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# Defense minister orders officers' detention over deaths of 2 cadets

## Joint investigative panel formed • Sheikh Nasser leaves to pursue medical treatment

### Trump welcomes Amir to White House on Sept 5

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump is set to welcome HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to the White House on Sept 5, 2018 for a "working visit", the White House announced. The White House said in a statement that HH the Amir "is leading a Kuwaiti delegation to the United States to discuss trade, investment, and security cooperation".

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah headed yesterday to Washington in preparation for the Amir's summit with Trump. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled is accompanied by a high-level delegation consisting of officials from the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) and the foreign ministry. — KUNA

KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah yesterday issued a decision to form a joint investigation committee after two cadets died at Ali Al-Sabah Military Academy. Sheikh Nasser also issued instructions to the army chief of staff Lt Gen Mohammad Al-Khader to detain a number of officers, non-commissioned officers and trainers at Ali Al-Sabah Military Academy. The directorate of moral guidance and public relations at the defense ministry issued a statement saying that Sheikh Nasser's instructions are to refer the detainees to the joint investigation committee to examine the circumstances of the student officers' deaths, who passed away on Wednesday at the academy.

The statement referred to the arrestees, namely the commander of Ali Al-Sabah Military College and assistant director of educational affairs. The arrestees are also from the directorate of educational affairs, the arms wing commander, the students' affairs commander and the assistant commander of the battalion. They also include students' affairs command officers, namely commander of the student officers, commander of the student cadets and from the weapons wing, the weapons agent and four weapons trainers.

The directorate of moral guidance and public relations said the joint investigation committee consists of the ministry of defense represented by the military judicial authority, ministry of health and ministry of justice. The committee will investigate recent and previous



KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah attends the funeral of the cadets. — KUNA (See Page 3)

death cases and use the help of any other authority to get to the facts, the statement added.

The committee will submit a comprehensive report of the conclusions and recommendations to take the nec-

essary legal action on the deaths of current and former officers at Ali Al-Sabah Military Academy and Ahmed Al-Jaber Air College, the statement noted.

Continued on Page 24

### Amir's visit to US reflection of strong, enduring partnership



By Lawrence Silverman  
US Ambassador to Kuwait

The United States government warmly welcomes the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah to the United States and his meeting with President Trump at the White House Sept 5. The visit provides an opportunity to exchange views on pressing regional challenges, building upon a face-to-face dialogue between the two leaders begun at last year's US-GCC Summit in Riyadh and continued at the Amir's visit to the White House last September. His Highness' visit is further proof that the strong relationship between the United States and Kuwait is growing even stronger. The visit will witness the signing of several bilateral arrangements that will enhance the strategic ties and cooperation between our two countries.

Every day, cooperation between the United States and Kuwait makes both countries more secure and more prosperous. Commerce and investment between our two countries (both government and private) are growing; defense and security cooperation is enhancing mutual capabilities to keep our people safe and promoting long-term regional stability. While the United States maintains its commitment to Kuwait's security, US training and defense and security exercises further build Kuwait's capacity to prevent terrorism and defend its territory. Increasing information sharing will help us both prevent the organization and financing of terrorist acts, of which we have both been victims.

Large numbers of Kuwaitis continue to visit the United States, and thousands of Kuwaiti students entering US universities follow in the footsteps of five generations of their fellow countrymen and women. The United States welcomes Kuwaiti students. The quality education they earn is a fundamental investment in the intellectual capital of Kuwait. Our two countries agree that healthcare and the management of healthcare in Kuwait open new avenues for cooperation. Today, we are working together to increase protection of the innovation and creativity produced by Kuwaitis and Americans - their intellectual property. That will help improve the business and investment environment in Kuwait and foster entrepreneurship - the keys to the country's economic future.

The United States and Kuwait share concern for regional threats and the need for unity among partners to address those threats.

Continued on Page 24

### Anger as US ends funding for UNRWA

RAMALLAH: Palestinians reacted angrily yesterday to a US decision to end all funding for the UN agency that assists millions of refugees, seeing it as a new policy shift aimed at undermining their cause. Washington, which until last year was by far the biggest contributor to the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), announced on Friday that it would no longer make any contributions to the "irredeemably flawed operation".

The move by President Donald Trump's administration was described as "cruel and irresponsible" by senior Palestinian official Hanan Ashrawi. "The Palestinian refugees are already the victims who have lost their homes, livelihoods and security as a result of the creation of the state of Israel," she said. The US has backed Israel in accusing the agency of perpetuating the Middle East conflict by maintaining the idea that many Palestinians are refugees with a right to return to homes in what is now Israel. But to Palestinians, the right of return for the hundreds of thousands who fled or were expelled during the 1948 war that accompanied Israel's creation is central to their cause.

Chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said the American administration was invalidating future peace

### Libyans endure baking summer amid power cuts

TRIPOLI: On a sweltering night in Libya's capital, Ahlam Fathi watches her son study by candlelight as yet another power cut has plunged the family home into darkness. Despite the large windows being swung open, the air hangs heavily in the small central Tripoli apartment. "I can't even be mad at him for failing one or two subjects," said Fathi of her son, who is revising for his high school exit exams. The 41-year-old mother of two teenagers is one of millions of Libyans enduring prolonged power cuts amid high summer humidity and temperatures which sometimes reach 50 degrees Celsius.

"The summer is difficult in Libya, as always, but you feel the heat even more in small apartments because of the electricity cuts, which often last more than 10 hours," she said. Tripoli residents flock to beaches and other public spaces during power outages, escaping the heat of their homes as air conditioning and fans remain switched off. Residents have also been hit by sharp price rises, including a fourfold jump in the cost of bread in less than a month.

Cross-border smuggling of subsidized goods has created shortages which have left families struggling to get by. While these are nationwide problems, they are exacerbated in the crowded capital, which is home to 2.5 million residents and others displaced from fighting elsewhere in the country. Cities in western Libya refuse to



GAZA: Palestinian schoolgirls pose for a picture near an UNRWA tractor in the Rafah refugee camp in southern Gaza Strip yesterday. — AFP

talks by "preempting, prejudging issues reserved for permanent status" negotiations. Palestinian and Israeli "elements that want to achieve peace peacefully, based on a two states solution, are being destroyed", he told AFP. "The United States may have the right to say that we don't want to give taxpayers' money, but who gave the US the right to approve the stealing of my land, my

future, my aspirations, my capital, my Aqsa Mosque, my Holy Sepulchre Church?" he demanded.

Trump had already angered Palestinians by his December recognition of the disputed city of Jerusalem as Israel's capital and axing more than \$200 million in bilateral aid for Gaza and the West Bank.

Continued on Page 24



TRIPOLI: Libyan men repair power generators in the capital on Aug 25, 2018. — AFP

share the burden of power shortages, and militias often forcefully prevent national electricity firm Gecol from imposing rationing. In Tripoli, fighting erupted this week between rival militias in the southern suburbs, with Gecol warning of a total blackout after the clashes damaged the electricity network. University professor Amal Khayri, 40, said the situation has forced Libyans to install generators, but they are "often very expensive, not very powerful and of poor quality". The trade has created employment in a time of crisis, as selling and fixing generators has become a lucrative business. Abdallah Al-Werfalli, an electrical engineer, said repairing generators has boosted his income. "That's how I provide for my family," said the 53-year-old father of three.

Continued on Page 24

### Saudi official hints at Qatar canal project

RIYADH: A Saudi official hinted Friday the kingdom was moving forward with a plan to dig a canal that would turn the neighboring Qatari peninsula into an island, amid a diplomatic feud between the Gulf nations. "I am impatiently waiting for details on the implementation of the Salwa island project, a great, historic project that will change the geography of the region," Saud Al-Qahtani, a senior adviser to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, said on Twitter.

The plan, which would physically separate the Qatari peninsula from the Saudi mainland, is the latest stress point in a highly fractious 14-month long dispute between the two states. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt cut diplomatic and trade ties with Qatar in June 2017, accusing it of supporting terrorism and being too close to Riyadh's archrival, Iran - charges Doha denies. Qahtani has mentioned the project on Twitter over the past few months, but Friday's tweet was the clearest reference yet to an initiative which critics dismiss as a public relations tactic aimed at intimidating Qatar rather than a serious plan.

Continued on Page 24

## Local

# Minister, officials tour new education ministry's building

## Panel, government meet to discuss lowering retirement age

By Meshaal Al-Enezi and A Saleh

KUWAIT: Education Minister Hamid Al-Azmi visited the new education ministry's building in South Surra, where he made minor observations and asked that they be corrected, according to sources familiar with the tour. The minister along with undersecretaries toured the building and each of them had a look at their own subdivision, the sources said, adding that some need two or three floors. The sources expected the building to be officially opened in October and the subdivisions will move in gradually. The 142,300-square-meter building consists of 12 floors and was built at a cost of KD 76 million. The building was constructed in a unique shape resembling a dhow, and is set to house offices for the ministry's various administrative sectors and departments.



### Retirement age

Chairman of the parliamentary financial committee MP Salah Khorsheed said the committee will hold a meeting with the finance ministry to discuss the reasons for the government sending back the law that

lowered the retirement age, especially since it received the approval of 43 MPs. He said the lowering of the retirement age should be discussed again and the government's opinion will be sought, while the matter is still being discussed. "We are waiting for the Silk City proposal and the islands' development plan from the government," he added.

### Air quality control program eyed

Informed sources said the project to monitor pollutants from fixed and mobile sources, and the development of a monitoring program and improving air quality will cost a total of KD 700,000 - an annual cost of KD 384,960, informed sources said. The project is currently 45 percent complete, said the sources, adding that it is expected to be completed in 2020. The project aims at increasing the control network by two setting up fixed stations, training five employees on calculating the environmental load, continuously monitoring pollutants and calculating air quality.

### Udhiya donations

Informed sources at the social affairs ministry



KUWAIT: The Education Ministry's new headquarters building.

said the total amount of the fifth project to collect udhiya (sacrificial) donations will be announced within two weeks. They said there is a virtual commitment by all societies and foundations, and some violations were corrected immediately. The sources added that 32 NGOs are participating in the project (28 societies and four foundations). The social

affairs ministry put forth regulations for those participating in the project, mainly a ban on cash collections either at their main premises, foundations or in public. They added that collecting donations can be done through K-net, online, bank deductions, e-applications, smartphones, and telecommunication companies' SMS.

## Defense minister holds separate meetings



KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah meets officials. — KUNA

KUWAIT: Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah met separately on Friday with members of the Supreme Council for Planning and

Development, members of the apparatus tasked with developing Mubarak port and Boubyan island as well as a delegation of the 'Kafu' youth group. — KUNA

## Interior Ministry ready for new school year

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Acting Director General of the Ministry of Interior's Relations and Security Information Department Brig Tawheed Al-Kandari said there are clear instructions by Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khalid Al-Jarrah with follow-up by Undersecretary Lt Gen Essam Al-Naham to complete all security and traffic preparations for the new school

year. He said the security establishment has made all preparations in all sectors, and preventive and precautionary measures are already in place. Kandari said his department works on implementing the awareness plan for citizens and expats on the occasion of returning to school, and the department makes announcements on various media including social media, and is in continuous contact with parents to explain traffic matters.



Brig Tawheed Al-Kandari

## Kuwait declares emergency numbers for returning citizens

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Foreign Ministry yesterday urged citizens with flight tickets from Wataniya Airways abroad, namely in Beirut, Istanbul, Tbilisi, Baku, Sarajevo, Malaga and Athens, to get in contact with the Kuwaiti Embassy and Consulate to arrange for a returning trip back home. A statement by the ministry explained the framework of the government's efforts in cooperating with the concerned authorities for this situation and allocate the following emergency numbers to assist citizens and provide support to facilitate and ensure their comfort and safety in the light of the

national lines of cancellation and delay on flights.

The Ministry allocated the following emergency phone numbers to receive the calls of citizens to help facilitate their returns as soon as possible: Athens: 00306943010301; Istanbul: 0090 5306902097, 00905333864949; Baku: 00994502330536, 00994509999661; Sarajevo: 003876120287, 0038760 3200000; Beirut: 0096171171441, 0096176700080; Malaga: 003466 6665066; Tbilisi: 00995568627160, 00995568627148.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had coordinated with Kuwait Airways to send additional flights yesterday to Tbilisi, Georgia, and Baku, Azerbaijan to bring back Kuwaiti citizens whose returning flights on Wataniya Airways were cancelled. Meanwhile, Kuwait's Embassy in Beirut called on Kuwaiti nationals who hold return tickets on Wataniya Airways flights to contact the embassy to arrange their return after cancellation of their flights from Beirut to Kuwait. — KUNA

## Kuwait voices support to efforts for Guinea-Bissau

NEW YORK: The State of Kuwait renewed its support to the regional and international efforts to realize the Conakry Agreement in Guinea-Bissau. The Conakry Agreement, reached in 2016, called for the appointment of a consensual Prime Minister, the organizing of fair election, and the implementations of reforms in the West African country.

Delivering Kuwait's speech to the UNSC session on the agreement late Thursday, member of the Kuwaiti permanent delegation to the UN headquarters in New York Tareq Al-Bannai lauded the UN, African Union (AU), the European Union (EU), and Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) for their concentrated efforts to help Guinea-Bissau and the West African region in general. The Conakry



Tareq Al-Bannai

Agreement parties should abide by the tenets of the deal to lead Guinea-Bissau towards a bright future, said the Kuwaiti diplomat who saw that there was much to improve during the upcoming period.

In regards to the legislative elections next scheduled for November, Bannai said that Kuwait shared the concern of the UN in regards to the agreed upon timetable leading to the election in Guinea-Bissau, stressing that a free and fair democratic process must take place. Bannai commended all efforts carried out by the UN Peacebuilding Commission and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime namely within implementing UNSC resolution 2404 and reinforcing efforts for stability, security and peace in Guinea-Bissau. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) concluded a special campaign it had launched during the Eid Al-Adha holiday, and which featured several activities including campaigns on social media, as well as visits to KFH staff who worked during the break.

Local

# Defense minister: Full medical care for military personnel

Sheikh Nasser promises 'immediate action' after cadets' deaths



KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah offers his condolences over the cadets' deaths. —KUNA photos



First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah visits a non-commissioned officer at the hospital.

KUWAIT: Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah affirmed on Friday that no effort would be spared for providing all medical facilities and care for the military personnel. The minister was addressing a group of non-commissioned officers' families at the Armed Forces Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital, while visiting their sons there.

Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad has assured the families that he considers their sons as his own, wishing them quick recovery so they may resume their studies and serve the dear homeland, says a Ministry of Defense statement. Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad visited the hospital yesterday to check on condition of the non-commissioned officers Abulwahab Al-Ghannam and Saeed Al-Hajeri from Ali Al-Sabah Military Academy.

The statement said the minister was briefed about all medical procedures that have been taken to treat each one since admission. He proceeded to Al-Sabah Hospital to inquire about the non-commissioned offi-

cers, Hamad Al-Mutairi and Khaled Al-Bassam. He was also informed in details about their condition and treatment given to them.

**'Immediate action'**

Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad had called for "decisive and effective measures" in response to the death of two Kuwaiti cadets. The Kuwaiti defense minister's comments came after he presided over a meeting involving the military defense council, according to a statement by the defense ministry. He expressed his "grave concern" over the tragic incident, saying that the officials who were referred for investigation in connection with the deaths of Hadib Al-Swaraj and Falih Al-Azmi will be indefinitely suspend-



**Amir expresses grief over cadets' deaths**

ed until investigations are complete. Sheikh Nasser urged senior military officials to make sure that all officers, regardless of rank, are safe and well looked after in training camps and military academies. The statement revealed that the military defense council has clarified to the minister the details behind the unfortunate incident. Meanwhile, the Kuwaiti military's Chief of Staff Lieutenant-General Mohammad Al-Khader has said that he would oversee the formation of a committee tasked with determining if the cadets' deaths might have been caused by negligence. The Kuwaiti army has launched an "impartial and

transparent probe" in conjunction with the health ministry into the circumstances surrounding the officers' deaths.

**Minister leads wave of mourners**

Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad and masses of mourners held a funeral Thursday for the two student officers. Sheikh Nasser expressed his deepest condolences, asking Almighty Allah to bestow his mercy upon the deceased. The funeral was attended by Chief of Staff Lt Gen Khader, Deputy Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Abdullah Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah and several army leaders, Directorate of Moral Guidance and Public Relations of Defense Ministry said in a press statement.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah extended his deepest condolences on Thursday over the death of the two Kuwaiti officer trainees. His Highness the Kuwaiti leader expressed his "deepest sympathies" in a cable he sent to the families of the late cadets, saying he was distraught over the tragic loss. His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar messages to the families of the fallen soldiers. —KUNA



First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah visits a non-commissioned officer at the hospital.



First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah speaks with family members of one of the non-commissioned officers at the hospital.



First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and Kuwaiti military's Chief of Staff Lieutenant-General Mohammad Al-Khader are seen during the funeral of the deceased's cadets.



First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah pays tribute.



First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah visits a non-commissioned officer at the hospital.

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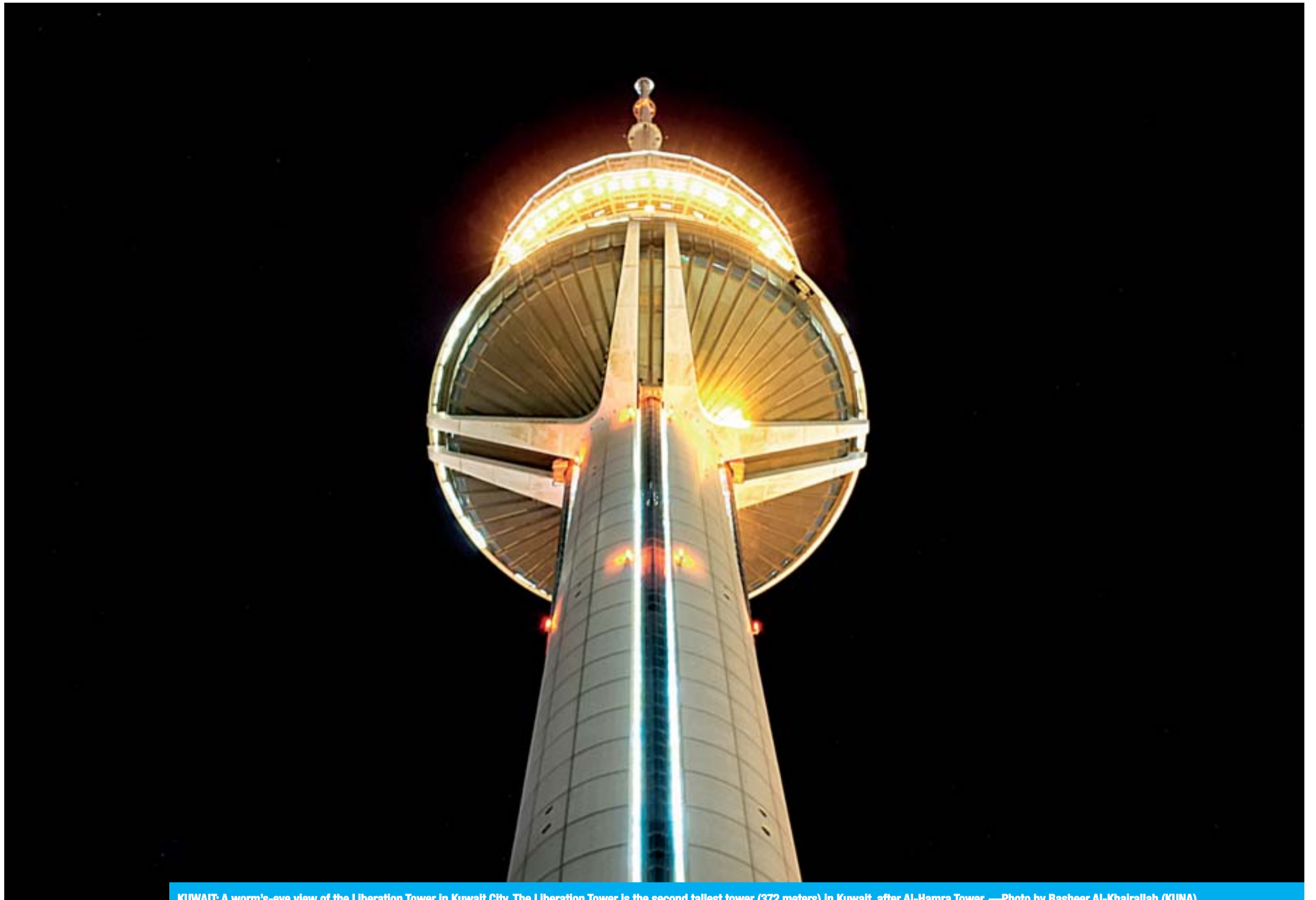
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## Local

## Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: A worm's-eye view of the Liberation Tower in Kuwait City. The Liberation Tower is the second tallest tower (372 meters) in Kuwait, after Al-Hamra Tower. —Photo by Basheer Al-Khairallah (KUNA)

# 95% MENA job seekers want companies to engage with them via job sites

## 82% believe it is difficult to learn about company before applying

**DUBAI:** In today's hyper competitive market, companies have to find ways to differentiate themselves to become an employer of choice and ensure not only talent attraction, but also retention. In the latest Bayt.com poll entitled Employer Branding in the Middle East and North Africa, the leading job site in the Middle East found that engaging with potential job seekers online is positive for a company's employer branding and is demanded by 94.7 percent of the region's job seekers. In fact, two thirds of these job seekers (66.5 percent) said they follow companies on job sites to 'learn about their work environment'. That being said, the majority (82.3 percent) of respondents believe that it is currently 'difficult' to learn about company culture and work environment before applying for a job, including three in every four respondents (76.1 percent) who say that it is 'very difficult'. Only one in 10 respondents claimed that finding out sufficient information about the company culture and work environment was easy (10.9 percent).

### The employer branding imperative

93.6 percent of job seekers believe that a company's employer brand is important for its success, with 85.9 percent stating that it is 'very important'. When asked about the benefits of employer branding, seven out of 10 MENA respondents said 'ease of attracting job seekers' (70.2 percent). Others also mentioned 'recognition as an employer of choice' (3.4 percent), and 'better employee engagement' (2.2 percent).

What's more, nine in every 10 respondents claim that online employer branding helps 'increase talent retention rates' (89.8 percent) and 79 percent agreed that it can also help 'reduce long-term hiring costs'.

Two thirds of respondents believe that the most harmful thing for an employer brand is 'not communicating with talent' (67.4 percent), this is followed by an 'unprofessional work environment' (6.6 percent), 'unclear job descriptions' (2.5 percent), and 'lack of information on job sites' (2.3 percent).

When asked about who in the company was responsible for employer branding, a majority of the respondents answered that the onus lay on 'the HR department' (69.1 percent), followed by 'all employ-

ees' (15.2 percent), 'the marketing department' (10.3 percent), and 'the company's senior management' (3.6 percent).

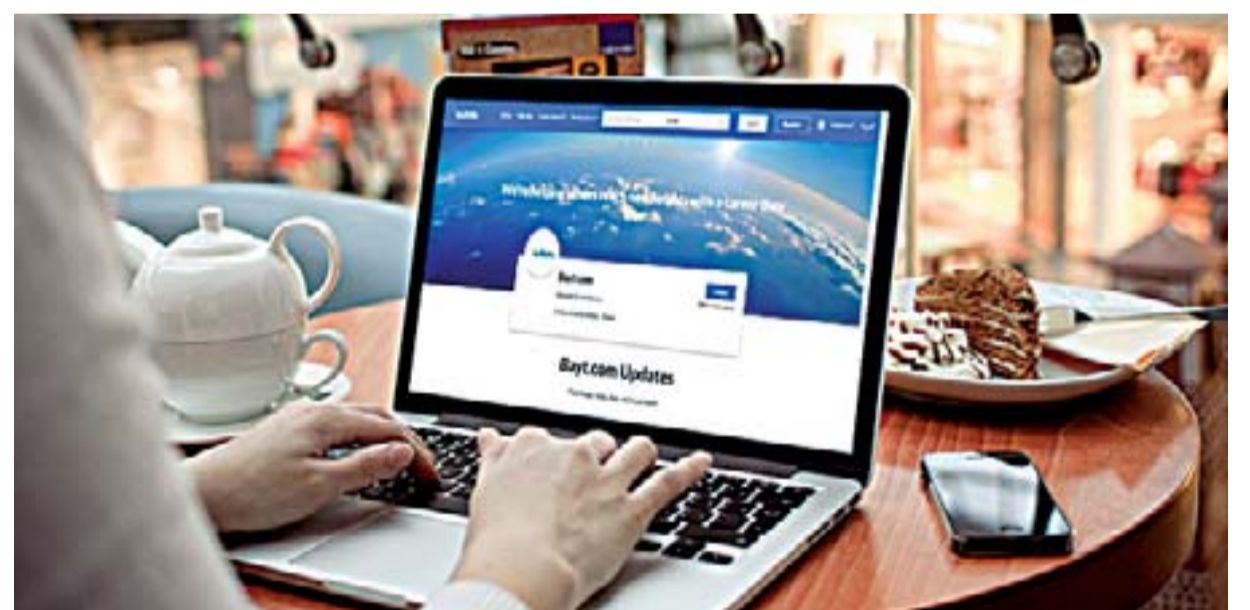
"The recent technological advancements and trends, which make information easily and readily accessible, have rendered employer branding one of modern-day essential business practices. Indeed, in today's hyper-connected world, and amidst the ongoing battle to hire and retain the best talent, companies that manage their online presence and create a powerful online brand are able to better position themselves as an employer of choice among top talent. Bayt.com provides employers around the region the essential tools to elevate their employer brand and become a more attractive workplace for potential job seekers. In fact, a full branding platform is now launched on Bayt.com to allow companies to share more information with their target talent, attract more applicants, and track and measure their brand power in real time," said Suhail Masri, Vice President, Employer Solutions, Bayt.com.

