I expect that Germany will have also 'rahma' with me," he said, using the Arabic word for "mercy". Sufyan has written to his parents in Germany, who replied and also sent a letter and money to his wife.—AFP

## Endless trucks to dirty laundry: NATO exercises big in every way

OSLO: NATO's biggest military exercises since the end of the Cold War, dubbed Trident Juncture 18, take place in Norway from October 25 to November 7 in what will be a massive display of strength.

Around 50,000 troops from 31 countries-NATO's 29 member states plus Sweden and Finland-will take part in the manoeuvres organized in central Norway for the land exercises, in the North Atlantic and the Baltic Sea for the maritime operations, and in Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish airspace. That is about 10,000 more soldiers than in the Strong Resolve exercises in Poland in 2002, which brought together Alliance members and 11 partner states. No fewer than 10,000 vehicles will take part in the manoeuvres. Lined up end-to-end, the queue would measure 92 kilometers, according to the Norwegian army. Some 250 aircraft and 60 ships will also be involved, including the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Harry S Truman. More than 20,000 land forces will take part, as well as 24,000 navy personnel including US Marines, 3,500 air force personnel, around 1,000 logistics specialists and 1,300 personnel from a range of NATO Commands.—AFP

International

# Palestinian forces 'systematically' abuse, torture opponents, critics

## Authorities use threats, arbitrary arrests, violent abuse

**RAMALLAH:** The Palestinian security forces "systematically" abuse and torture opponents and critics in what could amount to crimes against humanity and undermine Palestinian accusations against Israel, Human Rights Watch said yesterday. "Systematic torture as part of a government policy is a crime against humanity," Omar Shakir, HRW's Israel-Palestine director said.

The rival authorities of the Palestinian Authority (PA) and Hamas both used threats, arbitrary arrests and violent abuse, including beatings, electric shocks and stress positions, the New York-based rights group said in a report released in Ramallah in the occupied West Bank. Both particularly focus on those allegedly affiliated with the rival faction, including protesters, dissidents, journalists and bloggers, with the aim of crushing dissent, the report said. The PA rejected the allegations, accusing Human Rights Watch of allying with the US government.

Hamas did not respond to requests from AFP but told HRW they were willing to receive them in Gaza, though Israel rejected a permit request, the rights group said. The report is likely to raise issues for governments that fund the PA's security forces, including the United States, which has maintained security funding despite cutting aid to the

Palestinians. Shakir said both sides were "systematically, arbitrarily detaining critics and torturing those in custody." On one occasion PA security forces tied a cord around a detainee's penis for eight hours, causing it to swell and



### PA rejects allegations

turn blue, HRW said. The PA has limited self autonomy in the Israeli-occupied West Bank but no influence in Gaza since 2007, when Hamas expelled its forces in a near civil war. The two have run separate and rival administrations since. The PA government is a signatory to a series of conventions including the United Nations Convention against

Torture. HRW said the report was the result of two years of research and nearly 150 interviews. Shakir said the allegations undermined Palestinian criticism of Israeli rights abuses. "You have Palestinian leaders going around the world speaking about Palestinian rights at the same time as they are directing a machinery of oppression to crush dissent," he said.

### Hanged from the ceiling

Sami Al-Sai, a 39-year-old independent journalist, was arrested in 2017 on suspicion of relations with Hamas. He was beaten, had threats made about his family and hanged from a ceiling by handcuffs before eventually pleading guilty to various charges including "creating sectarian strife." "Every day I expect that they will rearrest me, and torture me again, but they can't do anything more than they did," he said. In Gaza, 34-year-old journalist Fuad Jarada was arrested by Hamas services in June 2017 after critical comments on Facebook. He was detained for more than two months, the report said, including in a room called "the bus" where he was blindfolded and forced to stand up and then sit in a child's chair for hours at a time. No security officers have been convicted by either Hamas or the PA, HRW said.

### Funding questions

The report will raise questions for Western nations which provide funds to PA security services. Those forces cooperate closely with Israel and officials say they regularly foil planned attacks against Israelis. Shaker called on Western states to temporarily suspend funding to the PA security forces. A Western diplomat said the report was alarming, without suggesting what action could be taken in response. The United States under President Donald Trump has cut around \$500 million in aid to Palestinians this year, but continued to provide roughly \$50 million a year for security coordination with Israel.

Hamas does not recognize Israel and is considered a terrorist organization by much of the international community. HRW called on Hamas's primary backers Iran, Qatar and Turkey to suspend their support to the group's security forces. Haitham Arar, head of human rights at the PA's interior ministry, said the government "rejected everything in the Human Rights Watch report". "The report confuses politics and human rights and is consistent with the (US) Deal of the Century with the aim of weakening the PA," Arar said, referring to Trump's long-delayed peace plan that Palestinians fear will be biased towards Israel. — AFP

## Burkina Faso's violence spreads

**OUAGADOUGOU:** No one was killed when gunmen on motorcycles stormed a police station in Burkina Faso's restless north last week—but only because the outnumbered officers quickly fled the scene, allowing an unknown number of detained terror suspects to escape. The attack in the heart of Djibo on Thursday night came just hours after French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian arrived in the capital Ouagadougou, his second visit this year to address deteriorating security in the country since a deadly assault on the French embassy last March.

French officials say the raid was a "catastrophe", signalling a growing boldness of jihadist fighters in the north of the former French colony, while also broadcasting the government's apparent inability to protect its citizens. "Clearly Burkina Faso is now the main worry" among the G5 Sahel nations trying to fend off jihadism and lawlessness in five nations on the Sahara's southern rim since 2015, a top French diplomatic source said, warning of a "very long" anti-terrorist fight.

Already around 220 schools have been closed in the north and up to 40,000 people have been driven from their homes toward Djibo, a town that is home to one of the biggest cattle markets in West Africa. In September, a spate of near-daily roadside bomb attacks erupted along the eastern border with Niger, a sparsely populated area of national parks with a history of smuggling activities. Although attacks in the area have subsided in recent weeks, NGOs have told their workers to remain in larger

cities for fear of landmines. So far no group has claimed responsibility for the bombings, which officials say could be the work of Ansarul Islam—normally based in the north—or the Islamic State in the Greater Sahel, the group behind a deadly ambush on US soldiers in western Niger in October 2017. But the violence has prompted two of Burkina Faso's neighbors to the south, Togo and Benin, to start moving troops to their northern borders, according to a French diplomatic source. And on the eve of Le Drian's visit, defense and foreign ministers from Togo, Benin and Niger met their Burkinabe counterparts in Ouagadougou to discuss security strategy and cooperation—for the first time in recent memory.

Adding to the unease, President Roch Marc Christian Kabore has refused to address the surge in attacks, declining to appear alongside Le Drian for a press briefing after their meeting last week. Few people believe his claim that partisans of former president Blaise Compaore are at work, trying to destabilize his government. "People are scared," said a local journalist in Ouagadougou who asked not to be quoted by name, calling Kabore's silence "an admission of weakness".

"He can't do anything—he doesn't have the resources," the senior diplomatic source added. "We'll see how they are going to respond, what they're going to ask of us," he said, noting a planned visit by Kabore to Paris in December. His government has recently taken the notable step of calling on France's Barkhane anti-terror force in the Sahel for air strikes and other assistance, after refusing for years to seek help from Paris.

For now, no Barkhane troops are stationed in Burkina Faso, where the focus has been on training an army which was severely curtailed after the 2014 ouster of Compaore, who used elite forces as his personal militia. — AFP

## Indonesia disaster 'punishment for gay activities'

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malaysia's opposition leader said yesterday a quake-tsunami that killed thousands in neighboring Indonesia was "punishment from Allah" for the activities of gay people, sparking a storm of criticism. Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, who heads a party which lost power in Muslim-majority Malaysia at historic elections in May, made the remarks in parliament as he warned about the growing influence of the country's gay community. It was the latest sign of a backlash against homosexuals in Malaysia. In recent months officials—including the prime minister—have spoken out against gay rights and two lesbians were censored for breaking Islamic laws that forbid same-sex relations.

Ahmad Zahid, a former deputy former premier who is now facing jail after being arrested for corruption, said that "in Palu, where there was recently an earthquake

and tsunami, it was said that there were more than 1,000 (people) involved in such (LGBT) activities. "As a result, the whole area was crushed. This is punishment from Allah." The 7.5-magnitude quake and subsequent tsunami smashed into the coastal city of Palu, on Sulawesi island, on September 28. More than 2,000 bodies have since been recovered and there are fears that 5,000 more could be buried beneath the ruins in several hit-hard neighborhoods. Ahmad Zahid's remarks sparked widespread criticism, and he was accused of making populist comments to save his own skin.

Pang Khee Teik, a leading gay rights activist, told AFP that the comments were "proof that every time a politician is in trouble, LGBT people get blamed. "Next time you hear a politician say that LGBT people are causing natural disaster, please remember that it's because his career is about to be swallowed up by the earth." There was a flood of anger on social media, with one Facebook user slamming Ahmad Zahid for his "stupid and irresponsible statement". Last week the 65-year-old was hit with 45 charges in a \$26 million corruption case. He is accused of crimes that include accepting bribes to award government contracts and money-laundering. — AFP

## Drought cripples crucial German waterways

**COLOGNE:** The docks are eerily quiet at Cologne's main port on the mighty River Rhine, with hundreds of containers piled up and awaiting their journey north on one of Europe's busiest commercial arteries. Months of scarce rainfall and hot sunny weather drove water levels on the Rhine to a record low, forcing ship operators to suspend services to keep vessels from running aground.

"We haven't had any new ships in Cologne since last week — they stop in Duisburg" 80 kilometers north, Oliver Grossmann, head of shipping company CTS said.

He said that under normal conditions, "three or four" of his big vessels would stop each day in the city known for its Gothic cathedral. The few barges still chugging along the river have had to drastically reduce their cargo to stay afloat. Sitting in his office overlooking the mountain of containers, Grossmann said rail links can only fill part of the gap as long as river transport is paralyzed because of a lack of infrastructure and train engineers.

### 'Widespread rainfall'

At the entrance to the port of Duisburg, a small tower houses a Rhine measuring station. On its roof are two LED panels reading 1.55 meters (5.09 feet). "This is the lowest level ever measured here," said Jan Boehme, a hydrologist with the Water and Shipping Authority. Torrid temperatures throughout the summer and only rare rainfall have transformed Germany's waterways and created a crisis unseen since the start of record keeping in 1881. The previous low water record set in Cologne in 2003 of 81 centimeters (32 inches) was shattered last Friday

when the level dipped to just 77 centimeters, the water authorities said.

All along the Rhine, the situation looks similarly dire. "Since July, the water levels have been lower than we normally see in this season," Boehme said, noting that in October it usually fluctuates between three and four metres. Although the link is not proven beyond a doubt, German authorities say the extreme dry weather matches the models of climate change drawn up by scientists. The Rhine is hardly the only major waterway affected, with levels on the Elbe leading to Hamburg also dangerously low. "This drought phase is exceptionally long," Boehme said. "For water levels to rise again we would need a lot of rain - a little shower won't do it. We need extended, intense, widespread rainfall." — AFP

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## International

# NATO to show military muscle in massive exercises in Norway

## 50,000 troops to kick off biggest military exercises since Cold War

OSLO: Some 50,000 troops will kick off NATO's biggest military exercises since the Cold War today in Norway, a massive show of force that has already rankled neighboring Russia. Trident Juncture 18, which runs until November 7, is aimed at training the Alliance to mobilize quickly to defend an ally under attack. The head of NATO's Allied Joint Force Command, US Navy Admiral James Foggo, said the exercise was intended to "show NATO is capable to defend against any adversary. Not a particular country, anyone." Russia, which carried out its biggest ever military exercises in September in the Far East, has not been officially identified as the intended adversary, but it is on everyone's minds after the 2014 Ukraine crisis.

"Russia doesn't represent a direct military threat to Norway," Norwegian Defense Minister Frank Bakke-Jensen said. "But in a security situation as complicated as we have today... an incident elsewhere could very well heighten tensions in the North and we want to prepare the Alliance in order to avoid any unfortunate incidents," he added. The exercises come after President Donald Trump has repeatedly complained that other NATO members do not contribute enough money to the 69-year-old alliance, although Defense Secretary Jim Mattis reassured allies of America's "iron-clad" commitment earlier this month.

### 'Sabre-rattling'

While the exercises will take place at a respectful distance from Norway's 198-kilometre border with Russia in the Arctic, Moscow has expressed anger over the manoeuvres. Russia was already touchy over the fact that independently of Trident Juncture 18 - the United States and Britain have been increasing their troop presence in the Scandinavian country to acclimatize them to combat in

the chilly Arctic. And tensions between Moscow and Washington have flared in recent days after Trump announced he was abandoning a Cold War-era nuclear treaty, a move which Russia warned could cripple global security. When at full strength, 700 US Marines will be on



### Show of force rankles Russia

rotation on Norwegian soil. "The main NATO countries are increasing their military presence in the region, near Russia's borders," Russian foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said, slamming "the sabre-rattling".

"Such irresponsible actions are bound to lead to a destabilization of the political situation in the North, to heighten tensions," she said, vowing Moscow would "take the necessary retaliatory measures to ensure its security." Under President Vladimir Putin, the Russian army has already beefed up considerably in the Arctic. Military air bases have been built or refurbished, and new radar and anti-aircraft missile systems have been installed. In addition, the backbone of the Russian navy, the Northern Fleet, is due to receive five new warships, five support vessels, and 15 aircraft by the end of the year, according to



EINDHOVEN: Dutch soldiers depart with a KDC-10 tank and transport device from Eindhoven Airport in Eindhoven in The Netherlands to participate in the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) exercise Trident Juncture. — AFP

Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu. "Russia's military strength has pretty much returned to what it was during the Cold War," Francois Heibourg of France's Foundation for Strategic Research (FRS) said. "In a way, NATO is also in the process of returning to what it was." "It's a pretty mechanical engagement," a "return to a kind of choreography," he said. But Trident Juncture 18 is "in no way destabilizing," he added. The exercises, involving NATO's 29 members plus Sweden and Finland, are nonetheless imposing, with substantial means deployed. The 50,000 troops will be backed by 10,000 vehicles, 250 aircraft and 60 ships, including a US aircraft carrier. "The core exercise

area is 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) from the Russian border, and air operations could take place up to 500 kilometers away from the border," Norwegian Lieutenant General Rune Jakobsen said. "There should not be any reason for the Russians to get scared or see this as anything other than a defensive exercise." Two Russian and two Belarus military observers have been invited to watch the maneuvers. The British contingent hit the road for five days to travel to the exercises. "It demonstrates ... to our NATO allies that we're prepared to move across Europe when needed and to show that we have the capability to do so," Major Stuart Lavery told APFTV. — AFP

### News in brief

#### 52 die in Madagascar

ANTANANARIVO: Fifty-two people died in pre-trial detention in Madagascar last year as the country grapples with paralysis in its judicial system, rights group Amnesty International said yesterday. It warned that 55 percent of the Indian Ocean island nation's prison population—around 11,000 people—were awaiting trial as of October 2017 despite many only facing allegations of minor crimes. "The miserably poor conditions of detention in which pre-trial detainees are held clearly amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment," said Amnesty's report titled "Punished For Being Poor". — AFP

#### Convicted jihadist recruiter

BRUSSELS: A man found guilty in Belgium of recruiting jihadists was stripped yesterday of his Belgian citizenship, a rare move which the country's Flemish nationalists want applied more broadly in terrorism cases. Fouad Belkacem, a 36-year-old born in Belgium to Moroccan parents, was sentenced in 2015 to 12 years in prison for heading "a terrorist group," Sharia4Belgium, which sent jihadists to Syria. An appeals court in Antwerp withdrew his citizenship on grounds "he seriously failed to meet his obligations as a Belgian citizen and posed a permanent threat to public security," Belgian media reported. Belkacem's lawyer Liliane Verjauw denounced the decision by the court in the northern Dutch-speaking city, saying she would take further action to restore his nationality. — AFP

#### Boko Haram kills two

KANO: Boko Haram jihadists have killed two people in an attack on a village in northeast Nigeria near the town of Chibok, residents and a militia official said yesterday. The jihadists, believed to be loyal to Boko Haram factional leader Abubakar Shekau, late Monday raided Mifah, seven kilometers from Chibok, where militants abducted more than 200 schoolgirls in 2014. Boko Haram's nine-year conflict has killed an estimated 27,000 people and displaced two million, creating a humanitarian crisis and spilling into Nigeria's northern neighbors. "They killed two people and looted the village before setting it on fire," said David Bitrus, a civilian militia member fighting alongside the army, after the Mifah attack. "The village has been reduced to ashes. Six people were injured in the attack," he said. — AFP

#### Hotline opens for victims

WASHINGTON: US prosecutors opened a hotline Monday for victims of pedophile priests in Washington, a week after the local archdiocese published the names of 31 members of the clergy accused over the past seven decades. "Survivors of child sexual abuse by a clergy member that took place in a house of worship, school, or other location in the District of Columbia can call the Clergy Abuse Reporting Line" or send an email, the US Attorney's Office for the US capital said in a statement. "All reports will be reviewed and a team of experienced criminal investigators, prosecutors and victim advocates from the Superior Court Division of the US Attorney's Office will determine whether any criminal charges can be brought or victim services provided." — AFP

#### Falsifying earthquake data

TOKYO: A Japanese company supplying equipment to protect buildings from earthquakes has admitted falsifying data, authorities said yesterday, a week after a Tokyo-based firm revealed a similar fraud. Kawakin Holdings' oil damper unit altered data for products installed at 93 education facilities, government buildings and offices, the land ministry said. "I deeply apologize for causing great concerns and trouble," Kawakin president Shinkichi Suzuki told reporters. The ministry has instructed the company to immediately change affected parts and to investigate why the data manipulation happened. — AFP

## Trump rallies in Texas for ex-rival Cruz

HOUSTON: Donald Trump on Monday stumped for his former rival Ted Cruz, a pair that had long exchanged barbs but now share a Texas rally stage just two weeks before the congressional midterms. The political equation is simple: Trump needs Cruz to maintain Republican control of the US Senate, while Cruz is all too aware that a presidential seal of approval could help him in his face-off with rising Democrat star Beto O'Rourke.

During the 2016 campaign, Trump infamously insulted the looks of Cruz's wife Heidi, vaguely suggested Cruz's father had played a role in John F. Kennedy's assassination and tagged him with the nickname "Lyn' Ted." The 47-year-old junior senator from Texas fired off insults of his own, calling Trump a "pathological liar" and "utterly amoral." But sporting black cowboy boots, Cruz welcomed the president to the Lone Star State on the tarmac as he descended from Air Force One.

"He's not Lyn' Ted anymore," Trump told reporters before leaving for Texas, bestowing Cruz with two new nicknames: "Beautiful Ted" and "Texas Ted." "He defended your jobs. He defended your borders," Trump said later at the rally. "He defends your families and your faith." "We

are defending together with other great Republicans your freedom," he said, encouraging Texans to "get out there and vote." Thousands of Trump supporters arrived hours in advance of the rally - swarming streets around Houston's Toyota Center stadium in a festival-like atmosphere that was to include live music and food trucks.

Some had camped overnight, bundled up against the frigid temperatures, according to local media. Trump focused particularly on immigration, a tender point in the border state of Texas. The rally is timed with the beginning of early voting in the state. Local media reported unexpectedly heavy traffic at polling stations, where some also camped overnight in order to cast their ballots. With national attention on Houston, O'Rourke campaigned in various spots around the city to boost supporters and encourage them to vote early. "We are here for everyone," O'Rourke told a crowd in Pasadena, a Houston suburb, "Republicans, Democrats, independents alike."

### Far from a cake-walk

Opinion polls still have the ultra-conservative Cruz in the driver's seat, but he is far from the cake-walk win he and the party initially predicted. "Beto," as supporters of the 46-year-old O'Rourke call him, is making life difficult for Cruz. While positioning himself firmly on the left, O'Rourke has eschewed the anti-Trump rhetoric systematically rolled out by most of his party - a move that has won over voters. Some even say O'Rourke could be the party's savior in the next presidential election in 2020. Trump has called O'Rourke a "total light-



TEXAS: US President Donald Trump is brought on stage by Sen Ted Cruz (R-TX) during a rally at the Toyota Center in Houston, Texas. — AFP

weight" but the Democrat has opted not to trade insults with the president on Twitter. "I don't know that it makes any sense to respond," O'Rourke told ABC News. "The kind of bitterness and the name-calling and partisanship that has unfortunately defined so much of the national conversation, you can add more to it or you can stay focused on the future."

### A study in insults

Though Trump sang the praises of Cruz Monday night, two years ago the pair were hardly friends. Cruz was the last man standing against Trump in the primary -

and the campaign got ugly. Trump gave vague credence to a report from The National Enquirer tabloid that Cruz's Cuban-born father Rafael had been friends with Lee Harvey Oswald, the man who assassinated John F. Kennedy in 1963. Cruz in turn accused the Manhattan real estate mogul of being the source of another Enquirer article that alleged the senator had been unfaithful to his wife. After the primaries, Cruz took a long time to formally endorse Trump, even going so far as to accept a speaking slot at the Republican National Convention in July 2016 — and withhold his support. — AFP

## US warships sail through Taiwan Strait

WASHINGTON: Two US warships sailed through the Taiwan Strait on Monday, a military spokesman said, in a move bound to aggravate China amid heightened tensions with Beijing. The USS Curtis Wilbur and USS Antietam conducted a routine transit to demonstrate US commitment "to a free and open Indo-Pacific," Colonel Rob Manning told reporters. It was the second time in the space of three months that American warships had conducted so-called "freedom of navigation" exercises in the 180-kilometer wide stretch of water.

Multiple Chinese warships shadowed the two US vessels during the transit, following at a safe distance, defense

officials told CNN. China still sees Taiwan as part of its territory to be reunified, despite the two sides being ruled separately since the end of a civil war on the mainland in 1949. Beijing recently conducted a series of military manoeuvres, including a live fire exercise in the Taiwan Strait in April, declaring its willingness to confront Taiwan's "independence forces." Washington remains Taipei's most powerful unofficial ally and its main arms supplier despite switching diplomatic recognition to Beijing in 1979.

The Trump administration has sought closer ties to the island, announcing plans last month to sell it \$330 million spare parts for several aircraft including the F-16 fighter and the C-130 cargo plane. Taiwan's premier William Lai said during a parliamentary session Tuesday that Taiwan respected the US right of passage in international waters and recognized "the various efforts of the US in maintaining peace in the Asia-Pacific Region". Taiwan's defense ministry had said in an earlier statement that the military was "closely monitoring the US warships during their passage". — AFP



AT SEA: Photo shows the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Curtis Wilbur (DDG 54) as it participates in a close quarters maneuvering exercise in the Philippine Sea. — AFP

## Russians out to stir anger ahead of US midterms

WASHINGTON: A concerted Russian hacking and online disinformation campaign helped tip the 2016 US presidential election toward Donald Trump. Two weeks ahead of midterm congressional elections, Moscow's operatives are at it again. The shutdown of thousands of Russian-controlled accounts by Twitter and Facebook-plus the indictments of 14 people from Russia's notorious troll farm the Internet Research Agency—have dulled but by no means halted their efforts to influence US politics. #MAGA-Trump's rallying call to "Make America Great Again"—remains the top hashtag among 18,000 tweets pumped out daily by hundreds of Russia-backed and allied Twitter accounts monitored by Hamilton 68, a tracking operation of the Alliance for Securing Democracy in Washington.

"After the election in 2016, there was a lot of talk about whether the Russians will be back in 2018," said Suzanne Spaulding, senior advisor on the Homeland Security Program of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "We now know: they never left." On Friday the US Justice Department announced criminal conspiracy charges against the IRA clerk who manages the tens of millions of dollars it spends on information operations in the United States and Europe.

The charges documented typical social media postings on IRA accounts that purported to be American mainly aimed at fanning the flames of political anger. "Just a friendly reminder to get involved in the 2018 Midterms," said a tweet posted earlier this year by @johncooper16, which prosecutors say was an identity created by the IRA. "They hate you. They hate your morals.... They hate the Police. They hate the Military. They hate YOUR President." Such divisive messages could influence the November 6 vote. While the presidency is not up for grabs, control of Congress is, making voter turnout in specific individual races important. — AFP



International

# India court eases firecracker ban even as pollution soars

## Activists smolder over 'green' Diwali firecrackers

**NEW DELHI:** India's Supreme Court yesterday allowed the use of "green" firecrackers for Diwali next month to try to curb pollution, but it was unclear how the rules will be enforced or whether there was such a thing as an environmentally safe firework. The court banned the sale of firecrackers outright during the Hindu festival of lights last year but revelers bought them from neighboring states and air pollution in New Delhi hit 18 times the healthy limit.

Each year, smoke from firecrackers covers Delhi and its satellite cities in a haze that can linger for days as wind speeds drop in the cooler weather, adding to pollution caused by the burning of crop residue, vehicle exhausts and industrial gases. Activists in India, home to the world's 14 most polluted cities, had petitioned the court for another ban on fireworks ahead of Diwali, when millions of firecrackers are lit.

Environmentalist Vimlendu Jha said there was no such thing as an environmentally safe firework and blasted the court decision as others raised concerns about how the order can be enforced. "Your one decision to allow sale and use of firecrackers in current times, while half of our country turns into a gas chamber, will kill toddlers, children and elderly," Jha said in a Tweet. But authorities have been reluctant to enforce an outright ban to avoid offending millions of Hindus across the country, for whom Diwali is one of the biggest festivals. A two-judge bench said firecrackers would be permitted during Diwali, Christmas and New Year, with conditions.

Only "safe and green firecrackers" would be allowed, for a maximum two hours on Diwali, and only in designated areas such as parks. Online sales were banned. "This decision should have come earlier because manufacturers are ready with all kinds of firecrackers and it will be very

hard to stop them," said Greenpeace campaigner Sunil Dahiya. New Delhi accounts for nearly half of India's demand for firecrackers although Diwali is celebrated across the country. "These celebrations should not be spoiled. Such petitions for a ban are deliberately targeted against Hindu festivals," said Tajinder Pal Singh



**Pollution in New Delhi hit 18 times the healthy limit**

Bagga, a spokesman for the Delhi unit of ruling Bharatiya Janata Party.