### The importance of an employer's digital presence

In today's digital era, one of the best ways to let people know about your work environment is by being active online and engaging with your audience. Humanizing the digital approach is essential to make potential employees relate to your company. In fact, more than three quarters of MENA respondents believe that 'online job sites' (79.9 percent) work best for employer branding. Other channels such as 'social media' (9.6 percent), a 'company's own website' (5.2 percent), 'PR and media' (2.2 percent) and 'offline events and marketing' (0.7 percent) are reported to be less effective.

Nine out of 10 MENA respondents (93 percent) say that they 'research a company online before applying for a job', while only 7 percent do not. Job seekers in MENA follow companies on job sites to 'learn about their work environment' (66.5 percent), to 'find and apply for jobs' (15.4 percent), to 'evaluate a job offer' (1.9 percent), as well as to 'check the latest news and updates' (1.8 percent), and to 'prepare for an interview' (1.6 percent).

At 62 percent, 'reputation and culture' rate high on the list of priorities as an important type of



information respondents need to know about companies. This, in addition to 'work environment and facilities', 'perks and benefits', and 'rewards and recognition' are all important points of consideration for a quarter of MENA respondents (24.2 percent).

The newly launched Bayt.com Branding Platform allows companies to target custom audiences through tailor-made mailers and ads with premium placement and homepage integration, as well as the ability to create a customized company profile to

share more information with online talent, and real-time analytics for assessing employer branding performance. Click here to learn more about Bayt.com's new Branding Platform.

Data for the 2018 Bayt.com 'Employer Branding in the Middle East and North Africa' poll was collected online from June 10 2018 to August 02 2018. Results are based on a sample of 8,681 respondents. Countries that participated are the UAE, Jordan, Kuwait, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Algeria, Morocco, Bahrain, Tunisia, and others.



### Bayt.com launches employer branding platform

## Food Bank plans several charity projects in India

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Food Bank is continuing to follow up the project to dig dozens of wells and build 100 mosques in India, Kuwait Food Bank Director-General Salem Al-Hamar stated yesterday. The project was launched by the bank this year to provide a decent life for the needy outside of Kuwait and a suitable environment for housing communities and

religious duties, Hamar said in a press statement.

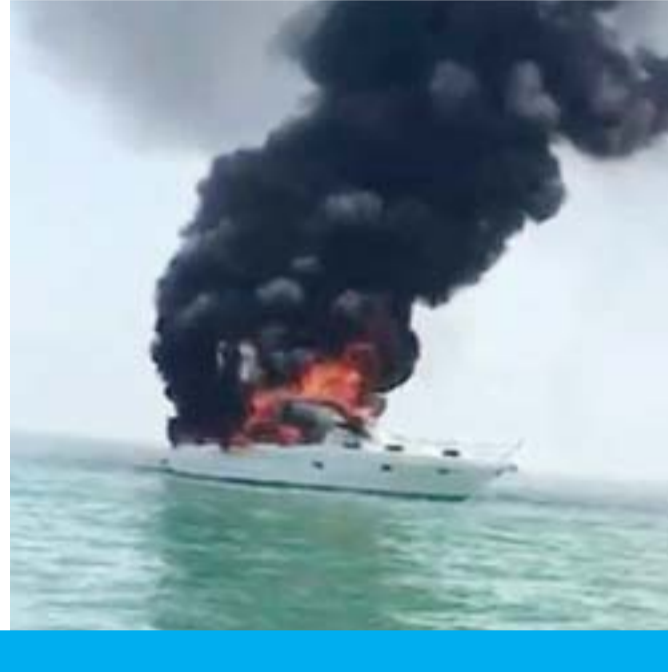
Hamar noted that the value of mosque construction in India is about KD 2,500 (about \$8,257), and the wells' cost starts from KD 50 (about \$165). Muslim people in remote Indian areas are in dire need for drilling fresh water wells, where they suffer the most to get a drop of water, he added. He stressed that the bank will not hesitate to provide support and assistance to Muslims in many poor countries, pointing out that the bank has launched several charitable projects in various Arab and Islamic countries during the past months, which had a significant impact on charity and humanitarian work. —KUNA

# Coastguard rescues eight people on burning yacht

## Runaway maid turned apartment into unlicensed creche



KUWAIT: Firefighters tackle a blaze on a yacht in front of Marina Mall on Friday.



By Hanan Al-Saadoun and Agencies

KUWAIT: Kuwait Ministry of Interior announced on Friday the coastguard have successfully rescued eight people on a yacht that caught fire in front of Marina Mall; no injuries were recorded. The Ministry's Public Relations and Security Media Department said in a press release that the coast guards have had been dispatched to the scene of the accident as soon as the emergency call came in. People who need assistance should dial (112), or contact the coast guards at: 1880-888, in case of emergency.

### Unlicensed creche

An Indian maid turned her apartment in Mahboula into an unlicensed creche and was receiving children from apartments around her, Al-Anbaa reported yesterday. She became so famous that authorities learned about her. The woman became in violation of residency law three years back, so she decided to work in her apartment and turned it into an unlicensed nursery. She was busted after a citizen became furious when he learned that his ex-wife left their daughter with the woman and her bachelor friends. He videotaped the creche in which 16 children appeared. He then went to the police station accusing his ex-wife of negligence. Policemen went to the apartment, arrested the Indian woman and sent her for deportation.



### Cops attacked during 'wedding mayhem'

went to the police. The woman bought an expensive piece of textile to make a dress for the party, then, according to a security source, when she went to collect the dress, she was shocked to find it was damaged and not as she had ordered. A verbal dispute took place between the tailor and the woman. The owner then interfered and lost her temper, insulted and kicked the client out of her shop, so she resorted to police.

### Policemen attacked

Police officers in Jahra put an end to chaos that spoiled a wedding party, which ended in attacking policemen. Eight bedoons were arrested, six of whom were sent to traffic detention, Al-Anbaa reported yesterday. The other two were detained for attacking policemen. Police received complaints about six vehicles showing off in front of a wedding hall in celebration of their relative's wedding. Policemen rushed to the area and attempted to break up the 'show', but were attacked. Backup was called in, and while the reckless drivers were being rounded up, two others attacked the police and injured some of them.

### Dress damaged

An Indian tailor damaged a female citizen's dress and prevented her from attending a private party. A dispute took place, then the owner of the workshop intervened and kicked the client out, and she



local spotlight

## Fake employment

By Muna Al-Fuzal

Muna@kuwaittimes.net

Kuwait provides citizens financial support to encourage them to join the private sector to reduce the employment rate in the government sector, but the implementation of this policy must be done in cooperation with the private sector. The problem is that some companies in the private sector are trying to manipulate the law despite government control and procedures, as well as penalties. There have been cases of cheating and deceit by some companies that grant citizens half of the basic salary on the condition that they do not come to work and stay home. This has resulted in the phenomenon of disguised unemployment, which has disastrous consequences on the actual employment of citizens and expatriates, so the government must act strictly.

In January, the minister of social affairs and labor revealed the existence of 60 companies that are not present in their licensed addresses, which were monitored during inspections and follow-up by the Public Authority for Manpower, adding out that the total number of such companies discovered over the past seven months reached 270. Their files were suspended until their situation is modified. The minister pointed out that these campaigns aim to monitor violations and regulate the labor market, as such companies cause the spread of fake laborers who are in violation of residency laws and constitute a danger to the security of society.

I believe that the time has come to address this issue. Many decisions have been taken to deal with fake employment, but to this day this dangerous phenomenon has not been eliminated, especially with regards to real employment and the importance of distinguishing between the two.

Recently, the head of the Masrafi banking group Faisal Al-Kandari said that for a long time he has been demanding and suffering from illusory employment that violates and wastes public funds. Kandari asked why is the real employee in the private sector being harassed and why measures aren't being taken against companies that manipulate quotas to avoid fines imposed by the state.

In July 2016, the residency authority arrested the owner of a local company and his accountants who were accused of bank fraud and abusing public funds. According to a tipoff it received, the company had won a private tender, but one of the tender conditions was the recruitment of Kuwaiti security officers. A number of female citizens were employed on a salary of KD 230 per month, but the management of the company seized their bank cards with the aim of withdrawing their salaries immediately after depositing them, which prompted the employees to report the case to the police. They arrested the manager and accountants, who admitted to the crime. They said they wanted to prove to the labor authority that the women were receiving their salaries to prevent the suspension of the company's file. The company also took advantage of the labor support allowance to pay insurance and monthly subscriptions.

Also, some expatriates change their residencies from housewives, for example, to employees for a sum of money, but in fact they do not work for the company. These expatriates may hold real and valid residencies, but they do not have a real job and therefore struggle to survive, especially since they often paid large sums to come to Kuwait. Some pay around KD 1,000 to renew their residency every year and do not have any business relationship with the company that brought them to Kuwait.

This reality must be eliminated by intensifying procedures, follow-up, inspection and control to distinguish between real and fake employees. One of the suggestions to end this situation is by forcing companies to pay the labor support allowance with the basic salary, to be offset by the restructuring program and supporting companies that pay salaries to employees. Kuwait has signed several agreements aimed at protecting workers and preserving their rights and benefits. Those who attempt to trade the rights of workers, whether citizens or expatriates, must be stopped and punished.

## No injuries in Salmiya fire



KUWAIT: A fire was reported in a Salmiya apartment, prompting Bidaa and Salmiya fire stations to respond. The fire was in a room and was put out, while no injuries were reported. — By Hanan Al-Saadoun

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# International

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2018

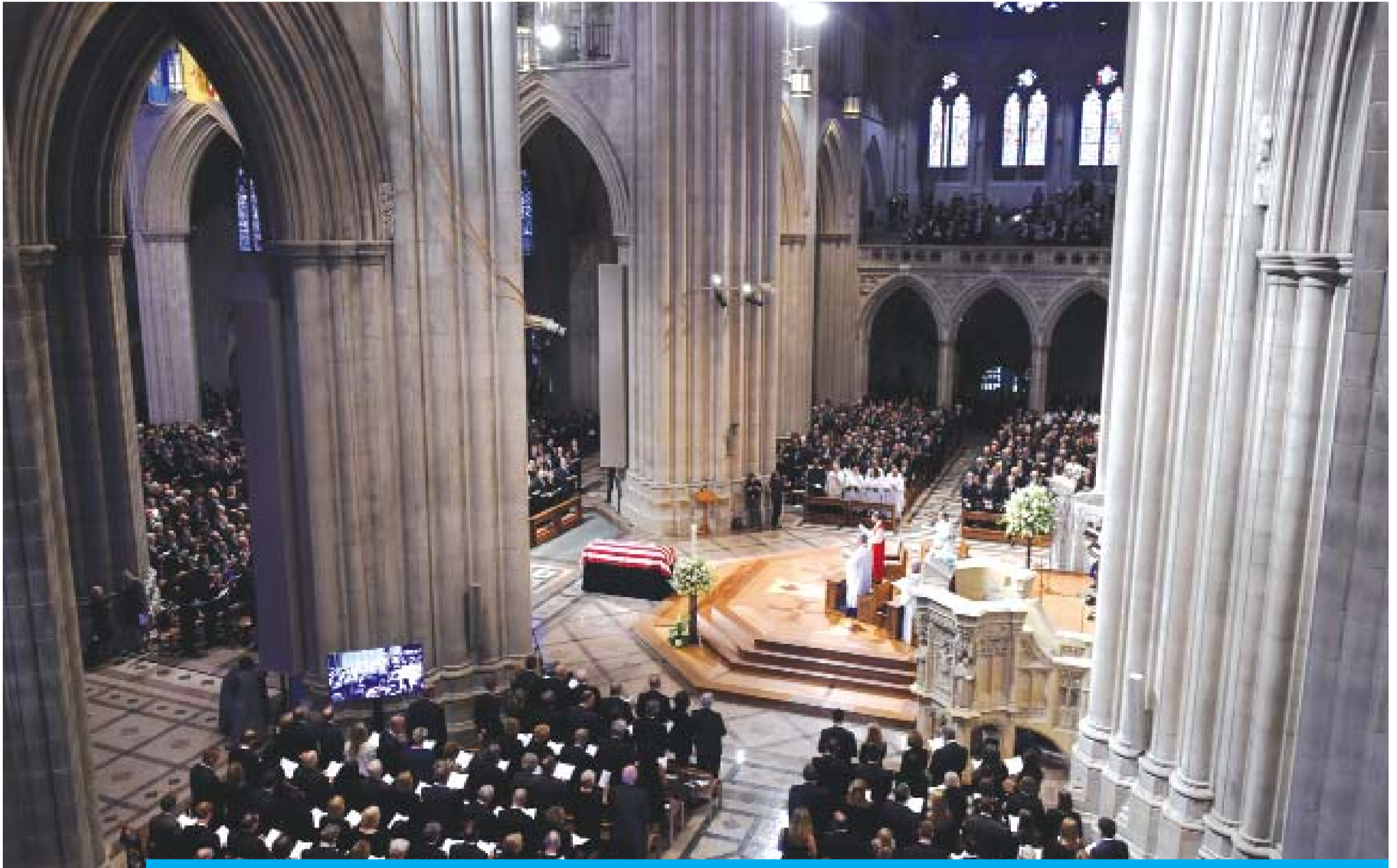


Mauritians vote before key presidential ballot

## Gangster turned lawmaker new face of Mexican politics

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WASHINGTON: General view of late US Senator John McCain, Republican of Arizona, National Memorial Service at the Washington National Cathedral. — AFP

# Americans bid McCain solemn farewell

## Bush, Obama pay tribute to McCain at Washington funeral

WASHINGTON: Americans paid their final respects Friday to John McCain as the national icon lay in state in the US Capitol as part of a momentous sendoff for the war hero and statesman. McCain's widow Cindy, his seven children and his 106-year-old mother Roberta McCain joined scores of members of Congress, state governors, diplomats and other dignitaries to bid the senator farewell.

President Donald Trump, who had feuded bitterly with McCain, was notably absent from the somber ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda, an honor accorded to just 30 Americans throughout the nation's history. The last visit to Washington by McCain — who died last Saturday at age 81 after a yearlong battle with cancer — is being spread out over two days with former presidents George W Bush and Barack Obama to eulogize him during a memorial service Saturday at the city's National Cathedral.

Just before 11:00 am Friday, a military honor guard carried the flag-draped casket up the Capitol stairs, moving one deliberate step at a time, while inside the Rotunda dark-suited mourners stood at silent attention. The silver-haired Roberta McCain — whose presence was only confirmed on the eve of the ceremony — appeared composed as she drew near her son's casket in a wheelchair, making the sign of the cross on her chest. Seated beside her granddaughter Meghan McCain, she held the young woman's hand and appeared to comfort her as she wept.

### Final rebuke to Trump

Vice President Mike Pence — who represented Trump at the ceremony — began his tribute with an address to McCain's family, and particularly his mother. "It is deeply humbling to stand before you today at the United States Capitol to commemorate the life and service of an American patriot, senator John McCain," Pence said. "The president asked me to be here, on behalf of a grateful nation, to pay a debt of honor and respect to a man who served our country throughout his life, in uniform and in public office."

It was an awkward message to deliver from a president who has studiously refrained from praising McCain, either during his illness or since his death. Guests included former secretary of state Henry Kissinger, riding in a wheelchair at age 95; the actor Warren Beatty, a McCain friend; and former senator Joe Lieberman, who in 2008 McCain came close to naming as his running mate.

The former aviator spent more than five years in a Vietnamese prison camp, returning home to launch a political career that saw him win the Republican presidential nomination in 2008.

The final public ceremony honoring late US senator John McCain began Saturday in Washington, where eulogies by two former presidents will highlight the warrior politician's call for healing, but current commander-in-chief Donald Trump is notably absent.

They were set to continue at the nationally televised cathedral ceremony, a who's who of political Washington attended by the likes of dozens of congressional colleagues, Bill and Hillary Clinton, former vice presidents Al Gore and Dick Cheney and former secretaries of state Madeline Albright, John Kerry and Henry Kissinger, who is to address the gathering. The president's daughter Ivanka Trump and her husband Jared Kushner were also present, along with Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, White House Chief of Staff John Kelly and Hollywood icon Warren Beatty.

### Memorial service

Earlier yesterday McCain's flag-draped casket was taken by honor guard from the US Capitol and placed in a black hearse, which stopped at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to allow his widow Cindy McCain to lay a wreath honoring all of those who died in the conflict. At the National Cathedral, attention will no doubt focus on the addresses by Bush and Obama.

That the men who vanquished McCain in their presidential battles were asked to speak is testament to his commitment to looking beyond party and signaling that Americans, regardless of political affiliation, are rowing together in the same boat. But the absence of Trump, whose bitter feud with McCain has wrangled America's already stormy politics, will serve as a final rebuke to the president, highlighting the clash between a Republican

elder statesman and the current president from his own party. Their feud took root during Trump's 2016 campaign, when he questioned the notion McCain was a war hero — because he had been captured after his navy fighter jet was shot down over Hanoi in 1967. The enmity was clear in the fracas this week over whether the White House would keep its flags at half staff in McCain's honor — which Trump finally agreed to do under heavy pressure from politicians, veterans groups and reportedly his own aides.

McCain meanwhile took a final swipe at Trump in a farewell message to the nation, delivered posthumously on Monday, warning not to "confuse our patriotism with tribal rivalries." The president was unusually quiet in the White House Friday, not tweeting during the McCain ceremony, then departing for a political event in North Carolina. While Trump stayed away, Pence was joined by Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, National Security Advisor John Bolton and Attorney General Jeff Sessions.

Thousands of people queued outside for hours, many holding umbrellas to shield themselves from the sun, waiting their chance to honor a patriot. US Capitol staff confirmed that as of 2200 GMT Friday more than 10,000 people walked through the Rotunda to view McCain's casket. "I wanted to pay my respects to John McCain," Mike Holy, a Vietnam war veteran sporting a Hillary Clinton button, told AFP as he waited in a line that snaked down the street. — AFP

## US citizens hurt in Dutch knife attack

AMSTERDAM: Two people who were seriously injured in a knife attack at Amsterdam's Central Station are US citizens, the US ambassador said yesterday, as Dutch police probed a possible terror link. "We are aware that both victims were US citizens and have been in touch with them and their families," Pete Hoekstra said in a statement.

Panic broke out at the Dutch capital's main station shortly after midday Friday when the knife-wielding man stabbed two bystanders before he was shot and wounded by police. Police later identified the suspect as a 19-year-old Afghan man with a German residency permit. He is being questioned in hospital under police guard and Dutch authorities said they were in close contact with their German counterparts for more details about his background.

A preliminary investigation revealed

that the assailant did not know his victims and that he did not specifically target them, the police spokesman said—suggesting a random attack.

An Amsterdam police spokesman, Frans Zuiderhoek, told AFP late Friday "we are seriously taking into account that there was a terrorist motive." Another police spokesman, Rob van der Veen, said Saturday that "the police investigation is in full swing and we are looking at all angles". Further details of the two Americans injured were not immediately known, although one was reported to be a young man. Hoekstra said the US is ready to "assist as appropriate, with our main priority as always being the safety and well-being of US citizens in the country".

The attack comes a day after an announcement by Dutch anti-Islam politician Geert Wilders that he was cancelling movies to stage a cartoon competition to caricature the Prophet Mohammad, a plan that had angered many Muslims.

Witnesses described scenes of panic on Friday as gunshots rang out and thousands of commuters and tourists were evacuated from the rail terminus shortly after midday. "The two people are very badly injured, and they were brought to the hospital," said Van der Veen. — AFP

## Chilean clergy abuse cases triple to 119

SANTIAGO: Scores of new cases of priestly sexual abuse of minors have come to light in Chile, public prosecutors said Friday, deepening a crisis in the country's Catholic Church that has embroiled Pope Francis. The country's chief prosecutor's office said the number of cases it was investigating had soared to 119 as more victims came forward.

A total of 167 bishops, priests and lay members of the church are now under investigation for sexual crimes committed in the South American country since 1960. Seven of those under investigation are bishops and 96 are priests, but it was unclear from the figures released Friday how many were currently serving. Among those implicated is the country's most senior Catholic figure, Santiago Archbishop Ricardo Ezzati, who faces accusations he helped cover up sexual abuse in his diocese.

Most of the evidence against him was gathered during a search of the archdiocese offices in Santiago earlier this month. The search was ordered by the prosecutor in charge of the investigation, Emiliano Arias, after the church refused to hand over files to investigators, citing the need

to respect victims. Ezzati has denied allegations that he covered up cases of abuse, including those of a top aide, 56-year-old Oscar Munoz, who was jailed in July while a probe into allegations he raped at least seven children continues.

### Public outrage

Reflecting public outrage over the investigation's findings, the Chilean parliament has begun moves to withdraw citizenship from the naturalized Italian-born Ezzati, who has protested his innocence. A recent opinion poll by pollsters Cadem showed 96 percent of Chileans believe the church systematically covers up abuse by priests.

Pope Francis has already apologized repeatedly to Chileans over the scandal, admitting the church failed "to listen and react" to the allegations, but vowed to "restore justice." In May, the Argentine pontiff accepted the resignation of five Chilean bishops amid accusations of abuse and related coverups. Francis himself became mired in the scandal when, during a trip to Chile in January, he defended 61-year-old bishop Juan Barros, who was accused of covering up abuse by pedophile priest Fernando Karadima in the 1980s and 1990s.

Karadima was suspended for life by the Vatican over the allegations of child molestation. Francis eventually accepted he was wrong to defend Barros and subsequently accepted his resignation. State prosecutors began investigating scores of abuse cases following outrage

around the country over the church's own probe into decades of abuse by priests, crimes over which it often failed to take any action or handed down lenient punishments. Now bishops and other priests accused of abuse in Chile will face the full force of secular law.

### Number of cases triple

Prosecutors initially indicated that 38 cases had been opened in the first weeks of their probe, which began in July. "The number of investigations into sexual crimes committed by members of the Catholic Church has reached 119 cases," the state prosecutor said Friday in a statement. Many of the cases have come to light after recent searches of properties belonging to the Marist Brothers religious order.

The Vatican recently defrocked a Marist priest Abel Perez, who confessed to sexually abusing 14 minors in the 1970s. He admitted the abuses in 2010, but the Marists only reported his crimes to the authorities seven years later. Earlier this month, Episcopal Conference president Santiago Silva announced a series of measures to "at least begin to resolve the serious problem we have in the church." In an attempt to douse the fires of the crisis engulfing the Catholic Church in the South American country over the deluge of accusations against clergy, bishops have decided to publicly disclose the previous investigations on alleged sexual abuse of minors. Previously, bishops had insisted that canonical law prevails over criminal law. — AFP

## International

# Trump's key decisions in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

## A timeline of the key developments since 2017

**WASHINGTON:** From the transfer of the US embassy to Jerusalem, to the halting of US aid to Palestinians, US President Donald Trump has made key moves in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Here is a timeline of the key developments since 2017:

### Silence on settlements

On January 24, 2017, Trump's administration refuses to be drawn on whether he backs Israel's decision to approve 2,500 new settler homes in the occupied West Bank, the biggest project of its kind for years. "He wants to grow closer to Israel," his spokesman says.

### First break with Palestinians

On February 15, welcoming Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to the White House, Trump halts Washington's quest for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, saying he would back a single state if it led to peace. On March 27 new US ambassador Nikki Haley promises an end to bias against Israel at the United Nations.

### Trump at Western Wall

On May 3, Trump hosts Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas at the White House, saying of a Middle East peace agreement: "We will get it done." On May 22, Trump becomes the first sitting US president to visit the Western Wall in Jerusalem's Old Town. Netanyahu announces new US military aid.

### 'Alleged' occupation

In September, US ambassador to Israel David Friedman, a longtime friend and advisor of Trump, angers Palestinians by downplaying the Israeli occupation of the West Bank.

### Jerusalem

On December 6 Trump says "it is time to officially recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel", breaking with the policies of his predecessors and provoking criticism worldwide. Palestinians express rage. Palestinians have since refused all contact with the American administration, and no longer accept the United States as a peace mediator.

### 'Slap of the century'

On January 14, 2018 Abbas denounces White House peace efforts as "the slap of the century". On January 16 Washington holds back \$65 million, more than half of what that had been earmarked for the UN relief agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA. Washington says its move is not linked to tensions over Jerusalem, but it further heightens tensions with the Palestinians. On January 25, Trump accuses Palestinians of disrespecting the United States after it snubbed Vice President Mike Pence during his visit to the Middle East. He threatens to withhold aid worth hundreds of millions of dollars until they accede to US-brokered talks.

### US embassy in Jerusalem

On March 5 Trump hosts Netanyahu at the White House and says US-Israel ties have "never been better". On May 14, the transfer of the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem coincides with a bloodbath in the Gaza Strip, where about 60 are killed from Israeli fire. On June 1 the United States vetoes a UN draft resolution calling for protection measures for the Palestinians and on June 19 announces its withdrawal from the United Nations Human Rights Council over its alleged bias against Israel.



**Palestinians steer their boat as they protest against the more than a decade-long Israeli's naval blockade of Gaza, in Beit Lahya on the border with Israel in the northern Gaza strip on August 11, 2018. — AFP**

### Halt to US aid

The United States announces on August 24 it has cancelled more than \$200 million in aid for the Palestinians in

the Gaza Strip and West Bank, then on August 31 decides to end funding for UNRWA, saying the organization was "irredeemably flawed". — AFP

## Turkey calls for new chapter in Greece relations

**ATHENS:** Turkey's foreign minister called for a new chapter in testy diplomatic ties with Greece yesterday, even as he berated the neighboring country for providing a safe haven for Turkish "criminals." Eight Turkish commandos are seeking asylum in Greece after commandeering a helicopter to flee Turkey following a failed coup attempt against President Tayyip Erdogan in July 2016.

Turkey describes the fugitives as criminals involved in the coup plot, and has demanded that Greece hand them back. Greek courts have so far rejected Ankara's requests. "The situation in our relations today is not to the benefit of our countries. Building trust is important. We should open a new chapter in our relations," Mevlut Cavusoglu told Ta Nea newspaper in an interview released yesterday. "We should continue the process of bilateral talks without any conditions. This is the way to solve our problems."