But Judge Arjan Kumar Sikri said a balance had to be drawn between religious practices and safeguarding public health. "If a particular religious practice is threatening the health and lives of people, such practice is not entitled to protection," Sikri said. Yesterday, Delhi's air quality index, which measures the concentration of poisonous particulate matter, stood at over 300 in some parts of the sprawling city, far above the safe limit of 100. Last week, hundreds of protesters from conservative Hindu groups defied a Supreme Court decision allowing women of menstruating age to enter a Hindu temple in southern state of Kerala, saying it would hurt a centuries-old tradition. — Agencies



**NEW DELHI:** Indian Hindu activists protest against a court-ordered ban on the sale of fireworks ahead of the Diwali festival in New Delhi. India's top court yesterday eased a ban on fireworks for a major Hindu festival despite air pollution in New Delhi and other cities again reaching danger levels. — AFP

## Plastic to ride: Indonesians swap bottles for tickets

**SURABAYA:** Indonesia's second-largest city has come up with a novel way to encourage its residents to recycle waste: giving free bus rides in exchange for used plastic bottles. Under the scheme launched by Surabaya in April, commuters can ride red city buses by dropping off plastic bottles at terminals or directly 'paying' a fare with bottles. A two-hour bus ticket costs 10 plastic cups or up to five plastic bottles, depending on their size, which the city hopes will help it meet an ambitious target of becoming free of plastic waste by 2020.

Surabaya is the first city in Indonesia to implement this scheme. "Garbage, like plastic bottles, piles up in my neighborhood, so I brought it here so the environment is not only cleaner but also to help ease the workload of garbage collectors," said Surabaya resident Linda Rahmawati. City data shows that 15 percent, or nearly 400 tons, of Surabaya's daily waste is plastic. A bus can collect up to 250 kg (550 lb) of plastic bottles a day, or roughly 7.5 tons in a month, the data shows.

After collection, labels and bottle caps are removed from the waste and it is auctioned off to recycling companies. Money earned from the auction goes towards running the bus operations and to fund green spaces in the city, located on the eastern tip of Java, Indonesia's main island. The world's fourth-most populous country is home to the largest expanse of tropical rainforest in Asia, but also struggles with grid-locked traffic in its congested cities. "Indonesia is one of the biggest contributors in the world for plastic waste, and through this initiative, we hope to raise public awareness on the environment, especially issues that relate to plastic trash," said Irvan Wahyu Drajad, the head of Surabaya's transportation department. — Reuters

## Foreign parents fight in vain for custody in Japan

**TOKYO:** Emmanuel, Stephane, Henrik and James come from very different backgrounds, but they share the same painful experience of battling Japan's legal system - in vain - for access to their children after divorce. Once married to Japanese women, they say they were prevented from contact with their children when their relationships disintegrated, sometimes even after court rulings in their favor.

Tough laws and patriarchal cultural norms that overwhelmingly see mothers granted sole custody after a divorce - 80 percent of the time, according to official figures - mean that fathers rarely see their children again. Frenchman Emmanuel de Fournas has spent years battling for access to his daughter after his Japanese ex-wife moved back to Japan. Despite winning a court order in France and filing a case under the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction in September 2014, he is still fighting for the right to see his daughter.

"I thought I could benefit from the clear rules of the Hague Convention, but... they aren't respected in Japan," he said. "I've lost everything, my savings, my job," he said tearfully. AFP was not able to contact the mother. His experience is not unusual. Henrik Teton from Canada and James Cook from the United States have similar stories to tell. "What kind of justice system is it if decisions are not implemented? There is room to do more and better," says Richard Yung, a French senator who came to Japan to plead the cases of several French parents.

### Patchy enforcement

Although Japan has signed the Hague Convention designed to prevent a parent from moving a child to another country and blocking access for the former partner, Tokyo demonstrates "a pattern of noncompliance" with the pact, according to the US State Department. For

foreign parents, most often fathers, "this poses major problems, because they have a different mentality and they can't comprehend losing custody or the right to visit their child," said Nahoko Amemiya, a lawyer for the Tokyo Public Law office. Even when foreign parents win their case in a Japanese court, enforcement is patchy.

The State Department's 2018 report described "limitations" in Japanese law including requirements that "direct enforcement take place in the home and presence of the taking parent, that the child willingly leave the taking parent, and that the child face no risk of psychological harm." With opinion divided on what causes the most trauma to children, the longer a child is separated from one parent, the more reluctant authorities are to intervene, citing a "principle of continuity." "It's not that Japanese courts favor the Japanese parent, it's that they favour the 'kidnapper'," who is living with the child, said John Gomez, founder of the group Kizuna, which advocates for parents separated from their children.

Japan's government defends its record, saying most of the 81 cases filed under the Hague Convention since 2014 have been settled. "The majority of the cases in which we intervened have been resolved, but we are aware of six or seven where the return decision could not be implemented," said Shuji Zushi, a foreign ministry official.

"In these cases, there is a very strong conflict between the two sides and that leads to media attention or political action," he said. Stephane Lambert spent years fighting to see his son after his wife and child moved away from their home in Japan - a case not covered by the Hague convention. "The Japanese police don't do anything in this kind of case," he said. "On the basis of a court ruling, I saw my son for a total of 14 hours for the whole of the following year, and not at all after that, because my wife refused the visits," he said. "I can't think about my son anymore. Looking at a photo of him tears me apart. I've learned to forget him."

There are some signs of change: a panel of experts met in June to discuss new ways to enforce court orders, as well as the issue of joint custody and changes to the law. But regardless of changes to the law, the pain of parental separation is always traumatic - as demonstrated by the case of Joichiro Yamada, who was 10 when his Japanese father and American mother split up. — AFP

## Indian temple closes without admitting women

**NEW DELHI:** The latest window for worship at a flashpoint Indian shrine has closed without a single female devotee of menstruating age being admitted, despite a court order overturning a ban on their presence in the temple. Mobs of Hindu hardliners prevented women aged 10 to 50 from getting in to the Sabarimala temple complex when it opened last Wednesday for the first time since the Supreme Court reversed a ban on women of menstruating age from worshipping at the temple.

The shrine in southern Kerala state is only open on a handful of auspicious days every year, and a number of Hindu women between these ages had flocked there in the wake of the court order. But the ruling had enraged traditionalists, including supporters of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Protesters, including women and children, massed at the base of the shrine when it opened last week, threatening women trying to reach it. Some smashed car windows and clashed with police. Armed police escorted some devotees but none managed to make it to the hilltop temple over the five-day worship period before it closed late Monday. It will not reopen until November. Sabarimala has become a flashpoint in a battle over gender equality, pitting religious traditionalists against progressive voices pushing for a more liberal Hinduism. Women are permitted to enter most Hindu temples but are still barred by some. Those of menstruating age - between 10 and 50 years - were denied entry to Sabarimala for decades, reflecting an old but still prevalent view in some parts that connects periods with impurity. — AFP

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## Trump withdrawal from nuke pact plays into Putin's hands

By David A Andelman

It may be the highest-stakes move for Donald Trump in his entire presidency - unilaterally removing the United States from yet another international treaty, this time with immediate and potentially existential consequences. Trump's Oct 20 announcement that Washington would withdraw from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) with Russia, a landmark 1987 agreement signed by Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev to remove nuclear weapons from Europe, eliminates whatever curbs may be left on the development and deployment of a whole new generation of lethal and more readily deployable nuclear arms.

Gone will be any restraints on Russian President Vladimir Putin from modernizing and updating his nuclear arsenal, thereby reviving the nuclear arms race at a time when a new round of nuclear forces in North Korea and Iran threaten the world and new missile technologies are proliferating. Trump's ill-conceived and poorly thought-out action plays directly into Putin's hands. As much as the Russian leader may already be flouting the principles and provisions of that treaty, he can now do so with impunity and none of the consequences of being labeled the transgressor.

Fortunately, since this was a treaty ratified by a two-thirds vote of the Senate on May 27, 1988, it cannot be formally ended without a similar two-thirds vote, which seems most improbable in today's divided political environment. Still, Trump can, in theory, begin violating the provisions of the treaty without any Senate action, which - if Russia keeps its threats to match tit-for-tat - will have the equivalent impact of tearing up the document. And the costs of a new nuclear arms race could be astronomical. The nonpartisan Arms Control Association has estimated that updates to the US nuclear arsenal would cost US taxpayers upwards of \$1.2 trillion over the next 30 years.

Trump's withdrawal from the INF treaty can only send chills up the spines of the Baltic nations of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, as well as Ukraine and Georgia, all former Soviet republics which Putin would love to reel back into some newly constituted Russian empire. Europeans who will suddenly find themselves within range of the weapons previously banned by the treaty can only be equally concerned. The weapons in question include all shorter-range missiles with ranges of 500 to 1,000 km and intermediate-range missiles capabilities of 1,000 to 5,500 km, both nuclear- and conventional-armed. Some 2,692 were eliminated by 1991.

The origins of the INF treaty can be traced to the two-day Reagan-Gorbachev summit held in Reykjavik, Iceland in October 1986. As it happens, I am the translator of a remarkable book by French journalist-historian Guillaume Sorina on that meeting: "An Impossible Dream: Reagan, Gorbachev and a World Without the Bomb." To be published next year, it includes an introduction by Gorbachev and material obtained from the opening of a number of Kremlin archives as well as the assistance of several of the surviving aides from both delegations, including the former Soviet leader himself.

At the time, Gorbachev surprised and stunned the Americans when he proposed a total elimination of all nuclear arms by both super-powers. It was a daring and unprecedented Hail Mary move. But it would have required Reagan to give up his beloved Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), the ill-fated and ill-conceived space weapons defense system that never really worked. Reagan declined, but agreed to the more limited INF pact. (Gorbachev, now 87, has condemned the US withdrawal, with Russia's Interfax news agency quoting him as saying, "Do they not understand in Washington what this could lead to?")

Inspections under this treaty were guaranteed for 10 years and ended officially in 2001. Both sides largely respected its provisions in the years after, but in July 2014, the Obama administration accused Russia of testing a prohibited ground-launched cruise missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead with a range of some 1,240 miles.

When I visited the Baltic republics two years later, leading defense officials told me that while they had been aware of Russia's capacities they relied on its adherence to the INF's treaty provisions to guarantee their security. Still, last year, the Pentagon publicly accused Russia for the first time of testing the Novator 9M729 - referred to by NATO as an SSC-8 missile. This led last December to a series of sanctions against Russian companies that had been involved in the development and production of the weapon.

The Russians insisted the missile's range and fixed-base deployment in Kaliningrad did not breach the treaty. Still, with the Russian enclave nestled between NATO members Lithuania and Poland, the development of the SSC-8 did raise some serious issues. None of these are solved by Trump's threatened unilateral withdrawal from the INF treaty. What the world needs now is more, not less, arms control. China, not a signatory of the INF treaty, has a range of missiles that would be banned under its provisions: US officials cited China's arms build-up in the Pacific as a central reason for scuttling the Russia pact and pressing ahead with expanding the American arsenal.

NOTE: David A Andelman, a former foreign correspondent for the New York Times and CBS News, is visiting scholar at the Center on National Security at Fordham Law School and author of "A Shattered Peace: Versailles 1919 and the Price We Pay Today". — Reuters



## Behind Italy's welfare revolution

Outside the job center in a poor quarter of Naples in southern Italy, Emanuele Varriale uses a ballpoint pen to fill in a form certifying he is looking for work. But he has no hope that the center will find him a job. Inside the dusty office, scores of people are completing the same form, helped by five middle-aged employees working with piles of folders and paper clips more than computers. "I have only come for the certificate", says 26-year-old Varriale, who lost his job in a fruit shop. "My father has been enrolled for 30 years and they've never offered him anything."

The certificate entitles Varriale to a temporary unemployment cheque of a few hundred euros per month, linked to his previous salary. But it could soon give him access to a far more generous income of up to €780 (\$894) under a new welfare policy designed to lift 5 million Italians out of poverty. The "citizens' wage," championed by the governing 5-Star Movement, will cost €10 billion next year, the most expensive item in a big-spending budget which itself has raised concerns in the European Union that Italy could be sowing the seeds of a financial crisis.

Italy's 550 state-run job centers will be in charge of verifying that recipients of the new benefit meet an important eligibility criteria: that they are actively looking for a job. But Italians widely regard the centers as being blighted by obsolete technology and insufficient and under-qualified staff, creating fears they will be unable to verify that recipients are genuinely looking for work and could encourage benefit cheats. Another concern is that they will fail in their most basic task of advertising all job opportunities, raising the risk that even industrious people will be funnelled into welfare simply because they were not made aware of suitable vacancies.

The new populist government plans to spend €1 billion to modernise the centers - 10 percent of the total cost of the new policy in its first year in 2019. Critics say it is not enough and that the wage will reward people for doing nothing. "Lots of people will just sit on their couches because the centers aren't equipped to offer jobs or to check that people are searching for them," said Renato

Brunetta, an opposition politician, former minister and professor of labor economics.

The 5-Star Movement used to bill the citizens' wage as a basic-income policy - an unconditional form of welfare - but imposed conditions to counter the charge that it would pay people to be idle. Unlike a basic-income scheme that was tried and abandoned in Finland, Italy will impose the job-seeker requirement for everyone except retirees and those unable to work. It will be means tested and will now more closely resemble income-support schemes offered across the EU, though it will rank among the more generous.

Direct comparisons are complicated, but the €780 maximum amount available to a single person with no other income is about double the £318 (\$412) available to someone aged 25 or over under Britain's universal credit scheme. Still, the citizens' wage has drawn skepticism from labor experts who say the job centres are a weak link that is unlikely to be fixed in the five months before it is rolled out.

### 'Humiliating experience'

Labour Minister Luigi Di Maio, head of the 5-Star party, acknowledges the job centres are a "humiliating experience" for the unemployed, but is staking his career on transforming them into a high-tech network that can help people find jobs or guarantee them training courses to improve their skills. If he fails, it could backfire on 5-Star, embarrass the new government and erode a central pillar of the budget. Some 700 km north of Naples, a manager at a successful glass-making firm near Venice says that when he needs new staff the last place he turns to is the local job center.

"The few times we tried, it was a dreadful experience," says Alessandro Zanchetta, head of human resources at Somec, whose 400 workers make glass sheeting for ships and skyscrapers. The candidates sent by the centres always lacked the skills Somec needed, Zanchetta said, adding that he now used private agencies or headhunters. In Italy, only 3 percent of unemployed people find work through public job centers, compared to 20 percent in France and Germany, according to the EU's statistics office, Eurostat. Italy's centers

employ 8,000 people, compared with 100,000 in Germany and 45,000 in France.

Members of the workforce who receive the citizens' wage, which is due to launch by March, must do eight hours of community service per week and accept one of the first three job offers for which they are qualified. "We are working on a single software for all the job centers that is able to cross-check databases," 5-Star leader Di Maio told Reuters. "In this way we will know who is receiving the income, how he is being trained, how he is behaving and if he is entitled to receive it again." He has also launched a public competition to give the centres a new design and logo.

### Fears of a 'tsunami'

Some labor experts, and some of the center's employees, are skeptical the system can be overhauled by March, saying that the 1 billion euros budgeted to upgrade them will not be enough. "It's not clear how we can bring about this revolution in such a short time," says Sonia Palmeri, head of employment policy in the Campania region around Naples. "We need to hire young and trained people, otherwise we will be overwhelmed (by applicants) like a tsunami."

Michele Tiraboschi, professor of labour law at Modena University, holds out even less hope. "It's going to be a total failure," he said. "In Italy the job centres never worked, not even after World War Two when the State had the monopoly of the labor market." The average age of job-center employees is 50, and only 26 percent have a university degree, according to a survey by Italy's national agency for labour market policies. Fifty percent said their computer systems were inadequate. In Italy's poor south, 17 percent of job center staff held a degree.

In the south, where most people do not work and many others toil in the shadows of the black economy, the wage is so eagerly awaited that some residents have already tried to claim it. "I came for the citizens' wage but they told me to come back in 2019," Cuono Orto, a 54-year-old unemployed builder, said despondently as he left the job center in Naples. — Reuters

## Out of Appalachia, a tough-as-nails Democrat emerges

Part GI Joe, part steadfast advocate for West Virginia's working poor, Richard Ojeda is pursuing the near-impossible: Flipping one of America's most conservative congressional districts and reclaiming corners of Trump country for Democrats. Impoverished Appalachia is a culturally conservative bastion on edge, ground zero in an opioid abuse crisis that has devastated families, and where wages are stagnant, health care costs are rising and the coal industry is gasping for air.

Two weeks before midterm elections that will determine which party controls Congress, tough-talking Ojeda is urging voters in West Virginia's third district to swallow a dose of the economic populism he preaches. "I have no problems making some noise when they're not doing right by the working-class citizens of this state," Ojeda told AFP in a recent interview in Huntington, where his insurgent campaign is based. "We've been absolutely duped and abused for far too long."

Something about the campaign, which he likens to a "combat deployment", is resonating: polls show him narrowly trailing his Republican opponent for the open US House seat, Carol Miller. Ojeda's no-fuss campaign attire is a beige pullover, khakis and combat boots. At a political roundtable at Marshall University, he clashes with a Republican delegate over abortion legislation. After 24 years in the military with combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, the muscular 47-year-old father pulls no punches when it comes to lambasting Republicans including Trump, for whom he voted in 2016.

Trump, campaigning for Republican foot soldiers during a rally in Wheeling, West Virginia, branded Ojeda "stone cold crazy". Ojeda's response? Bring it on. But he reserves his harshest criticism for those in his own party, which had dominated West Virginia politics for decades until Republicans snatched the legislature in 2014. Two

years later, Trump won Ojeda's district by nearly 50 percentage points, among the largest margins in the country. "The reason why the Democratic Party lost power was because the Democrats sucked," Ojeda said. "That's the truth. We have people that were in office for 30, 40 years," he said, pointing to establishment politicians "sticking their hand in the cookie jar".

### 'Airborne'

The parties' demographic and cultural realignment shifted the state from deep blue to red in just a few years. Now, as Trump's GOP fights to hold their majority in Congress, West Virginia Democrats aim to swing the pendulum back. To do so they'll need someone who fits in. Enter Ojeda. He is a retired US Army paratrooper who often ends a speech or encounter with an exclamation: "Airborne." Tattooed on his back are the names of fellow soldiers killed in action. Some of his campaign staffers' relatives have died of overdose.

He supports gun rights and the coal industry, walks a delicate line on reproductive rights, and fumes about the prospect of health insurance companies discriminating against people with preexisting conditions. When West Virginia teachers went on strike in February demanding better insurance and higher pay, Ojeda was an early backer. "I've got Republican people from all over that have contacted and said 'Look, we're going to support you,' because I say what needs to be said," Ojeda recalled. "A lot of them are just, they're tired of the garbage."

Ojeda returned home from military tours to a state ravaged by drug abuse. In particular he blames the pharmaceutical companies that he says "sprinkle their Oxycontin and Hydrocodone on our people like Tic Tacs". But he also attacks the "fake leaders" who receive massive contributions from the industry. "We got kids that go to bed hungry at night, we got elderly people cutting their meds in half, we got an opium epidemic ripping apart our community and that has killed thousands of our people, and we don't have nobody that's got the guts to stand up against big pharma," he said. Ojeda decided to act, and ran for state senate in 2016. Weeks before the election he was nearly murdered when a man struck him in the head with a metal object. Ojeda recovered, and won.



Richard Ojeda addresses an audience during a political roundtable at Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia on Oct 18, 2018. — AFP

### 'Arrogant'

Shortly before marching in a homecoming parade, he fielded calls from fans, including one who told Ojeda he would volunteer for his campaign if he ran for president. Ojeda insists that for now, his focus is on helping West Virginians. "At the end of the day, if nobody steps up, I'm not scared at all," he said about a run for higher office. "I have no problems doing that." Hunter King, an 18-year-old son of a coal miner, says he will likely cast his first-ever ballot in November, for Ojeda. "He's the person who has made me feel most like I have a voice," King said.

Not everyone is appreciative. Trump-voting bar owner Bob Ellison, of the town of Rainelle, called Ojeda an "arrogant" pretender. Ellison lost a daughter to opioid abuse and his son is hooked on methamphetamines. But Ellison waves away suggestions that Ojeda could help end the crisis. "I believe Republicans are going to take care of it," he said. — AFP

## Business

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2018

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RIYADH: (Left to right) Lubna Olayan, CEO and Deputy Chairperson Olayan Financing, Yesir Al-Rumayyan, Saudi managing director of Public Investment Fund, Kirill Dmitriev, CEO of Russian Direct Investment Fund and Khaldoon Khalifa Al-Mubarak, Managing Director and CEO of Mubadala Development Company, speaking at the opening ceremony of the Future Investment Initiative FII conference in the Saudi capital Riyadh. — AFP

# EU rejects Italy's 2019 draft budget

## Budget rejection 'changes nothing': Italy's Salvini

**STRASBOURG:** The European Commission rejected yesterday Italy's draft 2019 budget because the plan breaks EU rules in an "unprecedented" way and asked Rome to submit a new one within three weeks or it would face disciplinary action.

The decision by the European Union executive arm is the first time it exercises the power, obtained during the sovereign debt crisis in 2013, to send back a budget of a eurozone country that violates the rules. "Today, for the first time, the Commission is obliged to request a euro area country to revise its draft budget plan," Commission Vice President for the Euro Valdis Dombrovskis told a news conference.

"But we see no alternative than to request the Italian government to do so. We have adopted an opinion giving Italy a maximum of three weeks to provide a revised draft budgetary plan for 2019," Dombrovskis said.

The Commission said that the revised budget it expected to receive from Italy should be in line with the recommendation of EU finance ministers from July 13.

In July, EU ministers asked Rome to cut its structural deficit, which excludes one-offs and business cycle swings, by 0.6 percent of GDP. The plan rejected by the Commission increases that deficit by 0.8 percent of GDP.

Italy sent a letter to the Commission on Monday, acknowledging that its draft budget was in violation of EU rules, but insisting it would still go ahead with it. "The Italian

Government is openly and consciously going against the commitments it made," Dombrovskis said. Dombrovskis said that Italy had the second highest debt to GDP ratio in the EU at 131.2 percent in 2017 and the highest debt servicing costs in Europe.

"Italy's interest expenditure stood in 2017 at around 65.5 billion euros or 3.8 percent of GDP, which was broadly the same amount of public resources devoted to education," the Commission said. Italy believes that its additional spending measure would boost economic growth, helping reduce the debt to GDP ratio. But the Commission said the growth assumptions were overly optimistic, which also made Italy's debt reduction questionable. "Experience has shown time and again that higher fiscal deficits and debt do not bring lasting growth. And excessive debt makes your economy more vulnerable to future crisis," Dombrovskis said.

"Therefore, if looser fiscal policy affects confidence, it can actually have the opposite effect to growth," he said.

Dombrovskis noted, that unless Rome changes its draft budget in the next 3 weeks, the Commission was ready to open a disciplinary process against the country, called the excessive deficit procedure, based on the lack of progress in cutting debt — an obligation under EU law. "In May, the European Commission did not propose opening an Excessive Deficit Procedure related to debt,

mostly because of Italy's broad compliance with its commitments," Dombrovskis said of a procedure that could entail fines. "The current plans are a material change, which may require a reassessment of that conclusion. The ball is now in the court of the Italian government," he said. Meanwhile, far-right Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini yesterday insisted Italy would stick to its budget despite the European Commission rejecting it for increasing the deficit, Italian media reported. "This doesn't change anything, let the speculators be reassured, we're not going back," League head Salvini said in Bucharest.

"They're not attacking a government but a people. These are things that will anger Italians even more and then people complain that the popularity of the European Union is at its lowest," he told journalists. The European Union's executive arm earlier Tuesday rejected Italy's proposed 2019 budget and asked for a new plan.

Italy's government said it would stick to a deficit of 2.4 percent of annual economic output next year, which would be triple the amount forecast by the previous government and approach the EU limit of 3.0 percent. The proposed budget would also aggravate Italy's already huge debt mountain, at some 130 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), way above the EU's 60-percent ceiling and second only to Greece's in Europe. Italy now has three weeks to revise its budget, under EU rules. — Agencies

## Pakistan PM seeks loans to re-service debts, investments

**RIYADH:** Pakistan is seeking loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and friendly countries to reservice debt and shore up its economy, Prime Minister Imran Khan said yesterday.

"What we are hoping is that we do a bit of both, get a loan from IMF and other loans from friendly governments," Khan told an audience at an investment conference in Saudi Arabia's capital, Riyadh.

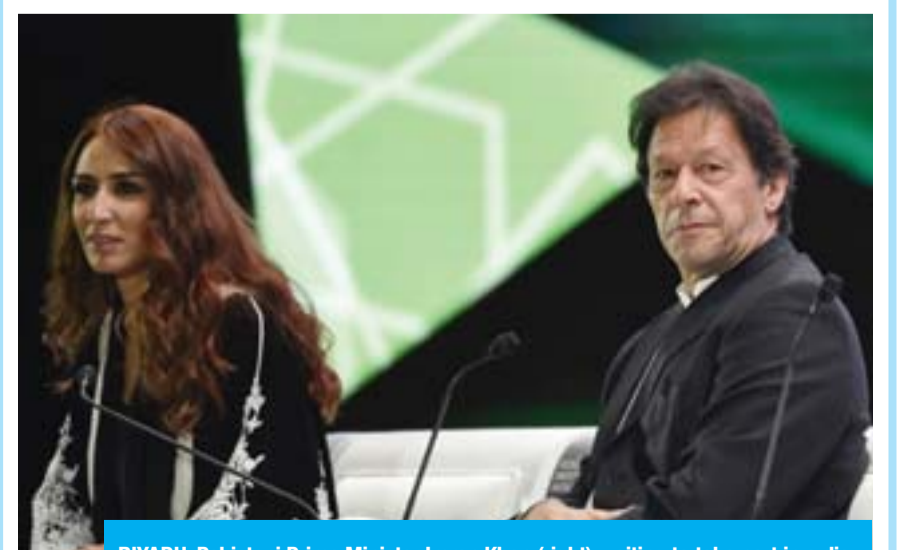
Islamabad has already asked the IMF to open negotiations for the country's second potential bailout in five years. Khan, who took office in July, has also been seeking alternatives to the tough conditions the IMF is likely to impose for loans.

Khan is in Saudi Arabia for the second time this month seeking to shore up financial aid as the country reels

from a looming balance of payments crisis. "One thing Pakistan needs more than any other country right now is peace and security," Khan said yesterday. Imran said he had tried to extend hand of peace to India, had not received a response, but hoped to resume efforts to improve ties with India after national elections there.

In September, India called off the meeting between the nuclear-armed neighbors' foreign ministers, planned for the sidelines of the UN General Assembly the same month.

Imran said the country also needs two oil refineries to meet demand, and it was talking to Saudi investors about the projects. Khan said Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman was organizing a delegation of Saudi businessmen to invest in Pakistan. — AFP



RIYADH: Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan (right) waiting to take part in a discussion with a presenter during the opening ceremony of the Future Investment Initiative FII conference taking place in Riyadh from 23-25 on October. — AFP

## Swiss bank UBS says 'business as usual' in China

**BEIJING:** Swiss banking giant UBS said yesterday it was "business as usual" in China following reports that the company restricted travel there as an employee had to delay her return home after being asked to meet with authorities. The wealth manager, who focuses on China, delayed her return from Beijing to Singapore last week after she was asked to meet with local officials on an unknown matter, Bloomberg

News reported, citing a personal familiar with the issue.

News reports said the incident prompted UBS to ask some bankers not to travel to China, but Bloomberg said yesterday that the bank had lifted its restrictions.

"UBS would like to confirm that we allow all our staff to travel freely in and out of the country and it is business as usual for us in China," the Swiss bank said in a statement. "UBS has had a strong franchise in China for 30 years and remains fully committed to further developing our business on the mainland," it said. The statement mentioned neither the travel restrictions nor the situation of the Singaporean banker, who according to Bloomberg is due to meet with officials this week.

US banks Citigroup and JPMorgan Chase

have asked wealth managers to reconsider travel to China following the incident, according to Bloomberg.

Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told a press briefing on Monday that she was unaware of the situation and referred questions to UBS.

It is not uncommon for Chinese authorities to prevent foreigners from leaving the country due to investigations or legal matters. The incident also comes as Chinese authorities have intensified a campaign against corruption within the Communist Party and seek to curb financial risks.

More than a million officials have been punished under the sweeping anti-graft drive launched by President Xi Jinping but critics say it has also served as a way to root out his political enemies. — AFP

# Europlace seeks to build Arab partnerships ahead of Brexit

## Paris to emerge as financial center, says Bresson

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: As EU member states prepare for Brexit, the CEO and Managing Director of Europlace of the Paris-based International Financial Center, is visiting Kuwait. Europlace is an organization in charge of developing the International Financial Center. Arnaud de Bresson is in Kuwait to promote Europlace activities and build more partnerships with Arab investors. The objective is to prepare EU investors for the possible impact of Brexit.

"Brexit is real and as EU member states reconcile to the fact, we are more and more concerned about what is next. The British have decided to leave the EU bloc. We want to say that we do not really want Brexit to happen. However, we are not convinced about the reasoning of the decision because we are all living in one small economic bloc," he said.

"We believe that it would have been better if the UK stayed in the bloc," he said. "Now that they have decided to leave, we have to do something to cope with the possible impact of Brexit. So, the reason why we are here is to offer Paris as the center of banking and asset management services," he said.

According to Bresson, with Brexit, many businesses will have to relocate, while many

people are going to lose their passports as well. However, to move forward, he said Paris is the best location after the United Kingdom for EU clients, especially in the presence of several big international companies, talents as well as their prowess in the banking industry and asset management. "We have world-class education, top quality infrastructure and the advantage of our geographical location of being in the center of the EU. Thanks to Emmanuel Macron for the reforms which he initiated quickly after his election to improve labor rules, allow more flexibility and reduce taxes and corporate taxes in all areas," he said.

But Brexit is just one part of Europlace's activities, as it has a major role to play in the 'Paris 2030 Plan', which is a long-term strategy to continue to improve Paris' attractiveness. "We want reforms to continue being implemented. Now we have in the parliament a new plan to orientate savings to develop the equity market. We also have pension reform, the possibility to implement new pension programs and to accelerate our industrial priorities," he added.

Europlace's strategy is to continue prioritizing high-tech companies including fintech, which is now a priority for the center to accelerate the positioning of Paris as a sustainable financial hub and to develop an international partnership with the GCC



Arnaud Bresson, CEO, Paris Europlace, speaks during the interview. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

and MENA region. "Fintech development has been in existence since 10 years - the good thing is that we have now a new generation of people ready to start. Our main goal is to consolidate our position in the EU," he explained.

Bresson admitted that Europlace has been coming back to Kuwait on a regular basis since three years. "This time, we are here because we are developing a strong partnership between France and Kuwait in

the economic field. We know that we have to accelerate relationship in businesses," he said. He also met Kuwait Investment Authority officials and representatives of the banking sector in Kuwait, headed by the National Bank of Kuwait.

"NBK is extending its activities in Paris in the context of Brexit. NBK confirmed to us that in the context of Brexit, it will come and consolidate its forces to enter Europlace as it understands we are going to be the gateway to the Europe market, including relocating some of its people from London to Paris. We will be the gateway as well for the MENA region," he said. "We are in the process to suggest/propose signing an agreement with the Kuwait market similar to what we have signed with some GCC markets like Dubai and Abu Dhabi. We are convinced that there are more business opportunities here if we have partnerships to build between Paris, in the context of Brexit," he said.

### Challenges of Brexit

Bresson admitted no one knows what will happen in the negotiations between EU and UK on how to deal with Brexit. He said there are camps that suggest UK should come back, but realistically speaking, whatever happens, according to Bresson, big companies, investment banks, asset management

companies, insurance companies and fintech companies are relocating their businesses because they cannot wait that long.

"We see the announcement for example of HSBC, Bank of America, JP Morgan, British Bank, Blackrock or even your local bank (the National Bank of Kuwait) - they are eyeing Paris to be their next stop because of the proximity to the EU market. Even if we see progressive development around us, we are poised to be the next trading hub in time for Brexit," he reiterated.

"I think the remaining members of EU are now thinking how difficult it will be for them to leave EU, because of the importance of commercial and financial relationships with the rest of EU members. Today, UK is proof that leaving the EU is really difficult. They know the competition is not between EU countries, but the rest of the world. This is the very reason why we have consolidated - the reason is that if we are smaller, we will be alone. We are bigger when we are together," he said.

He lauded strong ties with Arab countries as they are well-known and heavy investors in the EU market. "Saudi Arabia, UAE and Kuwait are investing all over the world. We heard today from KIA that they continue to invest more and more abroad, and for this reason, we are very interested in talking to them," he concluded.

## ECB to focus on bond-buying exit as threats mount

FRANKFURT AM MAIN: European Central Bank President Mario Draghi will press ahead with his exit from massive stimulus tomorrow, analysts expect, playing down multiplying threats to economic good times in the eurozone. The list of potential pitfalls runs from a growing intra-EU row over the Italian budget to increasing risk of a no-deal Brexit, trade tensions with the United States, turmoil in emerging markets, rising oil prices and jumpy economic indicators.

A major upset could threaten growth in the eurozone-and the ECB's years-long quest for its goal of inflation steady at just below 2.0 percent. The official account of September's governing council meeting showed some members felt "a case could also be made for characterising the risks to activity as now being tilted to the downside".

While Draghi ultimately stuck to his judgement that positive and negative risks were "broadly balanced", the record demonstrated discord among the 19 national central bank chiefs and six board members who set policy. For ING Diba bank economist Carsten Brzeski, "even though recent developments have been anything but encouraging, the downside risks are simply too minor and too premature for the ECB to alter its chosen path".

### Inching out of stimulus

Draghi acknowledged last month that some threats "have become more prominent recently". But he told European Parliament lawmakers he was confident of hitting ECB forecasts showing 1.7 percent average price growth between 2018 and 2020.

Capital Economics analyst Jennifer McKeown pointed out that "events since the ECB's last meeting might have led it to reassess the downside risks to (economic) growth, but not necessarily inflation", which is influenced by longer-term factors like wage increases. Policymakers' confidence for inflation has prompted gradual steps towards ending mass purchases of government and corporate bonds, known as "quantitative easing" (QE).

Launched in March 2015, the scheme is designed to pump cash through the financial system to firms and households, powering growth and, in turn, inflation. From 30 billion euros (\$34 billion) per month, the ECB has throttled bond-buying to 15 billion euros per month between October and December, when it is slated to end.

Meanwhile, the central bank will keep credit flowing by leaving interest rates at historic lows "at least through the summer of 2019" and possibly beyond-leaving it well behind the US Federal Reserve, which is gradually raising rates.

And some of the easy-money effect of QE will be preserved as the ECB reinvests the proceeds from its 2.5-trillion-euro stock of bonds.

### Manageable threats

The slow-burning nature of many of the threats to growth mean QE may well end before any of them materialize. A US-EU row on import tariffs Washington imposed on metals imports and threatened on the transatlantic car trade has been on ice since July, although American officials are displaying growing impatience.

Meanwhile, economists see little risk of Italy running out of buyers for its debt, even though Rome declined Monday to heed Brussels' warnings about its swelling deficit or last week's credit rating downgrade from Moody's.

As for Brexit, while European leaders last week blew through another deadline to reach a deal, there is still time before the UK's departure date of March 29. Nor are weakening forecasts for eurozone expansion-like the IMF's prediction of 2.0 percent growth in 2018 and 1.9 percent next year-so drastic that they should undermine inflation.

"It would definitely need a severe growth accident, an escalation of the Italian crisis or trade tensions with tangible consequences on financial markets before the ECB would change its course," ING economist Brzeski concluded. —AFP

## Al-Sayer announces winners of the grand prize

KUWAIT: Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer, a subsidiary of Al-Sayer Holding recently held a raffle draw part of the "Toyota - The Smart Choice" special promotion, to select winners of the two Avanza cars as the grand prize. The draw was organized in cooperation with the Ministry of Commerce & Industry for Consumer protection.

According to Johan Heislitz Senior Business Director "We thank and appreciate the support from our valued customers towards making this special campaign a huge success. Toyota's ever better cars, peace of mind ownership, along with our benefits package have been drivers of customer satisfaction. We will continue to offer such value deals in the future for customers to come forward and grab a great Toyota opportunity".

During the promotion period that was run in cooperation with Kuwait Finance House and Warba Bank, with every purchase of their favorite Toyota, all customers gained automatic entry into the promotional raffle draw to win a 2018 Toyota Avanza. Customers chances increased with every KD 500 that they spent. The promotion also included standard benefits package 3rd party insurance, free registration and 5-year warranty.

Above all, exciting Toyota 2019 models are now available at all retail outlets with attractive service package to ensure peace of mind along with three years complimentary T-Connect subscription in addition to the above-mentioned benefit package.

## McDonald's notches sales growth in key regions

NEW YORK: McDonald's, home of the Big Mac, reported a dip in third-quarter profit yesterday, but notched comparable sales growth in key regions, including Britain, France and Japan.

Net income at the fast-food giant fell to \$1.6 billion, a drop of 13.1 percent from the same period of the prior year. But the 2017 quarter was boosted by about \$850 million from the sale of businesses in China and Hong Kong. Quarterly revenues fell 6.7 percent to \$5.4 billion.

But on the bright side, comparable sales-a key benchmark in the restaurant business-grew in all four of McDonald's regional categories, with the home US market up 2.4 percent. The company also experienced strong sales growth in Britain, Australia, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Japan, McDonald's said. —AFP

Raffle Draw Gifts	Winner Names
Grand Prize 2018 Toyota Avanza	Saeed Motlaq Saud AlMuwaizri
Grand Prize 2018 Toyota Avanza	Jawad Ali Ibrahim Alattar



One of the winners of the raffle draw



## EXCHANGE RATES

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL			
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL	
<b>Europe</b>			
British Pound	0.387117	0.401017	
Czech Korune	0.005472	0.014772	
Danish Krone	0.042623	0.047623	
Euro	0.340895	0.354595	
Georgian Lari	0.118123	0.118123	
Hungarian	0.000987	0.001177	
Norwegian Krone	0.032707	0.037907	
Romanian Leu	0.057704	0.074554	
Russian ruble	0.004651	0.004651	
Slovakia	0.009095	0.019095	
Swedish Krona	0.029662	0.034662	
Swiss Franc 0.298666	0.309666		
<b>Australasia</b>			
Australian Dollar	0.206493	0.218493	
New Zealand Dollar	0.192615	0.202115	
Canadian Dollar	0.226818	0.235818	
US Dollars	0.300200	0.305500	
US Dollars Mint	0.300700	0.305500	
<b>Asia</b>			
Bangladesh Taka	0.002976	0.003777	
Chinese Yuan	0.042436	0.045936	
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036732	0.039482	
Indian Rupee	0.003628	0.004400	
<b>Arab</b>			
Bahraini Dinar	0.792591	0.809091	
Egyptian Pound	0.014302	0.020020	
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085	
Iraqi Dinar	0.000213	0.000273	
Jordanian Dinar	0.424898	0.433898	
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000	
Lebanese Pound	0.000151	0.000251	
Moroccan Dirhams	0.022500	0.048500	
Omani Riyal	0.784071	0.789751	
Qatar Riyal	0.079294	0.084234	
Saudi Riyal	0.080060	0.081360	
Syrian Pound	0.001289	0.001510	
Tunisian Dinar	0.102660	0.110660	
Turkish Lira	0.047506	0.059006	
UAE Dirhams	0.081425	0.083125	
Yemeni Riyal	0.000989	0.001069	

Business

# Ooredoo participates in Kuwait Fintech Conference & Exhibition

**Al-Thani: Ooredoo Kuwait has successfully tested end-to-end eSIM solution**



KUWAIT: Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al-Thani



KUWAIT: (From right to left) Yousif Al-Shallal, Abdul Aziz Al-Babtain, Ahmed Al-Fares, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al-Thani, Qossai Al-Shatti, Sheikha Al-Bahar, Salah Al-Fulaj, Mijbil Al-Ayoub and Belal Agha.

KUWAIT: Ooredoo Kuwait participated as the platinum sponsor in the Kuwait Fintech Conference and Exhibition, which took place at the Palms Beach Hotel - Naseema Hall. The event is held under the patronage of Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudan, with endorsement by the Ministerial Council's Central Agency of Information Technology. Participants in the event included a number of experts and professionals in the field of financial technology in the region. Ooredoo's participation in this event comes to reiterate its commitment to digitalization and enriching people's daily experiences, and as part of its commitment to keeping up with the latest trends in the tech world, especially as telecommunications plays a vital role in making Fintech (or Financial Technology) more efficient and accessible to a larger segment of people.

The conference covered a number of subjects relevant to this developing field including block chain, financial innovation, electronic finance, risk management, data protection, bitcoin and cryptocurrency, seamless payment, cyber security, and cloud banking solutions, among other topics.

During his speech, Ooredoo Kuwait's Chief Executive Officer Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al-Thani said that, "I am pleased to be with you today at the Fintech Conference and Exhibition - where the financial technology sector is witnessing remarkable development, especially as a large number of start-ups are moving to adopt this technology globally, private sector institutions have a great role in supporting this economic revolution as an important



element in the vision Kuwait 2035."

Al-Thani added that we would like to announce through this conference, which brings together a group of specialists and experts in the field of IT, that Ooredoo Kuwait has successfully tested end to end eSIM solution and Single Number Multi-SIM solution, as the first telecom operator in Kuwait and one of the first in the region to make such an accomplishment, in order to invest in providing the best services to all members of the Kuwaiti society and to maintain our leadership in the field of communications and adopt the strategy of digital transformation. The eSIM technology will enable our customers to enjoy unprecedented data and benefit from our voice services on our network.

Ooredoo Business gives the ideal solutions and plans to all businesses by providing them with the latest technologies in telecommunications.



KUWAIT: Qossai Al-Shatti and Ahmed Al-Fares honoring Sheikh Al-Thani

## Ooredoo announces its readiness to launch eSIM on its network soon

KUWAIT: Ooredoo Kuwait announced its readiness to launch the eSIM on its network soon, during a press conference held at its headquarters in Kuwait City this afternoon. The press conference was attended by a number of media representatives in addition to social media influencers. Ooredoo Kuwait is the first telecom operator to offer this service in Kuwait, and one of the first in the region. The service will be commercially available soon and is subject to the approval of the Communication and IT Regulatory Authority in addition to the iOS 12.1 update.

This important step comes in tandem with its digital transformation strategy and affirming its leadership in digitalization in Kuwait, in addition to providing its customers a full-fledged and unique digital experience without the need to use a physical sim. The press conference included a demonstration which showcased the way to activate the eSIM along with technical explanations and showcasing its various benefits.

During the press conference, Ooredoo Kuwait's Senior Director, Corporate Communications Mijbil Al-Ayoub expressed that this is a proud achievement for Ooredoo: as it is the first telecom operator to offer this service and one of the first in the region to make such an accomplishment. This achievement strongly demonstrates the company's belief in offering and investing in the best services for the Kuwaiti society, which makes Ooredoo a leading telecommunications operator.

Al-Ayoub added "We will continue to invest and further improve our services and network in order to provide our customers with a fully digitalized experience".

Acting Chief Technology Officer, Engineer Shaima Al-Najdi stated that this advanced technology is aligned with the launch of the 5G Network, and that the eSIM technology "will enable our customers to seamlessly switch between personal and business accounts, enjoy data like never before and take advantage of our voice services on our network, as well enjoy multi-profile features".

Al-Najdi further explained, "The eSIMs are embedded SIMs that will enable Ooredoo to offer a fully digitized user experience without having to insert the normal SIM card in the smart device. This is directly aligned with Ooredoo's digital strategy which is to empower Kuwait's society by driving digital transformation and enrich people's digital lives." She added, "eSIM will also be crucial for the 'Internet of Things'. Without the need for a physical SIM card, many devices, such as watches and other wearables, can be connected to the mobile network, completely transforming the digital experience at home or at the office."

It is worth mentioning that with this advanced technology and alongside our 5G roll-out, customers will

be able to switch between their private and business numbers in a single phone without the need to physically swap sim cards.

### Latest in telecom technology

Al-Ayoub reiterated Ooredoo's commitment to providing and adopting the latest in telecom technology, despite the array of challenges, especially in a dynamic market such as Kuwait where customers are tech savvy. Al-Ayoub added, "Earlier this year, we showcased the great speed and power of the 5G network, which will be launched in selected areas this year as we will gradually launch it across Kuwait. We also launched the iPhone XS and iPhone XS Max last month, and we will be launching the iPhone XR on Friday 26 October with the strongest offer in Kuwait."

### The Internet of the Future

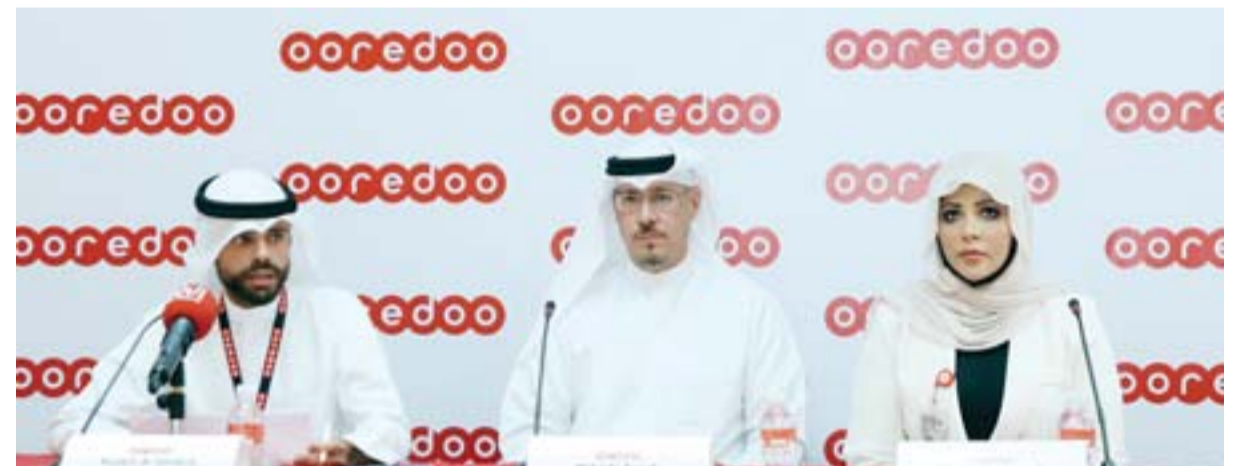
Ooredoo launched 5G mobile internet in test sites, which delivers a speed of up to 10 Gbps. This came in an announcement made last June as the company launched 5G internet in test sites in preparation to deliver this service to customers. The launch came in tandem with the international Ooredoo Group's plans to launch this technology across its markets, after it launched the new high-speed mobile internet in Doha through Ooredoo Qatar.

It is worth mentioning that towards the end of last year, Ooredoo announced the completion of a major network upgrade operation in various locations across Kuwait, aimed at increasing network capacity by upgrading the current infrastructure.

### Fully equipped state-of-the-art data center

Ooredoo launched a fully equipped state-of-the-art data center by FASTtelco, an internet service provider owned by Ooredoo Kuwait. The launch of the center

- The first telecom operator to offer this service in Kuwait
- eSIM comes in tandem with Ooredoo's digital transformation strategy
- eSIM will provide customers with a full-fledged and unique digital experience
- The service will be commercially available soon and is subject to the approval of the Communication and IT Regulatory Authority in addition to the iOS 12.1 update
- Al-Ayoub: We will continue to invest and further improve our services and network in order to provide our customers with a fully digitalized experience.
- Al-Najdi: The eSIMs are embedded SIMs that will enable Ooredoo to offer a fully digitized user experience without having to insert the normal SIM card in the smart device.



KUWAIT: Ooredoo Kuwait's Senior Director, Corporate Communications, Mijbil Al-Ayoub (center), flanked by Shaima Al-Najdi (right) and Nathem Al-Ghabra addresses a press conference. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat



comes to further reiterate Ooredoo's commitment to being one of the leading companies in information technology solutions, and the company of choice for prospective clients searching for ICT solutions, catering especially for the needs of corporates and businesses. The center provides a suite of managed hosting services tailor-made to fit corporate and business needs. These services are ideal for corporates and businesses looking to better manage their data, platforms and applications. The new data center provides end-to-end IT solutions to customers in various sectors including financial, healthcare, media, e-commerce, educational and governmental.

The center is fully equipped to deliver an exceptional experience in services and solutions like managed CPE, cloud services, NOC and operations, data center consultancy, and much more. This is especially important today, where businesses are faced with growing challenges to respond efficiently to new digital trends in IT, security and control.

**iPhone XS and iPhone XS Max Launch Event**  
Continuing its annual Apple launch event since 2014,

Ooredoo Kuwait took the lead in launching Apple's latest devices: iPhone XS and XS Max; last month; amidst a vast number of customers who came to the headquarters in the heart of Kuwait City in order to get the devices which were paired with an exclusive unprecedented offer making this the biggest and most exciting launch event in Kuwait.

### Ooredoo to launch iPhone XR

It is worth mentioning that Ooredoo will launch the iPhone XR, bringing the latest iPhone innovations to more people and will be available in select stores starting Friday 26 October in a select branches. For complete pricing details, please visit ooredoo.com.kw. Customers will be able to enjoy the strongest offer that a telecommunication company launches in Kuwait.

- eSIM Features:
- Seamlessly switch between personal and business accounts
  - Multi-profile features
  - Watches and other wearables, can be connected to the mobile network.

# NBK enhances ATMs and CDMs for customers to enjoy faster services

## Al-Salem: Customers can withdraw money by simply using their phone number or Civil ID

KUWAIT: Focused on launching the latest safe and secure technology to improve the banking experience of its customers, National Bank of Kuwait introduces its newly-enhanced Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) and Cash Deposit Machines (CDMs). The new enhancements enable customers to enjoy cardless cash withdrawals by simply using their mobile number or Civil ID. Customers can also use the NBK Tap & Pay debit card or any NFC-enabled debit card to withdraw or deposit money with only a tap and without inserting their card in the machine.

In addition to these features, customers can also easily change their debit or credit card PIN number, update their Civil ID expiry date, transfer between accounts, request cheques and account statements and add beneficiaries who will be able to initiate cardless cash withdrawals in the same way.

"Once again, we are focused on delivering faster, more secure and convenient banking experience said Maitham Al-Salem, ATM Channel Supervisor, National Bank of Kuwait. "With the new Tap & Pay enabled feature and cardless transactions, customers can enjoy easy services through

our machines. They can withdraw money without their card and by simply using their Civil ID or phone number. The new features will help customers to complete many of their daily banking transactions without having to visit the branch".

Al-Salem added: "We have dedicated time and effort to enhance our ATMs and CDMs to provide our customers with a better banking experience. Our customers will not only save time and effort when using these new services, but will also benefit from features that meet their unique needs. We at NBK, continue to introduce services and enhancements that cater to their lifestyle and ensure they receive the best banking experience."

Located across Kuwait, NBK's ATMs and CDMs enable customers to deposit up to 100 notes at one time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and immediately credit the amount into their account in a safe and secure way. NBK also provides customers with the convenience of mobile ATMs to easily withdraw cash. Moreover, NBK's Multi-Currency ATMs at the airport allow customers to withdraw cash in six different currencies that are the US dollar, euro, British pound sterling, UAE dirham, Saudi



Maitham Al-Salem

riyal and Kuwaiti dinar.

NBK makes it even easier, more convenient and safer for customers to withdraw cash in Saudi Riyal when crossing the Nuwaiseb borders with the multi-currency ATM. Both NBK and non-NBK customers can withdraw in Saudi Riyal when heading to Saudi Arabia and in Kuwaiti Dinar when returning to Kuwait.

Providing convenience and reliability in every step of the banking experience, NBK offers its customers a wide range of exclusive and innovative services and products to satisfy their unique needs and lifestyle.



## Last quarter offer countdown begins on Mazda cars

KUWAIT: Kuwait Automotive Imports Co. Al-Shaya & Al-Sagar, the authorized dealer of Mazda cars in Kuwait, started the countdown on its special offer for the latest models of the Mazda SUV CX9 and Mazda 6 with cash discount up to KD 2500, in addition to a free warranty 3 years or 100,000 km. This offer is an extension of the strong offers made by the company in recent months for customers wishing to own the 100 percent Japanese made vehicles.

The Mazda CX9 is one of the best SUVs that combines the seven-seater concept and sports design. In addition to a full range of SKYACTIV TECHNOLOGY which now includes the GVC system. It also features excellent safety and sporty design, a 2.5T Turbo engine with SKYACTIV TECHNOLOGY with 231 hp. It comes with 20-inch wheels and the MZD CONNECT system that keeps you connected at all times. The interior is characterized by leather seats which can accommodate up to 7 passengers with ease. The comfort of the passengers is confirmed by the light weight of the body and the adjustments made on the chassis and suspension.

As the flagship of the Mazda Lineup, Mazda6 has always been the most elegant and refined statement of the KODO design language and Mazda6 expresses this with its



dynamic design and powerful three-dimensionality in the grille and signature wings. Mazda 6 is the perfect car of the driver, it is a sporty personal car equipped with everything necessary in the cockpit which has been dedicated to help you enjoy the drive.

High-efficiency SKYACTIV-G direct-injection petrol engines are your passport to a world of driving that is both exciting and eco-friendly. The engine delivers a fuel efficiency of up to 15 percent. Safety features include Lane-Keep Assist System, Lane Departure Warning System and Smart Break Support. While the interior is characterized by the MZD CONNECT system, which gives you superior connectivity to the Internet and advanced navigation system.

"The customer is and always has been our priority, so we at Kaico make sure to deliver a one-of-a-kind service and offer the most competitive packages in the automotive

industry," stated Ashish Tandon, General Manager of KAICO.

Nader Salmeh, Sr Divisional Manager, added, "Our customers have great knowledge when it comes to the auto world, hence we provide them with the latest Japanese technology and manufacturing techniques that they expect from a 100 percent Japanese made brand such as Mazda."