He repeated demands, however, for the eight commandos to be sent to Turkey to face trial. "The Greek justice system, contrary to the rules and the principles of the international law, is letting the culprits go unpunished and is violating the victims' rights," Cavusoglu was quoted as saying. "We remain determined in our effort to make sure that the fugitive coup perpetrators will be extradited and stand trial in Turkey," he added.

Long-time regional rivals, the two neighbours have been at odds over a host of issues from ethnically divided Cyprus to rights in the Aegean Sea. Rhetoric on both sides in recent months has taken a marked turn for the worse, particularly after the collapse of peace talks in Cyprus in July 2017. — Reuters

## Brazil's top electoral court votes down Lula candidacy

**BRASILIA:** A majority of Brazil's top electoral court shot down late Friday the candidacy of popular leftist Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in the country's upcoming presidential vote, telling the jailed former leader he cannot participate in October's critical election. The vote punctuated a gripping case that has roiled the country for months, with Lula, 72, remaining the top contender among Brazilians to lead Latin America's largest economy — despite sitting behind bars since April for accepting a bribe.

In an extraordinary session the Superior Electoral Court dashed Lula's hopes after hours of debate, with the judges voting an overwhelming 6-1 against him. Shortly thereafter, the former president's Workers' Party (PT) vowed to "fight with all means" to secure candidacy for the leftist icon. "We will present all appeals before the courts for the recognition of the rights of Lula provided by law and international treaties ratified by Brazil," said the party in a statement. "We will defend Lula in the streets, with the people, because he is a candidate of hope."

Lula's case was a last-minute addition to the court session. The result was expected, but the vote of Judge Edson Fachin, the second to speak, had momentarily rekindled suspense. He relied on Lula's recent backing from the UN Human Rights Committee, which ruled that the former leader cannot be disqualified from the elections as his legal appeals are ongoing. But the votes that followed torpedoed the former president's bid for a third term.

### Potential appeal

Lula has been sentenced to 12 years in prison for accepting a luxury seaside apartment as a bribe from a construction firm. He vehemently denies the accusations and has dismissed the charges as a political plot aimed at preventing him from standing in the elections. The PT has stubbornly kept up its attempts to force Lula's name onto the ballot box, registering him as a candidate two weeks



**CURITIBA:** Supporters of Brazilian former president (2003-2011) Luiz Inacio Lula Da Silva attend a vigil outside the Federal Police Superintendence. — AFP

ago. The court's decision would be open to appeal, magistrate Henrique Neves, a former electoral court member, told AFP. He said either party would also be able to lodge an appeal with the Supreme Court over the constitutional nature of the electoral court's ruling. The court decision dropped late in the night but before the spots of presidential hopefuls were set to broadcast.

### Adored by millions

Lula was found guilty in July 2017 and then lost a first appeal in January. Nonetheless, UN committee member Olivier de Frouville told AFP that Lula should be allowed to "organize and campaign, even from jail." Brazil is technically obliged to abide by those findings, but the government in Brasilia described the committee's conclusions as "a recommendation" that is "not... legally binding." Former trade union leader Lula is also involved in another five

ongoing court cases. But he is adored by millions of Brazilians due to the prosperity Brazil enjoyed under his leadership from 2003 to 2010. He left office with a popularity rating of over 80 percent. Despite the uncertainty over his ability to stand, Lula currently leads polls with more than double the share of his nearest challenger, the right-winger Jair Bolsonaro. But the PT's second choice looks hopeless. Former Sao Paulo governor Fernando Haddad, who will stand if Lula is barred, commands little popular support.

However, the political chaos has had wider repercussions in the country with the currency losing 20 percent of its value against the dollar since January. Lula's social media followers remain upbeat, though. The PT launched an appeal for support on Twitter, after which a hashtag translating as "Lula on the ballot box" quickly began trending. — AFP

## Drought puts Iraq at risk of jihadist resurgence

**BAGHDAD:** Iraq risks a jihadist resurgence if it fails to tackle a critical drought and other climate-related security issues, according to a study presented to the UN Security Council and made public yesterday. "The combination of its hydrological limitations, increasing temperatures and extreme weather events puts pressure on basic resources and undermines livelihood security for Iraq's population," the Expert Working Group on Climate-Related Security Risks warned in its report.

"Failure to monitor and manage these climate-related risks will increase the risk of ISIS and post-ISIS terrorist groups gaining support and regaining strength within resource-constrained communities," it said. The jihadist organization, also known as the Islamic State group, seized a third of Iraq's territory in 2014 before being beaten back in a sweeping government offensive last year. The water study, presented to the Security Council in July, draws a clear link between climate change and security.

Iraq is in the midst of a devastating drought and water levels are at their lowest since 1931. The flow of water in the country's rivers has shrunk by 40 percent in recent decades, battering the country's agricultural sector threatening the population's water security. The shortage stems from the "climate change and increasingly erratic precipitation across the region, a decline in water flows from Iran and Turkey, weak irrigation systems due to damage to infrastructure during the war, and a



**BASRA:** An Iraqi man and a boy collect dead fish from a reservoir at a fish farm north of Basra. — AFP

lack of economic and political investment," the report read.

"The absence of an adequate national water management policy exacerbates and compounds these critical threats." While the agriculture sector is Iraq's top employer after the oil industry, its ministry is allotted one of the lowest federal budgets. The Ministry of Water Resources also suffers financial constraints and has not been able to modernize the country's water infrastructure despite plans being in place for over two decades. Baghdad does not have formal agreements with its neighbors on equi-

table distribution of water resources.

Scarce rainfall and dam projects in neighboring countries have put more than seven million people living along the banks of the Tigris River at risk of displacement, the report said. Water shortages could also increase inter-communal tensions, particularly in rural areas, it added.

The working group urged the UN's mission in Iraq to monitor and report on the risks of climate change and to support the authorities by integrating climate and displacement into their post-IS plans. — AFP

## 30 soldiers killed in Boko Haram raid

**KANO:** At least 30 Nigerian soldiers died in combat with Boko Haram jihadists who overran a military base in the northeast near the border with Niger, two military sources told AFP yesterday. Scores of jihadists in trucks stormed the base at Zari village in northern Borno state late Thursday and briefly seized it after a fierce battle, they said.

"They came in large numbers in trucks and carrying heavy weapons and engaged soldiers in a battle that lasted for an hour," a military officer said. "We lost at least 30 men," the officer said, adding that the attack took place at around 4:00 pm. "They overwhelmed the troops who were forced to temporarily withdraw before reinforcements arrived," said the officer who asked not to be named because he was not authorized to speak.

Boko Haram has intensified attacks on military targets in recent months. The attacks appear to undermine repeated claims by the military that Boko Haram had been defeated. The militants took weapons and military equipment before they were pushed out of the base by troops with aerial support, said a second military source who gave a similar death toll. The militants were pursued and bombed by a fighter jet, said the military sources.

"The terrorists also suffered heavy casualty from the bombardment", one of the military officers said. Zari is located

30 kilometers from the town of Damasak on the border with Niger. The jihadists are thought to have attacked the base from the nearby Garunda village, where 17 troops were killed and 14 injured in an attack on another military base last month, the sources said. In a statement late Friday the Nigerian military confirmed troops fought Boko Haram "insurgents...on rampage to loot the community and extort money from villagers".

"Troops...have successfully routed Boko Haram insurgents in an encounter that ensued yesterday evening at Zari village," the military said in the statement. It did not speak of military casualties and the raid on the base but maintained "several Boko Haram fighters and weapons" were destroyed in the fight.

The Nigerian army has on several occasions disputed reports on losses to Boko Haram and has in some cases played them down. On July 14 Boko Haram militants overran a military base in Jilli village, in neighboring Yobe state when dozens of troops were said to be killed, wounded or missing. The army at the time conceded the base was attacked but said troops remobilized and succeeded in repelling the attackers. In a short statement on Wednesday, IS-affiliated Boko Haram jihadists claimed to have killed "several" Nigerian troops in mortar strikes on a military base in the town of Arge in the Lake Chad area. — AFP





## International

# Mauritanians vote in election before key presidential ballot

## Oppn deplored logistical snags, hints at flawed outcome

**NOUAKCHOTT:** Mauritania, a frontline state in the fight against Islamic extremism, voted yesterday in legislative, regional and local elections that will test head of state Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz's record seven months before a presidential vote. Military personnel cast their ballots Friday to free themselves up to provide security in the vast and arid West African state with a registered electorate of some 1.4 million.

Polling opened at 0700 GMT in the capital Nouakchott but several voters were sent to different polling stations due to last minute changes, an AFP reporter said. President Aziz hailed the "peaceful and democratic nature" of the ballot after casting his vote but a leading opposition figure Mohamed Ould Moloud deplored logistical snags and hinted the outcome could be flawed.

"There are voters who have been misdirected and don't know where to vote," he said, adding that there were "serious signs of possible fraud". The opposition boycotted the last polls in 2013 but a record 98 parties are taking part this time. Voting ends at 1900 GMT with results not expected until the middle of next week. There are no international observers.

"I voted for people I support in different parties including some from the ruling party and others in the opposition," a woman who identified herself as Fatimatou said. "It's not easy," she added after taking eight minutes to fill in the forms and deposit them in five different ballot boxes. Potential run-off elections

would take place on September 15.

Aziz, 61, who came to power in a coup in 2008, won elections in 2009 and again in 2014 for a second five-year term. He has been frequently accused by opposition figures and NGOs of rights abuses, including the arrest of a former senator and the "secretive" detention of a blogger. Aziz says he will not seek a third mandate, which would be against the constitution, but statements by ministers and supporters have allowed suspicions to flourish.

### 'Assassinating democracy'

Aziz has slammed opposition leaders as "villains" and "troublemakers". He has described some as "dangerous Islamists, racist extremists and the leftovers of former regimes which brought the country to its knees". Earlier this week he accused Islamists of "just awaiting their political failure to take up arms" drawing an indignant response from Jemil Ould Mensour of the Islamist party Tawassoul.

"It is Mr Aziz who took up arms against an elected regime and is assassinating democracy," he charged, referring to the 2008 coup. Veteran opposition leader Ahmed Ould Daddah, who heads the Gathering for Democracy (RFD), has urged voters to make "the necessary leap to get rid of dictatorship and generalized bankruptcy". The ruling Union for the Republic is campaigning largely on changes it made in the 2017 constitution, abolishing the senate and bringing in a new national anthem and flag. Voters endorsed the controversial measure in a referendum, while the opposition

## A registered electorate of some 1.4 million



## Ugandan pop star MP flies to US for treatment

**KAMPALA:** Ugandan singer-turned-politician Robert Kyagulanyi has left Uganda for medical treatment in the United States following accusations he was tortured by security forces, his lawyer told AFP yesterday. The 36-year-old reggae star — better known as Bobi Wine — had spent Friday holed up in a government hospital after being re-arrested while trying to leave the country.

Kyagulanyi became an MP in 2017, firing up a youthful population and proving a thorn in the side of ageing President Museveni. He was charged with treason last week after protesters stoned Museveni's car during a by-election campaign. The lawmaker's arrest sparked violent protests and international condemnation over his alleged torture. "He left last night at around 11.00 pm aboard KLM flight for Schiphol (Amsterdam) onward to United States," lawyer Nicholas Opiyo said. "He was in the company of his wife, Barbie and brother Daks Sentamu."

Released on bail on Monday, Kyagulanyi was seized

again by police on Thursday evening at Entebbe airport, outside the capital Kampala, his lawyers said. He was taken to the government's Kiruddu General Hospital in Kampala, where the MP's international lawyer Robert Amsterdam said he had locked himself in a room with his wife and refused access to army doctors. "The doctor who oversaw Bobi's torture is part of the team trying to access him," Amsterdam said.

Supporters say he had been badly beaten and tortured while in army custody, during and after his arrest in the northwestern town of Arua earlier this month, and required medical treatment abroad. On Friday, Ugandan chief justice Bart Katureebe issued a public reminder that the constitution bans torture. "Security forces, when you are arresting Ugandans, arrest them like human beings not animals," he said.

Kyagulanyi, who chanted lyrics about poverty and social justice, has become a lightning rod for youthful opposition to the 74-year-old president. Museveni, who has held power since 1986, is expected to seek another term in 2021 after constitutional changes were passed last year to scrape age limits. In this context, the brash former slum-dweller channels the daily frustrations of many young Ugandans in a country led mostly by old men.

Wine's "age, his background and his story" make him a challenge unlike any Museveni has faced during his 32-year rule, said political analyst Rosebell Kagumire. Many Ugandans nonetheless credit



**NOUAKCHOTT:** In this file photo taken on July 2, 2018 Mauritania President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz (R) and French President Emmanuel Macron (L) meet as they arrive for the African Union (AU) summit. — AFP

warned they would give the president more power. After more than a year of detention on corruption charges, former senator Mohammed Ould Ghadda was due to be released on Friday, his lawyer said.

However, Ould Ghadda, who led the campaign against the constitutional changes, rejected the condi-

tions set for his release and remained in detention, lawyer Mohamed El Mamy said in a statement. Mauritania, which hosted an African Union summit in July, has recently revived diplomatic ties with Morocco, after years of tension over the status of Moroccan-annexed Western Sahara. — AFP



**GULU:** In this file photo taken on August 27, 2018 Ugandan singer-turned-politician Robert Kyagulanyi (C), better known as Bobi Wine, reacts as he gets into an ambulance after being released on bail at The High Court. — AFP

Museveni with delivering a degree of stability after he came to power at the head of a rebel army, he said.

"Now the majority of Ugandans are young women, and they don't relate to Museveni's political message." However, it is unclear what Kyagulanyi's political ambitions will become the next election, Kagumire said. "He has not yet even said that he wants to stand for president but a lot of people expect that" he will. — AFP

## Myanmar releases 75 more children soldiers: UNICEF

**YANGON:** Myanmar's military has released 75 child soldiers, a UN agency said, and its first discharge this year as part of a gradual process to end decades of forced recruitment of underage fighters. There are no concrete figures on how many children are still among the estimated 500,000 troops that serve in Myanmar's military, or the ethnic rebel armies that it battles in the country's border regions.

The state's army also referred to as the "Tatmadaw" has released 924 children and young people from its ranks since signing a deal with the United Nations in 2012, according to Friday's statement released by UN child protection agency UNICEF. The child soldiers released will have to attend reintegration programs to return them to civilian life, a process that will contribute to "bringing lasting peace in Myanmar as productive citizens", the statement added.

Friday's ceremony was attended by the discharged children and young people, with the youngest ex-soldier being 14 years old. UN Myanmar resident coordinator Knut Ostby said in a speech during the ceremony that it is much more difficult to recruit a child today than before the 2012 pact was signed. But more could be done to ensure the safety of children and young people in Myanmar, he said, calling out the Tatmadaw for "not having put in place measures for protection of children with regards to killing and maiming, and rape and other forms of sexual violence."

Ostby yesterday recounted to AFP scenes of joy from the children and their families during the ceremony. "The children and youth and their families were clapping, they were so happy that this was happening. These are (children) who are going back to their normal lives," he said. "The context is challenging but there has been considerable progress in stopping underage recruitment and discharge of child soldiers." — AFP

## Bosnian police find 50 migrants on cargo train

**ZVORNIK:** Bosnian police stopped about 50 migrants from Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan trying to cross from Serbia in a cargo train overnight on Friday as authorities step up patrols of the border. Bosnia had not been on the well-trodden migrant route through the Balkans to European Union nations until earlier this year when arrivals jumped. About 11,000 people from Asia and North Africa have been registered as arriving so far this year.

Still recovering from a devastating war in the 1990s, Bosnia was bypassed in 2015 and 2016 when more than a million migrants and refugees passed through the Balkans. But as borders have closed elsewhere, Bosnia has become a new transit route. "Migrants are crossing the River Drina (the border between Serbia and Bosnia). They pay between 250 and 300 euros to smugglers to take them over the Drina," said a police source who asked not to be named.

The cargo train carrying coal was stopped near the Bosnian border town of Zvornik on the banks of the River Drina. As the train was brought to a halt, some of the migrants onboard jumped out and started running, some back to Serbia, said a Reuters photographer who witnessed the operation. A group remained on the train and were then turned back to Serbia, the photographer and police said. Local police did not give further details. Migrants and asylum seekers, most of them from Afghanistan, Iran, Syria and Pakistan, reach Serbia via Albania and Montenegro, according to Bosnian authorities. Some go to beaches on the Serbian side pretending to be tourists and then swim to the Bosnian side, the police source said. They then walk west to try to cross into the EU member Croatia. But with Croatian police increasing border patrols and turning back migrants, around 5,000 remain stranded around in Bosnia. — Reuters



The abandoned Indonesian ship "Sam Rataulangi PB1600" is seen from the shore of Yangon region. — AFP

## Creepy ghost ship in Myanmar waters towed: Navy

**YANGON:** A stranded vessel empty of crew and goods that was found in Myanmar's waters this week was being towed by a ship with 13 Indonesian nationals before it became unmoored, the Myanmar Navy said. Fishermen came across the rusted and empty vessel, bearing the name "Sam Rataulangi PB 1600", drifting in the Gulf of Martaban, about 11 kilometers (seven miles) off the coast of Myanmar's commercial capital.

Myanmar Navy personnel boarded the vessel to investigate the situation this week, and shed some light on their search in a post on the navy's official Facebook page late Friday. "It was the view that the ship could have been towed by another ship after two cables... were found at its head", the post said. The navy's coastal radar records showed the movement of two ships on Sunday and Monday in the Yangon and Sittoung rivers — which run into the Gulf of Martaban.

Based on these findings, the navy scoured the waters for a second ship and found the "Independence" vessel, carrying 13 Indonesian crew members, about 80 kilometres from Yangon's shores. After questioning the crew members, the navy discovered that the Independence departed Jakarta on August 13, towing the old vessel bound for a ship-breaking factory in Bangladesh, the Facebook post said.

"They faced bad weather when they arrived south of Yangon River", the navy said. "The cables attached to the ship broke, and the ship was floating along with the tide and it was difficult to continue its journey." Old and unseaworthy vessels are often towed to Bangladesh's southern Chittagong province, which houses a thriving — and controversial — ship-breaking industry. According to the MarineTraffic website, which lists the movements of ships around the globe, the vessel was built in 2001 and had a deadweight of 26,500 tons. The navy said the investigation is ongoing.

An official from the Indonesia Foreign Ministry confirmed Saturday that they had received word of this case and said the embassy in Yangon was handling it. "It is the boat that was arrested; the Indonesians are just the boat crew," Lalu Muhammad Iqbal, director at the ministry's Indonesian citizens protection department said. — AFP

## Buddhist monk held over sexual abuse at India school

**NEW DELHI:** Indian police have arrested a senior Buddhist monk accused of sexually abusing 15 boys at a meditation centre he ran in a holy city, officials said yesterday. Bhante Shanghpriya Sujoy was detained in the UNESCO heritage town of Bodhi Gaya, which attracts tens of thousands of pilgrims every year, after boys complained that they had been beaten, abused and forced to dance naked, police said.

The scandal is the latest to hit the Buddhist establishment after the former head of China's government-run Buddhist association was removed this week as abbot of a Beijing temple following a sexual assault investigation. A senior police officer at Bodhi Gaya told AFP there are "serious allegations" against Bhante Shanghpriya Sujoy who took boys aged between six and 12 from impoverished families in India's remote northeast. "The children complained to their guardians about physical and sexual abuse by their head monk. The children say they were thrashed and sexually abused at the school. They were locked up without food and water if they resisted," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. Bhante Shanghpriya Sujoy was first arrested on Wednesday and police are also investigating the trust which runs the school. — AFP

## Analysis

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EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432  
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7  
FAX : 24835620/1  
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163  
ACCOUNTS : 24835619  
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## WASHINGTON WATCH

## Myanmar-Thai highway branded 'ecological and social disaster'

Community and conservation groups in Myanmar have branded a planned highway linking a port project to Thailand an "ecological and social disaster", saying it would uproot indigenous people from their homes and farms. Critics said an environmental and social impact assessment for the road project, approved by the Myanmar government in June, failed to adequately specify compensation for loss of land and livelihoods, among other problems. "This is a road to an ecological and social disaster (in Myanmar)," said Christy Williams, Myanmar director for the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), an international conservation group.

The highway is considered strategically important to both nations as it would link Thailand to a deep-sea port and planned Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Dawei, a town on the Myanmar side of an isthmus divided between the two countries. The industrial complex would serve as a gateway to Southeast Asia's markets, with goods trucked between Dawei and Thailand, avoiding the need for ships to sail southward through the Malacca Straits, the world's busiest shipping lane.

But Williams said the planned road would pass through a region of "huge ecological importance with rich biodiversity". The assessment looked only at the effects on people and the environment within 500m (550 yards) of the road, he added, but the impact will affect a much wider area. He said WWF had been working with communities and provided "extensive recommendations and solutions" to the Myanmar government and Myandawei Industrial Estate Co Ltd, the Thai firm developing the road and SEZ, but these had "been ignored".

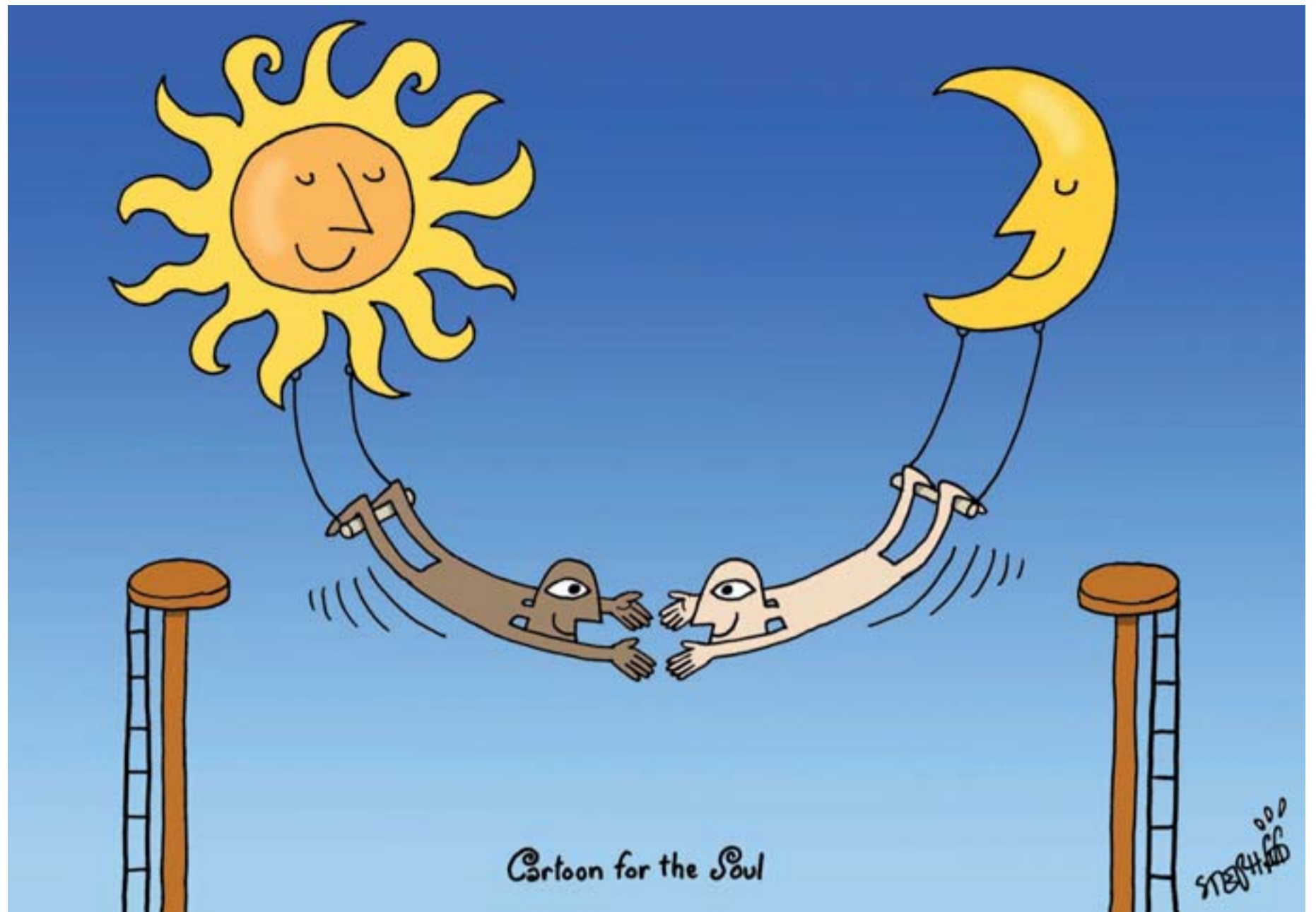
The impact assessment failed to address many issues brought forward by residents during consultation sessions, said Thant Zin, director of the Dawei Development Association, a local civil society group. "Our main concerns over the project are forced relocation of thousands of local indigenous people, potential industrial pollution ... land grabbing and livelihood issues, and human rights violations in project area," he said. A spokesman for Myanmar's environment ministry did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

Gunn Bunchandranon, a spokesman for Myandawei Industrial Estate Co Ltd, said the highway's impact assessment was in line with the laws of both Myanmar and Thai. He said people from affected communities who attended public consultations did not raise any concerns about compensation for loss of land. However, a 2015 draft of the impact assessment provided by conservation group EarthRights International included the minutes of one such meeting where the land compensation question was raised.

### Risk of conflict

Myanmar residents have also expressed fear that the highway could reignite conflict between the government and Myanmar's oldest armed group, the Karen National Union (KNU), according to Ben Hardman of EarthRights International. Those concerns did not make it into the impact assessment, Hardman said. The KNU signed a ceasefire agreement with the military in 2012, ending six decades of fighting. In 2015 it signed a national ceasefire agreement (NCA), along with other armed ethnic groups.

But relations with the government remain tense and the KNU claims control over territory the highway would pass through. Saw Tah Doh Moo, the group's secretary general, said the NCA required that the KNU be consulted about any development projects in areas under its control. However, neither the company nor the government have officially discussed the road project with them, he said. "I don't want to say what would happen, but it would undermine the NCA," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation by phone. "We have to think about how to respond." —Reuters



## Mr Trump, you cannot erase Palestinian right to return

By Dr James J Zogby

First, the Trump Administration "took Jerusalem off the table". Now, in an especially dangerous display of recklessness, they have announced their intention to do the same for the Palestinian "right of return". The first indication that this was in the works came with the administration's announcement that they would be suspending all US assistance to UNWRA, the UN agency created to address the humanitarian needs of the Palestinians who were forced to flee from their homes in 1948 and again in 1967. More recently, the administration supported by some Republican members of Congress, launched an effort to limit "refugee" status to only those Palestinians who were victims of the 1948 expulsions. [In a future article I will address the devastating humanitarian and political consequences that will result from crippling the work of UNWRA.]

Because Israel has always rejected its culpability for the Palestinian refugee crisis and has consistently refused to acknowledge that those who fled in 1948 had any rights to repatriation, the US intent to take the refugee issue "off the table" was described by one Israeli writer as a "dream come true." And a minister in Prime Minister Netanyahu's government celebrated the US move as "finally speaking the truth to the Arab lie that has been marketed all over the world for decades... There is no reason for [Palestinians] to dream of returning."

Israel claims that they have no responsibility for Palestinian refugees. As is their practice, the Israelis have attempted to exonerate themselves by creating "alternate facts" - that Palestinians voluntarily left their homes or that they were ordered to leave by advancing Arab armies. However, an exami-

nation of the historical record (link to book on AAI) establishes that the Zionist political leadership executed a deliberate plan to "cleanse" entire areas of their Arab inhabitants in order to create a state that would be larger than what was provided by the UN partition, with fewer Arabs.

They are indicted by their own words: Yigal Allon (leader of the Palmach - the official Zionist military):

"We saw the need to clean the upper Galilee and to create... Jewish continuity in the entire area of the upper Galilee... We, therefore, tried a tactic... which worked miraculously well. I gathered all of the Jewish Mukhtars, who have contact with the Arabs in the different villages, and asked them to whisper in the ears of the Arabs that a large Jewish reinforcement has arrived in Galilee and that it is going to burn all the villages in the Huleh. They should suggest to these Arabs, to their friends, to escape while they had time to flee. The flight numbered in the myriads. The tactic reached its goal completely."

David Ben Gurion (speaking of "Plan D," the operation designed to expand the size of the "Jewish State" and to reduce the number of Arabs within it):

"These operations can be carried out in the following manner: either by destroying villages (by setting them on fire, by blowing them up, and by planting mines in their rubble), and especially those population centers that are difficult to control permanently; or by mounting combing and control operations according to the following guidelines: encirclement of the villages, conducting a search inside of them. In case of resistance, the armed forces must be wiped out and the population expelled outside the border of the state."

Yigal Allon: "There is a need for strong and brutal reaction. We need to be accurate

about timing, place, and those we hit. If we accuse a family - we need to harm them without mercy, women and children included. Otherwise, this is not an effective operation. During the operation there is no need to distinguish between the guilty and the not guilty."

Menachem Begin (leader of the Irgun): "Arabs throughout the country, induced to believe wild tales of 'Irgun butchery', were seized with limitless panic and started to flee for their lives. The mass flight soon developed into a maddened uncontrolled stampede. Of the almost 800,000 who lived in the present territory of the State of Israel, only 165,000 remain. The political and economic significance of this development can hardly be overestimated."

In the aftermath of the war, during which thousands of Palestinians were murdered and another 700,000 were forced into exile, Ben Gurion celebrated what he termed "a double miracle" - an Israel with more land and less Arabs. After its establishment, Israel compounded its crimes against the Palestinians by passing a series of Orwellian laws which enabled the new state to seize Arab-owned land (over 2 million acres were taken - including businesses, homes, orchards, and farmland) and demolish 385 Arab villages - all done in the effort to physically erase any evidence of the prior Palestinian presence.

I spent time in Palestinian camps in 1971 collecting the nightmarish personal stories of those who were expelled, perusing their family photo albums of the homes they had left behind, and being shown the keys they still carried - which had become a sacred symbol representing what they had lost and hoped to regain. One said to me "the Jews said they remembered for 2,000 years. For me, it has only been 23 years, how can I forget?"

In the face of this, the actions of the Trump Administration are not only dangerous and reckless, they are cruel and insensitive, and violations of international law and covenants. While some conservatives love to cherry pick the celebrated 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights - citing their favorite, Article 18, which guarantees freedom of religion and belief - they willfully ignore other relevant articles:

Article 9: "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile."

Article 13/2: "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country."

Article 17/2: "no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property."

In addition, there is the 1948 UN resolution declaring "the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes" - a resolution which has been regularly and overwhelmingly passed by the UN General Assembly.

When in the face of this incontrovertible history of Israeli "ethnic cleansing" and international conventions on the rights of refugees, I cringe when I hear of the Trump Administration's intention to take the refugee issue "off the table." What they are, in fact, taking off the table is so much more. At stake is: the lives and fortunes of innocent Palestinians and their families; the rule of law; simple human justice; and the possibility of peace. The more than 5 million Palestinians living under occupation and in refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria cannot be erased and in their attempt to do so, it is not only the Israelis who are guilty of the war crime of ethnic cleansing. The Trump Administration is making itself complicit in this crime.

NOTE: Dr James J Zogby is the President of the Arab American Institute

## HTS: Regime's toughest foe in Idlib

The Syrian regime and its Russian ally are threatening an offensive to retake the northwestern province of Idlib, Syria's last rebel bastion, where the Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham group holds sway. The jihadist alliance, the core of which is formed by the former Al-Qaeda branch in Syria, is likely to be the regime's toughest foe.

### Here is some background.

#### What is HTS?

HTS first appeared in Syria in Jan 2012 as the Al-Nusra Front, and Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad and his Russian ally still refer to the group by that name. Classified as a "terrorist" group by the United States, the European Union and the United Nations, it arrived in Syria as an extension of Al-Qaeda in Iraq. The group's current leader, a Syrian who uses the nom de guerre Abu Mohammad Al-Jolani, is a veteran of fighting in Iraq.

In 2013, the group swore allegiance to Al-Qaeda before splitting with the global syndicate in July 2016 and renaming itself the Fatah Al-Sham Front. In 2017, it dissolved that group to form the backbone of Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham. The group mainly consists of Syrian militants, estimated at about 30,000 fighters, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. The jihadists are "well organized and battle-hardened", said Syria expert Fabrice

Balanche. "HTS definitely retains a sizeable foreign fighter component, perhaps comprising at least 20 percent of its total fighting force," said Charles Lister, an analyst at the Middle East Institute. The fighters are mostly from the Middle East, "but also from Russian-speaking areas, Europe and south Asia," he added.

#### How powerful is it?

HTS now controls nearly 60 percent of Idlib province. It has set up a civil administration that collects customs duties at the border with Turkey and imposes taxes on traders. The group "derives so much of its power from being the authority over how trade flows into and out of Idlib, which helps fund the group and gives it power beyond its size," said Nicholas Heras, a researcher at the Center for New American Security.

Previously, HTS had a presence in many of the country's rebel-held areas, especially near Damascus and in the south. But it has lost that territory as its fighters were evacuated to Idlib in surrender deals. HTS has consistently been excluded from ceasefires negotiated by the United Nations or Russia. The alliance has been the target of air raids from both Moscow and the US-led anti-jihadist coalition, which have killed several of its senior commanders.

#### Who are its rivals?

Formerly associated with influential Islamist rebel groups like Ahrar Al-Sham and Nureddine Al-Zinki, HTS underwent a bloody period of power struggles in 2017 that included battles with former allies, creating resentment that persists today. In early 2018, Ahrar Al-Sham and Nureddine



A Syrian protester chants slogans as he waves a flag of the opposition as he protests against the regime and its ally Russia, in the rebel-held town of Maaret Al-Numan in the north of Idlib province on Friday. —AFP

Al-Zinki announced their Turkey-backed merger to counter the growing power of HTS. They joined four other rebel factions in early August to form a new coalition - the National Liberation Front.

Separately, HTS has increased raids in recent weeks against "sleeping cells" linked to the Islamic State group (IS), which has claimed responsibility for assassinations and bombings targeting HTS's leaders and fighters. The two heavyweights have also clashed in Syria's northern city of Raqqah and in eastern Deir Ezzor province. In July 2014, Nusra's chief said the group's goal was to set up an "Islamic emirate", akin to the "caliphate" proclaimed by IS shortly beforehand.

#### What is its future?

On Aug 22 the reclusive Jolani broke a long silence to reiterate that the group was determined to repel any offensive by Damascus. "Just thinking about surrendering to the enemy and handing over weapons is an act of treason," he said. Russia has called for the dissolution of HTS, but neighboring Turkey is trying to negotiate a solution with the jihadists to avoid a large scale offensive that would destabilize the border area, the Britain-based Observatory said. According to Heras, the alliance's "dissolution on the command of Turkey would rob it of much of its power, which would replace HTS rule with Turkish rule." —AFP

## Business

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2018

**12** Boursa Kuwait equities mixed amid growing selling pressures**13** India's economic growth surges to 8.2% despite currency woes**14** US presses ahead with Mexico trade pact, Canada talks go on

ANKARA: A man counts dollar bills in a money exchange office in Ankara. The lira has fallen 42 percent against the dollar this year. — AFP

# Turkey hikes gas, power prices by 14%

## Inflation running at 14-year high as currency crisis deepens

ANKARA: Turkey raised natural gas prices yesterday by as much as 14 percent, two sources said, while the energy regulator announced a similar increase in electricity costs as a deepening currency crisis stokes inflation. The lira has fallen 42 percent against the dollar this year, hit by concerns over a worsening rift with the United States.

The sell-off has increased the cost of food and petrol and raised fears about the impact on the country's wider economy and banks. Economists are particularly worried about the central bank's inability to rein in inflation, which hit a 14-year high of nearly 16 percent in July.

State pipeline operator Botas raised natural gas prices by 14 percent for industrial use and 9 percent for residen-

tial use effective from yesterday, two sources told Reuters. Officials for Botas were not immediately available to comment. Last month, Botas increased the price of natural gas for electricity production by 50 percent and by 9 percent for residential use. Turkey is dependent on imports for almost all of its energy needs. The lira crisis has driven up the cost, in local currency terms, of oil and gas.

Likewise, Turkey's energy regulator said it would raise electricity prices by 14 percent for industrial use and 9 percent for households from yesterday. It increased prices by the same amount last month. Almost a third of Turkey's total 293 billion megawatt power production came from natural gas power plants in 2017.

### Eyes on inflation

Retail prices in Istanbul, Turkey's biggest city, surged 2.23 percent month-on-month in August, for a year-on-year increase of 14.99 percent, the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce said yesterday.

Official August inflation data is due tomorrow, and economists expect another hefty reading. "This will provide the first hard evidence of the impact of the lira's collapse this month on the wider economy," Jason Tuvey of Capital Economics said in a note to clients on Friday. Erdogan, a self-described "enemy of interest rates", wants to see lower borrowing costs to keep credit flowing, particularly to the construction

sector. Investors, who see the economy heading for a hard landing, say decisive interest rate hikes are needed to put the brakes on inflation. Erdogan, who has appointed his son-in-law Berat Albayrak as finance minister, casts the lira's slide as an economic attack on Turkey by Western governments, financiers and ratings agencies.

He says high interest rates cause inflation—a stance at odds with orthodox economics. "We see little chance that an ugly set of inflation figures will change the government's—and, crucially, President Erdogan's—stance on interest rates," Tuvey of Capital Economics said. — Reuters

## 'Shape up or we'll quit', Trump tells WTO

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump has threatened to pull the United States out of the World Trade Organization if it does not "shape up." His remarks, made in an interview with Bloomberg News on Thursday, were the latest in a series of attacks on institutions of the global order that the US helped to build after World War II.

"If they don't shape up, I would withdraw from the WTO," Trump told the news agency, describing the agreement to set the organization up as "the single worst trade deal ever made".

Trump, who has previously criticized the WTO's dispute settlement system as being unfavorable to the US, said Washington had "rarely won a lawsuit" there although things began changing last year. "In the last year, we're starting to win a lot," he said. "You know why? Because they know if we don't, I'm out of there." China, which is currently embroiled in a trade war with the US, joined the WTO in 2001 — a move which US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer has described as a mistake.

Trump made the threat as Washington presses challenges at the WTO against trading partners that have fought back against tariffs on importers that were imposed by the Trump administration.

### No panic

World Trade Organization head Roberto Azevedo said on Friday US President Donald Trump's comments about potentially leaving the WTO were consistent with what the United States has said previously and did not reflect new con-



WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump said the agreement to set the World Trade Organization up was "the single worst trade deal ever made". — Reuters

cerns. In a response on Friday, Azevedo, the WTO's director general, said there was no reason for "panic". "The US concerns about areas in the WTO that they would like to improve are not new. And I think what he said yesterday is consistent with what they have expressed before."

Trump has previously called the WTO a "disaster" and a "catastrophe". During his election campaign he told NBC's Meet the Press program that if the WTO rules blocked his policies, he would renegotiate US membership or pull out.

Trump's ambassador has said the United States will not shy away from being disruptive to shake up what it sees as a complacent organization, and has precipitated a crisis by blocking appointments of WTO appeals judges, forcing other countries to discuss potential reforms to assuage Trump.

Many diplomats say that although they dislike the US tactics, they agree that the WTO needs reform, and hope that the situation can be used to make the 23-year-old trading club more efficient and effective. The WTO is run on the basis of "consensus", meaning that every one of its 164 members has an effective veto and it is almost impossible to get agreement on any change to the rules.

Azevedo said many WTO members were now talking about improvements, which was a good development.

"Everyone that would like to see improvements in the WTO is very welcome to present their ideas and their suggestions to improve the organization, sit down with the other members and get the job done," he said. — Agencies

## 60% of Americans disapprove of Trump's job performance: Poll

WASHINGTON: Sixty percent of Americans disapprove of President Donald Trump's job performance and nearly half support impeachment, according to an opinion poll published on Friday.

Thirty-six percent of Americans approve of Trump's White House performance, the Washington Post-ABC News poll found. In the last Post-ABC survey, in April, Trump received an approval rating of 40 percent and a disapproval rating of 56 percent.

The latest survey of 1,003 adults was conducted between August 26 and 29, the week when Trump's former campaign chairman Paul Manafort was found guilty of tax and bank fraud and his attorney, Michael Cohen, pleaded guilty to making hush payments to women who claimed to have had sexual liaisons with Trump.

Forty-nine percent of those polled by the Post and ABC News said that Congress should launch impeachment proceedings against Trump, while 46 percent disagreed. Fifty-three percent said they believed Trump has committed obstruction of justice by trying to interfere with Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into whether the Trump election campaign colluded with Russia.

Thirty-five percent said they do not believe the president has sought to interfere. Trump has denounced the ongoing probe as a political "witch hunt." Sixty-three percent of those surveyed said they support Mueller's investigation while 29 percent said they oppose it.

Trump's ratings are better when it comes to handling the economy, the Post-ABC poll found. Forty-five percent approved of his handling of the economy while 45 percent disapproved. Republicans and Democrats differ sharply when it comes to Trump's popularity. Seventy-eight percent of Republicans approve of the Republican president's performance while 93 percent of Democrats and 59 percent of independents disapprove. The poll has a margin of error of 3.5 percentage points. — AFP

Bayan Weekly Market Report

# Boursa Kuwait equities mixed amid growing selling pressures

## Market capitalization reached KD 28.71 billion

KUWAIT: Boursa Kuwait ended last week with mixed performance. The Premier Market Index closed at 5,261.82 points, down by 2.23 percent, the Main Market Index increased by 0.06 percent after closing at 4,897.46 points, and the All-Share Index closed at 5,132.31 points down by 1.46 percent. Furthermore, last week's average daily turnover increased by 16.70 percent, compared to the preceding week, reaching around KD 18.84 million, whereas trading volume average was about 76.15 million shares, recording a decrease of 18.27 percent.

The Boursa ended the trading of last week of August with mixed closing for its three indices, whereas the Premier Market Index and the All-Share Index continued recording losses for the second consecutive week amid increased selling pressures and profit collection operations on many leading and heavy stocks headed by the stocks in the Banks and Telecommunication sectors, while the Main Market Index succeeded in recording some weekly gains supported by the random purchasing operations executed on some small-cap stocks especially in the last session of the week.

The market capitalization of the Boursa recorded weekly losses equivalent to KD 319.14 million, as it reached by the end of the last week around KD 28.71 billion, down by 1.10 percent compared to its level in the previous week, where it was KD 29.03 billion. The market cap gains of Boursa since the application of the new market segmentation contracted reaching KD 855.29 million or 3.07 percent. (Note: the market capitalization for the listed companies in the Market is calculated based on the weighted

INDICES PERFORMANCE				
		Premier Market Index	Main Market Index (PMI)	All-Share Market Index (PSI)
Weekly	Last week	5,261.82	4,897.46	5,132.31
	Previous week	5,381.57	4,894.32	5,208.54
	Change (Point)	-119.75	3.14	-76.23
	Change (%)	-2.23%	0.06%	-1.46%
Mid Seg. to Date	Close	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
	Change (Point)	261.82	-102.54	132.31
	Change (%)	5.24%	-2.05%	2.65%

average number of outstanding shares as per the latest available official financial statements).

Last week witnessed trading over 147 stock out of 175 listed stock in the Market, where prices of 48 stock increased against prices of 83 stock decreased, and prices of 44 stock remained at no change.

### Sectors' indices

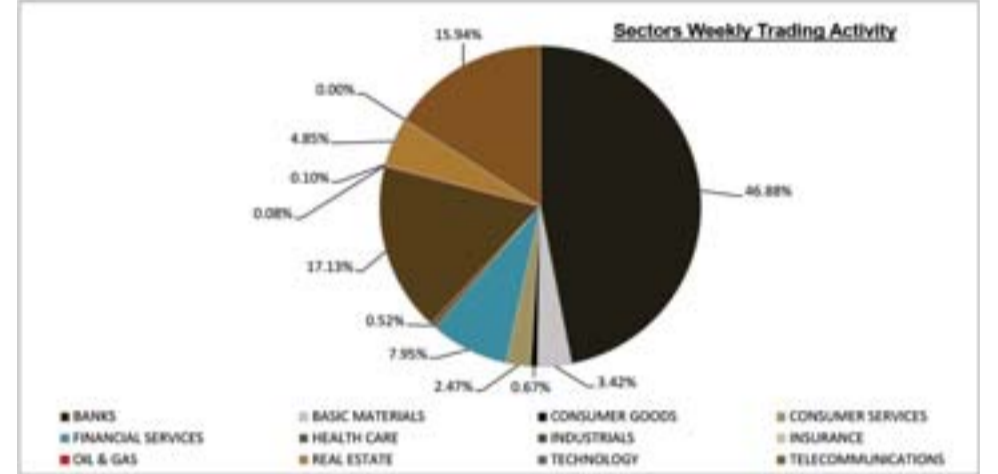
Seven of Boursa Kuwait's sectors ended last week in the red zone, three recorded increases, while the Heal Care & Technology sector's index closed with no change from the week before. Last week's highest loser was the Real Estate sector, as its index declined by 2.37 percent to end the week's activity at 986.77 points. The Banks sector was second on the losers' list, which index declined by 1.84 percent, closing at 1,062.19 points, followed by the Telecommunications sector, which index declined by 1.41 percent, closing at 931.63 points.

On the other hand, Last week's highest gainer was the Consumer Services sector, achieving 2.23 percent growth rate as its index closed at 1,056.99 points. The Oil &

Gas sector came in the second place, as its index closed at 1,097.18 points recording 0.99 percent increase, followed by Consumer Goods sector, achieving 0.23 percent growth rate as its index closed at 890.39 points

### Sectors' activity

The Banks sector dominated a total trade volume of around 119.29 million shares changing hands during last week, representing 31.33 percent of the total market trading volume. The Financial Services sector was second in terms of trading volume as the sector's traded shares were 24.88 percent of last week's total trading volume, with a total of around 94.72 million shares. On the other hand, the Banks sector's stocks were the highest traded in terms of value; with a turnover of around KD 44.17 million or 46.88 percent of last week's total market trading value. The Industrial sector took the second place as the sector's last week turnover was approx. KD 16.14 million representing 17.13 percent of the total market trading value. — Prepared by the Studies & Research Department, Bayan Investment Co.



## Vodafone seals merger to become India's biggest telecoms group

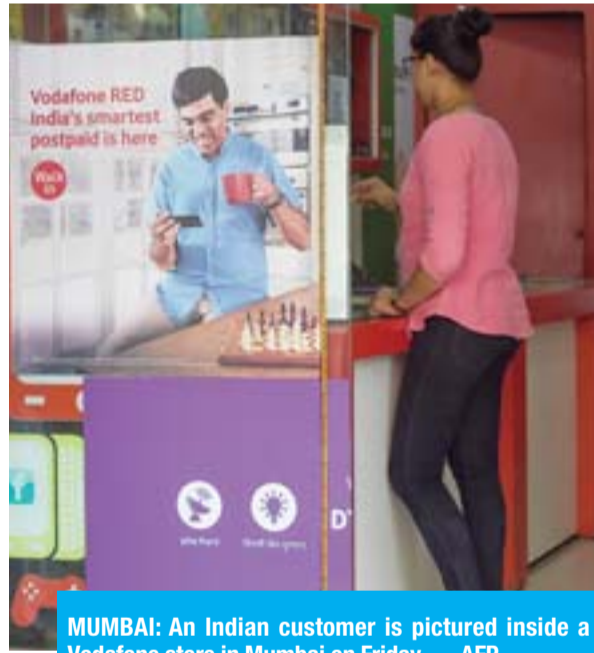
NEW DELHI: The Indian offshoot of Britain's Vodafone on Friday completed a merger with Idea Cellular to become the country's biggest mobile phone company with more than 400 million customers.

The new \$23 billion Vodafone Idea giant deposes Bharti Airtel-with its 350 million subscribers-as India's top mobile firm. Approval by the National Company Law Tribunal allowed the two companies to finalize their merger.

"Following clearance of the transaction by the relevant competition and regulatory authorities, Vodafone Group Plc announces the completion of the merger between Vodafone India Ltd and Idea Cellular Ltd," the company said in a statement.

The two companies generated around 7.1 billion euros (\$8.2 billion) in revenues in the year to June 2018, it said. Vodafone and Idea flagged the tie-up in March 2017 and the deal is expected to further shake up India's giant telecom industry. India is expected to generate telecom service revenue of more than \$50 billion by 2020, according to Market Research Store.

The sector was jolted in 2016 when Asia's richest man Mukesh Ambani launched Jio with market-defying tariffs for consumers. Jio's arrival sparked a rush to



MUMBAI: An Indian customer is pictured inside a Vodafone store in Mumbai on Friday. — AFP

market consolidation as competitors tried to match the resources of a firm backed by Ambani's energy-to-chemicals conglomerate Reliance Industries.

Jio, now the third biggest operator, announced a profit of 5.10 billion rupees (\$76.43 million) for the quarter ended March 31, up from 5.04 billion rupees reported in the previous quarter. Observers expect further tariff wars in India's ever expanding telecom sector. — AFP

## Italy, after Fitch cuts outlook, vows to respect EU commitments

ROME: Italy will respect European Union budget commitments and address the concerns of credit ratings agencies like Fitch - which cut the outlook for Italian debt - with concrete policy choices in coming weeks, the economy minister said yesterday.

Fitch Ratings on Friday changed the outlook for Italian debt, the world's third-largest pile of state borrowing, to "negative" from "stable", citing concerns about the populist government's "new and untested nature" and its promises to hike spending. "Fitch expects a degree of fiscal loosening that would leave Italy's very high level of public debt more exposed to potential shocks," said the agency, which held steady its overall 'BBB' credit rating.

Fitch's move followed remarks on Friday by a government official, who said Italy could exceed the EU budget ceiling next year if needed. Those comments drove short-dated bond yields to their highest levels in almost three months. "We have commitments to Europe that must be respected, but they essentially are a function of the financial markets," Economy Minister Giovanni Tria said in Shanghai yesterday. The comments were first reported by state news agency Ansa and later confirmed by a spokeswoman travelling with Tria.

The coalition of the far-right League and anti-establishment 5-Star Movement, which took office in June, plans to increase welfare spending and cut taxes next year to follow through on their campaign pledges.

But recent data have indicated that economic growth is slowing this year, further reducing the government's room to manoeuvre.

After the Fitch announcement, a source in the prime minister's office said the government's 2019 budget would "confirm the commitment to proceed along the path to reduce Italian debt".

### 'Sizeable differences'

Italy's 2.3-trillion-euro debt - equivalent to more than 130 percent of its domestic output - makes the country vulnerable to changes in investors' sentiment.

But neither of the governing allies have yet signalled which of their promises they are willing to delay or scale down in order to keep the public accounts under control. In its analysis, Fitch also underscored "sizeable policy differences" between the coalition partners as a risk, adding that it saw increasing chances for an early election from next year. "The risk or strategy of early elections will make it more challenging for both parties to make compromises that alienate their political bases, while fiscal realities will make it hard to deliver on election promises," the agency said.

League leader Matteo Salvini yesterday renewed his tax-cut promise, saying on Twitter, "step by step" tax cuts would fuel economic growth, hinting the reductions will be staggered. Five-Star, on the other hand, wants to introduce a universal income for the poor.

"The actions of the next few weeks will be translated into official government documents," Tria told reporters. "The (Fitch) judgments will be corrected... positively since they are opinions not based on facts, but on intentions attributed to the government."

The government is due to unveil its growth and public finance targets at the end of the month, and the cabinet then will approve the budget in late October. Moody's, which in May placed Italy's "Baa2" rating on review, last week extended to the end of October a deadline to decide whether to cut Italy's debt ratings so that it would have "better visibility" of the government's policy choices. — Reuters

## China's Zijin to acquire Serbia's largest copper mine

BELGRADE: Serbia has picked a Chinese firm to take over its debt-hit copper mine after the company offered to invest \$1.26 billion, a minister said Friday.