KAICO, Al-Shaya and Al-Sagar have always stated that they strive to provide the best for their customers in cars sales, spare parts, after-sales services and maintenance in order to increase comfort and safety while driving on the roads at all times. Car enthusiasts wishing to own any of the Mazda vehicles, which suit their needs and requirements and the nature of their daily habits, are greatly welcome to visit Mazda showroom in Al-Raid area to have a first-hand look at the cars and book a test drive.

## Gulf Bank announces winners of Al-Danah weekly draw

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held its Al-Danah weekly draw on the 21st of October 2018 announcing the names of its winners for the week from the 14th till the 18th of October 2018, in which five winners will receive KD 1,000 each, every week.

### The winners this week are:

- Lafi Naser Fahad Al-Mutairi
- Mohsen Abbas Ismaeil
- Ghaliya Imad Habib Hayat
- Alyaa Ali Hasan Al-Saraf
- Mustafa Sayed Hassan Al-Zelzala

Gulf Bank Al-Danah's first quarterly draw for KD 200,000 prize was held on 28 March, and the 2nd Al-Danah quarterly draw, for the prize of KD 250,000 was held on 27th June and the 3rd quarterly draw for the prize of KD 500,000 was held on 26th September. The final Al-Danah draw for KD 1 million will be held on 10th January 2019, where the Al-Danah millionaire will be announced. Customers are encouraged to open an account or deposit more before October 31st for a chance to become the next millionaire!

Gulf Bank encourages customers to increase their chances of winning with Al-Danah by depositing more into their Gulf Bank accounts using

the new ePay (Self-Pay) service, which is available on Gulf Bank's online and mobile banking services. Al-Danah offers a number of unique services to customers, including the Al-Danah Deposit Only ATM card, which allows account holders to deposit money into their accounts at their convenience. Account holders can also calculate their daily, weekly and yearly chances of winning the draws through the 'Al-Danah Chances' calculator available on the Gulf Bank website and app.

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account is open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. Customers require a minimum of KD200 to open an account and the same amount should be maintained for customers to be eligible for the upcoming Al-Danah draws. If the customer's account balance falls below KD200 at any given time, a KD 2 fee will be charged to their account monthly until the minimum balance is met. Customers who open an account and/or deposit more will enter the daily draw within two days. To take part in the Al-Danah 2018 upcoming quarterly and yearly draws, customers must meet the required hold period for each draw.



## Japan PM heads to China looking for economic common ground

TOKYO: Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe makes a rare trip to China this week hoping improved relations will lead to new economic partnerships, as the two countries come under US pressure on trade. The visit is the first by a Japanese premier since 2011 and is part of a years-long process of repairing ties in the wake of a disastrous falling-out in 2012, when Tokyo "nationalized" disputed islands claimed by Beijing.

The incident prompted anti-Japanese riots in China, and kicked off a frosty spell that has only gradually and recently begun to thaw. Since an awkward 2014 encounter between Abe and Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of a summit, there have been ministerial visits by both sides and a softening of rhetoric. But Abe's trip will be a test of how far the two countries have come, and the need for progress is all the more urgent as US President Donald Trump levies tariffs and sabre-rattling on trade with both China and Japan.

"The trade war with the US seems like it's helping bring them together a bit," said Kristin Vekasi, assistant professor of political science at the University of Maine, and an expert on Japan-China ties.

"In that sense, they're actually on the same side... and if Japan leans away from the US because of decreased economic opportunities, there's a potential for closer ties with China," she told AFP.



BRUSSELS: China's Premier Li Keqiang (left) gestures as he speaks with Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe as they arrive to pose for a family photograph during an ASEM summit at the European Council in Brussels. — AFP

### Complementary economies

The two leaders are likely to focus on a range of potential deals, including joint investments in infrastructure in regional nations including Indonesia and the Philippines.

Abe has signalled some interest in China's massive "Belt and Road Initiative", which funds major infrastructure work, but experts said a concrete deal on Japanese participation was unlikely for now.

Both sides are keen to improve economic cooperation, with Japanese business eager for increased access to China's massive market, and Beijing interested in Japanese technology

and corporate knowhow. "Japan and China have really nicely complementary economies, and they can benefit hugely from having closer trade and investment ties," said Vekasi. "They'll try and bring home some economic tangibles. That's generally where they've been able to successfully cooperate in the past."

The two leaders may find less common ground outside of the economic realm, with tensions lingering over territorial issues. Just days before Abe's trip, Tokyo lodged an official complaint after Chinese ships cruised around the disputed islands that Tokyo calls the Senkaku and Beijing labels the Diaoyu islands. — AFP

## Malta expects to maintain budget surplus, strong growth in 2019

VALLETTA: Malta expects to register a fiscal surplus for the fourth successive year in 2019 and forecasts its economy to grow by 5.3 percent in real terms, Finance Minister Edward Scicluna said yesterday when he presented the Mediterranean island's 2019 budget.

Scicluna said the surplus in 2019 was projected to reach 1.3 percent of gross domestic product, including proceeds from a controversial scheme by which the country sells foreigners the right to Maltese citizenship. Net of the proceeds

from the scheme, the surplus will amount to 0.5 percent of GDP, the finance minister said.

The total surplus in 2018 is targeted at 1.1 percent. "Our unofficial target is to achieve a surplus every year," Prime Minister Joseph Muscat told reporters.

Scicluna said the debt-to-GDP ratio is projected to drop to 43 percent next year from 47 percent in 2018. He said the budget would not introduce any new taxes or tariffs, but revenue was still projected to increase by 8.4 percent in 2019, mostly as a result of economic growth. He said the government was raising its expenditure by 8 percent, with most of the increase going on a major roads improvement program. Employment is projected to grow by 3.7 percent in 2019 while the unemployment rate is seen at 4.3 percent, similar to 2018. Inflation is forecast at 1.9 percent.

Earlier on Monday, Eurostat said Malta's budget surplus of 3.5 percent of GDP in 2017 was the largest of any EU country. — Reuters

What's On

# Ahmadi Governor receives WVC



Within the activities of the governorate's weekly Diwaniya receptions, Ahmadi governor Sheikh Fawwaz Al-Hamad Al-Sabah recently received the chairman of Wafa Voluntary Committee (WVC), Khaled Al-Marri and committee members, Dr. Anas Borhama, Mohammed Al-Subai'e, Abdullah Al-Hubail and Barjas Al-Dousary. The reception, which was also attended by mayors and officials, was dedicated to discussing voluntary initiatives in serving Wafa residents.

## British Ambassador to Kuwait visits KNES

British Ambassador to Kuwait Michael Davenport MBE joined Kuwait National English School (KNES) on October 14, 2018 for the opening ceremony of the new school premises, and officially cut the ribbon of the new school site. Chantal Al Gharabally - School Director joined the ambassador on his tour around the school senior management and the students from student council were also present to guide and inform the ambassador on developments at Kuwait National English School.

After a year of construction, Kuwait National English School is proud to open the doors of its new building which will facilitate students with wide additional space, comfort and consequently better learning. The very spacious and bright new site is fully equipped with new furniture, equipment to enrich education. We also have new ICT infrastructure. Music rooms have also been enhanced with brand new instruments and learning space as well as a huge drama place.

Michael Davenport MBE spent a few hours visiting the whole school premises, and was highly impressed with the new site, the enthusiasm of the teachers and students of KNES whom the ambassador referred to as 'keen learners'. Kuwait National English School contin-



ues to strive for perfection and excellence by offering students a wide range of programmes, facilities, support and guidance with the mission to cultivate a generation of hard working, intelligent and motivated pupils.



## GUST to host 17th IFIP Conference

Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) is set to host the 17th annual International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP) Conference. The event will bring together approximately 75 scholars from around the globe to present research findings conducted on the subject of this year's conference: Challenges and Opportunities in the Digital Era. Among these, 11 are from GUST. The event is to be held over a period of four days on GUST's campus, and will be the first time that this symposium is held in Kuwait.



Dr. Salah Al-Sharhan



Antonis Simintiras

With the exponential growth of digital forums across the world on a multitude of platforms, it is imperative the academic community explore different ways of adapting to new realities to conduct business. This is especially true today as opportunities afforded to consumers - due to the sheer volume of information accessible to them - presents challenges to companies that need to constantly create innovative strategies to remain relevant. Similarly, consumers are also challenged as they seek optimal ways of sifting through information which inundates them, and makes the process of selecting the best product or service provider increasingly difficult.

Prior to the conference, a doctoral colloquium will be held to give PhD candidates and research students an opportunity to present their work to a panel of experts to get feedback and gain further insight in their area of study. GUST Vice President of Academic Affairs and Conference Co-Chair, Dr. Salah Al-Sharhan, said, "As the world around us changes, so must we. As academics, we must consistently strive to find ways to relate to and connect with the wider world. This conference will be a prime opportunity to learn from other scholars and academics, learn how their findings can be applied locally, and also cement GUST's place as a veritable regional knowledge hub."

Presenting findings on behalf of GUST will be Nabae Asfar, Dr. Saeed Askary, Dr. Ahmed ElMorshidy, Dr. Ahmed Hassanein, Dr. Khalid Kiswani, and Professor Taher Ali, who explored the topics of e-Business, e-Services, and e-Society. Also in attendance, are prominent scholars such as Professor Yogesh Dwivedi from Swansea University in Wales, Professor George Balabanis from City University in London, Dr. Winfried Lamersdorf from the University of Hamburg, and Professor Matti Mantymaki, from University of Turku, Finland.

Dean of the College of Business Administration and Conference Co-chair, Professor Antonis Simintiras, said, "I am very optimistic that this conference will yield some interesting results, and I am excited to hear the different perspectives scholars from around the world will present to us. I'd also like to thank Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences and That Al Salasil for their support in helping put together such a high profile and prestigious conference."

## NOTICE

TES cordially invites everyone to another session of their series about some prophets and messengers of Allah (SWT) on October 25, 2018, at 7:00 pm. This class will discuss why Yusuf (AS) secretly placed his royal cup in Benjamin's pack-saddle, how his half-brothers defended themselves when it was apparent that Benjamin had stolen Yusuf's cup, and how Yusuf (AS) responded to that.

The class will also learn about the punishment for theft in both the ancient Egyptian and Canaanite laws, and why Yusuf, despite being a high minister in Egypt, implemented the Canaanite Law. From these events, we will see how Allah's help often comes unexpectedly when we totally put our trust in Him-when you reach a deadlock, divine assistance intervenes-and we will elicit many lessons that, if implemented, can impact our lives positively.

## Technology

# Moscow cryptocurrency boutique: Physical portal to the virtual realm

## 'I want bitcoin but I don't know what it is'

**MOSCOW:** First you ring, then push through heavy doors past a suspicious security guard before arriving at Moscow's pioneering cryptocurrency store—a physical portal to the virtual realm of bitcoin. Russia has been at the forefront of the cryptocurrency revolution and the ultra-modern "DeeCrypto" shop, spread across two floors in central Moscow, attempts to navigate the legal grey area around the innovation in the country.

"Clients come to us and say, 'I want bitcoin but I don't know what it is,'" said founder Denis Onatsik. "Here it's a bit like the Apple Store, we explain to them that they can buy the equipment to make it themselves or even come to install their own 'farm'". Screens mounted on white walls allow visitors to follow in real time the value fluctuations of currencies such as bitcoin and ethereum and allow them to decide which to invest in.

Display cases line the room, holding gadgets like "virtual currency wallets" as well as t-shirts bearing the dollar-like bitcoin symbol. "In Russia we need 'offline'

shops, real places," Onatsik said. "Because people trust things more when they see it on the shop floor, where they can come in, look at it, touch it, see it, when a salesperson explains to the buyer what the equipment does, how it functions," he said.

"There's a big risk factor when you buy online. There has been plenty of fraud in the sector—the machines that never arrive, bitcoin that you pay for but never get," he added. The Muscovite, a forty-something businessman wearing a white shirt and gold rings on his fingers, works primarily in the building sector but two years ago began opening bitcoin farms in abandoned sites.

Onatsik conceived of "DeeCrypto" as something between a shop and a club—anyone can buy the products but only members can buy, sell and trade virtual currencies between themselves. There are now around 100 members, mainly businessmen, who buy into the virtual currency using cash and so rely on security and confidentiality offered by the store.

Onatsik's shop also offers equipment to "mine" the currency, for those who wish to

produce their own. These devices, humming in a corner of the store, only require electricity and an internet connection to function. But the pricing of certain brands suggests that the peak of the cryptocurrency revolution might have already passed. "Today, these cost between 35,000 and 50,000 roubles," whereas when the shop opened in February the price was many times higher, the owner said.

Having peaked at \$20,000 at the end of December 2017, the global price of bitcoin collapsed early this year and has only just begun to recover. According to a study published at the end of last year by Ernst and Young, Russia was the third largest producer of cryptocurrency behind the United States and China. "Today, cryptocurrencies and a set-up like ours are neither forbidden, nor explicitly authorized," said Onatsik of the innovation's current legal status. The boutique was however granted a license by the FSB security service to open its doors.

But the founder's expectations that Russia would pass a law fully legalizing cryptocurrencies in the summer were



TEL AVIV: This file photo shows a visual representation of the digital crypto-currency Bitcoin, at the "Bitcoin Change" shop in the Israeli city of Tel Aviv. — AFP

dashed. And while the cost of the equipment has dropped, the corresponding fall in the value of the currencies has brought the viability of mining them into question. "People were interested in opening franchises in

other (Russian) cities," Onatsik said of the situation pre-crash. "We were sure there would be a queue in front of the shop, like in front of Lenin's mausoleum during the Soviet era." — AFP

## Microsoft highlights intelligent cloud solutions at summit in Kuwait

**KUWAIT:** Microsoft this week marked its presence as the Cloud Security Partner at the 7th Regional Cybersecurity (RCS) Summit in Kuwait, a key event hosted by the Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA). Organized by ITU Arab Regional Cybersecurity, in collaboration with White Paper Summits (WPS), the RCS Summit took place on October 21-22, 2018, at the Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel in Kuwait City, and focused on a vast range of key topics to highlight current trends and future security issues that affect the virtual security of organizations, and interfere in business efficiency.

The summit is hosting 250+ key attendees from across the Middle East to discuss partner and form new ideas, policies and present the latest technological advancements that can help in battling cyber coercions. "The fourth industrial revolution is upon us and is transforming the way we work and live. This calls for a significant need of cybersecurity to be on the agenda of every organization in the country and the wider region," said Eng. Salim Al Ozainah, Chairman and CEO, Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA).

The RCS Summit is a cornerstone of our effort to create shared learning and dialogue regarding cybersecurity challenges and facilitate the exchange of information, ideas, solutions, and emerging practices that could improve security posture in the region. We commend the efforts of partners like Microsoft for their participation in this event and sharing the best practices to empower governments and organizations take the right security measures," he added.

The RCS Summit covered keynote presentations, case studies, panel discussions, and technology showcase and demos to enhance the knowledge and understanding of all delegates and attendees to deal with various aspects of Cyber threats and digital security issues. Mohamed Zayed, Cybersecurity Lead for Microsoft Kuwait, delivered a keynote session titled "The Culture Transformation for Identities



and Information Protection in a Cloud Era" that was focused on how organizations can improve their security by moving to the intelligent cloud, adopting modern platforms, and embracing comprehensive identity, security and management solutions to drive a secure digital transformation. He also highlighted the importance of building a culture of Data and Information security across the organizations.

A recent Microsoft study surveyed nearly 1,000 GCC-based organisations and found that over 80% of large Gulf enterprises were still using usernames and passwords as the exclusive means of log-in to corporate networks. While 11 percent use multi-factor authentication, 7 percent reported using fingerprint-scanning, and just under 1% had adopted facial recognition. Additionally, 41 percent admitted to having clicked on links within unsolicited emails from unknown parties and just over 61 percent said their organisation did not yet have a data-classification solution in place.

"The past few years have seen a rise in cyber attacks in the region and around the world," said Charles Nahas, General Manager,

Microsoft Kuwait. "Organizations must act now to secure their business environment and protect their customers. A holistic approach to security is key and must involve end-to-end solution from the cloud to the edge, by a trusted provider. Microsoft has placed trust at the core of its organization, and we build security from the ground up in our solutions to deliver the promise of guarding the digital estates of our customers, while they continue to achieve more with no boundaries. The RCS Summit is an ideal platform for us to highlight how our security technologies work in concert with each other to deliver a holistic security platform."

Microsoft spends \$1 billion annually on cybersecurity R&D; to protect its customers with constant vigilance: through the some of the industry's most trusted practices. With the recent uptake in demand for its trusted cloud services, Microsoft earlier this year announced that it will deliver the secure, flexible and intelligent cloud for its regional customers through two dedicated cloud datacenters, one in Dubai and one in Abu Dhabi; catering specifically to enterprises in the Middle East.

## Uber plans pollution levy on London fares

**LONDON:** Uber will levy a "clean air fee" on London journeys from early 2019 to help tackle pollution and part-fund electric cars for its drivers, the pioneer ride-sharing app said yesterday. A levy of 15 pence (17 euro cents) per mile will be introduced, resulting in an average additional cost of 45 pence per ride, Uber said in a statement.

"The Mayor of London (Sadiq Khan) has set out a bold vision to tackle air pollution in the capital and we're determined to do everything we can to back it," said Uber chief executive Dara Khosrowshah. Uber said the amount drivers received toward the cost of an electric vehicle would be based on the number of miles driven. "For example, a

driver using the app for an average of 40 hours per week could expect around £3,000 of support... in two years' time and £4,500 in three years," the company said.

Uber wants to use only electric cars in London from 2025, while it anticipates the first 20,000 upgrades by the end of 2021. In June, Uber won a legal bid to restore its operating license in London after a judge overturned an earlier decision by Khan — and granted the ride-hailing app a 15-month permit. The capital's transport authority stripped the American firm of its license in late 2017 amid safety concerns, but Uber appealed the decision and was allowed to continue operating while the case was heard. Earlier this month, Uber drivers in Britain went on strike, demanding higher fares and improved workers' rights. Uber operates in 60 countries and is eyeing a valuation above \$100 billion for its much-anticipated share offering due in 2019, which would be the biggest-ever in the tech sector. — AFP



LONDON: In this file photo, Uber application is seen on a mobile phone in London.

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- ◆ Thyroid surgery.
- ◆ Surgery for the deviated nasal septum.
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- ◆ Surgery for morbid obesity (sleeve, gastric bypass)
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**Dr. Hani Haider** **http://www.international-clinic.com** **Tel: 1886677** **ic\_kwt**

**Scope of Clinical Practice:**

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- ◆ 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
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**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

**مستشفى دار الشفا Dar Al Shifa Hospital**  
**Tele: 1802 555** **@daralshifa**  
Email: aalhaddad@daralshifa.com

**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  
Laposcopic and Bariatric Surgery

**Academic Certificates - Training**

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

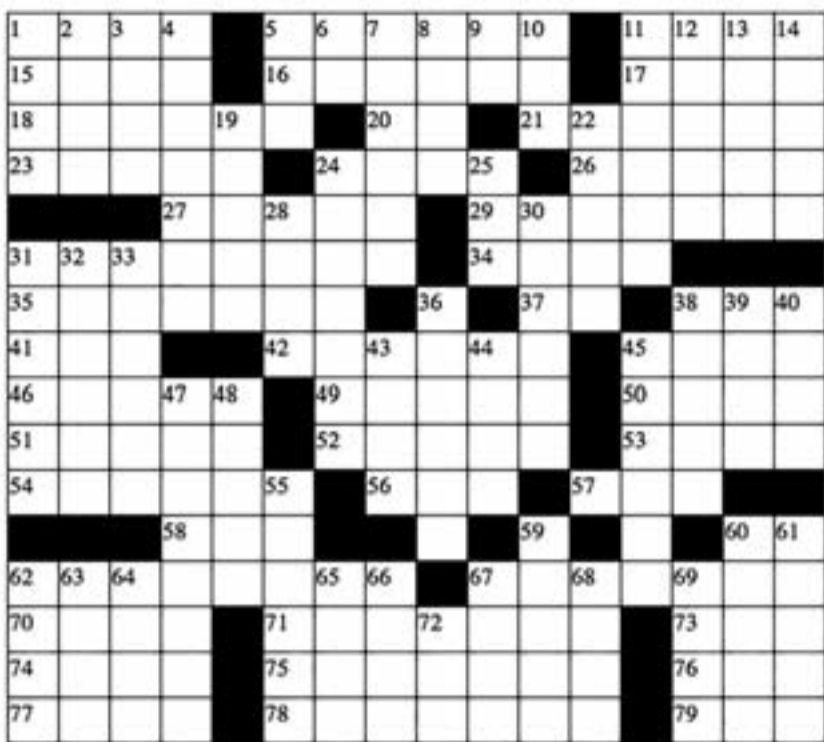
**Scope of clinical Practice.**

- ◆ 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 2042



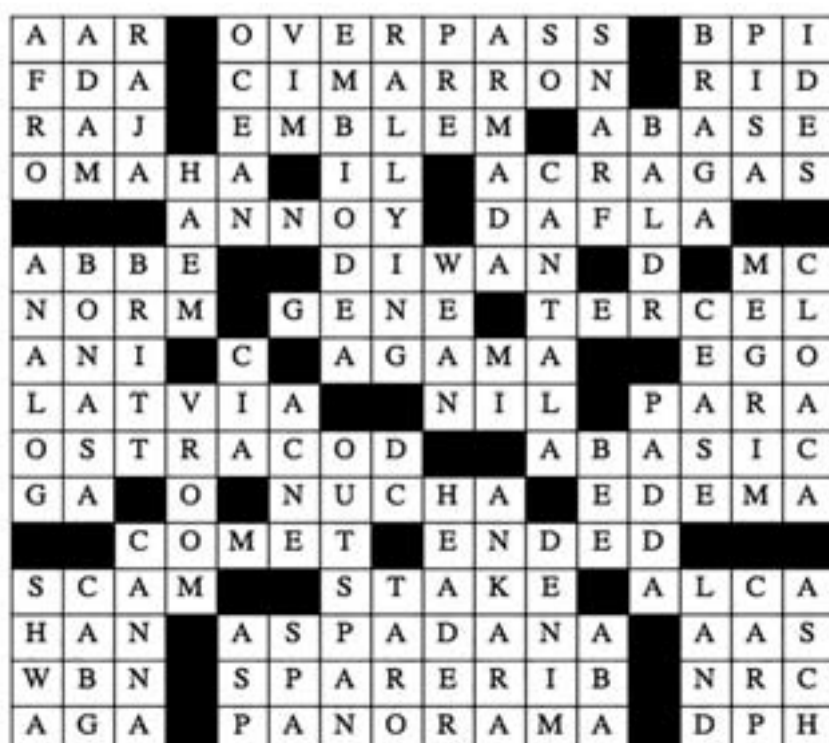
ACROSS

1. Round object that is hit or thrown or kicked in games.
5. A small spineless globe-shaped cactus.
11. A river that rises in northeastern Turkey (near the source of the Euphrates) and flows generally eastward through Armenia to the Caspian Sea.
15. Relatively small fast-moving sloth.
16. Paralysis of the vocal cords resulting in an inability to speak.
17. Something left after other parts have been taken away.
18. Any of several sorghums cultivated as a source of syrup.
20. Informal terms for a mother.
21. The wood of an African obeche tree.
23. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
26. A building where travelers can pay for lodging and meals and other services.
27. A thermoplastic polyamide.
29. Any of various large edible marine gastropods of the genus *Halotis* having an ear-shaped shell with pearly interior.
31. The sport of riding on a sled or sleigh.
34. (anatomy) A fold or wrinkle or crease.
35. Small toothless ant eater with prehensile tail and four-clawed forelimbs.
37. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
41. A gradual decline (in size or strength or power or number).
42. Used of mouth or eyes.
46. Wild or domesticated South American cud-chewing animal related to camels but smaller and lacking a hump.
49. Wood of a larch tree.
50. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
51. Type genus of the Laridae.
52. Any plant of the genus *Erica*.
53. Rock that in its molten form (as magma) issues from volcanoes.
54. A member of the Circassian people living east of the Black Sea.
56. The smallest multiple that is exactly divisible by every member of a set of numbers.
57. A rotating disk shaped to convert circular into linear motion.
58. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
62. A member of a military unit trained as shock troops for hit-and-run raids.
70. (Old Testament) In Judeo-Christian mythology.
71. 100 tambala equal 1 Kwacha.
73. The elementary stages of any subject (usually plural).
74. Port city that is the capital and largest city of Latvia.
75. An alloy of mercury with another metal (usually silver) used by dentists to fill cavities in teeth.
76. Resinlike substance secreted by certain lac insects.
77. A town in north central Oklahoma.
78. Hard fiber used in making coarse twine.
79. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

1. A caress with the lips.
2. Small buffalo of the Celebes having small straight horns.
3. Acquire or gain knowledge or skills.
4. The Bantu language of the Buganda people.
5. An enzyme that catalyzes the oxidation of many body compounds (e.g., epinephrine and norepinephrine and serotonin).
6. Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).
7. Large ornamental tropical American tree with bipinnate leaves and globose clusters of flowers with crimson stamens and sweet-pulp seed pods eaten by cattle.
8. Wearing or provided with clothing.
9. The branch of computer science that deal with writing computer programs that can solve problems creatively.
10. Of or relating to a member of the Buddhist people inhabiting the Mekong river in Laos and Thailand.
11. Small space in a tissue or part such as the area between veins on a leaf or an insect's wing.
12. Right-hand page.
13. Ash-colored or anemic looking from illness or emotion.
14. The usually cylindrical central vascular portion of the axis of a vascular plant.
19. Austrian composer who influenced the classical form of the symphony (1732-1809).
22. God of wealth and love.
24. Having nine units or components.
25. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
28. (British) A recreational facility including a swimming pool for water sports.
30. Founder of Buddhism.
32. 1 species.
33. Go on board.
36. Make richer.
38. A woman of refinement.
39. Speaking a Slavic language.
40. The capital and chief port of Qatar.
43. A British peer ranking below a Marquess and above a Viscount.
44. Electronic warfare undertaken to insure effective friendly use of the electromagnetic spectrum in spite of the enemy's use of electronic warfare.
45. West Indian tree having racemes of fragrant white flowers and yielding a durable timber and resinous juice.
47. Leader of Black Muslims who campaigned for independence for Black Americans (1897-1975).
48. (Hindu) A manner of sitting (as in the practice of Yoga).
55. A histamine blocker and antacid (trade name Zantac) used to treat peptic ulcers and gastritis and esophageal reflux.
59. Small evergreen shrub of Pacific coast of North America having edible dark purple grape-size berries.
60. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
61. An indehiscent fruit derived from a single ovary having one or many seeds within a fleshy wall or pericarp.
63. (Norse mythology) Ruler of the Aesir.
64. (New Testament) The sages who visited Jesus and Mary and Joseph shortly after Jesus was born.
65. Fallow deer.
66. A strategically located monarchy on the southern and eastern coasts of the Arabian Peninsula.
67. Mentally or physically infirm with age.
68. A Tibetan or Mongolian priest of Lamaism.
69. The basic unit of money in Western Samoa.
72. Sandwich filled with slices of bacon and tomato with lettuce.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Work on your self awareness today. Do you love who you are? Be honest with yourself and make the changes that need to be made. Look deep into your innerworkings and decide if your actions are truly a reflection of the person you long to be. If you have any doubt, now is the time to make the necessary changes. Look for motivation and set your mind and focus on becoming a better you. You are the only one that can make these wishes become a reality and now is the time to make it happen. Live, laugh, and Love should be the major focus for your world now.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You know exactly what you want and today finds you in the mood you are determined to go for it. You are a force to be reckoned with today. You have a desire to try something new. Maybe a new hairstyle is in order. You are having no problem letting those close to you know exactly what you want, and you are able to express yourself very clearly. You are high energy and assertive today. Your focus seems to be centered solely on you and yours and have no time nor concern for that which is going on in the outside world. Taurus, now is a great time to spend with family and enjoy some time at home.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You are so independent you tend to forget this sometimes everyone needs a friend to lean all or shoulder to cry on. You seem to try to take on the world all alone. This is a time you may find yourself needing support and the security of knowing someone is there for you. This causes your relationships to take on a deeper meaning for you. Today finds you serious with an awareness of time. You are very ambitious and have zero tolerance for anything that does not contribute to your success. You find yourself with a no-nonsense attitude and very dedicated and devoted to the task at hand.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Let your creative juices flow. Use that nervous energy to be creative. That which is unique and special about you will have you in the limelight today. Those close to you will be very appreciative of these qualities. Place your focus on your problem-solving skills. Take some time for yourself today to reflect, regroup, and reorganize. Cancer, leave those big decisions on the back burner today and do not let anything dull your shine! You may find yourself deep in thought struggling with a big decision but for today, let it be.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

When it comes to speaking your mind, today seems to find you an expert at that. You are opinionated and your thoughts and words are forceful. While this is a great quality, you may find others are easily offended if you are not careful with your approach. You are high energy and you will have the strength and determination to accomplish every goal you set your mind to. You crave organization in your world. Not only do things have a place but you also have a talent when it comes to putting people in the place they belong. This is very beneficial in the workplace as you are able to manage people efficiently.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You may find yourself feeling emotionally detached from your surroundings. Ideas are what are important to you now. You may not have tolerance and find yourself distancing yourself from those who do not see things this way. You seem to be drawn to all that is unusual and a bit on the eccentric side. From the way you are beginning to think to the material possessions you wish to acquire, your taste is changing. You have a desire to travel and are focused on your relationships with friends and those who are in your social circle. Pay close attention to any red flags that seem to appear.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Feeling overwhelmed? Too much to do, and not enough time? Trying to multi-task isn't working. Get organized. Start by making a list of things you need to do. Then prioritize. You may find that some of the things on the list are not important. Cross them off. Now list the others in order of importance. Focus on one item at a time; and when it is finished, check it off. The satisfaction of a completed task will give you the confidence you need to tackle the next one. When you have completed the list, set it aside and relax.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

This day may find you longing for change. A new style, new friends, new experiences may be calling out to you. You want to break out and break away from the mundane life you have been leading. A major change is on the horizon. You may be led to really change things up in your life. Don't run out and get a tattoo or make any changes that can be reversed because this phase could fade as fast as it appeared. This change in attitude is very evident to those around you and you may find you are being met with much opposition.



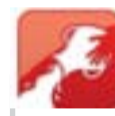
Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

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



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may be feeling drawn and even turned on by that which is taboo. Sex, power, and the pursuit of wealth are beginning to be a driving force behind your emotions. You are fascinated by people. What makes them do the things they do? What makes them tick? You desire a fresh start in your life and major changes. You know this may only be accomplished by turning your back on all you believed and starting over with an open mind and a new outlook on life in general.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

It seems you may find yourself in a power struggle. You may find someone challenging you concerning a very private matter. Your personal issues are just that, personal! You may find someone invades your space and this could lead to conflict. Respect is something that is a priority in your world. Not only to treat others with respect, you demand to be treated as such. You are ambitious and practical and may find this a time you are able to work well with others developing strong teams who will be able to accomplish big goals.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may find comfort staying in and spending some time with the family and loved ones today. A strong sense of needing to be needed may be overwhelming today and you will find just what your heart desires from these loved ones. Home is where your heart is today. Pisces, you may feel as if you are being put in a position to make choices that go against your values to further your career. This could be a very awkward situation for you. You may see this as a very crooked road to success and feel you will be ignoring much of what you love if you choose to follow this path. Continue to follow your heart and know you will always be supported by the ones you love.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Flowers

Find and circle all of the flowers that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message - a quotation from Romeo and Juliet.

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

Yesterday's Solution

Fish 2

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

Hidden sentence: A COUNTRYMAN BETWEEN TWO LAWYERS IS LIKE A FISH BETWEEN TWO CATS

Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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

# Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2018



A model presents a creation by Patricia Viera during the Sao Paulo Fashion Week in Sao Paulo, Brazil.— AFP

## WORLD'S OLDEST INTACT SHIPWRECK FOUND IN BLACK SEA

An ancient Greek trading ship dating back more than 2,400 years has been found virtually intact at the bottom of the Black Sea, the world's oldest known shipwreck, researchers said yesterday. The vessel is one of more than 60 shipwrecks identified by the Black Sea Maritime Archaeology Project including Roman ships and a 17th-century Cossack raiding fleet. During the three-year project, researchers used specialist remote deep-water camera systems previously used in offshore oil and gas exploration to map the sea floor. "A small piece of the vessel has been carbon dated and it is confirmed as the oldest intact shipwreck known to mankind," the project said in a statement.

The ship, which is lying on its side with its mast and rudders intact, was dated back to 400 BC—a time when the Black Sea was a trading hub filled with Greek colonies. The team said the vessel, previously only seen in an intact state on the side of ancient Greek pottery, was found at a

depth of more than 2,000 meters (6,500 feet). The water at that depth is oxygen-free, meaning that organic material can be preserved for thousands of years.

"A ship, surviving intact, from the Classical world, lying in over two kilometers of water, is something I would never have believed possible," said Professor Jon Adams from the University of Southampton in southern England, the project's main investigator. "This will change our understanding of shipbuilding and seafaring in the ancient world," he said.

Helen Farr, a project team member, said: "We have bits of shipwreck which are earlier but this one really looks intact." "The project as a whole was actually looking at sea level change and the flooding of the Black Sea region... and the shipwrecks are a happy by-product of that," she told BBC radio.— AFP



An undated handout picture released by Black Sea MAP/EEF Expeditions in London shows the remains of an ancient Greek trading ship laying on the sea bed at the bottom of the Black Sea near Bulgaria.— AFP

## New Pompeii evidence rewrites Vesuvius eruption history

A newly-discovered inscription at Pompeii proves the city was destroyed by Mount Vesuvius after October 17, 79 AD and not on August 24 as previously thought, archeologists said. Archeologists recently discovered that a worker had inscribed the date of "the 16th day before the calends of November", meaning October 17, on a house at Pompeii, the head of archeology at the site, Massimo Osanna, told Italian media. Pompeii and Herculaneum were previously thought to have been destroyed by the massive eruption of Mount Vesuvius on August 24, based on contemporary writings and archeological finds.

Nevertheless, evidence such as autumnal fruits on branches found in the ash ruins had suggested a later date since the 19th century, Osanna said. "Today, with much humility, perhaps we will rewrite the history books because we date the eruption to the second half of October," said Italy's Minister of Culture Alberto Bonisoli. Pompeii is the second most visited tourist site in Italy, after the Colosseum in Rome, with more than three million visitors in the first eight months of this year.— AFP

## Egyptians farmed fish 3,500 years ago

Egyptians practiced fish farming more than 3,500 years ago, the earliest evidence of such activity worldwide according to a joint German-Israeli study released yesterday. Scientists studied 100 fish teeth found at archaeological sites across modern-day Israel to conclude they had been plucked from a lagoon in Egypt's Sinai thousands of years ago. "The sample of teeth covered a chronological period extending over 10,000 years, from the early Neolithic period through to the early Islamic period," said a statement from Israel's Haifa University, one of the participants in the study.

Of those samples, some were from about 3,500 years ago. Farmers at the time found a lagoon which fish were entering and barricaded it for a few months, Guy Bar-Oz, one of the authors of the report and archaeology professor at the University of Haifa. Afterwards "you can easily harvest them," the ac-

ademic explained of a method still used in the same Sinai lagoon. The Haifa academics worked alongside those from German universities in Mainz and Gottingen to deduce their findings from the teeth of gillhead sea bream.

Through studying the different types of oxygen isotopes in the teeth, scientists deduced that they were "spending at least four months in the closed lagoon", Bar-Oz told AFP. The majority of the fish found by the researchers came from aquaculture and not local fishing. Irit Zohar, from the University of Haifa and co-author of the study, said the size of fish standardized around 3,500 years ago and those imported from Egypt were all "the size of a plate". "Exactly what we observe of the fish bred in modern aquaculture," she said.

Egypt became a "superpower in aquaculture" at that time, according to Bar-Oz. Scientists believe fish farming was practiced in China 4,000 years ago, although Bar-Oz said no evidence has yet been produced to prove the theory.— AFP

## US museum says five Dead Sea Scroll fragments fake

A US museum announced Monday that five artifacts it had said were fragments of the ancient manuscripts known as the Dead Sea Scrolls are in fact fake, and will no longer be displayed.

Washington's Museum of the Bible—which stirred controversy last year for its financial backing from a billionaire evangelical Christian—removed the pieces from exhibition after a German research institution concluded that they weren't old enough. "Though we had hoped the testing would render different results, this is an opportunity to educate the public on the importance of verifying the authenticity of rare biblical artifacts, the elaborate testing process undertaken and our commitment to transparency," the museum's chief curator Jeffrey Kloha said in a statement. "As an educational institution entrusted with cultural heritage, the museum upholds and adheres to all museum and ethical guidelines on collection care, research and display."

The Dead Sea Scrolls, which include the oldest known manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible, date from the 3rd century BC to the 1st century AD. Numbering around 900, they were discovered between 1947 and 1956 in the Qumran caves above the Dead Sea. The five removed fragments had been exhibited in the sprawling museum since it opened in November 2017, but were labeled with explanations that research on their legitimacy was underway.

In April last year the museum sent five of its 16 Dead Sea Scroll pieces to Germany's Federal Institute for Materials Research and Testing (BAM) for testing after previous studies questioned their authenticity. One researcher, Kipp Davis of Trinity Western University, had published work saying "at least seven fragments in the museum's Dead Sea Scrolls collection are modern forgeries."—AFP



In this file photo visitors look at an exhibit about the Dead Sea scrolls during a media preview of the new Museum of the Bible, a 430,000 square-foot (39,948 square-meter) museum, dedicated to the history, narrative and impact of the Bible, in Washington, DC.— AFP

## Lifestyle | Music &amp; Movies



File pictures taken on September 18, 1984 shows Rock star Freddie Mercury, lead singer of the rock group "Queen", during a concert at the Palais Omnisports de Paris Bercy (POPB). — AFP photos

## Mercury biopic crowns enduring majesty of Queen

The Freddie Mercury biopic "Bohemian Rhapsody" premieres in London in grand style yesterday, reflecting the enduring appeal of Queen and their legendary frontman 27 years on from his death. Fans are set to watch the film in the 12,500-capacity Wembley Arena-opposite the stadium where the iconic British rock band staged a famous performance at the 1985 Live Aid concert. Appreciation of the group's legacy and Mercury's unique talent has only grown since his death in 1991 of bronchial pneumonia, brought on by AIDS.

Among the world's best-selling artists ever, most of the band's sales have come since the singer's passing at the age of 45. And Queen guitarist Brian May and drummer Roger Taylor, now 71 and 69, are still rocking arenas worldwide, resurgent as a live act propelled by the flamboyant US vocalist Adam Lambert. Now hits including "We Will Rock You", "Another One Bites The Dust" and "Don't Stop Me Now" are set for a further lease of life through the movie. In the pipeline for eight years, the film could deliver another smash hit, with Egyptian-American actor Rami Malek winning rave reviews for his performance as Mercury. In interviews, Malek has talked about

tackling a complex character—a publicly bombastic yet privately shy individual with a highly unusual path to stardom.

### Zanzibar to Wembley

Born Farrokh Bulsara in 1946 to a Parsi Indian family living on the East African spice island of Zanzibar and educated at an English-style boarding school in India, he arrived in London when his family fled the 1964 Zanzibar revolution. The movie follows Mercury's rise to fame and complicated love life, from Queen's formation in 1970 to the band's stellar performance at the Live Aid concert. Their 20-minute set at Wembley Stadium-opposite Wembley Arena—was the band's finest hour, often cited as one of the greatest live performances ever.

Mercury's demise seemed like the end for Queen—a band of four equal partners who each wrote chart-topping hits. Bassist John Deacon retired in 1997 and has vanished from the public eye. Assuming Queen was a chapter closed, May and Taylor tried to move on with solo careers. However, they gradually came to embrace rather than resist the gravitational pull of their band's

legacy. And Mercury's legend only grows with time, yet to be eclipsed by a more captivating stadium showman.

Even during his lifetime, Mercury was stunned that nobody had written a hit to overtake "We Are The Champions". But 41 years on, his 1977 singalong anthem remains the go-to tune at sporting finales, and 1975's "Bohemian Rhapsody" is still regularly voted the greatest rock song ever written.

### Concerts a celebration

With Deacon's blessing to carry on as Queen, May and Taylor joined forces with bluesy former Free singer Paul Rodgers from 2005 to 2008 and played sell-out concerts. Afterwards, the pair assumed their revival was done. Then in 2009, on the television show "American Idol", they met Lambert—someone May describes as a "gift from God". Early brief performances snowballed into a European tour in 2012 and world tours in the years since.

May and Taylor are visibly rejuvenated by Lambert's natural ability to handle Mercury's dramatic range and camp touch. Queen fans have embraced the 36-year-old,

who does not try to mimic or replace their lost frontman. Lambert acknowledges before audiences that he's "no Freddie", and asks their permission to celebrate Mercury with them by singing his lines. Billed as Queen and Adam Lambert, they played 26 arena shows in North America and another 26 in Europe in 2017. But such is the demand that they were back out again this year, touring Oceania and Europe and holding a residency in Las Vegas.

Concertgoers include those old enough to have seen Queen's last tour with Mercury in 1986, but also younger generations thrilled at the chance to experience the band live. "I keep thinking, 'who could have thought it?'" and "how Freddie would love all this," May said Thursday on Instagram, in anticipation of the movie premiere. "Hopefully he is somewhere close by, just one dimension away, with a naughty smile on his face." —AFP

## Award-winning film casts light on 'vicious cycle' of sex trafficking

An award-winning film about a Nigerian woman trapped in the sex trade in Austria aims to shine a light on the cycle of abuse and poverty fuelling sexual slavery, the director said yesterday. Sudabeh Mortezaei said she hoped that "Joy", which won the best film award at the BFI London Film Festival on Saturday, would encourage viewers to empathize with the trafficking victims hiding in plain sight in many cities worldwide. "I really wanted the audience to see that human face of these women and just put themselves in their shoes," the Iranian-born Austrian director said in an interview.

Thousands of women have been lured in recent years from impoverished lives in southern Nigeria to Europe with the promise of lucrative work, most of whom ending up selling sex. Many are enslaved after undergoing black magic rituals and signing contracts to finance the move, leaving them with debts that spiral into thousands of dollars and take years to pay off. Such stories were the inspiration for "Joy", which follows a young Nigerian woman

working the streets in Austria and selling sex to pay off debts to the woman who controls her - a madame - while trying to build a better life for her young daughter.

Mortezaei began work on the film after learning that many of the madames are former victims who have bought their freedom and gone on to entrap other women in a "vicious cycle" of abuse. "(It) really shocked me," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "Why would a woman do that who has been a victim?" "There's almost an industry that has developed there." There are few happy endings for the women involved, Mortezaei said, explaining that most apply for asylum in Europe but are turned down because they are not fleeing war or persecution. Some women are able to buy their freedom and remain in Europe, but continue selling sex due to a lack of alternatives. Others return to Nigeria still indebted to their traffickers, only to be rejected by their families, she added. "If they can have something to show for it then they will be accepted in society (back in Nigeria)," Mortezaei said. "But

if they come back without any money they will be shunned."

Anti-trafficking charities praised the drama film for highlighting the reality of sex slavery within Europe. "We still see that Nigerians coming to Europe are very vulnerable for human trafficking; in particular women," said Suzanne Hoff of European anti-trafficking charity La Strada. "It remains important that awareness is being raised." The director of "Love Sonia" - an Indian sex trafficking drama with Freida Pinto and Demi Moore that premiered in June - said it struggled to get funding as it was too controversial. More than 40 million people globally are trapped in forced labor and forced marriages the United Nations estimates, earning traffickers illegal profits of \$150 billion a year. — Reuters



In this file photo US actress Jamie Lee Curtis attends the "Halloween" premiere at the TCL Chinese Theatre in Los Angeles, California. — AFP

## 'Halloween' scares up big box office numbers in North America

North American moviegoers really like to be scared, and Universal gleefully accommodated them this weekend as its new release "Halloween" registered an impressive \$76.2 million in ticket sales, industry tracker Exhibitor Relations reported Monday.

That strong three-day number gave the film the second-best opening ever for an October, trailing only "Venom," which earlier this month booked an \$80 million debut. Universal executives could be excused for a bit of gloating—they produced "Halloween" for a microscopic \$10 million. "Halloween" recounts the return of homicidal masked figure Michael Myers (Nick Castle) 40 years after he set off on a bloody Halloween night killing spree. Jamie Lee Curtis again stars as Laurie Strode, sole survivor of that spree. "OK, I'm going for one BOAST post. Biggest horror movie opening with a female lead," Curtis tweeted, reeling off a list of the movie's achievements. "Biggest movie opening with a female lead over 55. Second biggest October movie opening ever. Biggest Halloween opening ever #womengettingthingsdone." Holding tight in second spot was Warner Bros musical drama "A Star Is Born," with ticket sales of \$19.1 million.

The film, the third remake of a 1937 movie, was directed by Bradley Cooper. He plays a hard-drinking musician who falls in love with a young singer (Lady Gaga), only to see her star rise as his plunges. Sony's "Venom" was not far behind, taking in \$18 million as it approaches \$500 million globally. Tom Hardy stars as a journalist who becomes the superpowerful host for an alien creature. In fourth was another seasonal offering, Sony's "Goosebumps 2: Haunted Halloween," at \$9.7 million. The family-friendly sequel, based on the R.L. Stine children's books, stars Wendi McLendon-Covey and Madison Iseman. Fifth spot went to Universal's astronaut drama "First Man," with \$8.3 million. The film, directed by Oscar winner Damien Chazelle and starring Ryan Gosling, recounts Neil Armstrong's historic journey to the moon in 1969. Rounding out this weekend's top 5 were:

- "The Hate U Give" (\$7.6 million)
- "Smallfoot" (\$6.6 million)
- "Night School" (\$4.9 million)
- "Bad Times at the El Royale" (\$3.4 million)
- "The Old Man & The Gun" (\$2.1 million)—AFP



Stills from the film "Joy" which follows Nigerian women trafficked to sell sex in Europe. — Reuters photos

## Download Festival: Def Leppard, Slipknot and Tool confirmed as headliners

Def Leppard will headline Download Festival 2019 and play 'Hysteria' in full. The first wave of bands have been announced for the iconic rock event at Donnington Park next summer, and it's already set to be a special weekend from June 14-16 with Slipknot and Tool joining them at the top of the bill. Frontman Joe Elliott confirmed the legendary group will be performing their classic 1987 album - which features 'Pour Some Sugar On Me' and 'Animal' - in full at what will be their only UK appearance of 2019. He said: "We are delighted to be going back to headline Download in 2019! The festival has a very special place in our hearts and it's such a

great place to play. "We will be playing 'Hysteria' in full - yes, in full! - plus a load more of the hits, and we are going to put on a very special show for our UK fans. Can't wait to see you all there!"

Elsewhere, the likes of Slash - teaming up with Myles Kennedy and The Conspirators - and Whitesnake will be entertaining crowd at the extravaganza. Rob Zombie has also been announced, alongside Trivium, Amon Amarth, Carcass, Delain, Die Antwoord, Opeth, Power Trip, Skindred, Underoath and The Amity Affliction. Rounding off the initial line-up reveal are Me First and the Gimme Gimmes, Starset, Telsa and Reel Big Fish. Download Festival's Andy Copping said: "We're incredibly excited to announce three legends as Download 2019 headliners. "It's not quite been 10,000 Days since we have been able to indulge in one of our favourite all-rock bands, but after thirteen years I am thrilled to announce Tool are finally making their long-awaited return to Download.—BangShowbiz

## Rak-Su have vowed to stay sober while touring

Rak-Su have vowed to stay sober during their tour. The boy band - made up of Myles Stephenson, Mustafa Rahimtulla, Ashley Fongho, and Jamaal Shurland - have insisted that they won't be drinking as they've learned from other musician's mistakes - and want to build up their career after winning "The X Factor" rather than go out and party. Speaking to the Daily Star's Wired column, Myles said: "One thing that we have learned and that the boys have personally taught me is that hard work does pay off. "Before the 'X Factor' shows we were having like two hours of sleep a night tops. With previous acts, I can't vouch for how hard they've worked, but we will continue to try our hardest."

Ashley explained the the group understand the effort it will take to build a long-lasting career, and said they can save the celebrating until they're "done". He added: "We are just aware we have a lot of work to do to build our careers for the rest of our lives, once that's done then we can party and celebrate." The 'I'm Feeling You' hit-makers are conscious of riding off others' success - and despite having been offered the chance to work with girl band Little Mix they want to avoid collaborations until they have developed their career further.

Ashley said: "We love the Little Mix girls and know if we called them they'd probably say yes but we want to be at the right level of success so we feel we deserve it. "So we feel it's mutual rather than them doing us a favor." The group have also denied rumors that they will be supporting fellow 'X Factor' alumni Olly Murs on his tour next year. He joked: "We've got to keep him and Myles away from each other. I think they'll end up wrecking havoc." — BangShowbiz

Lifestyle | Features

# Grass skirts and kava as Harry and Meghan arrive in Fiji

Prince Harry sipped on the narcotic drink kava at a traditional welcoming ceremony in Fiji yesterday as the island nation gave the British royal and his pregnant wife Meghan the biggest greeting so far on their Oceania tour. After more than a week in Australia, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex began a four-day swing through Fiji and Tonga, arriving to huge crowds in the Fijian capital Suva. About 15,000 people, many holding union flags and pictures of the royal couple, packed into Albert Park in downtown Suva for the ceremony led by elders in grass skirts.

They presented Harry with a large sperm whale tooth known as a tabua, a symbol of prestige in Fijian culture. He was then given a cup of kava from a communal bowl, with the sixth in line to the British throne appearing slightly apprehensive as he looked at Meghan and his entourage. He drew cheers from the crowd through when he gave the traditional toast "bula" and downed the concoction in one, clapping himself after he was done.

The mildly intoxicating drink—made from the root of a relative of the pepper plant—is commonly described as tasting like muddy water, and leaves the face feeling slightly numb. "Thank you Mr President and you the people of Fiji for the warm welcome you've given us here today," he said. "The Duchess and I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible over the next two days."

### Zika precautions

Fiji, a former British colony, became independent in 1970 at a ceremony in the same Albert Park



This handout photo received from the Fijian Government shows Britain's Prince Harry (second left) and his wife Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex (left) meeting the President of Fiji Jioji Konrote (second right) and his wife Sarote (right) in Suva, Fiji yesterday. — AFP



Britain's Prince Harry (right) drinks kava as his wife Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex (left) looks on at a traditional welcome ceremony after they arrived in Suva.

venue that was attended by Harry's father Prince Charles. Earlier, thousands of people lined the route as the royal motorcade made its way into Suva, with the couple's progress broadcast on live television to the archipelago's population of 920,000. Harry wore medals from his own military service as he inspected a Fijian honor guard of soldiers wearing the distinctive sulu, a kilt-like white skirt with a zig-zag hem.

Meghan followed medical advice to cover up and minimize the risk of Zika infection, donning a

long-sleeved white dress with a matching hat. The news of Meghan's pregnancy had sparked fears among royal watchers about exposure to Zika virus, which is officially listed as a risk in Fiji and Tonga. Zika can cause congenital deformities in unborn babies but there have been no cases in either country this year and Kensington Palace said Harry and Meghan decided to proceed with the trip after consulting doctors.

Experts say the risk of infection is low if travellers in Zika-prone areas wear insect repellent, as

well as loose, light coloured clothing and stay indoors where possible. The royal visit is taking place during an election campaign, and Harry and Meghan were due to meet leaders from all political parties at a state dinner later yesterday. The royals will travel to Tonga on Thursday before returning briefly to Australia then wrapping up the tour with a visit to New Zealand. — AFP



Johannesburg Witwatersrand University's professor Jonah Choiniere (left) and Paleontology Master student Cebisa Mdekazi, 24, prepare to remove a cast jacketed rock formations containing fossils at the Heelbo farm on the outskirts of Rosendal, South Africa. — AFP photos



Johannesburg Witwatersrand University's professor Jonah Choiniere holds a bone shaped stone as he searches through rock formation containing fossils.



Johannesburg Witwatersrand University's professor Jonah Choiniere looks for fossils in the rock formations.

## BUFFALOES PLOUGH THROUGH ANNUAL THAI RACING FESTIVAL

Several hefty buffaloes thunder down a dirt track in eastern Thailand, kicking up dust as they are urged toward the finish line by whip-wielding jockeys perched on their backs. It's a display of strength and agility from the riders, who risk life and limb in their bid for glory—and a top prize of 8,000 baht (US\$240). The race is the highlight of the annual week-long buffalo festival held in the coastal town of Chonburi which is now into its 147th year. Buffalo trainer Pongsak Khanngern, 44, has entered two of his animals into the contest. "I have trained them for months and I am confident that one of them will win," he said. The decades-old tradition started as a way for farmers to blow off steam during the slow moments of an arduous rice-planting season, and over time many superstitions developed around it.

If a buffalo fell sick for example, farmers would pray to the spirits of their ancestors to heal it: if the animal recovered, a race would be offered in thanks. Yesterday, some 500 buffaloes were competing. "There are many youngsters attending and (a lot of) interest in this event," mayor Chutharut Parinwachirapud said of the crowds, which numbered in the thousands at the festival. For centuries, these gentle giants were of immense practical importance—ploughing the fields, providing transport, and even defending villages in times of conflict.