The deal, which gives China's Zijin Mining a 63 percent stake in the RTB Bor mining and smelting complex in eastern Serbia, marks the latest expansion of Beijing's economic footprint in the Balkan region. As part of the agreement, Zijin has also promised to cover RTB Bor's \$200 million debt and keep 5,000 jobs at the mine, Serbia's Minister of Energy and Mining Aleksandar Antic told reporters.

The contract is expected to be signed in September and Zijin could start managing the company early next year, Antic added.

A Chinese company bought Serbia's sole steel mill in 2016, while other firms have built infrastructure projects across the Balkans as part of Beijing's global "One Belt, One Road" ambitions.

The deals have raised concerns in Brussels and Western Europe over growing Chinese influence in the region, as well as risky loan terms for the host countries. — AFP

## Japan's BoJ chief says no rate hike for 'long time'

TOKYO: The Bank of Japan will not raise interest rates "for quite a long time", its chief said in an interview published yesterday even as its US and European peers tighten monetary policy. Haruhiko Kuroda dismissed speculation that the central bank was planning to adjust its super-loose policy, aimed at keeping long-term interest rates around zero percent and short-term rates at minus 0.1 percent. "We don't intend to raise them for quite a long time," he told the mass-circulation Yomiuri newspaper.

The BoJ has struggled for years to reach the 2.0 percent inflation rate thought necessary to turbocharge Japan's economy, and has defended its decision to maintain monetary easing even as other central banks tighten policy. After its last policy meeting in July, the BoJ said it "intends to maintain the current extremely low levels of short-and long-term interest rates for an extended period of time." Kuroda told the Yomiuri that "an extended period" - a phrase borrowed from the US central bank - meant "quite a long time." "We don't specify the period, such as whether it is one year, three years or five years," he was quoted as saying. "It's a commitment that we will maintain the current low levels (of rates) as long as uncertainty lingers."

His remarks are in sharp contrast to the direction the US and European central banks are taking. The US Federal Reserve is expected to raise interest rates twice more by the end of the year while the European Central Bank is exiting massive monetary easing. — AFP

## EXCHANGE RATES

### BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.387179	0.401079
Czech Korune	0.005762	0.015062
Danish Krone	0.043499	0.048499
Euro	0.345424	0.359124
Georgian Lari	0.137682	0.137682
Hungarian	0.001144	0.001334
Norwegian Krone	0.032434	0.037634
Romanian Leu	0.065015	0.081865
Russian ruble	0.004487	0.004487
Slovakia	0.009062	0.019062
Swedish Krona	0.029319	0.034319
Swiss Franc	0.307399	0.318399
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.210694	0.222694
New Zealand Dollar	0.195277	0.204777
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.227731	0.236731
US Dollars	0.299500	0.304800
US Dollars Mint	0.300000	0.304800
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.002990	0.003791
Chinese Yuan	0.043044	0.046544
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036933	0.039683

Indian Rupee	0.003830	0.004602
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000016	0.000022
Japanese Yen	0.002657	0.002837
Korean Won	0.000261	0.000276
Malaysian Ringgit	0.070806	0.076606
Nepalese Rupee	0.002625	0.002965
Pakistan Rupee	0.001956	0.002726
Philippine Peso	0.005600	0.005908
Singapore Dollar	0.216759	0.226759
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001519	0.002099
Taiwan	0.010417	0.010597
Thai Baht	0.008967	0.009517
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.790203	0.806703
Egyptian Pound	0.014335	0.020053
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000200	0.000260
Jordanian Dinar	0.423906	0.432906
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000156	0.000256
Moroccan Dirhams	0.022420	0.046420
Omani Riyal	0.782253	0.787933
Qatar Riyal	0.079101	0.084041
Saudi Riyal	0.079673	0.081173
Syrian Pound	0.001287	0.001507
Tunisian Dinar	0.106360	0.114360
Turkish Lira	0.041406	0.052906
UAE Dirhams	0.081234	0.082934
Yemeni Riyal	0.000987	0.001067

Business

# India's economic growth surges to 8.2% despite currency woes

## India on course to overtake Britain as world's fifth-largest economy

**MUMBAI:** India's economy grew at a stunning 8.2 percent in the first quarter of the 2018-19 financial year, official data showed Friday, as it charts a course to overtake Britain as the world's fifth-largest economy.

Central Statistics Office figures showed GDP growth for April to June in Asia's third-biggest economy improved from 7.7 percent in the previous quarter.

The latest figures, which mark India's highest growth rate in eight quarters, shot up from 5.6 percent for the same period last year and reinforces the nation's status as one of the world's fastest growing economies. "The Q1 figures were higher than we expected. Exports, infrastructure and industry activity have picked up pace," Sujan Hajra, chief economist at Anand Rathi Securities, told AFP.

India became the globe's sixth-biggest economy in 2017, pushing France into seventh place, according to figures released by the World Bank last month.

India's gross domestic product (GDP) was \$2,597 trillion at the end of 2017, against \$2,582 trillion for France, it said. The United States is the world's top economy, followed by China, Japan and Germany.

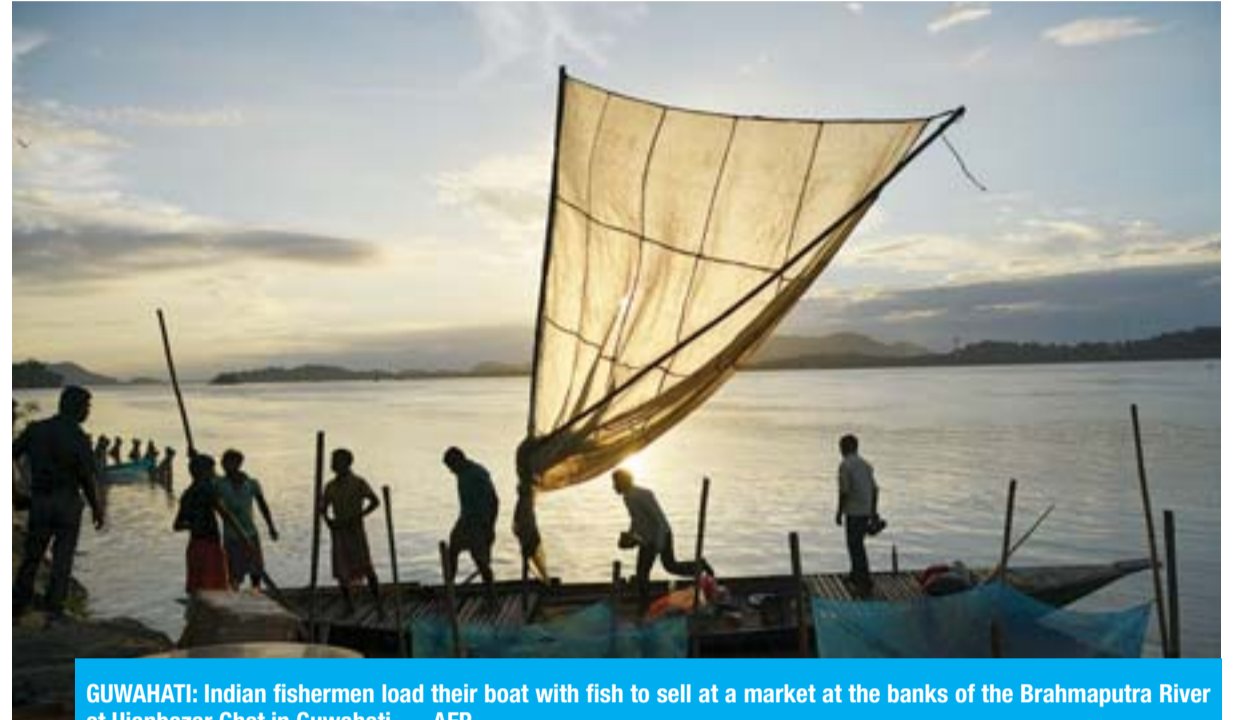
Britain is currently the world's fifth-biggest economy with a GDP of \$2,622 trillion last year. "Next year we are likely to overtake Britain," Indian Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said Thursday. He predicted that

the Asian giant, with its population of 1.25 billion people, would become one of the world's top three economies around 2030. India's GDP expansion is back on track after a rocky start to economic reforms implemented by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Quarterly growth fell as low as 5.6 percent in mid-2017 as the economy reeled from a shock cash ban that scrapped 86 percent of currency notes.

Business and customers were also wary of a new nationwide goods and services tax, introduced last year, which replaced a myriad of state and national taxes.

The International Monetary Fund has forecast GDP growth for the current fiscal year at 7.3 percent, rising to 7.5 percent the following year. This compares to the world's expected average growth of 3.9 percent. India is a massive importer of oil, however, and analysts say high crude prices and a tumbling rupee threaten to derail growth.

The Indian currency breached 71 against the dollar for the first time ever Friday. It started the year at 63.67. The slump is widening India's current account deficit, a measure of when the value of imports exceeds that of exports, threatening the country's balance of payments. Friday's 8.2 percent figure was above the median estimate of a survey of economists by Bloomberg, which had predicted of 7.6 percent. — AFP



**GUWAHATI:** Indian fishermen load their boat with fish to sell at a market at the banks of the Brahmaputra River at Ujanbazar Ghat in Guwahati. — AFP

## Argentine peso recovering after record low against dollar

**Buenos Aires:** Argentina's peso was recovering on Friday after President Mauricio Macri's bid to secure accelerated IMF funding sparked two days of crashes that sent it to a record low against the dollar. The peso recovered almost five percent on Friday to end the day at 37.98 to the dollar, as the Central Bank sold \$250 million of its reserves to put the brakes on the peso's plummet.

It had lost 20 percent of its value over the previous two days. The peso was trading at almost 40 to the dollar at the end of Thursday after the Central Bank hiked interest rates to 60 percent—the highest in the world—in a desperate bid to stabilize a currency in freefall since Macri revealed the day before he had asked the International Monetary Fund to advance the remainder of an agreed \$50 billion loan.

An initial \$15 billion tranche was released by the IMF when the three-year stand-by loan was agreed in June, with another \$3 billion due next month.

Part of that first installment was meant to help shore up the peso, but that backfired after Macri's announcement as the crisis in investor confidence deepened.

"It is now unclear if that will be enough to stabilize the government's finances amid persistent reserve drain," said Europe-based Deutsche Bank analyst Jim Reid. Argentina's currency has lost more than 50 percent of its value against the dollar since the start of 2018, when the rate was 18 to one.

Inflation over the last 12 months is at around 30 percent.

"It's a worrying situation, our salaries have



**Buenos Aires:** Currency exchange values are displayed in the buy-sell board of a bureau de exchange in Buenos Aires, on Friday. — FP

lost 15 percent of their value," said 46-year-old bank employee, Monica Vaccaro.

Finance Minister Nicolas Dujovne is heading to Washington next week to "continue to progress" talks with the IMF on "additional disbursements in 2019."

### IMF talks

The IMF released a statement saying its "goal is to rapidly conclude these talks and submit the revised economic plan to the Executive Board." Chief spokesman Gerry Rice said the IMF was "confident that the strong commitment and determination of the Argentine authorities will help the country overcome the current difficulties."

Argentina isn't out of the water yet, according to independent researchers Capital Economics, who released a report warning that "investor confidence is fragile."

And it said that if the "government fails to deliver a convincing austerity plan on

Monday" that would be a "trigger for further falls in the peso." Macri's request had seen the peso lose almost 7.0 percent on Wednesday and when it opened on Thursday down another 4.0 percent, the Central Bank decided to intervene, pledging to keep interest rates at 60 percent until December at least. But that measure didn't stop the fall as the peso ended the day down 13.5 percent.

On Friday, the S&P ratings agency placed Argentina's short- and long-term credit ratings under review for a possible downgrade. Although it praised Macri's efforts to "stabilize the economy through difficult austerity measures," it said that "recent pressure on the Argentine currency could jeopardize the effective implementation of economic adjustment measures." Cabinet Chief Marcos Pena had tried to downplay the crash, saying, "We are not facing economic failure. This is a transformation, not failure. In that transformation there are difficult moments." — AFP

### Bankers wary

The bankers are nevertheless wary after the Aramco experience. It highlighted the hurdles of doing business in a country governed by an absolute monarchy where public protest and political parties are banned. It also added to uncertainty after scores of top royals, ministers and businessmen were rounded up in an anti-corruption campaign last November.

The preparation for the listing was launched by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman two years ago and some bankers had flown to the kingdom hundreds of times to work in the Dhahran camp, a gated compound for the oil group's residents.

A different source said Aramco had demanded it deal only with the very top bankers. Another person familiar with the Aramco deal said he had made more than 20 trips to Dhahran over 18 months but with little to show for it. He said his team would "give the same presentation each time without getting much feedback."

Bankers also say the fees are modest in comparison to those paid by other countries. "The deal flow is huge but there's a worry that the fees coming from these projects are low," said a Gulf-based banker who spoke on conditions of anonymity. "Saudi Arabia is lower than Hong Kong and Dubai when it comes to fees," he said. "It's all substandard."

Typical fees for banks doing IPOs in more developed markets are around 1 percent of the overall deal while estimates from bankers and analysts for an Aramco IPO was 0.2 percent. — Reuters

## Kenya imposes 16% VAT on petroleum products

**NAIROBI:** Kenyans will pay a 16 percent value added tax on all petroleum products, the revenue authority said, a move that defies a parliamentary vote to delay the tax for two years.

Kenyan lawmakers on Thursday voted to delay the tax, which had already been postponed several times, citing the high cost of living. That was seen as a blow to government efforts to raise revenues through higher taxes. But the revenue authority said in a statement that it was proceeding based on previously approved budget bills.

"Kenya Revenue Authority informs the general public, oil marketers, resellers and retailers that VAT will be charged on all petroleum products at a rate of 16 percent on all transactions with effect from

Sept. 1, 2018," it said. To become law, the bill on delaying the tax that was passed in parliament still needs approval by President Uhuru Kenyatta. Analysts had said on Thursday that Kenya's fiscal deficit was likely to be higher than projected after parliament rejected most of the tax measures proposed by the government for the 2018 budget.

Kenya's legislature also rejected a "Robin Hood" tax of 0.05 percent on bank transfers of over 500,000 shillings (\$5,000) and an employee contribution scheme towards the national housing development fund. The rejected tax hikes were designed to fund a range of government development goals including universal healthcare and affordable housing.

KRA said it had advised importers, depots, distributors and retailers, including roadside fuel stations, to charge, account and submit returns on a monthly basis.

"KRA has instituted measures to support oil industry players in complying with the law. We have also engaged the Energy Regulatory Commission in order to ensure coordinated action by relevant government agencies," it said. — Reuters

## China Party journal warns of trade war's impact on financial stability

**SHANGHAI:** A Chinese Communist Party journal said yesterday that the country may experience near-term pain from trade friction with the United States, including a negative impact on financial stability, but China's stable growth trend would not change.

A commentary in the ideological journal Qiushi, or Seeking Truth, warned that trade and economic friction between Washington and Beijing could undermine "China's economic growth, financial stability, trade and investment, employment and people's livelihoods," particularly in industries exposed to tariff action by the United States. "But at the same time, we must see that the fundamentals of China's economic development have not changed. In particular, China's economic structure has been significantly improved in recent years, which has effectively improved its ability to withstand external shocks."

The United States had "provoked" these frictions, but China would accelerate research and development of core technologies, optimize its industrial structure, promote market diversification, and strengthen support provided by domestic demand to "turn bad into good," the commentary said.

It said that China's macroeconomic

management had "sufficient policy space" to counter negative impacts, with fiscal policies potentially playing a "greater role in expanding domestic demand and restructuring". "Unlocking the transmission mechanism of monetary policy and guiding funds to invest in the real economy, particularly small and micro-enterprises, can alleviate the problem of difficult or expensive financing and strengthen the ability of the financial industry and the real economy to withstand risks," it said.

"A just cause finds much support, an unjust one finds little," the commentary said, quoting the Chinese philosopher Mencius. "Over time, Sino-US economic and trade frictions will surely continue to develop in a direction favorable to China." In a separate Qiushi commentary yesterday, Chinese Commerce Minister Zhong Shan called for "proactively expanding imports to promote balanced trade".

China must "strengthen the protection of intellectual property rights, protect the legitimate rights and interests of foreign investors, and create a good business environment for investing in China," Zhong wrote. China will "greatly relax market access" and "steadily expand the opening of the financial industry, continue to promote the opening of the service industry and deepen the opening up of the agricultural, mining and manufacturing sectors," he said.

China has made moves to ease foreign investment curbs amid Beijing's trade dispute with the United States. But an official said earlier this year that China's opening of its financial sector to foreign banks and financial institutions would be based on the principle of reciprocity, and would not reward protectionism by other countries. — Reuters

## Bruised bankers seek consolation prizes after shelved Aramco IPO

**DUBAI/LONDON:** Investment banks which lost out on big payouts for the work on the shelved listing of oil giant Aramco are lining up for a raft of other projects as Saudi Arabia pursues reforms.

Banks including JPMorgan and Morgan Stanley worked for months to prepare what would have been the biggest ever stock market debut. But the plan to sell 5 percent of the company for a targeted \$100 billion was pulled. The bankers were paid retainer fees but were expecting around \$200 million would be shared among all the banks involved when the deal was done.

Now, they are pinning their hopes on other projects from a privatization program that is part of Riyadh's economic reform plan to loosen its reliance on oil. Without the funds from the Aramco sale, the government is looking to raise money in other ways, creating new opportunities for the banks, bankers say. Teams from JP Morgan and Morgan Stanley that worked on the IPO, have been shifted to advise on Aramco's planned acquisition of up to \$70 billion in petrochemicals firm Saudi Basic Industries (SABIC), three people famil-

iar with the details of the transaction told Reuters. HSBC, which was also an adviser on the Aramco IPO, is expected to play a role in putting together the debt to fund that purchase, they said. One of the sources said the issue could exceed the 2016 sovereign bond issue of \$17.5 billion, which was a record for the kingdom. Aramco said earlier this month it was in "very early-stage discussions" with the kingdom's Public Investment Fund (PIF) to acquire the stake in SABIC but has not said how it will finance the deal.

Spokespeople for JP Morgan, Morgan Stanley and HSBC declined to comment on their role in the Sabic deal. None of those banks have confirmed they were involved in the Aramco IPO. Other deals are expected to be forthcoming.

"The PIF (sovereign wealth fund) has had to reconsider its budget in the last three months, after finding out that they wouldn't be getting \$100 billion from the Aramco IPO right away," said a banker in Saudi Arabia. "So there's been a flurry of activity as they look to raise cash in other ways. A lot of these are smaller deals, \$1 billion here and there, but all geared toward financing their commitments for big infrastructure projects without slowing down their timelines."

The banker did not give details of the other deals. PIF officials did not respond to a Reuters request for comment. After Reuters reported last week that the Aramco deal had been shelved, Energy Minister Khalid al-Falih said the government was committed to conducting the IPO at an unspecified date in the future.

## Business

# US presses ahead with Mexico trade pact, Canada talks go on

## Trump comments anger Canadian officials

WASHINGTON: The United States is pressing ahead with a free trade pact with Mexico, but whether Canada will join depends on a new round of talks next week, after negotiations ended Friday without an agreement.

Officials had appeared to be on track to reach a deal that would rewrite the North American Free Trade Agreement, but in a bizarre twist, inflammatory comments from President Donald Trump angered Canadian officials and threatened to upend the talks.

The US and Mexico announced a breakthrough accord on Monday, potentially leaving Canada out in the cold if no deal is reached, but Ottawa's foreign minister insisted that a "win-win-win" agreement is within reach.

US and Canadian officials said talks will resume on Wednesday, but the White House already notified Congress Friday of its "intent to sign a trade agreement with Mexico-and Canada, if it is willing — 90 days from now."

The White House now has 30 days before it must present the full text of the new agreement to Congress, which will give Ottawa and Washington time to iron out remaining differences.

### 'Win-win-win'

"We know that a win-win-win agreement is within reach," Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland told reporters after a week of talks to rewrite the 25-year-old NAFTA. "With good will and flexibility on all sides, I know we can get there." However, she repeated that Canada will only sign an agreement that is in its national interest. "We'll keep talking until we reach a good deal," Freeland said.

US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer said the negotiations over the past four days were "constructive, and we made progress."

"Our officials are continuing to work toward agreement. The USTR team will meet with Minister Freeland and her colleagues Wednesday of next week," he said in a state-

ment. Lighthizer stressed that the new agreement will have "huge benefits for our workers, farmers, ranchers, and businesses." After the US and Mexico reached an agreement on new rules for auto trade, and tougher protections for workers and intellectual property, talks with Canada were hung up on the mechanisms used to resolve disputes among partners, and on Ottawa's strictly controlled dairy sector. "I think all three countries have worked together very productively, and we're getting more and more excited about the results," a senior US official told reporters.

But the official said that Washington could go ahead with just Mexico if Canada decides not to sign on to the near trade deal.

Mexican officials stressed in a joint statement that they are "continuing to promote an agreement to which Canada is a party." Jake Colvin of the National Foreign Trade Council agreed with that priority, saying: "Our strong preference is for a trilateral agreement."

"That's the preference of the business community, and the preference of Congress," Colvin said.

### 'I can't kill these people'

As negotiations went down to the wire earlier on Friday, Trump, who has been highly critical of Canada's managed dairy market, confirmed he was taking a hardline stance in the talks. Then the Toronto Star reported that Trump boasted in an interview that he was playing hardball with Canada in the negotiations. "If I say no-the answer's no. If I say no, then you're going to put that, and it's going to be so insulting they're not going to be able to make a deal... I can't kill these people," the newspaper quoted Trump as saying off-the-record during an interview with Bloomberg.

While Freeland said the US trade team was negotiating in good faith, a Canadian source told AFP that Ottawa expressed their disapproval to Lighthizer.

The Star said officials in the government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who had been optimistic about



WASHINGTON: Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland speaks at a press conference on Friday at the Embassy of Canada in Washington, DC. — AFP

reaching a deal with Washington, were angered by the reported comments.

Trump lashed out on Twitter for what he said was a breach of an off-the-record agreement, but he confirmed that he was taking a hardline stance in the talks.

"Wow, I made OFF THE RECORD COMMENTS to Bloomberg concerning Canada, and this powerful understanding was BLATANTLY VIOLATED. Oh well, just more dishonest reporting. I am used to it," Trump tweeted. "At least Canada knows where I stand!" — AFP

## Award winning HUAWEI P20 Pro: Leading the innovation agenda

KUWAIT: Huawei recently grabbed headlines when it climbed up to become the second smartphone vendor globally. As reported by IDC, Huawei's Q2 2018 global smartphone market share increased to 15.8 percent, solidifying the brand's new ranking.

With Android smartphone makers dominating the industry, the battle for best smartphone camera is currently being led by the HUAWEI P20 Pro. It is one of the first smartphones with cameras that surpass the 100-mark threshold on the DxOMark leaderboard, an independent industry benchmark that scientifically assesses image quality of smartphones, lenses and cameras.

Huawei, driven by innovation, has been leading the development and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in its devices. The brand took the smartphone industry by storm with the launch of HUAWEI P20 Pro earlier this year. While it is a known fact that most smartphone makers face challenges when it comes to offering low light or night mode photography as a feature, however, HUAWEI P20 Pro has made this a thing of the past.

The innovative device is powered by the world's first Leica triple camera that has unparalleled low-light photography capability. The path-breaking smartphone is enabled with AI Image Stabilization that allows one to capture incredible blur-free, handheld shots in low-light using Night Mode, without the need for a tripod. Moreover, its night mode also balances high-contrast scenes for effortlessly clear, light-balanced pictures in any setting, sometimes capturing scenes that even the naked eye cannot see. Enabled with AI scene recognition, the device can automatically recognize 500 scenarios in 19 categories of scenes and then adjusts the camera settings automatically to deliver incredible, professional-looking images.

HUAWEI's P20 Pro also offers 5x Hybrid Zoom - one of the most powerful zoom ever on a smart phone camera and with HUAWEI's AI capabilities quality loss in pictures is absolutely minimal.

Without a doubt, a camera is one of the most important features we all look for in a phone and with such state-of-the-art features, HUAWEI P20 Pro will turn any user into a professional photographer.

Looking at these amazing features, it comes without a surprise that the HUAWEI P20 Pro has secured several accolades globally and is definitely in the run for being one of the best phones launched this year, with one of the recent achievements being named as "EISA Best Smartphone 2018-2019" an award from the European Image and Sound Association (EISA), a group comprising 55 of the world's most respected consumer electronics magazines. This is the sixth consecutive year that Huawei has been recognized by EISA. The global shipments of the HUAWEI P20 series have surpassed 9 million in the first half of 2018, a testament of its success amongst users globally.

While being an award winning smartphone for its features, HUAWEI P20 Pro's design and colour is also a testament of Huawei's continued commitment to innovation. The smartphone's stunning and unique gradient twilight colors are set to up the style quotient of any fashionista, while adding to their personal style statement.

With no other smartphone maker offering such innovative features in recent times, it is safe to say that HUAWEI P20 Pro continues to be a leader in comparison to other smartphones in the same category, offering breakthrough technology that makes its smartphones a class apart from everything else available in the market.

## Warba Bank announces winners of Al-Sunbula weekly draws

KUWAIT: Warba Bank, "the Best investment Bank" and "Best Corporate Bank" in Kuwait, held the 30th and 31st Al-Sunbula Account weekly draws in parallel as the 30th draw was postponed due to Eid Al-Adha holidays. The draw announced the 10 lucky winners in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Bank officials.

The bank proudly announced the lucky 5 winners of week 30 who won KD 1,000 each: Abdullah Duhawi Faddan Al-Dhafeeri, Abdulmalek Mohammad Hasan Keewan, Khaled Mohammad Saleh Al-Ajeel, Maali Bassam Dandan Saad Mzaieel and Fawaz Khaled Yaseen Muhallhel Al-Yaseen.