But as farming became mechanised, buffaloes have taken on a symbolic role, acting as a reminder of Thailand's farming tradition. Near the race track, farmers splashed water over the buffaloes' glossy hides to keep them cool under the sun as they wait for their race category. Phaichit Payindee has been competing for years, and

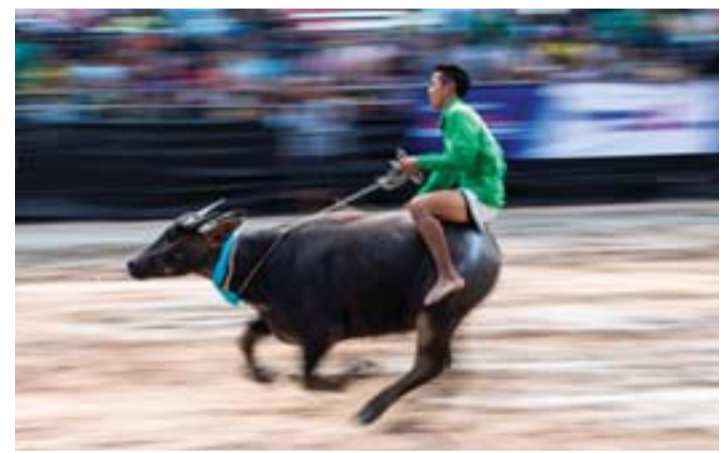


A jockey rides a buffalo during the annual buffalo races in Chon Buri.

prides herself in keeping last year's reigning champion, four-year-old Ruang, strong and healthy. "Today my buffalo is ready to defend his champion title," the 42-year-old said, adding that she doesn't care about the money at stake. "It's not about the prize, but my buffalo's reputation." — AFP



A jockey rides a buffalo during the annual buffalo races in Chon Buri.



A jockey rides a buffalo during the annual buffalo races in Chon Buri.



Jockeys get ready to ride buffaloes during the annual buffalo races in Chon Buri yesterday. — AFP photos

## 'Dinosaur country': Fossil hunters' S African paradise

The sun rises over the South African bush as scientists laden with backpacks climb a hillside. They get down to work, carving into two immense blocks of stone that have concealed the secrets of an ancestor of modern-day crocodiles for some 200 million years. Jonah Choiniere and his team from Johannesburg's Witwatersrand University had tracked the reptile from another age for three years. The search brought them to a stretch of farmland in the central town of Rosendal, where they are surrounded by cattle and impalas. "In 2015, one of my students just saw a few (fossilized) bones coming out," said Choiniere, his shirt sticking to sweat from the morning's hike. "We started to excavate it and we brought it back to the lab and it turned out to be a hip of a species we've never seen before," said the palaeontologist, who is originally from the United States.

The delicate excavation process at the site is grindingly slow and continues today. Before being extracted, the stone surrounding a fossil is carefully enveloped in a protective layer of plaster. After five hours of drying time, the stone is chiseled free, lifted by three strong people, and then transported by road nearly 300 kilometers (185 miles) to Johannesburg into the expert hands of Willfred Bilankulu. "My job is to make the fossils visible," said the former fine arts student. "I'm taking off the jacket that has been put in place around the fossil, and after I prepare them using dental tools."

### Rare specimen

The herculean task will take between eight and 12 months. A similar amount of time will be needed to meticulously examine, compare and describe the find. Choiniere expected a bountiful haul even before he had the discovery in hand. "This is a pretty good harvest for us. We didn't know what to expect when we came into this quarry... I can say it's much better than what we were expecting, very promising," he said. Given the bones already uncovered, Choiniere's research student Rick Tolchard can barely hide his excitement.

He knows he is in the presence of a rare specimen, the improbable forefather of the crocodile family which today stalks African waterways. "Two hundred and fifty to 200

million years ago, these animals were the dominant land carnivores and they were found all over the world... (but) in South Africa we don't have a record of them," he said. "Some of them were, I imagine, sort of like a crocodile crossed with a lion, a very large quadrupedal, legs under the body, with these massive big jaws—a very intimidating animal."

"The one here would have stood on his hind legs, it would have looked more like a theropod dinosaur, almost like a raptor." In recent years, South Africa has become a top destination for dinosaur hunters. Just an hour's drive from the Rosendal farm, Choiniere's team has already unearthed fossils belonging to a newly discovered type of dinosaur that roamed the earth 200 million years ago.

### 'Giant thunderclap at dawn'

Measuring four meters (13 feet) to the shoulder and weighing 12 tons—twice the weight of a modern elephant—the giant herbivore known in the local Sesotho language as Ledumahadi mafube ("a giant thunderclap at dawn") shook up the family tree of extinct monsters. Choiniere said it could well be "the first of the true giants". The beast is a forerunner of the 60-tonne sauropods familiar from Steven Spielberg's blockbuster "Jurassic Park" series. Experts say the southern tip of Africa is an ideal place to study the transition between the Triassic and Jurassic periods, when mass extinction events shaped the evolution of the planet.

"One of the reasons is that about 66 percent of the surface of South Africa has fossils on it—there are a lot of fossil-bearing areas," Choiniere said. "We don't get much rainfall, especially in the interior, so we have areas that erode rapidly—and that erosion exposes fossils." "It's phenomenal, it's really great," said palaeontology masters candidate Cebisa Mdekazi, a young student flying the flag for the next generation of South African palaeontologists.—AFP



Artist Ghadah Alkandari poses next to one of her paintings



## Color and form pack emotional punch in Ghadah Alkandari's latest work

### 'Hurricane PM/My Life from October to October'

Artist Ghadah Alkandari opened her newest solo exhibition, Hurricane PM/My Life From October to October, at Dar Al Fnoon in Kuwait City Monday evening. Documenting a tumultuous year in the artist's life, the paintings reflect a dramatic upheaval in her personal, emotional, chemical and physical states.

"For a whole year, my woman-ness (womanity?) was

intensified to the nth degree. I divided that year into two parts: The first was a three-month period of debilitating anxiety, depression and sleeplessness brought on by what I would ultimately discover was my perimenopause, or what I call Hurricane PM. The second was a time of mending and learning how to cope with all my form, in all its senses," Alkandari writes in her artist's statement.

Addressing the upheaval through self-portraits and portraits, Alkandari deploys color and form with casual brutality, packing an emotional punch into every stroke and leaving the viewer to both revel and fear what comes next.

The exhibition will be shown until Nov 1.



Artist Ghadah Alkandari (center) poses with two of her youngest fans, Sabel (left) and Safyre (right) at the opening night of her latest solo exhibition, 'Hurricane PM/My Life from October to October' at Dar Al Fnoon in Kuwait City. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



## In a London warehouse, the tools of Britain's soft power

In an unremarkable warehouse down a back alley in central London, thousands of paintings, prints and drawings are lined up in racks, awaiting distribution around the world in a British display of "soft power". The Government Art Collection comprises around 14,000 mostly British pieces amassed over the last 200 years, and displayed in consular buildings, residences and government offices around the world. It includes portraits by Lucian Freud and a John Constable housed in Downing Street, Barbara Hepworth screenprints on the walls of the embassy in Bahrain, as well as a Damien Hirst and a William Hogarth displayed in Washington. "Works of art can act as ice breakers, conversation starters, as well as just showing the great creativity there is in Britain," director Penny Johnson told AFP.

Some are personal choices of the ambassador involved, others reflect the location. Bridget Riley used the colors of ancient Egyptian painters for her 1982

work "Reflection", and it now hangs in the British embassy in Cairo. At any one time, around two-thirds of the collection is on display in more than 150 cities—some in better condition than others. Extreme heat and bugs are one peril in far-flung missions, and curators submit paintings and pictures to a "tropicalisation process", in which the back is lined with silver tape.

Some hazards are domestic—an ambassador recently returned a delicate installation to London, fearing it would not survive in his home with three young children. Other works fall foul of diplomatic tensions. Protesters who stormed the British embassy in Tehran in 2011 in response to sanctions over the nuclear dispute slashed some of the paintings inside, Johnson said. The embassy reopened in 2015 and full relations restored the year after, but the artwork was only returned a few months ago. "The portrait of Queen Victoria is currently being restored and we are hop-

ing that everything will return to Tehran in December," she said.

### Calling card to the world

The collection is government funded, and has a budget of £855,000 (960,000 euros, \$1.1 million) this year to cover acquisitions, conservation, framing, transport and installation. But donations help it keep up to date by investing in new artists. The collection last month announced a new commission for 10 works by 10 artists over the next decade, funded by a £500,000 donation from philanthropists Sybil Robson Orr and Matthew Orr. The first TenTen artist is Turner Prize-shortlisted artist Hurvin Anderson, who created the stencil print "Still Life with Artificial Flowers", inspired by a vase belonging to his Jamaican mother.

One of the limited edition prints has already been earmarked for the Paris embassy, which has about 17,000 visi-

tors a year, providing a perfect platform to showcase British talent. "Art and culture is one of our great calling cards to the world," said junior arts minister Michael Ellis at the launch of the new project. The collection "is part of our soft power footprint around the world", he said. Britain ranked number one in this year's Soft Power Index, which highlighted its cultural, sporting, creative, financial and technological influence in the world.

However, the report—compiled by Portland Communications—warned uncertainty over Britain's exit from the European Union next year has thrown many of these strengths into jeopardy. "Continued investment in the institutions and vehicles that export British soft power will only become more vital as Brexit is completed," it said. — AFP



Government Art Collection staff member Chris Christophorou prepares artwork for British Government buildings.



Government Art Collection staff member Chantal Condron poses with paintings at the painting storage area of the Government Art Collection in central London.



Government Art Collection staff members Anthony Lindsay (left) and Chris Christophorou (right) prepare a painting before being shipped to UK Ministry of Transport at Government Art Collection. — AFP photos

# Classifieds

Wednesday, October 24, 2018



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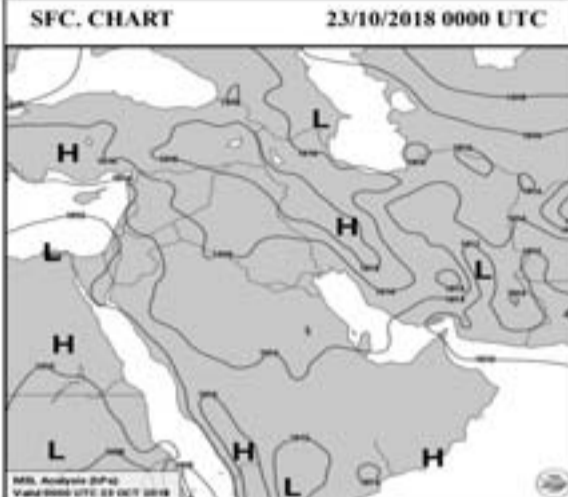
Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 6819 - 6817  
Fax: (+965) 24348714  
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## Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

**BY DAY:** Partly cloudy to cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times variable wind to south easterly wind, with speed of 10 - 40 km/h with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times.

**BY NIGHT:** Partly cloudy with light to moderate variable wind to north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 32 km/h.

WEATHER WATCH			Thunder Rain	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 23/10/2018 0000 UTC	
KUWAIT CITY	33 °C	27 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	33 °C	23 °C		
ABDALY	34 °C	22 °C		
BUBYAN	--- °C	--- °C		
JAHRA	34 °C	24 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	31 °C	24 °C		
SALMIYAH	31 °C	27 °C		
AHMADI	29 °C	27 °C		
NUWAISIB	33 °C	23 °C		
WAFRA	32 °C	21 °C		
SALMY	34 °C	22 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Wednesday	10/24	Relatively hot and Partly cloudy	35 °C	22 °C	VRB	08 - 20 km/h
Thursday	10/25	Partly cloudy to cloudy with a chance for rain that might be thundery later on	37 °C	21 °C	S-SE	15 - 42 km/h
Friday	10/26	Cloudy to partly cloudy causing rising dust with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times	39 °C	24 °C	SW-SE	15 - 45 km/h
Saturday	10/27	A significant decrease in temperature and Cloudy to partly cloudy with a chance for	31 °C	22 °C	NE-VRB	10 - 40 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:35
Sunrise	05:55
Zuhr	11:32
Asr	14:45
Sunset	17:10
Isha	18:28

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	30 °C
MIN. Temp.	19 °C
MAX. RH	100%
MIN. RH	51 %
MAX. Wind	SE 39 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	14.29mm

## Hospitals

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

## Clinics

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

## ACCOMMODATION

Sharing accommodation available for decent Christian bachelor / single lady in Salmiya, Block-10, Street-10 (near Garden).  
Contact: 51177342 (C 5430)  
23-10-2018

Sharing accommodation available for decent Christian bachelor / single lady in Salmiya, Block-10, Street-10 (near Garden).  
Contact: 51177342 (C 5430)  
23-10-2018

**EMERGENCY 112**

Airlines	
Kuwait Airways	171
Jazeera Airways	177
Wataniya Airways	22 066 536
Turkish Airlines	1884918
American Airlines	22087425
Jet Airways	22924455
FlyDubai	22414400
Qatar Airways	22423888
KLM	22425747
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6
British Airways	22425635
Air France	22430224
Emirates	22921555
Air India	22438184
Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Egypt Air	22421578
Swiss Air	22421516
Saudia	22426306
Middle East Airlines	22423073
Lufthansa	22422493
PIA	22421044
Bangladesh Airlines	22452977/8
Indian Airlines	22456700
Oman Air	22958787
Turkish Airlines	22453820/1
Aeroflot	22404838/9

## Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page ([www.kuwait-airport.com.kw](http://www.kuwait-airport.com.kw))

### Flight Schedule

Arrival Flights on Wednesday 24/10/2018					Departure Flights on Wednesday 24/10/2018					
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time		Airlines	Flt	Route	Time		
MSC	405	Sohag	00:05	GFA 221	Bahrain	14:15	JZR	176	Dubai	13:10
THY	772	Istanbul	00:15	KAC 618	Jeddah	14:15	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
KAC	702	London	00:50	KAC 364	Doha	14:20	JZR	144	Doha	13:55
DLH	625	Dammam	01:00	FDB 059	Colombo	14:20	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
JZR	539	Cairo	01:00	KAC 512	Mashhad	14:25	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	JZR 286	Dhaka	14:25	JZR	1330	Al Najaf	14:25
MSR	618	Alexandria	01:35	KAC 751	Madinah	14:30	CLX	792	Hanoi	14:30
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	KAC 788	Jeddah	14:50	FEG	342	Sohag	14:50
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	KNE 683	Madinah	14:55	JZR	802	Tbilisi	14:50
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:00	KAC 304	Mumbai	15:05	KNE	282	Taif	15:00
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	ETD 303	Abu Dhabi	15:05	GFA	322	Bahrain	15:00
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	KAC 412	Bangkok	15:10	KAC	539	Sharm el-Sheikh	15:00
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30	KNE 529	Jeddah	15:10	KAC	673	Dubai	15:05
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	KAC 562	Amman	15:20	FDB	060	Dubai	15:10
JZR	651	Lahore	02:55	OMA 645	Muscat	15:20	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
KAC	418	Manila	03:05	KAC 502	Beirut	15:35	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	ABY 127	Sharjah	15:35	KNE	684	Madinah	15:50
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	UAE 857	Dubai	15:45	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:55
RJA	648	Amman	03:05	SVA 504	Madinah	15:55	KNE	530	Jeddah	16:00
RBG	215	Sohag	03:05	KAC 118	New York	16:00	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:00
KAC	382	Delhi	03:10	SAW 705	Damascus	16:00	JZR	606	Kochi	16:00
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	JZR 535	Cairo	16:10	KAC	743	Dammam	16:05
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	QTR 1072	Doha	16:15	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
KAC	796	Madinah	03:45	FDB 051	Dubai	16:20	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
JAI	572	Mumbai	04:00	KAC 542	Cairo	17:00	KAC	619	Doha	16:15
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	SVA 510	Riyadh	17:15	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	GFA 215	Bahrain	17:30	OMA	646	Muscat	16:20
JZR	609	Hyderabad	04:30	JZR 777	Jeddah	17:35	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:40
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	JZR 145	Doha	17:35	SVA	505	Madinah	16:55
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	JZR 177	Dubai	17:40	SAW	706	Damascus	17:00
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	JZR 1331	Al Najaf	17:45	KAC	503	Beirut	17:15
KAC	544	Cairo	05:20	QTR 1080	Doha	18:10	FDB	052	Dubai	17:20
JZR	603	Mumbai	05:25	JZR 483	Istanbul	18:20	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	MSR 620	Cairo	18:30	KAC	361	Colombo	17:35
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	RJA 640	Amman	19:00	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
JZR	561	Sohag	05:55	GFA 217	Bahrain	19:05	KAC	381	Delhi	17:45
BAW	157	London	06:10	FDB 063	Dubai	19:10	KAC	331	Trivandrum	17:55
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:25	KAC 744	Dammam	19:10	KAC	283	Dhaka	18:00
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:40	ABY 123	Sharjah	19:20	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
KAC	678	Dubai	06:45	KAC 156	Istanbul	19:25	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
JZR	143	Doha	07:00	KAC 776	Riyadh	19:35	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00	JZR 189	Dubai	19:40	JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
JZR	503	Luxor	07:50	KAC 674	Dubai	19:40	JZR	608	Hyderabad	18:25
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	FDB 057	Bahrain	19:50	JZR	240	Amman	18:30
KAC	358	Kochi	08:00	KAC 616	London	20:00	JZR	266	Beirut	18:30
KAC	384	Delhi	08:05	OMA 647	Muscat	20:05	JZR	538	Cairo	18:35
JZR	529	Asyut	08:10	DLH 624	Frankfurt	20:05	QTR	1081	Doha	19:20
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	KNE 381	Taif	20:10	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	KAC 620	Doha	20:15	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	JAV 621	Amman	20:15	FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:25	MEA 402	Beirut	20:15	RJA	641	Amman	20:00
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	KAC 166	Rome	20:25	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	QTR 1088	Doha	20:40	JZR	552D	Alexandria	20:05
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	10:20	KAC 172	Frankfurt	20:45	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
JZR	787	Riyadh	10:30	JZR 803	Riyadh	20:45	JZR	602	Mumbai	20:30
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KLM 445	Amsterdam	21:00	DLH	624	Dammam	20:50
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	KAC 540	Sharm el-Sheikh	21:00	KNE	232	Kochi	21:00
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	ALK 229	Colombo	21:15	KAC	357	Doha	21:00
JZR	903	Baku	11:10	UAE 859	Dubai	21:15	OMA	648	Bengaluru	21:00
JZR	165	Dubai	11:45	ETD 307	Abu Dhabi	21:15	MEA	403	Muscat	21:05
IAW	157	Al Najaf	12:00	KAC 308	Paris	21:20	JAV	622	Beirut	21:15
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	THY 764	Istanbul	21:30	KAC	301	Amman	21:15
RBG	553	Alexandria	12:30	GFA 219	Bahrain	21:50	DHX	171	Mumbai	21:35
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	KAC 564	Amman	21:50	QTR	1089	Bahrain	21:50
CLX	792	Luxembourg	12:45	QTR 1082	Doha	22:05	KAC	205	Doha	21:50
KAC	522	Al Najaf	13:00	ETD 309	Abu Dhabi	22:10	ETD	308	Islamabad	21:55
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	KAC 786	Jeddah	22:15	KLM	445	Abu Dhabi	22:05
JZR	357	Mashhad	13:05	AIC 975	Chennai/Goa	22:25	KAC	543	Bahrain	22:10
KAC	774	Riyadh	13:30	SVA 514	Riyadh	22:30	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
JZR	125	Bahrain	13:35	SVA 502	Jeddah	22:45	KAC	383	Delhi	22:25
JZR	779	Jeddah	13:45	JZR 185	Dubai	22:50				

# UN rights panel slams French 'niqab ban' for 'violating' rights

GENEVA: The UN Human Rights Committee yesterday criticized France's so-called burqa ban, saying the law "violated" the rights of two women who were fined for wearing full-face veils in public. The committee called for the women to be compensated and for a review of the 2010 law that forbids people from publicly wearing clothing that conceals their face. "The French law disproportionately harmed the petitioners' right to manifest their religious beliefs," the committee said in a statement.

It added that it was not convinced by France's claim that the ban was necessary for security and social reasons. The two French women were convicted in 2012 for wearing the niqab, a veil with an opening for the eyes. "The ban, rather than protecting fully veiled women, could have the opposite effect of confining them to their homes, impeding their access to public services and marginalizing them," the committee said.

The UN Human Rights Committee, made up of independent experts, ensures countries stick to their human rights commitments but it does not have enforcement powers. It said the French ban was "too sweeping" but that governments could still make people show their faces in specific circumstances.

The committee's decision reignites a debate that has raged in France for years over Muslim headwear and other religious clothing. The debate has regularly pitted supporters of the country's secular constitution against those who argue for religious freedoms. The 2010 law had strong public support when brought in under former president Nicolas Sarkozy. But many said it targeted the tiny minority of Muslim women in France who wear Islamic veils.

Condemned by critics for pandering to far-right voters but backed by many women rights activists, the law made France the first European country to ban garments that cover the face. An estimated five million Muslims live in France and women who ignore the ban can be fined up to A150 (\$170). "The vast majority of cases where people have been stopped for checks and have been condemned to fines... have been women wearing the niqab," committee member Ilze Brands-Kehris told AFP. "In the context of fewer than 2,000 women wearing the full-face veil in France... (the law has) a vast disproportionate effect on those women."

Other EU countries, including Denmark, Austria and Belgium, have also implemented similar full-face veil bans. "France violated the human rights of two women by fining them for wearing the niqab," the committee



said, adding that measures should be taken to prevent similar violations in future, including a review of the law. France, which has ratified UN rights treaties, is "under obligation" to comply with the committee's recommendations and act in good faith, Brands-Kehris said.

The committee's stance contrasts with a 2014 European Court of Human Rights ruling which upheld the French ban, rejecting claims that it breached religious freedom. The court found that France was justified in introducing the ban in the interests of social cohesion as it was "not expressly based on the religious connotation of the clothing". Explaining the committee's decision, Committee Chair Yuval Shany said a general criminal ban did not allow a "reasonable" balance between public interests and individual rights.

"The decisions are not directed against the notion of secularity, nor are they an endorsement of a custom which many on the committee, including myself, regard as a form of oppression of women," Shany said. In August, the committee also criticized France over the 2008 sacking of a nursery worker who refused to remove her veil at work, arguing it interfered with her right to manifest her religion. The so-called Baby Loup case, named after the nursery, had already faced multiple legal battles in the French courts.

Debate about the effectiveness of the "burqa ban" also made headlines earlier this month after it was revealed that French gangster Redoine Faïd, who broke out of jail in July using a helicopter and was recaptured three months later, had at times worn a burqa as a disguise. Police say Faïd was caught after officers saw someone wearing a burqa but walking like a man. — AFP

strategy. "The rise of the dollar is having a serious impact on our currencies. We are not the only one affected," he told reporters in the Sri Lankan capital. "I want to build a coalition of the willing to deal with this problem. I don't see the global situation improving any time soon."

Washington pulled out of a landmark 2015 nuclear deal with Iran in May and has been reimposing punishing sanctions on the Islamic republic, targeting in particular its financial system. Iran not only supplies Sri Lanka with most of its oil, but is one of its chief buyers of the island's celebrated tea. Samaraweera has warned that blockading Iran will have ripple on effects on Sri Lanka, which has been unable to stop the rupee from nose diving. Last month, Colombo curbed its state institutions and public servants from importing cars to reduce the outflow of foreign capital. Banks were also ordered to restrict lending for purchasing overseas and consumer goods, but the rupee has continued its decline. In August, the government substantially increased taxes on small cars to discourage imports, but officials said there was still pressure on foreign exchange reserves to finance big-ticket imports. —AFP

reform could not be ignored. "Saudi Arabia's reforms are important and they are worth supporting," he told Reuters. Saudi Arabia signed 25 deals in the oil and gas industries and infrastructure sectors with firms such as Trafigura, Total, Hyundai, Norinco, Schlumberger, Halliburton and Baker Hughes. Saudi Aramco said it signed 15 memoranda of understanding worth \$34 billion.

Total Chief Executive Patrick Pouyanne, a panelist yesterday, said the French oil and gas producer would announce a retail network in the kingdom with Saudi Aramco. Falih heaped praise on Pouyanne for standing by Saudi Arabia in this difficult period. "We see what partnership means when you have difficult times," Pouyanne responded as he shared the stage with Falih. "This is when you really strengthen a partnership."

The managing director of the kingdom's sovereign wealth fund, the main backer of the event, said the country was becoming more transparent and that the Saudi Public Investment Fund continued to develop new industries under economic reforms launched by the crown prince. Yasir Al-Rumayyan said the fund has invested in 50 or 60 firms via SoftBank Group's Vision Fund and would bring most of those businesses to the kingdom. PIF has committed to invest \$45 billion in Vision Fund. SoftBank Group's chief executive Masayoshi Son - who maintains close relations with the crown prince - cancelled his speech, Bloomberg reported.

Many Western banks and other companies, fearful of losing business such as fees from arranging deals for Saudi Arabia's \$250 billion wealth fund, sent lower-level executives even as their top people stayed away. Top executives of Asian firms have been hesitant to pull out, so the participation of Chinese and Japanese institutions may help make the three-day conference as a success. "The West is still interested in the business opportunity that Saudi offers," said Tony Chan, president of Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, who attended the forum. "The no-shows have to be reconciled with that fact."

As business shifts from West to East, those companies have to find a balance between maintaining a good PR image and their business considerations. "The high profile withdrawal of so many American CEOs from the conference certainly presents opportunities for Asian and Russian companies to make a splash," Ellen Wald, author of the book "Saudi Inc", told AFP. For these reasons, the Western boycott may have little long-term impact on Saudi economic prospects. — Agencies

## Cryptocurrency bitcoin marks 10 years

LONDON: October 31, 2008 marked the birth of bitcoin. Ten years on, the world's first cryptocurrency is at the forefront of a complex financial system viewed warily by markets and investors. From its first evocation amid a global financial crisis, in a white paper written by Satoshi Nakamoto, an unknown pseudonym, bitcoin conveyed a political vision. The "abstract" set out in the paper for bitcoin, currently worth about \$6,400 per unit from a starting point of virtually zero, was for "a purely peer-to-peer version of electronic cash (that) would allow online payments to be sent directly from one party to another without going through a financial institution."

A decade on, this continues to be carried out via a decentralized registry system known as a blockchain. Such ambition for a cryptocurrency was fuelled by the bankruptcy of US investment bank Lehman Brothers in Sept 2008, an event that discredited the traditional system of "a small elite of bankers... (that) establishes monetary rules imposed on everybody", according to Pierre Noizat, founder of the first French bitcoin exchange in 2011.

Following its creation, bitcoin evolved for several years away from the public eye, grabbing the attention for the most part of geeks and criminals - the latter seeing it as a way to launder money. After bitcoin surpassed \$1,000 for the first time in 2013, it began to attract the attention of financial institutions. The European Central Bank compared it to a Ponzi scheme, but Ben Bernanke, then head of the US Federal Reserve, hailed its potential.

In early 2014, the cryptocurrency faced its biggest crisis to date, with the hacking of the Mt Gox platform, where about 80 percent of all bitcoins were traded. The result was a collapse in their value, leading to predictions of the virtual currency's death. It took until early 2017 for bitcoin's price to fully recover. That marked the start of a "turning point" according to Noizat, as the controversial cryptocurrency then rocketed to more than \$19,500 by the end of the year according to Bloomberg data.

That meant bitcoin had a total capitalization of



more than \$300 billion, according to the specialized website Coinmarketcap. By Jan 2018, the value of all cryptocurrencies exceeded \$800 billion, before the bubble burst. The concept of a digital currency has progressed substantially thanks to bitcoin, cryptocurrency analyst Bob McDowall told AFP, pointing to the creation of 2,000 rivals. "It becomes more than a technological, economic innovation. It almost becomes a religion for some people," he noted.

According to Anthony Lesoisier, co-founder of investment fund Swissborg which offers portfolios based on blockchain, "the real revolution has been on a philosophical level". But for economist Nouriel Roubini, decentralisation in crypto is a myth. "It is a system more centralized than North Korea. Miners are centralized, exchanges are centralized, developers are centralized dictators," Roubini tweeted.

If the initial idea was for bitcoin to facilitate payments, a majority of observers recognize that it is used above all as a store of value or as a speculative instrument owing to volatility in its value. "You need 20 years for this kind of... technology to take hold completely," said Noizat, who is banking on faster transaction speeds for bitcoin. As it stands, about five to ten bitcoin transactions can be processed per second compared with several thousand for Visa cards.

Looking ahead, US market regulators are considering applications for bitcoin-based exchange-traded funds, which if approved by the Securities and Exchange Commission would see the virtual currency become part of a financial system it set out to bypass. "We must cross some bridges in the short term" to generate the general public's interest and trust, said Lesoisier, who described himself as both an "idealist" and "realist". — AFP

## Lanka calls for global coalition to tackle dollar

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka yesterday called for a "coalition of the willing" to help stabilize free-falling emerging market currencies around the globe, as the beleaguered rupee slumped to fresh lows. The island's currency bottomed out at a record-low 174.12 rupees to the dollar, resisting a slew of measures by policymakers to arrest its steady decline. The rupee has shed more than 12 percent of its value this year and Sri Lanka fears it could slide further as US sanctions squeeze Iran, the island's chief source of oil.

A stronger dollar has made it difficult for emerging markets to repay debts and battered global currencies from Turkey to India and Argentina. Finance Minister Mangala Samaraweera invited those nations experiencing currency crises to visit Colombo and hash out a

## Saudi Arabia signs deals worth \$50bn...

Continued from Page 1

agreement to continue cooperation in the energy markets. "I don't rule out that the kingdom's production which has been 9-10 (million barrels per day) over the last decade or so will be a million to two millions (barrels) higher," Falih said, without providing a time frame.

Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan's government announced later yesterday in a statement from Islamabad that Saudi Arabia had pledged \$3 billion to Pakistan as it battles a balance of payments crisis, as well as to defer another \$3 billion in payments for oil imports. During his address at the FII, Khan confirmed that Pakistan was also in talks with the International Monetary Fund over a new bailout.

Hundreds of bankers and company executives joined officials for the Future Investment Initiative. But while last year's inaugural conference drew the global business elite, this year's event has been marred by the withdrawal of more than two dozen high-level speakers. Many foreign investors see a risk that the Khashoggi case could damage Riyadh's ties with Western governments. Saudi Arabia's stock index was down 1.3 percent in late trading on persistent investor concern. And in a fresh setback, the forum's website went down on Monday after an apparent cyberattack. There was no immediate claim of responsibility. It was back up with reduced content as the conference

US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and senior ministers from Britain and France pulled out of the event along with chief executives or chairmen of about a dozen big financial firms such as JP Morgan Chase and HSBC, and International Monetary Fund chief Christine Lagarde. Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi, who also withdrew from the event, said the firm was awaiting the full facts on Khashoggi's case before deciding whether that would affect Saudi involvement in the ride-hailing service. Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth fund has invested in Uber and its managing director sits on the app's board.

Russia sent a large delegation led by Direct Investment Fund head Kirill Dmitriev. He said Khashoggi's killing needed to be investigated and the culprits punished, but that the Saudi drive for economic and social

## Xi inaugurates HK-mainland...

Continued from Page 1

Xi presided over an inauguration ceremony attended by Hong Kong's and Macau's city leaders at a new port terminal in Zhuhai. "I declare the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau bridge officially open," Xi said in a one-line address, as digital fireworks exploded on a screen behind him at the indoor ceremony, before leaving the stage immediately. Supporters of the multi-billion-dollar bridge promote it as an engineering marvel that will boost business and cut travel time, but critics say it is one more way to integrate Hong Kong into China as fears grow that the city's cherished freedoms are being eroded.

China's Vice Premier Han Zheng characterized the bridge as part of the development of the Greater Bay Area - a Beijing-driven project to create an economic hub linking nine southern mainland cities to Hong Kong and Macau. At the ceremony he described the strategy as "deployed and driven by Xi Jinping personally". Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam said the bridge would help transform Hong Kong from a "connector to a more active participant".

Some Hong Kong social media comments accused Lam of "selling out" to Xi and portrayed her as Piglet to his Winnie the Pooh, as she was wearing an all-pink outfit. It is the second major infrastructure project tying Hong Kong to mainland China to launch in a matter of weeks, after the opening of a high-speed rail link last month that sparked criticism Hong Kong was giving away territory - with part of the terminus coming under mainland jurisdiction. The main section of the new bridge is also considered mainland territory, even though Hong Kong was slated to pay at least half the cost of the project, according to the original blueprint from the city's government.

Hong Kong cars and drivers travelling over it "must comply with the laws and regulations of the mainland",

## Erdogan calls for justice over...

Continued from Page 1

Erdogan confirmed that a Saudi official played the role of body double for Khashoggi, wearing his clothes in a bid to show that the journalist had left the consulate. The whereabouts of Khashoggi's corpse is still unknown. Turkish police were searching an abandoned car belonging to the Saudi consulate in an underground car park in the Sultangazi district of Istanbul. Investigators found some of Khashoggi's personal possessions in the vehicle, broadcaster CNN Turk said.

Erdogan said the killing was planned from when the 59-year-old Khashoggi first went to the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on Sept 28 to obtain documents necessary for his marriage. He was told he would need to come back later to collect the documents. On Oct 1, a day before Khashoggi's death, agents arrived from overseas

the city's transport department said. Building began in 2009 and has been dogged by delays, budget overruns, corruption prosecutions and the deaths of construction workers. The total price tag is unclear but some estimates run to over 100 billion yuan (\$14.4 billion).

Hong Kong residents will only be granted a license to cross into Zhuhai by car if they meet highly selective criteria, including holding certain mainland government positions or making major contributions to charities in the southern Chinese province of Guangdong. Most people will need to travel on coaches and buses. Some Hong Kong media reported that the physical condition of bus drivers would be monitored by cameras, including an alert sent if a driver yawns more than three times in 20 seconds.

Online commenters in Hong Kong complained about the bridge's restricted access ahead of the launch. "Such a huge investment using the Hong Kong taxpayer's money... yet basically it is not open to us at all," said one comment on the South China Morning Post website. But residents in Zhuhai welcomed it. "I think this bridge will bring great convenience to the whole area of Zhuhai, Hong Kong and Macao, and promote the economic development of the whole area of the Pearl River Delta," resident Dang Zheiliang told AFP. China already lays claim to the record for the world's longest bridge of any kind - the Danyang-Kunshan Grand Bridge, a viaduct which is part of a high-speed rail line.

Political analyst Willy Lam said the launch by Xi showed his support for Hong Kong's economic and political integration into the region, adding that the Pearl River Delta had long been the "new growth pole of China". It was also timed with a wider push to mark the 40th anniversary of China's economic reforms, against the backdrop of major challenges to the economy, including the escalating US-China trade conflict, Lam said.

China will mark the anniversary in December of the "reform and opening up" that was launched in 1978 under the late paramount leader Deng Xiaoping, moving away from a Maoist command economy and toward more market-oriented policies that transformed the country into the world's second-largest economy. — AFP

and began to scout locations, including the Belgrad Forest near Istanbul and the city of Yalova to its south, Erdogan said. Police have searched both areas for evidence of Khashoggi's remains. On the day Khashoggi arrived for his appointment and was later killed, the hard disk in the consulate's camera system was removed, Erdogan said. Jana Jabbour, a professor at Sciences Po university in Paris, told AFP that Erdogan could have chosen much sharper rhetoric against Riyadh, indicating that the two nations were talking behind the scenes. "Erdogan's very moderate speech shows that a deal has been reached," she told AFP.

"The word from President Erdogan this morning that this brutal murder was premeditated, pre-planned days in advance flies in the face of earlier assertions that had been made by the Saudi regime," US Vice President Mike Pence told an event at The Washington Post. CIA Director Gina Haspel, meanwhile, headed for Turkey, although details of her trip were not immediately clear. In London, a Downing Street spokesman said Erdogan's statement showed that "there are many questions which only the Saudis have the answers to." — Agencies



Sports

# Atlanta Falcons hand New York Giants fourth consecutive loss

## Dolphins rule QB Tannehill out for tomorrow

### NFL result/standings

New York Giants 20, Atlanta 23; Tennessee 19, L.A. Chargers 20 (at London); New England 38, Chicago 31; Buffalo 5, Indianapolis 37; Houston 20, Jacksonville 7; Detroit 32, Miami 21; Minnesota 37, New York Jets 17; Carolina 21, Philadelphia 17; Cleveland 23, Tampa Bay 26 (OT); New Orleans 24, Baltimore 23; Dallas 17, Washington 20; L.A. Rams 39, San Francisco 10; Cincinnati 10, Kansas City 45; Denver 45, Arizona 10.

#### American Football Conference

	East			PCT	PF	PA
	W	L	T			
New England	5	2	0	.714	214	179
Miami	4	3	0	.571	151	177
N.Y. Jets	3	4	0	.429	182	176
Buffalo	2	5	0	.286	81	175
North						
Pittsburgh	3	2	1	.583	171	154
Cincinnati	4	3	0	.571	184	203
Baltimore	4	3	0	.571	176	101
Cleveland	2	4	1	.357	151	177
South						
Houston	4	3	0	.571	155	144
Tennessee	3	4	0	.429	106	127
Jacksonville	3	4	0	.429	116	146
Indianapolis	2	5	0	.286	189	185
West						
Kansas City	6	1	0	.857	260	182
L.A. Chargers	5	2	0	.714	195	163
Denver	3	4	0	.429	165	164
Oakland	1	5	0	.167	110	176

#### National Football Conference

	East			PCT	PF	PA
	W	L	T			
Washington	4	2	0	.667	126	121
Philadelphia	3	4	0	.429	154	138
Dallas	3	4	0	.429	140	123
N.Y. Giants	1	6	0	.143	137	185
North						
Minnesota	4	2	1	.643	177	165
Green Bay	3	2	1	.583	148	144
Detroit	3	3	0	.500	157	158
Chicago	3	3	0	.500	170	134
South						
New Orleans	5	1	0	.833	204	163
Carolina	4	2	0	.667	142	131
Tampa Bay	3	3	0	.500	167	196
Atlanta	3	4	0	.429	190	212
West						
L.A. Rams	7	0	0	1.000	235	128
Seattle	3	3	0	.500	143	117
Arizona	1	6	0	.143	92	184
San Francisco	1	6	0	.143	158	218

**NEW YORK:** Matt Ryan threw for 379 yards, and fill-in kicker Giorgio Tavecchio connected from 56 yards late for his third field goal as the host Atlanta Falcons extended the New York Giants' losing streak to four games with a 23-20 victory Monday night.

Ryan, who completed his last 18 passes to finish 31 of 39, connected with Marvin Hall for a 47-yard touchdown. Tevin Coleman had a 30-yard TD run, and Tavecchio made field goals of 40 and 50 yards in addition to his 56-yarder with 1:55 remaining.

Odell Beckham Jr. caught a 1-yard touchdown pass from Eli Manning with five seconds left, and Saquon Barkley ran for the two-point conversion, but it was too little too late as the Falcons (3-4) stretched their home winning streak against the NFC East to eight games.

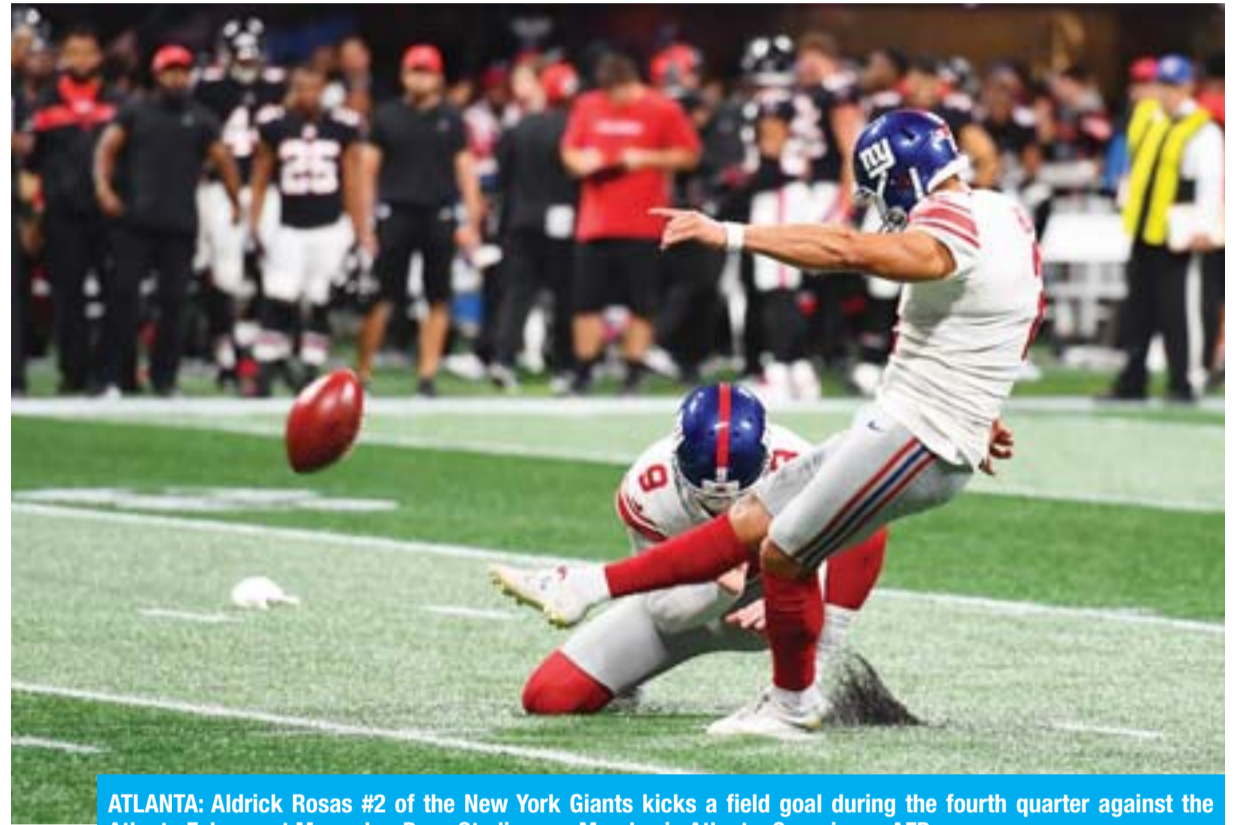
Manning completed 27 of 38 for 399 yards, with Beckham catching eight for 143 yards for the Giants (1-6). New York's Sterling Shepard had five receptions for 167 yards. Atlanta's Julio Jones made nine grabs for 104 yards. Barkley, who finished with 43 yards rushing and 51 receiving, scored on a 2-yard run with 4:47 left. That left the Giants down by eight points, and they surprisingly went for two points. Manning's pass to Beckham was incomplete.

Coleman's TD run came with just under eight minutes to go after Tavecchio started the final quarter with his 50-yarder. The Falcons led 10-3 at intermission, with all the scoring coming within the final five minutes of a first half that featured seven sacks and punts on the first three possession by both teams.

Hall caught a bomb from Ryan to cap a three-play, 86-yard scoring drive. A 38-yard pass interference penalty set up the 40-yard field goal by Tavecchio with three seconds left after Aldrick Rosas had connected on a 31-yard field goal for the Giants with 50 seconds on the clock.

Tavecchio, who kicked for Oakland last season, was signed by the Falcons after Matt Bryant strained his right hamstring on a 57-yard field goal against Tampa Bay late in the fourth quarter last week.

Defensive tackle Grady Jarrett had two of the Falcons' four sacks of Manning after missing the previous two games with an ankle injury. Manning connected with Shepard for 53 yards and Beckham for 52 yards in the third quarter, but New York got just a 36-yard field goal by Rosas out of the two trips inside the red zone. The other drive ended on an incomplete pass



ATLANTA: Aldrick Rosas #2 of the New York Giants kicks a field goal during the fourth quarter against the Atlanta Falcons at Mercedes-Benz Stadium on Monday in Atlanta, Georgia. — AFP

from the 1-yard line on fourth down.

Earlier, Miami Dolphins quarterback Ryan Tannehill will not play Thursday night at the Houston Texans, head coach Adam Gase confirmed Monday.

Tannehill has missed consecutive games with a right (throwing) shoulder injury and is reportedly facing "an uphill challenge" in his recovery, though Gase said last week surgery is not expected to be an option.

Gase said Monday that Tannehill is "in a good spot," and the team will have a better feel for when he can return after tomorrow's game. The Dolphins' next game will be Nov. 4 against the New York Jets, two weeks before the Week 11 bye.

Brock Osweiler will make his third straight start Thursday, this time against his former team, The Texans

signed Osweiler to a four-year, \$72 million deal in March 2016 but benched him in his 14th game with the team. Houston then traded Osweiler, along with second- and sixth-round picks, to the Cleveland Browns for a fourth-round pick to unload his contract after one season.

Osweiler said he has "no emotion" about facing the Texans, adding that he's "very proud of the things we accomplished" in his lone season with the team. "This really is just another game," he told reporters. "But it's the most important game because it's the next one."

Osweiler joined the Dolphins as a free agent this spring and has 654 yards, six touchdowns and two interceptions in two-plus games of work, going 1-1 as a starter. — Reuters

## Wozniacki back on track in with win over Kvitova

**SINGAPORE:** A tenacious Caroline Wozniacki revived her WTA Finals title defence with a third set masterclass against Petra Kvitova yesterday, leaving the former Wimbledon champion's Singapore campaign in ruins.

Rebounding from a disappointing opening defeat against Karolina Pliskova, Wozniacki wore down Kvitova to triumph 7-5, 3-6, 6-2 in two hours and 19 minutes. Kvitova has now lost both her matches and needs results to go her way in the White Group to stay afloat in the season-finale.

Kvitova mixed trademark power with exquisite touch but was matched by Wozniacki's dogged counterattacks. The Dane recovered from an injury scare, where she needed taping to her left knee early in the second set, and showcased her athleticism in a dominant third set to outlast Kvitova.

"I served well, returned well and moved well," Wozniacki said after the match. "I had the belief and fought to the end." Kvitova attacked the net in an effort to shorten the points against the fast-moving Wozniacki and earned two break points in the match's opening game.

But Wozniacki held and opportunities to break were scarce with both players serving strongly in a high-quality contest. The Australian Open champion finally broke in the ninth game—her first of the tournament after botching 10 break points against Pliskova.

Wozniacki couldn't serve it out though, with Kvitova saving a set point with a booming forehand winner



SINGAPORE: Denmark's Caroline Wozniacki hits a return against Czech Republic's Petra Kvitova during their singles match at the WTA Finals tennis tournament in Singapore yesterday. — AFP

down the line. In a topsy-turvy affair, Wozniacki earned the crucial break in the 12th game to draw first blood.

There were three breaks to start the second set before Kvitova held and unleashed a roar as she skipped out to a 3-1 lead. Wozniacki needed a medical timeout and the six-minute break seemingly halted Kvitova's momentum but the Czech regrouped and lev-

elled it up emphatically with a sliced backhand winner.

The match took a turn in the third with Wozniacki breaking immediately and then wearing down a fading Pliskova, who at one point threw her racquet in disgust. Wozniacki broke a four-game losing streak to Kvitova with her last victory being at the WTA Finals in 2014. —AFP

## Injured Wawrinka withdraws from Basel

**BASEL:** A back injury suffered during a Sunday practice session with compatriot Roger Federer forced Stan Wawrinka to pull out of the Swiss Indoors tournament on Monday, while Marin Cilic eased into the second round in Basel. "I turned my back, and retiring was the only decision I could make," said the three-time Grand Slam champion, adding that he will end his season early and not play at the Paris Masters next week.

The withdrawal of Wawrinka, ranked 68th in the world as he continues to fight to fully recover more than a year after two knee surgeries, comes after Federer made an injury confession of his own.

Federer revealed in the run-up to the start at the St Jakobshalle that he had been suffering since the summer with a hand injury, which the 20-time Grand Slam winner insisted was fine now.

Federer, the holder, is seeking a ninth title at the event where he got his start in the sport as a teenage ballboy. He begins tonight against Serb Filip Krajinovic.

Wawrinka has been playing in fits and starts this season, losing in the Shanghai first round this month after reaching the semi-finals in September in St Petersburg. Wawrinka, twice a semi-finalist in Basel, was to have faced Adrian Panatta in the first round today.

Later on Monday, 2016 winner Cilic saw off rising Canadian star Denis Shapovalov in straight sets to reach the second round. Australian Open runner-up Cilic is one of two former champions in the draw alongside Federer, and he brushed aside teenager Shapovalov 6-4, 6-2.

The world number six will next face Romania's Marius Copil, who defeated American Ryan Harrison 6-2, 7-6 (10/8). Finnish-born home player Henri Laaksonen won his first match in Basel after five previous first-round losses, beating Roland Garros semi-finalist and sixth seed Marco Cecchinato 6-4, 6-2. — AFP

## Arab fishing championship

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Sea Sports Club for Fishing ended in second and third place during the Arab Fishing Championship 2018 that was organized by the Lebanese Fishing Federation in Jounieh bay, in cooperation with Lebanon's water festival. Teams from Lebanon, Tunis and two from Kuwait participated.

Results of the sea club that was for two days under the rain resulted in Hamed Al-Sayyar winning second place in the heaviest fish (3.0 kg), meanwhile Mishal Saadun won third place with 1.130 kg. Lebanon's Nedal Fawas won first place with 3.200 kg, while Lebanon's team won first place with 15.600 kg.



## Sports

# Sri Lanka thump England to their heaviest one-day international loss

## Sri Lanka cricket's chief finance officer arrested

### SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close of play of 5th odi between Sri Lanka and England yesterday at Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka win by 219 runs (DLS Method)

#### Sri Lanka 1st innings

Niroshan Dickwella c Joe Root b Moeen Ali	95
Sadeera Samarawickrama b Moeen Ali	54
Dinesh Chandimal c Jason Roy b Tom Curran	80
Kusal Mendis c Ben Stokes b Liam Plunkett	56
Dasun Shanaka c Jason Roy b Adil Rashid	18
Thisara Perera c Alex Hales b Tom Curran	11
Dhananjaya de Silva Not Out	19
Akila Dananjaya Not Out	18
Extras 4b 3lb 0nb Open 8w	15
Total (50.0 overs)	366-6

Fall of Wickets: 1-137 Samarawickrama, 2-168 Dickwella, 3-270 Mendis, 4-300 Shanaka, 5-328 Chandimal, 6-328 Perera.

Did Not Bat: Chameera, Rajitha, Sandakan

Bowling: Mark Wood 8-0-55-0-6.88 (5w); Sam Curran 6-0-46-0-7.67; Tom Curran 8-0-71-2-8.88; Moeen Ali 8-0-57-2-7.12 (1w); Adil Rashid 10-0-52-1-5.20; Liam Plunkett 5-0-44-1-8.80 (1w); Ben Stokes 5-0-34-0-6.80 (1w).

#### England 1st innings

Jason Roy b Kasun Rajitha	4
Alex Hales c Kusal Mendis b Dushmantha Chameera	0
Joe Root c Sadeera Samarawickrama b Dushmantha Chameera 10	
Jos Buttler c Niroshan Dickwella b Dushmantha Chameera 0	
Ben Stokes c Thisara Perera b Akila Dananjaya	67
Moeen Ali c Dinesh Chandimal b Akila Dananjaya	37
Sam Curran c Lakshan Sandakan b Dhananjaya de Silva	2
Adil Rashid b Akila Dananjaya	4
Liam Plunkett lbw Akila Dananjaya	5
Tom Curran Not Out	1
Extras 0b 1lb 0nb Open 1w	2
Total (26.1 overs)	132-9

Fall of Wickets: 1-4 Roy, 2-4 Hales, 3-4 Buttler, 4-28 Root, 5-107 Ali, 6-121 Curran, 7-122 Stokes, 8-129 Rashid, 9-132 Plunkett.

Did Not Bat: Wood

Bowling: Kasun Rajitha 5-0-21-1-4.20; Dushmantha Chameera 6-0-20-3-3.33 (1w); Thisara Perera 2-0-18-0-9.00; Dhananjaya de Silva 4-0-18-1-4.50; Akila Dananjaya 6.1-0-19-4-3.08; Lakshan Sandakan 3-0-35-0-11.67.

**COLOMBO:** Sri Lanka's top-order batsmen put up a solid display and were ably aided by their bowlers to help their side thump England by 219 runs for the touring side's worst one-day international loss by runs in the rain-shortened fifth and final match yesterday.

England had come into the match with an unassailable 3-0 series lead and opted to make three changes to their bowling attack with regular captain Eoin Morgan also resting himself and handing the reins to Jos Buttler.

The weakened bowling attack seemed to have aided Sri Lanka as they put up a massive 366-6, buoyed by quick-fire half-centuries from their top four batsmen, after winning the toss and opting to bat.

Fast bowler Dushmantha Chameera then took three wickets in his opening spell to derail England's chase while Akila Dananjaya spun a web around their middle and lower order batsmen to restrict the touring side to 132-9 before rain put an end to their misery.

England were 219 runs behind Sri Lanka at that stage under the Duckworth Lewis scoring method which is used in rain-shortened fixtures. England's worst margin of defeat in the 50-over format previously was 165 runs.

Dhananjaya was the most successful bowler for the hosts with 4-19 while Chameera, who came into the side for Lasith Malinga, took 3-20. England all-rounder Ben Stokes, who was limping during the latter part of his knock after being hit on his knee by a delivery while batting, scored 67. Earlier, Niroshan Dickwella top-scored with 95 and added 137 with opening partner Sadeera Samarawickrama, who made 54 for his maiden half-century, to set the tone for the Sri Lankan innings.

Sri Lanka captain Dinesh Chandimal then notched up 80 while number four Kusal Mendis ended a run of low scores with a 56, the duo adding 102 for the third wicket.