The bank also announced the lucky 5 winners of week

31 who won KD 1,000 each: Amer Mousa Mohammad Al-Yasjeen, Tala Bader Hamed Al-Mulla, Fayezi Turki Waqqaf Al-Enezi, Hani Abdulati Abdulfattah Al-Tantawi and Salah Khalaf Awwad Al-Fadhli.

Al-Sunbula Account is the perfect choice for all customers who wish to save money and achieve steady returns while simultaneously have the opportunity to win cash prizes throughout the year. Due to the high traffic on this account, for its offerings of unparalleled opportunities, Warba Bank has worked on enhancing Al-Sunbula account to provide customers with more benefits. Such enhancements include increasing the number of winners and the frequency of the draws.

Now, on every Thursday the Bank holds draws for 5 weekly winners of KD 1,000 each. In addition, the Bank continues its monthly draws held on the first Thursday of every month, with cash prizes of KD 30,000 divided amongst 4 winners: two winners getting KD 10,000 each, and two winners getting KD 5,000 each.

Thus, the new development of Al-Sunbula account has increased the total number of winners to 24, and the total amount of prizes to KD 50,000 instead of KD 30,000. As

## 26 new winners in Al-Hassad Islamic account this week

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank recently conducted its Al-Hassad Islamic account weekly draw. Kuwait's leading sharia-compliant rewards program that offers a broad range of prizes to the largest number of winners, on the 29th of August 2018. The account provides 26 weekly prizes that are comprised of KD 25,000 as a grand prize and 25 other prizes valued at KD 1,000 each. AUB also offers four quarterly prizes that are valued at KD 250,000 to each winner allowing them to achieve their dreams of travelling, studying abroad, or owning their dream home or car.

On this occasion Ahli United Bank announced, "With this draw, we are adding 26 new winners and

## ABK offers 10 lucky students chance to experience an adventure for 2!

KUWAIT: In line with its commitment to offer the best banking experience to customers of all ages, Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) is launching its "Experience an Adventure" campaign that gives university students the chance to win unique trips in a bi-monthly draw. Starting September 2nd until January 20th 2019, ABK's A+ Student Account holders will enter 10 draws.

During the bi-monthly draws, one lucky student between the ages of 18 and 25 will be eligible for a pre-selected travel prize. To make the experience more exciting, ABK is also extending the chance for winners to invite a friend or family member to accompany them in their exhilarating voyage. In addition to the free adventure, winners will be given a FREE prepaid card worth KD 200.

Offered in partnership with Al-Qiblah Travel & Tourism, winners will receive an all-inclusive package to visit and explore one of the following destinations:

- Abu Dhabi Sir Bani Yas Island Day Trip (Snorkeling inclusive)
- Jordan Wadi Mujib (Dead Sea) and Ziplining Trip
- Atlantis Dubai Dolphin Adventure
- Hot Air Balloon Ride- Dubai
- Sky Dive Dubai
- YAS Waterworld VIP Experience
- YAS Ferrari World VIP Experience
- Dinner in the Sky Dubai Experience
- Zipline- Dubai
- Qatar Desert Safari trip

prizes to the Al-Hassad Islamic account whereby, the total number of winners annually will include more than 1300. The weekly grand prize winner of KD 25,000 Salem Eid Al-Enezi, 25 other winners won prizes of KD 1,000 and are as follows: Bader Habeb Al-Awad, Musaed Raheel Al-Enzi, Ardeshir Abdolhossein Sabouhian, Mohyi Ali Mottaq, Abdullah Faleh Almejhani, Mohammad Ahmad Al-Rasheed, Souad Mohamed Sabab, Naousheen Faruki Faruki, Nafth Mnabi Ajmi, Ali Mohammad Yousef, Yousef Mohammad Al-Musallam, Khawlah Othman Al-Othman, Ali Alsayed Al-Musawi, Ahmad Hussain Ebrahim, Barges Homoud Al-Barges, Khaled Mohammad Al-Muhanna, Reem Ebrahim Al-Husain, Zaid Fahad Al-Zaid, Jaafar Mansoor Naser, Hasan Fadhel Al-Dhaif, Bashar Hashim Al-Mishqab, Leena Khalifa Sulaibeeh, Ali Moh'd Shekar, Faisal Aadam Qaber and Ali Jawad Al-Mishal.

Al-Hassad Islamic account's customers in Kuwait and Bahrain are eligible to participate in the draw in line with the program's terms and conditions.

## KGL awarded a \$6.4m govt contract for KOC

KUWAIT: Kuwait & Gulf Link Transport Company (KGL) announced that one of its subsidiaries KGL Transportation was awarded a government contract for the supply of firefighting equipment to Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) for KD1.94 (\$6.4 million), where the expected return is expected to be around 5 percent of the contract.

Mohammed Mirza, Chief Technical Officer of the company, said: "Since its inception, the company has been striving to be a successful and pioneering model by working in an organized manner to build what private or public institutions need to develop their economic structure to be able to face competitive market conditions."

Mirza said that the company would provide firefighting equipment to meet the requirements of KOC due to the need for strict measures to provide the highest standards of safety in firefighting equipment.

"There is no doubt that the presence of firefighting equipment is very important even if not used for many years; the time may come when the equipment becomes a shield to fight fire or to save lives from sudden fire given the sensitivity of the oil extraction process by KOC".

## Dell Technologies announces new IoT solutions

KUWAIT: Dell Technologies' Edge and IoT Solutions Division is announcing new solutions and bundles to simplify deployment of secure, scalable solutions for edge computing and IoT use cases. With these solutions, Dell Technologies is combining tools from its broad portfolio with technology from Intel and partners in the Dell Technologies IoT Solutions Partner Program. This will drive workloads for computer vision - enabled by imaging sensors - and machine intelligence - characterized by structured telemetry from sensors and control systems. Dell Technologies has collaborated with Intel, who has helped advance these solutions with their computer vision and analytics technologies.

"Workloads and use cases for computer vision and machine intelligence require different combinations of tools, but the computing infrastructure elements are the same," said Joyce Mullen, president, Global Channel, OEM and IOT Solutions at Dell Technologies. "Dell Technologies provides a scalable, secure, manageable and open infrastructure - spanning edge to cloud - so customers and partners can realize value today and build a foundation to support these workloads and case studies in the future."

Cameras provide rich information about the physical world, but the deluge of video data creates too much data for humans to cost-effectively monitor for real-time decision making. Applying analytics, such as Artificial Intelligence, to these data streams automates powerful, actionable insights. Events driven by computer vision and analyzed together with telemetry from machines - including data that imaging sensors cannot provide, such as voltage, current and pressure - results in even more powerful insights.

Because of rapid evolution in the IoT market and the fast pace of innovation required to stay competitive, many customers now require an 'IT grade' infrastructure. This should include a security-first perspective to support scalability, data diversity and the increasingly complex needs of connected devices.

### Integrating solutions

By enabling computer vision with Dell Technologies IoT solutions, customers can more accurately, efficiently and effectively "see" relevant information pertaining to areas such as public safety, customer experience, and product inventory and quality. Surveillance is the first use case to which Dell Technologies has applied computer vision, so customers can more cost-effectively monitor events in the physical world and automate decision making. The IoT Solution for Surveillance is specifically built to transform and simplify how surveillance technology is delivered with an easy to deploy and manage hyper-converged, software-defined solution. Available later this year to purchase as a package, the engineered, pre-integrated solution will provide a consistent foundation from edge to distributed core to cloud. It will also be ready to run on day one with customer data to speed the return on investment. The solution is currently available as a reference architecture to align systems and build a framework for computer vision learning and adoption for other use cases.



Joyce Mullen



Mohammed Mirza

Technology

# Voice assistants tool up in hope of a bright future

## 100 million AI devices set to be sold this year

**BERLIN:** Some two years after stepping into the spotlight, voice assistants are learning new languages and connecting to ever-more devices around the home—but mass adoption and widespread ease with the new technology remain some way off. Virtual assistants are artificial intelligence (AI) programs that can be accessed from smartphones, specialized devices like Amazon's Echo speaker, smart televisions or even cars.

Connected via the cloud to search engines, databases, apps and other devices, they are designed to allow users to retrieve information and control their digital lives without laying a finger on their phone or computer. Some 100 million devices featuring the likes of Google Assistant or Apple's Siri are set to be sold this year according to consultancy Canals-up from around 40 million last year. The figures remain far short of the billions of smartphones in people's pockets around the world.

"Virtual assistants will reach mainstream adoption in the next two to five years," predicts Mike J. Walker, vice-president of research at Gartner. He forecasts that the hype around speakers and other electronics featuring voice-controlled artificial intelligence (AI) may ebb temporarily before their blockbuster moment arrives. Even so, at Berlin's IFA—the largest technology trade show in Europe—almost every new product is designed to work with offerings from Google, Apple, Amazon, Samsung or Microsoft, or all of them.



**BERLIN:** A Loomo by Segway-Ninebot is on display at the booth of Segway during a preview day of the IFA, the world's leading trade show for consumer electronics and home appliances in Berlin.



**BERLIN:** A booth host presents the Drift W1 at the booth of Segway. — AFP photos

**'I'm home!'**

Panasonic shows off air conditioning, lights and televisions that can be turned on or off all at once, simply by telling Google's assistant "I'm home" or "good night". Speakers and headphones on display from firms like Harman Kardon boast similar voice capabilities for queuing up new music. But sector specialists note that the bewildering arrays of gadgets that can be controlled and tasks completed with spoken commands alone—from turning on the heating to ordering a taxi—are racing ahead of users.

"Early adopters will have limited evidence on which to base their own best practices" in dealing with voice technology, Gartner predicts. Many may not even be aware of their silicon-powered butlers' prodigious talents, using them instead as simple speech-driven search engines. While shoppers were

quick to give up visiting stores in favour of online shopping, so-called "voice commerce" still puts off consumers, used to at least seeing if not touching prospective purchases.

Others fear placing an always-on microphone in their homes—necessary for the voice assistants to listen for activation phrases like "Hey Google" or "Alexa", although there is usually a button on devices to deactivate the sensor. Different firms offer their own forms of reassurance about personal data, with Google allowing users to delete their voice history and Apple keeping information saved on the customer's iPhone, rather than in the cloud. One area where firms are making progress is language, with Amazon adding French to Alexa and Google offering bilingual control in any two of English, Spanish, German, French, Italian or Japanese. —AFP

“ Virtual assistants will reach mainstream adoption ”

## Microsoft requires US suppliers to offer parental leave

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Microsoft said Thursday it will begin requiring US suppliers to offer employees at least 12 weeks of paid parental leave when they have or adopt children. The new policy applies to suppliers with 50 or more employees who do substantial work for the US technology giant, according to Microsoft general counsel Dev Stahkopf.

"We recognize today's announcement comes during an ongoing national dialogue about the importance of paid parental leave," Stahkopf said in an online post, while noting that only 13 percent of US workers in the private sector have access to paid parental leave. "The case for paid parental leave is clear."

Three years ago, Microsoft began requiring major suppliers to provide paid time off for workers, and parental leave was described as a reasonable next step. "Paid time off is good both for employers and employees," Stahkopf said. The technology giant planned to work with US suppliers during the coming year to implement the paid parental leave policy, which calls for workers to be paid as much as \$1,000 for each of the 12 weeks they are given off.

Microsoft acknowledged that the benefit could result in ramping up its own costs, but promised a process for addressing that issue with suppliers. "When parents can take time off work to care for their families, everyone



**NEW YORK:** This file photo shows the Microsoft logo displayed outside the Microsoft Technology Center near Times Square in New York City. — AFP

their kids, their companies, and their communities — benefits," Melinda Gates, the wife of Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates, said in a tweet. "Great to see."

**Ripples**

Microsoft said the requirement was inspired by legislation in several US states including Washington, where the technology firm is based. A law set to take effect in Washington State in 2020 will require that employees who qualify get 12 weeks paid parental leave. Microsoft opted to move before the law took effect, and wanted to help extend the benefit to employees of suppliers located outside the state, according to Stahkopf.

Family advocacy groups welcomed the news, and expressed hope that US legislators and other companies would champion the cause. On Twitter, the Family Values @ Work coalition congratulated Microsoft. "Offering

paid leave isn't just the right thing to do, it's good for the bottom line, helps increase gender equity in the workforce — and worker prosperity," the organization said. General Mills on Wednesday announced it is ramping up family leave benefits.

Beginning next year, the US food giant will begin providing 18 to 20 weeks paid leave to new mothers while giving 12 weeks paid time off to fathers, partners, and adoptive parents. "General Mills has been making food people love for over 150 years and our employees have always been our secret ingredient," chief human resources officer Jacqueline Williams-Roll said in a release. "We want to keep innovating in how we meet their evolving needs." A 2016 Pew Research Center study based on data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development found the United States was the only one of the 41 member countries without any mandated, paid parental leave. —AFP

## China to limit online games over myopia fears

**SHANGHAI:** Shares of Chinese video game companies plunged on Friday after the government unveiled plans to control the number of online games as part of an effort to prevent myopia among children. The plan is the latest move to tighten government oversight over the country's fast-growing and highly popular video game industry—and a new blow to their stock market fortunes.

The new regulations were announced late Thursday after Chinese President Xi Jinping

issued an "important directive" to protect children's eyesight. The education ministry said in a statement Thursday that the authorities will regulate and control the total number of internet games, as well as the number of new titles. The statement, which was signed by eight ministries, said the authorities will also explore an age-appropriate alert system and take actions to limit the amount of gaming hours among children.

The news sent the shares of Chinese video game companies sharply down on Friday morning. Tencent dropped by more than five percent in Hong Kong while Perfect World Co, which was once listed on the NASDAQ stock exchange, sank almost nine percent in Shenzhen. Smaller game developers also lost ground in Shenzhen. Youzu Interactive Co plunged nearly eight percent and Sichuan Xun You Network Technology

lost more than eight percent. Ourpalm Co was down nearly six percent.

China has a high rate of myopia among students at an increasingly younger age, the official Xinhua news agency said, citing Xi's order. Myopia has seriously affected children's physical and mental health, posing a big problem for the nation's future, the agency said. The plan follows a halt in the approval of new online game licenses.

Bloomberg News reported earlier this month that China had stopped approving any new mobile games as part of a wider shake-up of the market. No new titles for domestic firms had been added since May and no new imported games has been approved since February, according to the National Radio and Television Administration, which updates the online list of approved games regularly. —AFP

## Apple self-driving car rear ended during road testing

**NEW YORK:** An Apple Inc self-driving car was rear-ended while merging onto an expressway near the company's Silicon Valley headquarters this month, the company said in an accident report posted on Friday that confirmed the iPhone maker is still in the race to build autonomous vehicles. Apple executives have never publicly spoken about the company's self-driving car program, but filings in a criminal court case last month confirmed that it was working on circuit boards and a "proprietary chip" related to self-driving cars.

Apple is entering a crowded field where rivals such as Alphabet Inc's Waymo unit and traditional carmakers such as General Motors Co's Cruise Automation, as well as startups such as Silicon Valley's Zoox, are pouring billions of dollars into cars that can drive themselves. On Aug 24, one of Apple's Lexus RX 450h self-driving test vehicles in "autonomous mode" was merging south on the Lawrence Expressway in Sunnyvale, California at less than 1 mile per hour when it was rear-ended by a 2016 Nissan Leaf going about 15 miles per hour, according to the report posted on the California Department of Motor

Vehicles website.

The accident happened at about 3 pm as the Apple vehicle had slowed and was waiting for a safe gap in traffic to complete the merge, the report said. Both vehicles sustained damage but there were no injuries, the report said. Under a safety plan filed with California regulators, a human driver must be able to take control of Apple's self-driving test cars.

An Apple spokesman confirmed that the company had filed the report but did not comment further. He declined to respond to questions about whether the trailing car could have been at fault. Apple's efforts remained shrouded in secrecy until years after its rivals like Google had begun testing on public roads. The iPhone maker's first public acknowledgement of interest in the field came in a letter to US transportation regulators in late 2016 urging them not to restrict testing of the vehicles. Last year, Apple secured a permit to test autonomous vehicles in California. It has been testing cars on the road since last year and now has permits for more than 60 vehicles. Apple researchers also last year published their first public research on cars, a software system that could help spot pedestrians more readily. —Reuters



**CALIFORNIA:** A file photo shows the Apple logo on the outside of Bill Graham Civic Auditorium in San Francisco, California. — AFP

# CLINIC PAGE



**Kuwait Times**  
248 33 199

**DR. MOHAMMAD AL HAJRY**  
Canadian Board of Otolaryngology  
Head & Neck Surgery and Facial Plastics.  
Fellow of Royal College of Surgeons-Canada  
A rare Subspecialty in Microscopic Ear Surgery, Cochlear implant & Ear diseases

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- ◆ Member of the American Academy of Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery
- ◆ Member of the British Laryngological Association
- ◆ Member of the Canadian Society of Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery
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**Specialized in:**

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- ◆ Breast surgeries
- ◆ Thyroid & adrenal surgeries
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- ◆ Liver, pancreas & bile ducts surgeries

**Dr. Hani Haider**  
General Surgery Consultant

**Scope of Clinical Practice:**

- ◆ General & Laparoscopic Surgery
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- ◆ Surgical Treatment of Inflammatory Bowel Abscess
- ◆ Treatment of Perianal Fistula & Complex Perianal Fistula (complications)
- ◆ WAAF Procedure (Treatment of Fistula through Fistuloscope)
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- ◆ Colonoscopy & Gastroscopy
- ◆ Stomach Balloon Insertion & removal
- ◆ Bariatric Surgery - Lap Sleeve Gastrectomy
- ◆ Gallstones & Abdominal Hernias Surgery
- ◆ Colonic Hydrotherapy & Fecal Incontinence Treatment
- ◆ Laparoscopic mitral bypass
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- ◆ 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

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

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

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**DR. WALEED S BUHAIMED**  
Consultant of General Surgery  
Laparoscopic 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.**

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

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What's On

# Marriott International's loyalty programs - Marriott Rewards - unify

A new era is beginning for more than 110 million members of Marriott International's award-winning loyalty programs - Marriott Rewards, which includes The Ritz-Carlton Rewards, and Starwood Preferred Guest (SPG). For the first time since Marriott International acquired Starwood Hotels and Resorts in 2016, the programs now operate under one set of unified benefits and one currency spanning the entire loyalty portfolio of 29 brands and more than 6,700 participating hotels in 130 countries and territories.

Members are able to seamlessly earn and redeem across the entire loyalty portfolio and achieve Elite status faster with new Elite tiers. Members can now combine their separate program accounts into one at Marriott.com or SPG.com to take advantage of everything Marriott International's loyalty programs offer worldwide.

Together, the unified programs are richer. Members now earn on average 20 percent more points per dollar spent and have their Elite status recognized consistently at every hotel as they indulge in the elevated benefits they've earned. Additionally, members now have the added convenience to book stays throughout the portfolio on Marriott.com, SPG.com, and the Marriott and SPG apps, or by contacting customer engagement centers.

"This is an exciting time for our loyalty members who now have endless inspiration to travel and experience the world to create memories that will last a lifetime," said David Flueck, Senior Vice President, Global Loyalty, Marriott International. "We merged the incredible earning and redeeming power of Marriott Rewards with the phenomenal Elite benefits of SPG to create one of the richest travel loyalty programs with the most extraordinary global portfolio of hotels - from overwater bungalows, to mountainside ski resorts, to iconic urban landmarks."

### Earn points, achieve elite status

As a result of the unified, single-currency programs, when members combine their accounts, their points balances will also combine, ending the need to transfer points between programs. For SPG members, their SPG points balance multiplied by three. All members earn 10 points for every dollar spent at all brands except Residence Inn, TownPlace Suites and Element which earn five points per dollar spent and Marriott Executive Apartments and ExecuStay properties which earn 2.5 points per dollar spent.

In addition, for 2018, nights earned at Marriott Rewards and SPG hotels will also combine, potentially helping members achieve Elite status faster. Under the unified programs, all SPG members receive a new account number to align with the Marriott Rewards system. Members with multiple program accounts can choose to combine under their preferred account. The Marriott Rewards, The Ritz-Carlton Rewards and Starwood Preferred Guest (SPG) names will continue to live on until early 2019 until combining under a new brand name.

Under the unified programs, members now earn Silver Elite status after just ten nights annually, Gold Elite status after just 25 nights, Platinum Elite status after 50 nights and Platinum Premier Elite status after 75 nights. All Platinum Premier members surpassing 100 nights and \$20,000 annual spend will enjoy the highest level of personalized service - the popular ambassador program - along with all the other benefits in that tier. Members who have achieved Lifetime status will continue to have their status recognized under the new Lifetime Elite tiers that will apply across the unified programs.

### Redeem free nights

The unified programs introduce a new Free Night Award chart for redemptions across the entire loyalty portfolio. Nearly 70 percent of hotels now require the same or fewer points for a free stay than before. Further, members can save 25,000 points per night by redeeming for future category eight hotels priced in category seven until 2019, including coveted all-suites properties. The new Free Night Award chart launched with standard pricing, adding off-peak and peak pricing in 2019.

### Earn points, access benefits

With the new programs comes an array of refreshed benefits for co-branded credit cardholders that provide members with more benefits across the entire loyalty portfolio. Members of all three loyalty programs in the United Arab Emirates can take advantage of the Emirates NBD Starwood Preferred Guest World MasterCard with world-class banking partner Emirates NBD and new benefits offered within the region.

Experience rich rewards and best in class benefits with the Emirates NBD SPG World MasterCard. The ability to earn and redeem at our extraordinary collec-



tion of 6,700 hotels across 29 brands, an automatic upgrade to Gold Status, an annual anniversary Free Night Award Certificate upon renewal, and premium Wi-Fi are just a few of the exciting new opportunities that are now available to members.

With the Emirates NBD SPG World MasterCard, earn 6x points for each US dollar of eligible purchases made at participating SPG, Marriott Rewards, The Ritz-Carlton Rewards hotels, and 3x points for each US dollar of eligible purchases on your card. For more information, visit [emiratesnbd.com/spg](http://emiratesnbd.com/spg).

### More Travel Experiences

Marriott International's loyalty programs offer members a holistic travel experience encompassing much more than hotel stays. Members have access to the wide collection of nearly 120,000 irresistible experiences in 1,000 global destinations on the company's ever-expanding Moments platform - Marriott Moments, Marriott Rewards Moments and SPG Moments.

These range from destination tours and day trips, to

exclusive member-only events such as Super Fan Experiences during the Keith Urban Graffiti U World Tour, including autographed merchandise and backstage access, VIP access to sought after sporting events like the Super Bowl, music festivals like Coachella, and master classes with superstar chefs like Daniel Boulud in intimate settings.

In addition, other new benefits to highlight include:

All members now earn points for food and beverage, spa and other qualifying incidentals charged to their folio, rather than just the room rate.

Hotels throughout the loyalty portfolio now have no blackout dates for points redemptions.

Booking direct on any of Marriott International's digital and mobile channels means members can take advantage of exclusive member-only rates and free Wi-Fi. In addition, both the Marriott and SPG apps offer mobile check-in and check-out and send members alerts when their room is ready. Members can also chat directly with hotel associates before, during, and after their stays using Mobile Requests, and use their smartphones as their room key at more than 1,000 hotels.

## Bhavans Kuwait extends humane hands to Kerala

In the aftermath of the worst deluge in a century, when the Indian state of Kerala, fondly known as God's own Country tries to integrate the ashes to rise up like a phoenix, the altruistic hands reach out to the devastated land from all around the world, filling our hearts with a joyful message that humanity is not extinct. When the whirlwind of misfortune came to a halt, 2250 miles away, the Good Samaritans of Bhavans, Kuwait irrespective of caste, creed, state or nationality, joined their hearts and hands together to reach out to their 'brothers and sisters' in Kerala.

In their attempt to offer help in their own little magnanimous ways, the entire Bhavans fraternity, stood shoulder to shoulder, manifesting the unique solidarity. Sacrifice is the perfect paradigm of love and selflessness, and teachers are role models. Bhavans established it profoundly when the teaching fraternity took up the onus, and offered their one day's salary towards the flood relief fund raised in the school.

The customary celebrations of the schools were also cancelled and the expenses were offered to the flood relief fund. The stake holders, the strong parent community, and the pride of Bhavans, its very own Bhavanites donated generously to make the efforts of the institution truly meaningful. Bhavans takes pride in the fact that it has raised a decent sum of almost 7550 KD, 2550KD from the student community who forgone their birthday celebrations every year, and donate the expenses towards the charity drive organized by the school, 3000 KD from the teachers, and 2000 KD from the fund which had been set aside for Onam and Founder's Day celebrations of Bhavans, Kuwait.

The Bhavans Fraternity in Kuwait unconditionally embraced the pang and agony of the people in the flood relief camps, as the members of the family relentlessly worked together to collect and pack the items to be sent to the relief camps in Kerala. As many as 117 cartons, weighing over 3 tons of edible and other nonedible essentials such as groceries, sugar, tea, coffee, milk powder, garments, blankets, footwear, toiletries and detergent were packed, and loaded in a 20 foot container of Al Rashid Shipping Company by 28 students and 15 teacher volunteers along with the other support staff.

The Chairman of Bhavans, Middle East, N K Ramachandran Menon, and the Principals of Bhavans, Kuwait, T Premkumar, Mahesh Iyer and Rathi Ravindran expressed their gratitude to the Bhavans fraternity for manifesting their solidarity in upholding the true motto of the institution "let noble thoughts come to us from every side" irrespective of the chaos and turbulence around. The Vice Chairman of Bhavans, Middle East, Sooraj Ramachandran eulogized the efforts of the students and emphasized that their efforts to serve the society should be duly honored on the occasion of the Annual Day Celebration of the school. The success of



Bhavans lies in this synergy that radiates when the management, the staff, the students and the parent community work together with noble ideals, towards a noble cause, that elevates Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Kuwait to greater heights in its commitment to the fellow beings, the society, the state, the country and the world.