England drafted in pace bowlers Liam Plunkett, Sam Curran and Mark Wood in the side for Morgan. Chris Woakes and Oly Stone. It was the first time the Curran brothers - Sam and Tom - were making their England appearance together.

The two sides will next play a lone Twenty20 match on Saturday before a three-test series starts in Galle from Nov. 6. Meanwhile, police arrested the chief financial officer of Sri Lanka Cricket on Monday for suspected financial misappropriation linked with awarding telecast rights to Sony TV, police said. The International Cricket Council said this month that its anti-corruption unit was investigating serious allegations in Sri Lankan cricket and had provided a detailed briefing to the country's president, prime minister and sports minister.

"Following the investigation the CID arrested the main suspect. He is the chief financial officer of Sri Lanka

Warne also took aim at Mitchell Marsh, questioning why he was selected as vice-captain. "I hadn't even thought before that series that he had established himself in the team," Warne said.

"I don't think he's cemented a spot and that's why it was a strange selection for me as vice-captain. "He only averages 25 or 26 in Test cricket." The outspoken cricket great said he was a "huge fan" of the Marsh brothers Mitchell and Shaun, but that "they need to perform".

"Mitchell Marsh needs to go and make some runs," he added. "If Mitchell Marsh comes out and makes some hundreds, pick him. If Shaun Marsh makes some hundreds, pick him. If they don't, then pick the guys who are in form."

Warne told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation on Tuesday that cricket in Australia, left reeling by a ball-tampering scandal earlier this year, was struggling and needed to return to its grassroots.

"I think in any business you need the foundation to be strong, and the foundation of Australian cricket has always been grassroots cricket, club cricket, and first-class cricket, Sheffield Shield cricket," he said.

## Rantanen, Avalanche topple Flyers

**PHILADELPHIA:** Mikko Rantanen scored two goals, and Matt Nieto and Gabriel Landeskog each scored once to lift the visiting Colorado Avalanche past the Philadelphia Flyers 4-1 on Monday night. Rantanen has at least one point in all nine of Colorado's games this season. Nathan MacKinnon, who earned an assist on Rantanen's goal, also owns at least one point in all nine games. Colorado goaltender Semyon Varlamov stopped 37 shots for the team's third win in a row. Nolan Patrick scored for the Flyers, who got 29 saves from Brian Elliott.

### CAPITALS 5, CANUCKS 2

Alex Ovechkin scored two goals and added two assists as Washington won at Vancouver. Ovechkin netted the winner and added an insurance marker as the defending Stanley Cup champions earned only their second victory in the past five games. John Carlson had a goal and two assists for the Capitals, who got a goal and an assist from T.J. Oshie. Evgeni Kuznetsov also scored, and Nicklas Backstrom furnished three helpers. Troy Stecher and Sven Baertschi tallied for the Canucks.

### JETS 5, BLUES 4 (OT)

Jacob Trouba's goal at 2:54 of the extra period lifted Winnipeg over visiting St. Louis. The Jets twice had to overcome deficits to improve to 5-0-1 on home ice this season. Winnipeg has a 10-2-0 record in its past 12 games against St. Louis. Mark Scheifele led Winnipeg with two goals and two assists, and Ben Chiarot had a goal and an assist. Down 3-1 at the second intermission, the Jets drew even with two goals in the opening four minutes of the third period. David Perron put St. Louis on top 4-3 at 5:11, but Bryan Little tied the game at 18:20.

### HURRICANES 3, RED WINGS 1

Petr Mrazek made 20 saves against his former team,



**COLOMBO:** England cricket captain Eoin Morgan poses with the winner's trophy after England defeated Sri Lanka by 3-1 in their ODI cricket series during the fifth and final one day international (ODI) cricket match between Sri Lanka and England at the R. Premadasa Stadium in Colombo yesterday. — AFP

Cricket," Police spokesman Ruwan Gunasekara told Reuters, naming him as 42-year old Wimal Nandika Dissanayake. Dissanayake's lawyers were not immediately available for comment. He was arrested after the SLC's chief executive officer lodged a complaint to the police over financial fraud, the police spokesman said.

"The complaint says the SLC's television rights have been going to Sony since 2013. At the last South African tour, this main suspect asked Sony to deposit 15 percent of the television rights fees to a private account in America." He said the amount of money misappropriated on South African tours was more than \$187,000.

"Sony became suspicious when this suspect informed it (of the requirement) for a deposit of 50 percent of television rights fees from an ongoing England tour and it informed Sri Lanka cricket."

Sony could not immediately be reached for comment.



Shane Warne

"I don't think there's enough first-class cricketers getting into school cricket and inspiring people and talking to young boys and girls to say cricket's a great game and this is why, teaching them techniques. "It just doesn't happen anymore." — AFP



**PHILADELPHIA:** Nathan MacKinnon #29 of the Colorado Avalanche skates against the Philadelphia Flyers at the Wells Fargo Center on Monday in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. — AFP

Micheal Ferland scored for the fourth straight game, and Carolina snapped a three-game losing streak with a win at Detroit. Mrazek recorded 13 shutouts in while playing parts of six seasons with the Red Wings. He nearly had another, as the Wings didn't score until the third period. Defenseman Justin Faulk scored his first goal of the season, while Ferland tallied for a team-high sixth time. Jordan Martinook added an empty-net goal. Andreas Athanasiou scored for Detroit. — Reuters

## Australia need 'kick up backside', says spin legend Warne

**SYDNEY:** Shane Warne has dismissed Australia's struggling Test side as "ordinary" and said they needed a "kick up the backside" after their series flop against Pakistan. Australia suffered a 373-run defeat against Pakistan in the second of the two-Test series last week after a familiar batting collapse, following a fightback to secure a draw in the first Test.

"It's been pretty ordinary, hasn't it?" the Australian spin legend told reporters on Monday. "We all support the Aussie side as we do but they need a kick up the backside at the moment because they're not performing well."

## Du Plessis braced for hostile reception in Australia

**JOHANNESBURG:** South African captain Faf du Plessis said his team were braced for a hostile reception from supporters and the media when they travel to play their "favourite" opposition Australia for a limited overs tour next month. It will be South Africa's first trip Down Under since the ball-tampering scandal earlier this year, when Australia captain Steve Smith, and batsmen David Warner and Cameron Bancroft, received bans from Cricket Australia.

The Australian team bemoaned the treatment they received from South African supporters during that test tour and Du Plessis said his side would likely face a backlash. "Australia is our favourite team to play against, all the stuff that comes with playing them, on and off the field. I love that and I feel that brings the best out of us as a team," Du Plessis told reporters on Tuesday.

Du Plessis has twice before been found guilty of ball-tampering himself, including on a test tour of Australia in 2016 when he was accused of using sugary saliva after sucking a sweet to change the condition of the ball.

"It will be nice and hostile. We are not expecting anything less. Zunaid our security officer has been working hard in the gym. "We expect them to try and unsettle us as a team when it comes to the media space, obviously with myself being at the forefront of it, but we see it as part and parcel of touring Australia."

Du Plessis said his side would be under even greater scrutiny than on previous tours. "I do think this time round there may be one or two more traps for the players to try and stay away from. At the end of the day we want to go there and play a brand of winning cricket."

He said the tour would be an eye-opener for some of the younger members of the squad who have not played international cricket in Australia before. "The crowds do play their part, they're like a 12th man. Your mental strength is just as important as your skill. For a lot of the new guys it will be the first time where they field on the boundary and they hear just how good they are as human beings.—Reuters

The arrest came a week after former Sri Lanka captain and selector Sanath Jayasuriya was charged with two counts of breaching the ICC's anti-corruption code.

An official at Sri Lanka Cricket said it had given all its support to the anti-corruption team in its investigation. Sri Lanka's 1996 World Cup winning team captain Arjuna Ranatunga said he and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe had sought India's expertise in dealing with the investigation because Indian police had a good record for probing match fixing and other corrupt practices bedeviling the sport.

"We made this request because it is not only the players who are involved in this corruption. There is a group behind the players like bookies and betting agents. If we get the group, we can find out the root cause of this problem," he told reporters in Colombo after a three day visit to India. — Reuters

## Pakistan face Aussies with Twenty20 top ranking at stake

**ABU DHABI:** Pakistan captain Sarfraz Ahmed is confident his team can defend their world number one ranking in a stern challenge from Australia in a three-match Twenty20 series starting in Abu Dhabi yesterday.

Sarfraz led Pakistan to a tri-series triumph by beating Australia in the final at Harare in July this year and needs to win at least one match to remain at the top of the rankings.

Pakistan will be without senior batsman Shoaib Malik who was with his tennis star wife Sania Mirza in India for the birth of their first child. "Malik will join the team today but will not be part of the eleven, so we are ready for Australia who are a very strong Twenty20 side," said Sarfraz. Australia, who beat Pakistan in the group match of the tri-series, need to win 3-0 if they want to jump from their current third position to the top. Since Sarfraz took over captaincy, Pakistan have won 23 of the 27 matches they have played—a momentum the skipper wants to maintain.

"We know that Australia have good bowlers like Mitchell Starc, Billy Stanlake and hitters in Chris Lynn and D'Arcy Short so we have to be at our best to beat them," said Sarfraz. Stanlake took 4-8 in a lively spell in Australia's victory in the tri-series group game.

Australia will also have some fresh players after losing the two-match Test series 1-0 last week, also played in United Arab Emirates. Their Twenty20 skipper Aaron Finch said his team was motivated enough to win the series. "Pakistan played very well against us in July," said Finch. "We got the better off them in the first game but they battled back in the last two. They are world number one at the moment and they are world number one for a reason." "They played some great cricket in the last two years in this format so I think it will be a great contest." Finch played down the bounty of getting to the top of the rankings in case they win all the matches.

"I think any time you play anyone in a different country it's massively important and everyone wants to win," said Finch, who has won eight of the 16 matches, losing the other eight since in charge for four years.

"If number one rankings are on the line or anyone down the list, each game is important. Everyone wants to win. I don't think they need any motivation than that and we don't need it."

### Teams:

**Pakistan:** Sarfraz Ahmed (captain), Fakhar Zaman, Mohammad Hafeez, Babar Azam, Asif Ali, Hussain Talat, Shadab Khan, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Hassan Ali, Imad Wasim, Faheem Ashraf

**Australia (from):** Aaron Finch (captain), Mitchell Marsh (vice-capt), Alex Carey, Ashton Agar, Nathan Coulter-Nile, Chris Lynn, Nathan Lyon, Glenn Maxwell, Ben McDermott, D'Arcy Short, Billy Stanlake, Mitchell Starc, Andrew Tye, Adam Zampa. — AFP

## Sports

# Aubameyang, Ozil star as Arsenal make it perfect 10

## Puel furious his side didn't get penalty for first-half handball by Rob Holding

LONDON: Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and Mesut Ozil stole the show as Arsenal swept to their 10th successive win with a dominant 3-1 victory against Leicester on Monday. Unai Emery's side trailed to Hector Bellerin's first-half own goal at the Emirates Stadium.

But Ozil, captaining Arsenal on his return to the side after back spasms, produced a majestic display to lead the Gunners' impressive fightback. Ozil, shrugging off his poor start to the season, equalised just before half-time and played a key role in Aubameyang's second-half double.

Gabon striker Aubameyang scored twice in quick succession after coming off the bench, ensuring Arsenal won 10 consecutive matches in all competitions for the first time since 2007. They have scored 30 goals in that blistering streak and climb to fourth place in the Premier League, just two points behind leaders Manchester City.

On the 69th birthday of Emery's predecessor Arsene Wenger, this was the kind of swashbuckling show that recalled Arsenal's glory days under the Frenchman. Ozil summed up Arsenal mood, tweeting after the match: "I think we played some sexy football tonight. Proud captain of this team."

It was the perfect start to a hectic week that sees Arsenal travel to Portugal for a Europa League tie against Sporting Lisbon tomorrow before returning to domestic action at Crystal Palace on Sunday.

"We are happy because we are progressing. We need to play with organisation but also we are beginning to play with heart," Emery said. "Today the performance of the team, and also of Mesut, was very good." Emery has made a remarkable impact since replacing Wenger in the close-season. The Spanish manager's two-game losing streak at the start of his Arsenal reign is now a distant memory as Gunners fans

start to dream of a title challenge after their seventh successive league win. Emery isn't getting carried away just yet, saying: "It's important to keep calm and progress with every player. To continue winning is difficult. When you improve your demands are very high. We need to control matches more than we are doing now."

Leicester boss Claude Puel was furious his side didn't get a penalty for a first-half handball by Rob Holding. "I am angry about this decision because the good work from my players was not helped," he said.

### DRIVING FORWARD

Leicester's spot-kick claim came when Holding raised his arm above his head and clearly handled as he jumped to meet Jamie Vardy's flick-on, yet referee Christopher Kavanagh waved play on.

Harry Maguire's towering header forced a good save from Leno and Leicester's pressure reaped a tangible reward in the 31st minute. Wilfried Ndidi's pass picked out Ben Chilwell, who made a superb run in behind Bellerin and drilled a low shot that deflected off the Arsenal defender on its way past the wrong-footed Leno. Stunned into action by that setback, Arsenal nearly snatched an immediate equaliser when Granit Xhaka's free-kick was tipped over by Kasper Schmeichel. Suddenly, Arsenal were driving forward with purpose and they drew level on the stroke of half-time. Ozil was the catalyst as his pass sent Bellerin away down the right and when the defender crossed into the Leicester area, it was the German midfielder who timed his run perfectly to guide a delicate finish into the far corner. Ndidi led the Leicester response with a powerful header that rattled the bar from James Maddison's corner. But Emery sent on Aubameyang for Lichtsteiner after 61 minutes and the switch paid instant dividends two minutes later.



LONDON: Arsenal's French striker Alexandre Lacazette runs with the ball during the English Premier League football match between Arsenal and Leicester City at the Emirates Stadium in London on Monday. Arsenal won the game 3-1.—AFP

Ozil played a superb pass to Bellerin and the Spaniard's low cross was just right for the unmarked Aubameyang to slot home from close range. Aubameyang was in the right place at the right time again in the 66th minute as Arsenal conjured up another

incisive raid. This was Arsenal at their finest as Ozil and Lacazette combined to carve open the Leicester defence in a blur of flicks and tricks, presenting Aubameyang with a simple chance to tap in his eighth goal of the season. — AFP

## Faced with match-fixing scandal, Red Star adopt code of silence

BELGRADE: Red Star Belgrade, embroiled in a Champions League match-fixing scandal, have erected a wall of silence around the Rajko Mitic Stadium ahead of their clash with Liverpool today.

The trip to Anfield should have been a celebration for the team, 27 years after they won the European Cup, the first and last triumph in the competition for a club from the former Yugoslavia.

But now the match has been overshadowed by suspicion following the announcement that French investigators are probing allegations of match-fixing in the club's 6-1 thrashing by Paris Saint-Germain in their last Champions League group-stage outing on October 3.

The probe was launched after French sports daily L'Equipe alleged that a senior Red Star official bet five million euros (\$5.8 million) on the side losing by a five-goal margin to the French champions. The claims upset many Serbs including Predrag Saric, editor-in-chief of the Sportski Zurnal daily paper.

"Serbs are the ideal culprits. No one has read yet that the investigation had actually started, but they are already condemned," Saric told Serbian state-run television channel RTS. He was also surprised that "in the age of modern technology, everything is not yet clear".

Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic, a long-time Red Star supporter, said he was "very sceptical" regarding the allegations. "I think that the greatest part of what they are talking about is not true," he told reporters.

The Serbian leader vowed to "examine every possibility of whether anyone and in any way could have tarnished the name of our club and our country". After releasing two statements in which they urged a rapid investigation and threatened legal action against L'Equipe for defamation, the club have fallen silent.

Red Star president and Serbian football great Dragan Dzajic hasn't been answering his mobile phone. General director Zvezdan Terzic said the club had decided not to comment further following the initial two statements.

"I won't comment on the media reports, I can say they



PARIS: In this file photo taken on October 3, 2018 Paris Saint-Germain's Italian midfielder Marco Verratti (L) vies for the ball against Red Star Belgrade's German midfielder Marko Marin during their UEFA Champions' League football match. Red Star Belgrade, embroiled in a Champions League match-fixing scandal, have erected a wall of silence around their Marakana stadium ahead of their next match in the competition against Liverpool today. —AFP

don't affect the team," said coach Vladan Milojovic. "The players and I are focused on the current competitions." Sports analyst Mihajlo Todic said the betting allegations looked far-fetched.

He doubted a bookmaker could accept a five-million-euro bet on something which was "blatant", referring to the high probability that Red Star would be heavily beaten by one of Europe's elite clubs. "The left foot of (right-footed) Neymar is worth more than the whole Red Star team," fan Dragan Nikolic, 42, said. Todic said "match-fixing would have required participation of PSG", an accusation dismissed out of hand by the French club.

Independent Vreme weekly pointed to a record of previous corruption in sport in Serbia. "Match-fixing and money laundering sound familiar in Serbia," it commented. Serbian football in general and its two leading clubs—Red Star and Partizan Belgrade—have a nefarious reputa-

tion. Some of their hardcore fans, after first serving as paramilitaries during the 1990s Balkans conflicts, have now joined the underworld. They have been involved in gang shootings and often have trouble with the law.

The legal structure of Serbian clubs, which are officially public property, remain opaque and it is unclear who controls them. Red Star were heavily indebted for a long time but Terzic said in September that the club's debt had been "cut to 13 million euros, which means that we have repaid 41 million euros".

Terzic, elected general director in 2014, is a controversial figure. Suspected of embezzlement during suspicious transfers when he was running OFK Beograd, he fled Serbia in 2008 before turning himself in two years later. His trial has yet to open. Terzic was also president of the Serbian football federation from 2005 to 2008. — AFP



BRACKEL: Dortmund's players warm up during a training session yesterday in Brackel on the eve of their UEFA Champions League football match between Borussia Dortmund and Atletico de Madrid. —AFP

wrote him into Dortmund's footballing folklore.

"The freedom is playing, having minutes and enjoying the profession. I didn't have the minutes at Barcelona and now I am having them, things are going well," he added.

However, each goal he scores also carries a tragic reminder. When he scored at Stuttgart on Saturday, he raised his arms to celebrate, as does after each goal, and looked to the heavens with the words "Always in my mind, Papa" tattooed on his left bicep.

Alcacer was still a teenager when his world was turned upside down on the first game of the 2011/12 season. His father Francisco died of a heart-attack while leaving the stadium after watching his son play in a friendly for former club Valencia against Roma.

His father would no doubt be proud of what his son has achieved in just a few weeks at Dortmund, who have told Barcelona they want to sign him permanently, with his value estimated at around 30 million euros (\$34.4m).—AFP

## Facing Atletico is like 'toothache' for Dortmund's Alcacer

DORTMUND: Goal machine Paco Alcacer says playing against Atletico Madrid feels like 'toothache'—and he hopes to extract maximum revenge for past suffering when Borussia Dortmund meet them in today's Champions League clash.

The 26-year-old, on loan from Barcelona, has needed just 109 minutes to score seven Bundesliga goals this season—the best goal-rate in the league's history, which included a deft chip in Saturday's 4-0 drubbing of Stuttgart to keep Dortmund top of the table.

In total, Alcacer has netted 11 goals in his last seven games for club and country, but now has Atletico in his sights for the Group A showdown with both teams having won their first two games.

"A toothache to play against Atletico? Well, yes, totally," Alcacer told Spanish newspaper Marca, having lost six of his nine games against Atletico for either former clubs Getafe or Valencia. He never faced them while with Barcelona. "They are a team that concede very few goals and they leave few spaces, while they're always very aware of everything. For a striker, it's frustrating."

However, his form has been anything but 'frustrating' since arriving in Dortmund in August after two unhappy seasons at Barcelona, where his path to the first-team was blocked by Luiz Suarez. Alcacer's goal exploits quickly



### Matches on TV (Local Timings)

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE	
Club Brugge KV v AS Monaco FC	19:55
beIN SPORTS HD 5	
PSV Eindhoven v Tottenham Hotspur	19:55
beIN SPORTS HD 1	
BV Borussia Dortmund v Atletico de Madrid	22:00
beIN SPORTS HD 3	
FC Barcelona v Internazionale Milano	22:00
beIN SPORTS HD 1	
Liverpool v Crvena Zvezda	22:00
beIN SPORTS HD 4	
Paris Saint-Germain v SSC Napoli	22:00
beIN SPORTS HD 2	
Lokomotiv Moscow v FC Porto	22:00
beIN SPORTS HD 5	
Galatasaray Spor Kulübü v Schalke 04	22:00
beIN SPORTS HD 6	
SPANISH LEAGUE	
Rayo Vallecano v Athletic de Bilbao	20:00
beIN SPORTS HD 3	

## You're not singing any more: North's anthem played for South Korea

SEOUL: South Korean footballers were left dumbfounded at an international tournament in Indonesia when organizers played the North's anthem instead. Ahead of an AFC under-19 Championship qualifier against Jordan at the Patriot Candrabhaga Stadium on the outskirts of Jakarta, the South's team lined up with their hands on their hearts. But instead of Seoul's hymn-like anthem "Aegukga", North Korea's national tune blared out, leaving them stony-faced and silent.

The South's coaching staff told officials of the mistake, and while the correct song was then played, they protested after the game on Monday evening. Seoul's football authorities said yesterday they will file a formal complaint with the Asian Football Confederation (AFC). "This is the first time that the North Korean anthem was played instead of Aegukga at any official international match for any level of the national football team," the Korea Football Association said in a statement. The tournament's local organizing committee blamed the error on the audio operator in charge of playing the anthem.

"During the rehearsal, the South Korean anthem was played. But somehow the operator later picked the wrong song file," Gatot Widagdo, media coordinator for the AFF U-19 Youth Championship, told AFP yesterday. "The operator has (since) been replaced and we have apologized to South Korea verbally and in writing." The North's anthem was "stopped immediately", the AFC said. "An investigation into the mistake has been held," it said in a statement yesterday. "The AFC apologizes to the Korea Republic team and the Korea Football Association and the AFC will take the appropriate steps to ensure this error cannot be repeated."

The mistake comes as a rapid diplomatic thaw takes hold on the peninsula, led by South Korea's dovish President Moon Jae-in who has met with the North's Kim Jong Un three times this year. North and South Korea formed unified teams for some events at the Asian Games two months ago, also hosted by Indonesia, and reached the women's basketball final. —AFP

**25** Wozniacki back on track in  
with win over Kvitova

**26** Sri Lanka thump England to their  
heaviest one-day international loss

**27** Aubameyang, Ozil star as  
Arsenal make it perfect 10



## Bayern edge out AEK 2-0

Munich top Champions League group with win at Athens



ATHENS: Bayern Munich's German forward Serge Gnabry (L) heads the ball with AEK's Portuguese midfielder Andre Simoes during the UEFA Champions League football match between AEK Athens FC and FC Bayern Munchen at the OACA Spyros Louis stadium in Athens yesterday. — AFP

ATHENS: Quick-fire goals by Javi Martinez and Robert Lewandowski yesterday moved Bayern Munich top of their Champions League group with a 2-0 win at AEK Athens, as they made it back-to-back victories after a difficult start to the season.

Dogged defending by the reigning Greek champions left Bayern facing a frustrating draw until Martinez finally broke through with an hour gone at AEK, who travel to the Allianz Arena in a fortnight's time.

"It was very difficult, the pitch was not good, we played well in the first half, but the final pass was mis-

ing," said Arjen Robben. "We started using our chances and once Javi got the first goal, you could feel the relief.

"This was an important win for us." The result leaves Bayern top of Group E and puts pressure on nearest rivals Ajax, who earned a 1-1 draw in Munich three weeks ago, to beat Benfica in Amsterdam later yesterday and join the Germans on seven points, while AEK remain bottom after three straight defeats.

Bayern have never lost a European game in Greece, but despite breaking a four-match winless streak with a 3-1 victory at Wolfsburg on Saturday in the Bundesliga,

the German champions laboured until Martinez scored with an athletic half-volley.

The hosts' best chance of the match came on 20 minutes when Argentinian striker Ezequiel Ponce held off Bayern defender Mats Hummels, but fired wide. At the other end, Thiago Alcantara's pass rolled agonisingly away from Bayern striker Lewandowski.

Just as it was looking like AEK might earn their first point in the group stage, Bayern turned the game. Hummels picked out Robben, whose effort was blocked, but the ball flew towards Martinez, who slammed his

shot home. Any frustrations in the Bayern ranks disappeared and just two minutes later they struck again. Serge Gnabry, a constant threat on the right wing, played in Rafinha inside the box with a clever backheel, and the Brazilian's low cross found Lewandowski unmarked to tap home and delight the travelling fans.

It was Lewandowski's third goal in two games after also netting twice at Wolfsburg. Thiago tried an acrobatic volley of his own with 15 minutes left which flew wide as Bayern kept on the pressure to safeguard the three points. —AFP

## Young Boys pick up first point in Valencia draw

BERN: Guillaume Hoarau's second-half penalty earned Young Boys their first Champions League point yesterday after a 1-1 draw with Valencia in Bern.

Michy Batshuayi gave Valencia the lead on 26 minutes in the Group H clash, but former France striker Hoarau converted from the spot as Young Boys also scored their first goal in the competition.

The Swiss champions nearly snatched

victory late on at the Stade de Suisse but Valencia goalkeeper Neto pulled off a superb save to divert Sekou Sanogo's header onto the post.

Young Boys remain at the bottom of the group, while Valencia's bid to qualify for the last 16 ahead of Manchester United or Juventus suffered a blow with the Spanish club on two points after three games.

Valencia, now with just eight goals in 12 matches this term, were unable to fully exploit a Young Boys defence featuring 36-year-old Champions League debutant Marco Wolfl in goal and missing the suspended Mohamed Ali Camara.

Marcelino's side moved in front when Chelsea loanee Batshuayi gathered a pass from Carlos Soler and rounded Wolfl to slot home his second goal for Valencia. Young Boys right-back Kevin Mbabu

dragged an effort narrowly wide of the right upright minutes into the second half, with Christian Fassnacht then unable to generate enough power in his header to beat Neto.

The Swiss side's sustained pressure paid off though as they were awarded a penalty on 55 minutes when Valencia captain Dani Parejo brought down Djibril Sow in the area. It was the second spot-kick conceded by Parejo in three games in Europe, and after Hoarau fired the hosts level only the brilliance of Neto allowed a struggling Valencia to hold on for a draw.

The Brazilian turned behind a low strike from Fassnacht shortly after the Young Boys equaliser, but saved his best for last with a marvellous fingertip stop to deny Sanogo before he smothered the rebound at the feet of Roger Assale. —AFP



BERN: Young Boys' Swiss defender Kevin Mbabu (L) and Valencia's Spanish midfielder Ferran Torres vie for the ball during the UEFA Champions League Group H football match between Young Boys and Valencia. — AFP