## Burgan Bank surprises BuBa account holders with gift voucher

Burgan Bank announces the launch of its Back to School campaign for its BuBa Kids Account customers. In a bid to accommodate to the little ones transition back into the new academic year with utmost convenience, Burgan Bank is offering BuBa account customers a KD 20 gift voucher from Jarir Bookstore in preparation for their back to school supplies.

To collect the free gift voucher, BuBa customers or Parents can visit Discovery Mall branch and present

their BuBa ATM card starting from today (2nd of September, 2018). BuBa Kids Account aims at providing creative solutions for parents who want to earn more from their savings for their children and at the same time enjoy a wide range of benefits. The BuBa Kids Account is a savings account, with the minimum opening balance of KD 10. Children, up to 14 years old, will also enjoy special offers and promotions throughout the year as well as attractive discounts at selected merchants across Kuwait.



## KAICO (Michelin) continues door-to-door services

Kuwait Automotive Imports Co WLL (Al Shaya & Al Sagar) KAICO, the exclusive Michelin distributor in Kuwait for over 68 years, has been successfully continuing a unique Doorstep Michelin services since 2013 and adding new vehicles with extended services including tires change, punctures, balancing, rotation, free battery check, mobile oil change and refill of fluids all done in quick time at your work place, home or during the shopping time by Michelin trained expertise. The high-class performance and reliability of Michelin tires along with the service offered by Al Shaya & Al Sagar have made Michelin a favorite with quality-conscious motorists in Kuwait.

"We are committed to serve our customers with the best solutions in terms of

products, sales, and after-sales services. We truly believe that 'Customer is # 1 and Customer is for life' with the pride that we sell performance, not rubber," said Ashish Tandon, General Manager of KAICO. Sadiq Ali, Divisional Manager, Tires and Lubes explained that customers can now avail a free check-up and have their tires changed at the comfort of their home or office which means they receive a personal, professional and convenient service.

With the state-of-the-art equipped vehicle, the Michelin tire experts will reach you wherever you are and offer you new tire fitting, Mobil Oil change and balancing or puncture repair. All you need to do is call a Michelin representative. Michelin is a leading global manufacturer of tires for all kind of vehicles for over 130 years.

Globally, Ranking No.1 brand position by value and volume, the company commands about 15% of market share and is present commercially in more than 170 countries.

Michelin continues to innovate across all product lines with products that meet the demands of consumers. In the Middle East, Michelin has recently introduced its technology that allows a truck tire to be more resistant and last up to 15% longer. For passenger cars, Michelin has introduced tires with patented technology, allowing the tire to perform well in all areas - a concept Michelin calls Total Performance. In Kuwait, as in other parts of the world, the Michelin brand is regarded highly for its quality and performance. Users of Michelin tires consistently rate Michelin as the best and as



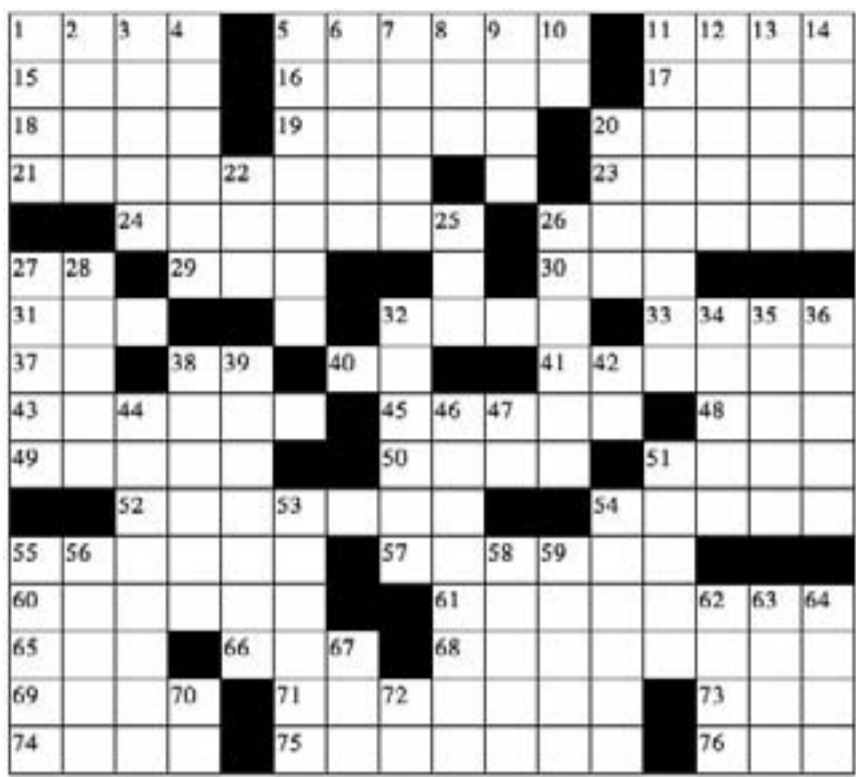
"worth the price".

Michelin tires available in Kuwait cater to 4 different segments: Sport, Top of the Range, SUV & Sedan Cars. Some of the most popular tires among Kuwait customers include the following Primacy 4, Latitude Tour HP, the high-performance

4x4 tire that provides greater comfort and lasts 20 percent longer, Latitude Sport which is the equipment for sport 4x4 vehicles, Pilot Sports 3 for sport-oriented vehicles and high-powered saloon, and Primacy HP that is specially designed for Luxury/comfortable saloon cars.

Stars

CROSSWORD 1998



ACROSS

- 1. A short labored intake of breath with the mouth open.
5. Type genus of the Parulidae.
11. Clothing of a distinctive style or for a particular occasion.
15. A narrow thin strip of wood used as backing for plaster or to make latticework.
16. Improved or corrected by critical editing.
17. The upper angle between an axis and an offshoot such as a branch or leafstalk.
18. Using speech rather than writing.
19. The capital and largest city of Bangladesh.
21. A member of the extinct Algonquian people formerly living between Lake Michigan and Lake Superior.
23. Eaten as mush or as a thin gruel.
24. A decorative musical accompaniment (often improvised) added above a basic melody.
27. A heavy odorless colorless gas formed during respiration and by the decomposition of organic substances.
29. A master's degree in business.
30. Belonging to or on behalf of a specified person (especially yourself).
31. A graphical record of electric currents associated with muscle contractions.
33. A city in the Asian part of Russia.
37. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
40. A metric unit of volume or capacity equal to 100 liters.
41. Wear away through erosion or vaporization.
43. An agency of the United Nations responsible for programs to aid education and the health of children and mothers in developing countries.
45. United States abstract expressionist painter (1910-1962).
48. Airtight sealed metal container for food or drink or paint etc..
49. East Indian silk cotton tree yielding fibers inferior to kapok.
50. Characterized by lightness and insubstantiality.
52. Mites and ticks.
55. An island in the Aegean Sea in the Saronic Gulf.
57. Spin or twist together so as to form a cord.
60. Sorting and allocating aid on the basis of need for or likely benefit from medical treatment or food.
61. The event of being born.
65. A silvery malleable metallic element that resists corrosion.
66. The 7th letter of the Greek alphabet.
68. King of the English who succeeded to the throne after his half-brother Saint Edward the Martyr was murdered.
69. Made agreeably cold (especially by ice).
71. Feeling or caused to feel uneasy and self-conscious.
73. A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.
74. (of a young animal) Abandoned by its mother and raised by hand.
75. French choreographer and ballet dancer (born in Russia) (1895-1979).
76. The 13th letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

DOWN

- 1. Take by theft.
2. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
3. A support or foundation.
4. (botany) Tissue that conducts synthesized food substances (e.g., from leaves) to parts where needed.
5. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
6. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
7. A toxic protein extracted from castor beans.
8. Greenwich Mean Time updated with leap seconds.
9. A soft heavy toxic malleable metallic element.
10. A public promotion of some product or service.
11. A sulfonamide (trade name Gantanol) used to treat infections (especially infections of the urinary tract).
12. A saying that widely accepted on its own merits.
13. A shoulder firearm with a long barrel and a rifled bore.
14. Lose blood from one's body.
20. Bushy plant of Old World salt marshes and sea beaches having prickly leaves.
22. A state-chartered savings bank owned by its depositors and managed by a board of trustees.
25. A protocol developed for the internet to get data from one network device to another.
26. Austrian physician who developed a rotational method for testing the middle ear (1876-1936).
28. Of or relating to Oman or its people.
32. A non-aromatic saturated hydrocarbon with the general formula CnH(2n+2).
34. A Portuguese province on the south coast of China and two islands in the South China Sea.
35. Rock star and drummer for the Beatles (born in 1940).
36. A republic in eastern Africa.
38. Any of various spiny trees or shrubs of the genus Acacia.
39. A motley assortment of things.
42. A light strong brittle gray toxic bivalent metallic element.
44. Not based on fact.
46. The property of having little body fat.
47. A heavy brittle metallic element of the platinum group.
51. A simple machine consisting of a circular frame with spokes (or a solid disc) that can rotate on a shaft or axle (as in vehicles or other machines).
53. Desert shrub of Syria and Arabia having small white flowers.
54. Submit or yield to another's wish or opinion.
56. Any plant of the genus Erica.
58. Club consisting of a heavy stick (often bamboo) bound with iron.
59. Ash-colored or anemic looking from illness or emotion.
62. A recurring sleep state during which rapid eye movements do not occur and dreaming does not occur.
63. Wrap up in a cerecloth, as of a corpse.
64. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls.
67. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
70. A Mid-Atlantic state.
72. A very poisonous metallic element that has three allotropic forms.

Friday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Just because something seems easy doesn't mean it is right. Taking the easy way out can lead to trouble. Not feeling right about the path before you, you may choose the long way around to accomplish your goals.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

What a great day to spend some time with those you love. Enjoy some time sitting around with friends and family. You may find taking a walk down memory lane will bring much laughter into your life today.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

With your mind set on a hair trigger, you could find yourself making some hasty decisions. Careful not to find yourself in conflict. Tense energy and unusual thoughts may come your way today.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You are making a difference in the lives of more people than you realize. You could qualify as a CREEP. That's a good thing, a compliment. It is an acronym for Constantly Ready to Encourage Every Person.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Don't be surprised if you cross paths today with someone who just doesn't sit right with you. You have a feeling that something about them just isn't right. You may feel as if you want to get away from this person as soon as possible.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Make plans for a quiet evening for those you hold near and dear to your heart. You may find this to be a great time of peace and understanding in your world.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You feel for others. You may find that you take on the emotions of those that surround you on a deep and personal level. Your focus should be on keeping your own feelings and emotions in check.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You may be feeling a strong desire for change, a need for something new and different. It may be time to throw out the old and start fresh. Let your creative side be your guide.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Don't be surprised if you cross paths today with someone who just doesn't sit right with you. You have a feeling that something about them just isn't right. You may feel as if you want to get away from this person as soon as possible.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Today is a great day to spend with someone you love. You may find yourself very emotional and deep in thought. You are focused on the meaning of life and what your true purpose in this life is.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

As clearly as you can see what direction you want to be headed, you are also able to see the past today. Memories of days gone by seem to flood in. You have come to appreciate the obstacles life has put in your path.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

This could be an open mouth, insert foot kind of day for you. Be sure and think before you speak. This will help you enjoy a more peaceful day.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Autumn

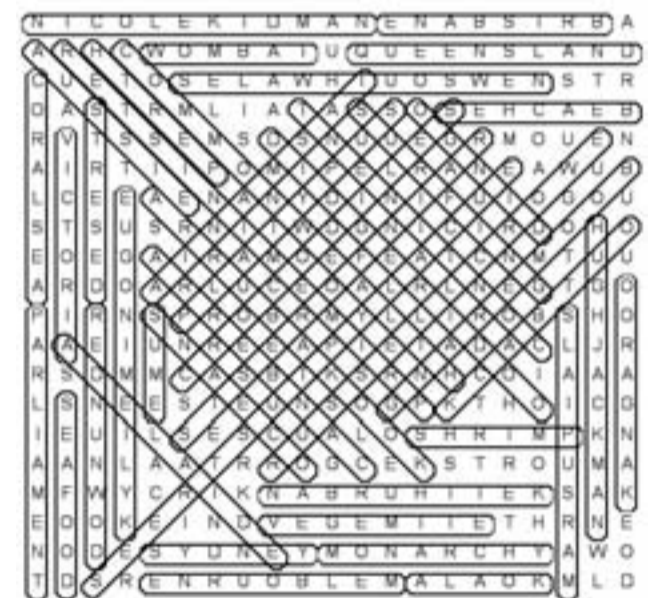
Find and circle all of the Autumn words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message - an Albert Camus quotation



- ACORN, APPLE, BIRD MIGRATION, BLOWING LEAVES, BLUSTERY DAY, CANNING, CHESTNUTS, CHILLY, COLD, CROPS, EQUINOX, FALL, FARMING, FEAST, FROST, HALLOWEEN, HARVEST, HAYSTACK, HICKORY NUTS, LONGER NIGHTS, NOVEMBER, OCTOBER, ORANGE LEAVES, PIE, PUMPKIN, RAKE, RED LEAVES, SCARECROW, SCHOOL, SEASON, SEPTEMBER, SHORTER DAYS, SQUASH, SWEET POTATOES, THANKSGIVING, TURKEY, WINDY, YELLOW LEAVES

Friday's Solution

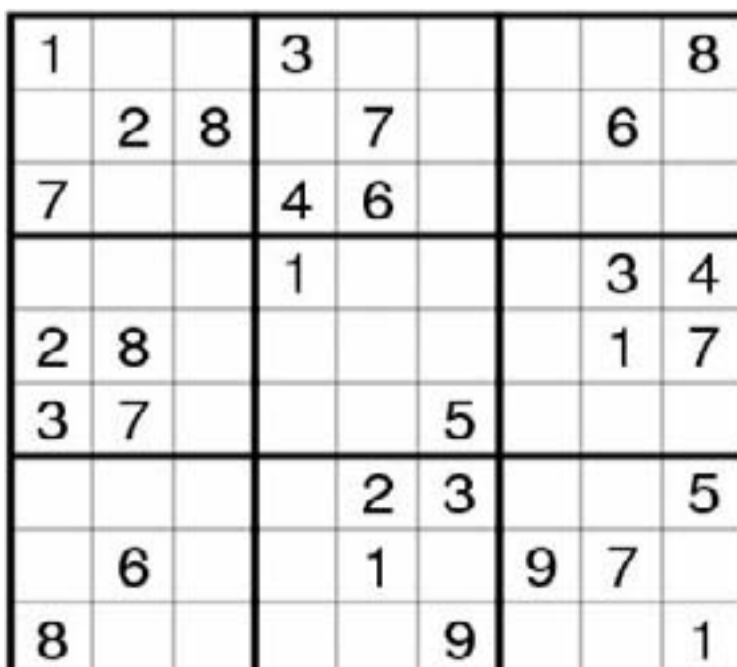
Australia



- ADELAIDE, AUSSIE, BEACHES, BOOMERANG, BRISBANE, CANNING, COMMONWEALTH, CONTINENT, CORAL SEA, CROCODILES, DESERTS, DIGGERDOO, DINGO, DOWN UNDER, EMUS, EUCALYPTUS TREES, HUGH JACKMAN, KANGAROO, KEITH URBAN, KODLA, KOOKABURRA, KYLIE MINOGUE, HARBORIALS, MELBOURNE, MONARCHY, NEW SOUTH WALES, NICOLE KIDMAN, OCEANS, OUTBACK, PARLIAMENT, PERTH, PLATYPUS, PRIME MINISTER, QUEENSLAND, RAINFORESTS, RUSSELL CROWE, SEAFOOD, SHIRAZ, SURFING, SYDNEY, TASMANIA, VEGETABLES, VICTORIA, WOMBAT

The hidden message is: AUSTRALIA'S MOUNT AUGUSTUS IS THE LARGEST ROCK IN THE WORLD

Daily SuDoku



Friday's Solution



# Lifestyle

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2018



A visitor poses for a photograph at the Egg House in Shanghai. "The Egg House" in Shanghai is where an apparently unhealthy interest in eggs and selfies meets Alice in Wonderland. Generously described as "an egg-themed pop-up exhibition" in Chinese state media, the installation is unashamedly all about one thing—photos and selfies. —AFP (See story on page 22)

## India's women-only comedy show tackles bras and biases

Men are strictly banned at Femapalooza, a comedy show for Indian women where the punchlines range from breasts and bras to equal pay and censorship. They are not allowed to attend, perform, or even check tickets at the most recent show at a New Delhi club. For Femapalooza founder Jeeya Sethi, humour just for women is a way to make progress in deeply patriarchal India, where rape and gender bias are hot-button issues and women are widely expected to adhere to conservative stereotypes. "Men only talk about men and (Indian Prime Minister Narendra) Modi or they make sexist jokes," said Sethi, a stand-up comic herself.

Femapalooza has organized more than 35 shows in different cities over the past three years, providing what Sethi calls a safe and friendly environment for women comics. "Stand-up is all about being unabashed. When there are women around you can say anything at all and not be judged," she said. Rights activists have campaigned for years for greater access to public and performing spaces for women in India—and their safety, given the record of violence against women in the vast South Asian nation. Some have emerged in recent years, with similar comedy events held in Mumbai and Bangalore.

Women-only shows such as "Leddies Night" by online magazine Ladies Finger and "Disgust Me" by stand-up comedian Sumukhi Suresh have been widely

acclaimed. At Femapalooza's New Delhi show, 13 comedians, aged between 17 and 37, tried out their jokes on an audience of around 30 women in an intimate, dimly lit room. Some appeared nervous, but the crowd reveled in every woman-friendly gag. Priya Elias vented her frustration with thongs. "Women don't enjoy wearing thongs... I am pretty sure a man invented them," the former lawyer joked. She told AFP that her content is received much more warmly by all-women audiences. "The energy in the room is different," she said. "Women are always told they are not funny and that is not true at all."

### No pressure

First-time performer Naomi Barton said she is more comfortable sharing her jokes with a women-only crowd, with no pressure to please men. "When I talk about PMS (premenstrual syndrome) and how it affects my mental health, landing me in funny situations, a woman will get it," said Barton, a digital publisher with a major firm. As in many countries, public discussion of menstruation and sexuality is replete with euphemisms. At the New Delhi show, Sethi asked some teenagers if they understood her joke about "the bedroom toy". As the teenagers blushed and smiled, she introduced the surprise act of the evening: Aditi Mittal, one of the handful of women to have made an impression in India's male-dominated comedy scene. Mittal has a special



Jeeya Sethi, Indian founder of 'Comedy Ladder', a comedy-focused events company, gestures at Femapalooza, an Indian women-only comedy show, in New Delhi. —AFP

affection for women-only shows.

"Many men think women are doing stand-up comedy because they are so desperate for attention... Some even say 'don't you get enough attention from your boobs'," quipped Mittal, the first Indian woman to get her own special on Netflix. Comedy in India can be a boys' club, acknowledged leading male stand-up Rohan Joshi, a member of the popular All India Bakchod sketch group. "We live in a culture where for years women's opinion has never been valued. This is at the heart of comedy," said Joshi.

Platforms such as Femapalooza have helped bring more women onto the comedy circuit, but there have been objections about its format. Male comics have complained about the women-only events, even calling them sexist, Sethi said. In response, her company Comedy Ladder organized an event where both men and women performed. The show introduced men as male comics on stage and women simply as comics, Sethi said, to show "how weird it sounds".

Femapalooza's audience has grown as word has spread. It does not always get a five-star rating, however. "It was a novel concept but only a few interesting per-



An Indian stand-up comedian Naomi Barton performs at Femapalooza, an Indian women-only comedy show, in New Delhi.



An Indian stand-up comedian performs at Femapalooza, an Indian women-only comedy show, in New Delhi.

formances... there were many first-timers," said Deepshikha Singh, a communications professional in the New Delhi audience. As the evening drew to a close, fathers and husbands lined up outside the club to drive members of the audience back home, partly out of concerns for their safety—a stark reminder that for many women in India, life is often no laughing matter. —AFP

### Mural in Spanish town not by Banksy

It was too good to be true. A mural sporting Banksy's alleged signature in a declining town in northwestern Spain that had caused a sensation when it appeared overnight in April is not by the legendary street artist, his website said Friday. The cheeky, stenciled image of two Guardia Civil police kissing had appeared on a white wall that had been "reserved for Banksy" in Ferrol, where a street art festival set up in 2008 to breathe new life into a dying neighborhood takes place every year. At the time, Spanish media was rife with speculation as to whether the image—which strongly resembles one of the artist's most famous images portraying two British cops kissing—was actually his.

But as the annual festival kicked off on Friday, AFP sent an email to Banksy's official website banksy.co.uk asking whether it was indeed his. The response was: "It is not by Banksy." The story started in 2017 when Estrella Galicia, a beer brand that had just started sponsoring the festival, took out ads in several British cities and newspapers calling for Banksy to join in.

The festival was created by Eduardo Hermida in 2008 who decided to get fellow artists to plaster walls and even doors in the district of Canido with their versions of Diego Velazquez's famed 17th century "Las Meninas" painting. The aim was to breathe new life into his beloved neighborhood, in an industrial town dubbed Galicia's Detroit for its population decline and abandoned spaces. "Dear Banksy, we have reserved a space for you on one of our streets so that you can freely express your most personal interpretation of Las Meninas and help us to make our neighborhood a more beautiful place to live," read Estrella Galicia's ad. —AFP



An Indian woman applauds prior to Femapalooza.



An Indian stand-up comedian Naomi Barton (center) performs at Femapalooza.

# JAKARTA SOUTHEAST ASIA'S DIVERSE, EVER-EVOLVING CITY



A general view of Jakarta's cityscape.



The exterior of Istiqlal Mosque.



Istiqlal Mosque as seen from Monas.



The interior of Istiqlal Mosque.

By Ahmad Jabr

Southeast Asia is already among the world's most popular touristic destinations, and Indonesia is increasingly becoming a favorite spot for tourists from the Middle East, who are capitalizing on the endless variety of options that the country has to offer. The capital Jakarta has everything a tourist would look for, including touristic attractions, beach resorts, fine weather throughout the year, high-end and traditional markets, easy public transport and countless of restaurants offering all kinds of Indonesian food.

The office of Jakarta's governor recently organized a business trip for media representatives from Kuwait to oversee the progress the city is witnessing and become familiar with the many potential business ventures that Jakarta has. Roaming around Jakarta gives you a glimpse of the rapid growth that the city and the whole country are undergoing. Indonesia maintained strong economic growth in 2017, and the outlook continues to be positive, according to the World Bank's March 2018 Indonesia Economic Quarterly. That growth can especially be seen in Jakarta, a city buzzing with life all day

long. Road, infrastructure and other developmental projects are taking place around Jakarta, with plenty of investment opportunities still available in the ever-growing city.

#### Public transportation

Like any other metropolitan city around the world, Jakarta records heavy traffic throughout the day, especially during the morning hours when its population reaches around 15 million, compared to the night when the population drops back to its normal 10 million rate as workers from nearby areas return home. But traffic is not an issue for tourists in the city - Jakarta has multiple public transportation options that help tourists reach their desired destinations in time, including free-of-charge tourist buses as well as the special 'Trans Jakarta' bus which has its own lanes and stations to help save time.

Furthermore, Jakarta is embarking on several major infrastructure projects for public transportation, the most notable of which is the ambitious Jakarta Mass Rapid Transit (MRT Jakarta) system, a subway network that is projected to serve the Greater Jakarta area.

The first phase of the project extends over

16 kilometers from south Jakarta to the city center. It is currently 95 percent complete, and is set to enter operation by March 2019. "The network is expected to carry around 173,000 passengers per day, according to calculations,"

said William Sabandar, President Director of MRT Jakarta. "Operations will run every day from 5:00 am to 12:00 am, with a train arriving every five minutes during peak hours, and every 10 minutes during normal hours."



The Selamat Datang Monument in downtown Jakarta.

Each train consists of six cars, and can carry 1,900 passengers at a time. Running at 50 kph, the train moving from the one end of the route would reach the other end in 30 minutes, effectively cutting a distance that would usually take one and a half hours by car to nearly half an hour.

The total cost of the first phase of the project, which consists of 13 stations, is \$1.2 billion - all financed through public funding. The state-owned company is seeking foreign investors to further develop the project, and according to Sabandar, a number of private investors from the Arab region showed interest during a recent function the company participated in in Dubai.

The second phase of the project includes building an eight-kilometer-long track to connect the city center to the north of Jakarta. The \$1.5 billion project is slated to start by the end of this year or early next year, and end in 2024. Meanwhile, the third and largest phase of the project, which extends over 31 kilometers from the east to the west of Jakarta, is expected to start in 2020, according to Sabandar. In total, the MRT Jakarta would cover an estimated total of 200 kilometers in length, serving the entire Greater Jakarta area.



Members of the media delegation stand outside the Istora Stadium for badminton at the Gelora Bung Karno (GBK) Sports Complex.



The National Monument (Monas).



A free of charge tourists bus.



The interior of St Mary of the Assumption Cathedral.



St Mary of the Assumption Cathedral.



A historical building at Jakarta's old town.



A man practicing in the archery field at the Gelora Bung Karno (GBK) Sports Complex.



The main swimming pool at the Gelora Bung Karno (GBK) Sports Complex.



The basketball court at the Gelora Bung Karno (GBK) Sports Complex.

### Abang None Jakarta: Selecting 'Mr and Ms Jakarta'

On the first day of our trip, we attended the 'Abang None Jakarta', an annual event to select 'Mr and Ms Jakarta' who will serve after their selection as activists to help promote tourism, investment and other sectors in the capital city. "As tourism ambassadors, they will have the duty to promote Jakarta as a tourist destination around the globe," said Hari Wibowo, Head of Destination and Marketing in Jakarta Tourism Division.

Nearly 1,000 contestants from Jakarta, aged between 18 and 25, compete in competitions that test their skills and knowledge

about the city, its history, culture, etc. The ability to speak one or more foreign languages gives a contestant an extra advantage.

We arrived in time to attend the final round of Abang None Jakarta, where 36 finalists (six contestants from each of Jakarta's six regions), divided into 18 couples, competed to be named 'Mr and Ms Jakarta'. The winning couple receive 100 million rupiah (\$10,000) each. Furthermore, the event provides a platform for the contestants to showcase their talents, as even those who do not win can become celebrities such as movie stars and news anchors.



The winning couples pose at the finals of the Abang None Jakarta.

### 2018 Asian Games

We were taken on the final day of our trip on a tour of the facilities that were prepared to host the 2018 Asian Games, in Jakarta from August 18 to September 2, 2018. We visited the Gelora Bung Karno (GBK) Sports Complex, where the majority of the activities are hosted. Built in 1962 to host the first Asian games, the place has undergone full renovations to host the current tournament.

Perhaps the most notable among GBK's facilities is the Istora Stadium for badminton; Indonesia's national sport, with its 7,110-seat capacity. The complex also includes an aquatic center (8,630 seats), basketball hall (2,920 seats), archery field and many others. An estimated 70,145 athletes and officials from 45 countries are participating in the tournament. An estimated 7,000 media personnel are covering the event, while nearly 30,000 volunteers and workers are participating, with expected viewership of 5 billion viewers from around the world.



William Sabandar, President Director of MRT Jakarta, speaks to the media delegation.

### Tourist attractions

Jakarta is certainly not short of tourist attractions where visitors can spend some memorable time, including the National

Monument (Monas) which symbolizes Indonesians' struggle for independence, the Istiqlal Mosque which is considered one of the largest in Asia, the Jakarta Old Town with its historic buildings that date back to the Dutch colonial era and Thousand Islands with their breathtaking scenery. The city is also filled with museums and traditional markets where visitors can take trips down memory lane, as well as parks where they can enjoy a break from city life. One thing you will always see in Jakarta is the smile on people's faces, giving the tourist the feeling that they are welcomed by the whole city and are always invited to enjoy its endless hospitality.

Jakarta is also carving its niche as one of the most popular halal tourism destinations in the world. "The governor's plan is to focus on developing tourism, with special focus on making Jakarta a destination for halal tourism," said Sherly Yuliana, Head of International Marketing Section at the Jakarta Tourism and Culture Office. "Regulations are being pushed, and cooperation is ongoing to reach the goal of making Jakarta the main destination for halal tourism."

Affordability is one of the coolest advantages of Jakarta, as a tourist can realistically stay in a downtown five-star hotel for nearly



The water polo pool at the Gelora Bung Karno (GBK) Sports Complex.

half the price compared to capitals of other nearby countries. Dining in Jakarta is an adventure of its own; not only is the Indonesian cuisine filled with countless options of delicious foods, but every island has its own way of preparing each traditional dish. For example, you can try different variations of the popular Nasi Goreng dish, and every time feel like you've experienced something completely different.

Diversity, hospitality, halal-friendliness, cool weather and affordability are some of the qualities that Jakarta enjoys and which distinguish the Indonesian capital from other popular Southwest Asian destinations. "You can find all you need in Jakarta," Yuliana stressed. "We have a lot of beaches, culture, ethnic diversity, mountains, and other things which are different from one island to another. Because of its nature, there is a lot of potential for tourism and investment in Indonesia."

## Thousand Islands: The secret escape



Tourists walk inside the Pulau Seribu resort.



The clear waters of Pantara Island.



The swimming pool at Pulau Seribu resort.

By Ahmad Jabr

For someone traveling on a budget, the idea of enjoying a vacation in an island resort might seem to be out of the question, especially for families traveling with kids. But at Jakarta's Thousand Islands, with their sandy beach resorts, crystal-clear waters, fantastic weather, family-friendly activities and affordable options, this dream is more real than you think.

On the second day of our trip, we were taken on a boat cruise to Pantara Island where we spent the night at its Pulau Seribu resort. It takes a 2-3 hour speedboat trip to reach the island (do note that there is only one boat trip a day to the island, which sets sail at 9:00 am). But other islands can be reached in less time; some of which in a mere half hour. We were overwhelmed by the reception we received by the Pulau Seribu Marine Resort's staff once we

reached the island. The resort offers guests the chance to enjoy many water activities. You can enjoy snorkeling in the island's amazing green waters and take a closer look of its wide varieties of corals and marine biodiversity, swim or simply relax on the beach under its blue sky and warm sun. At night, the island offers an unmatched experience of enjoying the breathtaking view of the full moon and its reflection on the seawater, or relaxing under the dazzling starry sky on moonless nights.

Perhaps the thing that separates the Thousand Islands from their peers is their ability to offer guests the true experience of being



A cottage inside the Pulau Seribu resort.

one with nature. The facilities in Pantara Island are simple; they have everything to make visitors feel comfortable, but are designed and built in a way that provides the perfect setting for people looking to enjoy nature.



The entrance way to the Pulau Seribu resort.

The cottages offer everything a guest needs, but are made to blend in with their natural surroundings in order to give the tourist a chance to reunite with nature. This makes the island a perfect getaway for those who are looking to escape from the city's busy lifestyle. Furthermore, a tourist can combine Jakarta's city experience and the Thousand Islands' relaxing atmosphere to create an unforgettable holiday.

While the name suggests otherwise, the Thousand Islands consist of 110 islands where 20,000 people live on 11 islands only. Some of the rest are turned into island resorts, while there are

plenty others that remain open for investment. The islands are already very popular among domestic tourists who through its resorts during holidays to enjoy the various water activities provided there such as snorkeling, diving and swimming, or have fun under the sun on their beautiful sandy beaches.

Whether you are looking for the perfect escape from the city's busy life, spending a vacation on an island resort with your family, or that secret honeymoon spot where you can spend the time of your life with your loved one, Jakarta's Thousand Islands is the answer.



The restaurant at Pulau Seribu resort.



Tennis courts at the Pulau Seribu resort.



Sunset at Pantara Island.



The coral rich waters of Pantara Island.



A view of the Pulau Seribu resort seen from the entrance way.

# SHANGHAI EXHIBIT DRAWS egg-lovers and selfie-takers



A visitor poses for a photograph at the Egg House in Shanghai.—AFP photos



A visitor (bottom right) gets her photograph taken as others mingle inside a giant caviar bowl at the Egg House.



A visitor poses for a photograph at the Egg House in Shanghai.



A visitor poses for a photograph on a trampoline guised as a giant egg frying pan at the Egg House.

“Last one in is a rotten egg,” a neon sign in brilliant pink glows, as half a dozen people frolic and snap photos in a giant caviar bowl. In an adjacent room, two school-girls in matching pink and white dresses jump excitedly on a trampoline the shape of a frying pan, taking pictures with a Hello Kitty camera. “The Egg House” in Shanghai is where an apparently unhealthy interest in eggs and selfies meets Alice in Wonderland.

The pop-up installation is described by organizers as “created to share the universal love of eggs and provide a momentary escape from the city”. Situated on the third floor of a Shanghai shopping mall, “The Egg House” is the work of Chinese creator Xu Biubiu and is her second installation—the first was in New York and another is planned for Los Angeles in November. It costs up to 198 yuan (\$29) to enter—for two adults at week-

ends—and once inside visitors can lose themselves in several egg-themed rooms. It is unashamedly all about one thing—photos and selfies.

In one room, there is an armchair that looks like a cheese sandwich, while another has the bewildering sign, “STOP BEING SO BLOODY EGGY WHEN YOU TAKE IN”. Aima Li sheepishly clambors out of the so-called caviar bowl, really a large ball pit more usually associated with nurseries. “I feel a bit too old for this,” the 29-year-old said, pointing out that many of the people around her were closer to high-school age. But Li, who works in television and splits her time between Shanghai and Tokyo, said she would be posting on social media the pictures she took with her friend. “I’m a bit of a little girl so I like the decorations here and it’s so colorful,” added Ling Jiamo, between preening and posing for pictures taken by her boyfriend.—AFP



A visitor poses for a photograph at the Egg House.



A visitor poses for a photograph at the Egg House.



A visitor poses for a photograph inside a giant caviar bowl at the Egg House.



A visitor poses for a photograph at the Egg House.

## Stars celebrate Queen Aretha at marathon funeral



Pallbearers carry Aretha Franklin's casket after the funeral ceremony at Greater Grace Temple.—AFP photos



Ariana Grande performs during Aretha Franklin's funeral.



Stevie Wonder performs at the funeral for Aretha Franklin.

Former presidents, stars and musical royalty paid joyous tribute to Aretha Franklin at her marathon funeral on Friday, leading her family and members of the public in bidding goodbye to America's “Queen of Soul.” The formal part of the service stretching nearly eight hours, the celebration of the life and legacy of the US icon was packed with gospel, eulogies, music and sermons. The 76-year-old singer, beloved by millions around the world, died of cancer on August 16, closing the curtain on a glittering six-decade career that spanned gospel, R&B, jazz, blues and even classical music.

Former US president Bill Clinton extolled her gifts, courage and compassion, sharing his memory of her final public performance, in November 2017, when she was already ill but performed with gusto. “I hope God will forgive me but I was so glad when I got here, and I hope you will forgive me, when the casket was still open because I said I wonder what my friend's got on today,” he said to laughter.

Franklin, loved not only for her powerful voice but her civil rights work, was dressed in a different outfit for each of three days of public viewings, visited by thousands in her Michigan hometown. For the funeral, she was clothed in a sparkling golden dress. “She worked her can off to get where she was. She took the gift God gave her and she kept getting a little bigger every day,” said Clinton, playing a snatch of her singing

“Think” on his cell phone. “It's the key to freedom. God bless you, Aretha, we love you.” Letters from George W. Bush and Barack Obama were read out, praising her contribution to America. Gospel music and opera filled the rafters, congregants danced and one of her sons sang “Mercy Mercy Me.”

### ‘Make love great again’

Franklin's gold-plated casket was escorted out of the church at 6:45 pm (2245 GMT), a simple posy of roses on top, nearly eight hours after the service officially began at 11am. VIPs had been in place at 10am. Stevie Wonder performed a virtuoso harmonica solo and a rendition of his hit “As.” “What needs to happen today, not only in this nation, but throughout the world is that we need to make love great again,” he said, one of several oblique or overt criticisms of Donald Trump at the service. Pop star Ariana Grande powered through Franklin's 1968 hit “Natural Woman,” while Jennifer Hudson stirred congregants with an impassioned delivery of “Amazing Grace.”

Singer/songwriter Smokey Robinson bid goodbye to his childhood friend, blowing a kiss toward her coffin and singing: “I miss you my buddy, I miss you my friend, I know that my love for you will never end.” Franklin's grandchildren spoke and a delegation represented the South African government. Franklin sang for Nelson Mandela in Detroit after he was released from prison.

Hundreds of members of the public invited at the last minute and who queued up—some through the night—to be the first in line were also admitted, mingling with the television stars and politicians. Outside, dozens more crowded around a large screen broadcasting the funeral at a nearby gas station, reclining in beach chairs or standing in the sun, applauding and laughing at all the speeches. “It's better than Inauguration Day!” said Theresa Cranford, 62, a retired auto worker, in reference to Barack Obama's investiture.

### ‘Our queen’

“This is something that I'll be in history,” she told AFP. “We don't have queens and kings in America, so she is our queen.” Franklin influenced generations of singers from the late Whitney Houston to Beyonce, with unforgettable hits including “Respect” (1967) and “I Say a Little Prayer” (1968). She won 18 Grammy awards and was feted for her civil rights work, raising money for the cause and inspiring activists with her anthems. For African American women in particular, she was a role model and a benchmark for success, feminism and empowerment.

Pink Cadillacs—some having been driven across the country—parked en masse outside the church, expected to follow her cortege to the cemetery where she is to be buried alongside her father. They are a nod to her 1985 hit “Freeway of Love,” an anthem to her Motor City



An Aretha Franklin memorial is seen outside New Bethel Baptist Church.

hometown. Franklin was expected to make her final journey in the same ivory 1940 Cadillac LaSalle used at the funerals of her father and of civil rights icon Rosa Parks. The daughter of a prominent Baptist preacher and civil rights activist, she sang at the funeral of Martin Luther King Jr, as well as the inaugurations of presidents Clinton and Obama. She was awarded America's highest civilian honor by Bush in 2005.—AFP

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**NOTICE**  
August 13, 2018

Mr. Lionel Lenard Fernandes son of Mr. Cosmas Fernandes, resident of 28 A, Lewis Cottage, Waroda Road, Bandra, West Mumbai 50 and Ms. Zenia Noella Pinto daughter of Mr. John Joe Pinto, resident of Khalai village, Kirel road, Vidhyavihar, Mumbai 86, both Indian nationals presently residing in Kuwait, have given notice of intended marriage between them under the Foreign Marriage Act, 1969. If anyone has any objection to the proposed marriage, he/she may file the same with the undersigned according to the procedure laid down under the Act/Rule within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice. Communications in this regard can be made by Email ([attachecons@indembkwt.org](mailto:attachecons@indembkwt.org), [welfaresection@indembkwt.org](mailto:welfaresection@indembkwt.org)) / letters / telephonic calls (00965 - 22550171, 00965 - 22533125).

(Sanjeev Siddiqui)  
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**DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION**

Arrival Flights on Sunday 2/9/2018				Departure Flights on Sunday 2/9/2018			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
JZR	513	Sharm el-Sheikh	00:10	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35
THY	772	Istanbul	00:15	MEA	405	Beirut	11:55
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	JZR	776	Jeddah	12:05
KAC	102	London	00:50	QTR	1075	Doha	12:10
KAC	504	Beirut	00:50	JZR	176	Dubai	13:10
JZ	R539	Cairo	01:00	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	THY	767	Istanbul	13:40
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	JZR	144	Doha	13:55
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	JZR	552	Alexandria	14:05
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:00	AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:10
JZR	267	Beirut	02:10	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	RJA	645	Amman	14:15
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	JZR	802	Jeddah	14:50
AEE	956	ATH	02:25	FEG	442	Asyut	14:50
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30	IAW	158A	Al Najaf	14:55
THY	768	Istanbul	02:40	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
WAN	714	AGP	02:45	FDB	060	Dubai	15:05
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	SWA	501	Jeddah	15:45
RJA	648	Amman	03:05	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:55
KAC	418	Manila	03:05	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:00
KAC	382	Delhi	03:10	JZR	606	Kochi	16:00
MSR	612	Istanbul	03:15	KNE	530	Jeddah	16:00
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:25	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	KAC	619	Doha	16:15
JAI	572	Mumbai	04:00	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	WAN	646	Muscat	16:20
JZR	551	Alexandria	04:05	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
JZR	609	Hyderabad	04:30	SYR	342	Damascus	16:55
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
THY	1414	TZY	05:05	SAW	710	Latakia	17:00
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	KAC	503	Beirut	17:15
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	FDB	052	Dubai	17:20
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
KAC	1544	Cairo	05:20	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
JZR	603	Mumbai	05:25	KAC	381	Delhi	17:45
QTR	8511	Doha	05:30	FEG	242	Alexandria	17:45
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	NIA	262	Alexandria	17:50
JZR	561	Sohag	05:55	FDB	8398	Dubai	17:50
BAW	157	London	06:10	KAC	331	Trivandrum	17:55
WAN	338	Alexandria	06:25	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:25	KAC	283	Dhaka	18:00
KAC	204	Lahore	06:30	SWA	511	Riyadh	18:15
WAN	966	Tbilisi	06:30	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	678	Dubai	06:45	JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
RBG	559	Alexandria	06:50	JZR	608	Hyderabad	18:25
JZR	143	Doha	07:00	JZR	240	Amman	18:30
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00	JZR	650	Lahore	18:35
MSR	2616	Sohag	07:05	JZR	538	Cairo	18:35
KAC	358	Kochi	07:35	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	19:20
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:45	QTR	1081	Doha	19:20
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	WAN	975D	Baku	19:25
JZR	503	Luxor	07:50	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:00	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
KAC	384	Delhi	08:05	FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	RJA	641	Amman	20:00
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
IRC	528	Ahwaz	09:00	RBG	556	Alexandria	20:20
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:25	JZR	602	Mumbai	20:30
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
WAN	352	Luxor	09:30	DLH	624	Dammam	20:50
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	353	Bengaluru	21:00
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	KAC	357	Kochi	21:00
ABW	9022	SVO	10:15	OMA	648	Muscat	21:05
SAW	703	Damascus	10:30	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
JZR	787	Riyadh	10:30	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:35
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	QTR	1089	Doha	21:50
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	KAC	203	Lahore	22:00
JZR	903	Baku	11:10	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:05
JZR	165	Dubai	11:45	JZR	1540	Cairo	22:10
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:20	KAC	1543	Cairo	22:15
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	KAC	1403	Delhi	22:25
THY	766	Istanbul	12:45	THY	860	AYT	22:25
KAC	742	Dammam	12:50	UAE	783	Dubai	22:35
JZR	239	Amman	13:00	KAC	283	Jeddah	22:50
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50
AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:10	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:00
JZR	531	Asyut	13:10	ABW	9923	Frankfurt	23:10
				ETD	9890	SGN	23:15
				KAC	411	Bangkok	23:15
				QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
				WAN	337	Alexandria	23:40
				JZR	560	Sohag	23:45



Lights of ultra trailers walking past the Combal lake are seen as they compete in the 170 km Ultra-Trail of Mont-Blanc (UTMB) race around the Mont-Blanc, crossing France, Italy and Switzerland, yesterday in Chamonix. The 16th UTMB, a mountain ultra-marathon with numerous passages in high altitude (above 2500m) and in difficult weather conditions (night, wind, cold, rain or snow) takes place once a year in the Alps. — AFP

# Iran plans to boost ballistic and cruise missile capacity

## Govt rejects report Tehran has moved missiles to Iraq

**DUBAI:** Iran plans to boost its ballistic and cruise missile capacity and acquire modern fighter planes and submarines, the Iranian state news agency IRNA quoted a senior Defense Ministry official as saying yesterday. News of the military development plans came a day after Iran dismissed a French call for negotiations on Tehran's future nuclear plans, its ballistic missile arsenal and its role in wars in Syria and Yemen, following the US pullout from Tehran's nuclear agreement with world powers.

State media also reported the launch earlier this week of war games involving some 150,000 volunteer Basij militia members, who vowed to defend the Islamic state against "foreign threats" including its arch foe, the United States. Tehran is furious over US President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw from the accord on Iran's nuclear program and re-impose sanctions on Tehran.

Senior Iranian officials have warned the country will not yield easily to a renewed US campaign to strangle Iran's vital oil exports. They say the country's missile program is solely for defense purposes and is not

negotiable as demanded by the United States and European countries. "Increasing ballistic and cruise missile capacity ... and the acquisition of next-generation fighters and heavy and long-range vessels and submarines with various weapons capabilities are among the new plans of this ministry," said Mohammad Ahadi, deputy defense minister for international affairs, IRNA said.

Speaking to Tehran-based foreign military attaches, Ahadi said international sanctions had not hampered the development of Iran's arms industry. "We have the necessary infrastructure and what we need to do is research and development, and at the same time upgrade and update the defense industry while relying on the country's very high scientific capacities and tens of thousands of graduates in technical fields and engineering," Ahadi was quoted as saying. He also defended Iran's role in conflicts in Iraq and Syria: "If Iran and its allies in Syria and Iraq had not stopped Islamic State, today the map of the region would be different and the world would face a terrible challenge."

Separately, the head of the Defense Ministry's naval

industries said Iran was developing a water jet propulsion system that would be ready by next March and a military commander said the air force planned to adopt Iran's new Kowsar fighter plane after successful tests, the semi-official news agency Tasnim reported. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said last month the Islamic Republic's military prowess was what deterred Washington from attacking it.

The exercises by the Basij militia, which are led by the elite Revolutionary Guards, come ahead of massive annual rallies planned for later this month to mark the start of the 1980s Iran-Iraq war. "The motto of these war games is unity ... and to declare that, when it comes to adversity and threats from foreigners, we all join to defend the (Islamic Republic's) system," Basij commander Gholam-Hossein Gheibparvar was quoted as saying by IRNA.

### Tehran rejects Reuters report

Meanwhile, Iran yesterday rejected a Reuters report that Tehran has moved missiles to Iraq, saying it aimed to hurt Iran's ties with neighbors, IRNA reported. "Such

false and ridiculous news have no purpose other than affecting Iran's foreign relations, especially with its neighbors," Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said, according to IRNA. Iranian, Iraqi and Western sources have told Reuters that Iran has given ballistic missiles to Shiite proxies in Iraq and is developing the capacity to build more there. "This news is solely aimed at creating fears in the countries of the region," Qassemi added.

Any sign that Iran is preparing a more aggressive missile policy in Iraq will exacerbate tensions between Tehran and Washington. It would also embarrass France, Germany and the United Kingdom, the three European signatories to the nuclear deal, as they have been trying to salvage the agreement despite new US sanctions against Tehran.

According to three Iranian officials, two Iraqi intelligence sources and two Western intelligence sources, Iran has transferred short-range ballistic missiles to allies in Iraq over the last few months. Five of the officials said it was helping those groups to start making their own. — Reuters

## Saudi official hints at Qatar canal...

Continued from Page 1

In April, the pro-government Sabq news website reported government plans to build a channel - 60 km long and 200 m wide - stretching across the kingdom's border with Qatar. Part of the canal, which would cost up to 2.8 billion riyals (\$750 million), would be reserved for a planned nuclear waste facility, it said. Five

unnamed companies that specialize in digging canals had been invited to bid for the project and the winner will be announced in September, Makkah newspaper reported in June.

Saudi authorities did not respond to requests for comment and there was no immediate reaction on the plan from Qatar. After the dispute erupted last year, Qatar - a small peninsula nation - found its only land border closed, its state-owned airline barred from using its neighbors' airspace, and Qatari residents expelled from the boycotting countries. Mediation efforts led by Kuwait and the US, which has its largest Middle East airbase in Qatar, have so far failed to resolve the dispute. — AFP

## Libyans endure baking summer...

Continued from Page 1

The ongoing power shortages since dictator Moamer Kadhafi was toppled in 2011 illustrate the failures of successive transitional authorities in the oil-rich nation. Poor public services and dire living conditions have largely persisted under the UN-backed Government of National Accord, which was installed in 2016 and has committed to holding elections later this year. But for many Libyans, including 53-year-old

Ramadan Al-Bouni, talk of a vote is fanciful without first addressing people's basic needs. "I want to laugh when they talk to me about elections, a constitution or a referendum," said Bouni, who sells electrical goods. "(I) don't find the time or the energy to think about things other than the hours wasted... in queuing up outside the bank or the petrol station," he said.

Gecol puts power supply shortages down to factors including theft and vandalism. The company also says numerous projects have been mothballed since 2011 as foreign companies have pulled out of Libya due to violence. "We run into difficulties, especially during summer peak" demand, said Gecol spokesman Mohammed Al-Tekouri. "But it's also a consequence of insecurity". — AFP

## Amir's visit to US reflection of strong...

Continued from Page 1

We look forward to discussions with His Highness the Amir and his delegation in Washington regarding Iran, developments in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, the ongoing GCC dispute, and other issues. We look forward to working together further as members of the United Nations Security Council, and in making the work of the Council as effective as possible. More broadly, the United States greatly appreciates Kuwait's consistent efforts, as envisioned by His Highness, to use diplomacy to help stabilize the region and to provide humanitarian assistance throughout the world. Kuwaiti humanitarian assistance is more than charity; it is an investment in the long-term

stability of its neighbors. The United States and Kuwait have enjoyed a very productive year in our bilateral relations, highlighted by His Highness the Amir's visit to the White House last September. We set ourselves ambitious goals and I am pleased to say that we met them in order to deepen and broaden that relationship. I am confident that the Sept 5 meeting at the White House will mark the beginning of the next period of growth in our relations.

In this regard, we look forward to Kuwait's hosting of the Third US-Kuwait Strategic Dialogue later this year. Since their formation in Oct 2016, the working groups charged with implementing ideas raised at our Strategic Dialogues have been busy advancing cooperation in defense, security, trade, investment, consular affairs and, of course, education.

We expect new agreements, with new tangible benefits for our peoples, to be signed at this third Strategic Dialogue in Kuwait. I can assure you that the US Embassy in Kuwait will continue to work all year-round to bring new benefits to the Kuwaiti and American people.

## Anger as US ends funding...

Continued from Page 1

The new policy on Jerusalem overturned decades of precedent and prompted the Palestinian leadership to break off relations with the White House. Palestinian presidential spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeina said Washington's decision "promotes terrorism" and was a violation of UN resolutions.

UNRWA, which was established in 1949, was already facing a financial crisis after Trump announced a \$300 million funding freeze in January. The agency, which assists more than five million registered Palestinian refugees, says it now faces the threat of major closures to its network of schools and health centers. Mahmoud Mubarak, director of the community-run committees that run the 19 refugee camps in the West Bank which accommodate some 500,000 Palestinians, warned of the "very serious repercussions" of the US move. Mubarak said representatives of the committees would be meeting on Tuesday to discuss their options.

In the impoverished Gaza Strip, where most children attend UNRWA schools, 55-year-old Hisham Saqallah said the US move was "political blackmail" that would merely increase unrest. "If they stop aid to schools, this means destroying the futures of a large number of students and throwing them into the street," he said. "I do not think that it can eliminate our Palestinian cause. It is

a just cause. If the aid is stopped, the Palestinian struggle will continue."

In Jalazone refugee camp near Ramallah in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, Ayoub Abeidi, whose family once lived in what is now the city of Lod in Israel, said the decision was political. "Trump wants to finish off UNRWA so he can terminate the right of refugees (to return)," said Abeidi, 53. "Our right to return exists and neither Trump nor anybody else can cancel it."

UNRWA spokesman Chris Gunness said the agency would try to make up a \$217 million shortfall. "If not, some of the most marginalized and vulnerable people on the planet may well suffer," he told AFP. "People are going to become more desperate and marginalized," he said, warning of "dramatic, widespread, profound and unpredictable" consequences. Jordan, which is one of just two Arab countries to have signed a peace treaty with Israel, already announced plans to organize a fundraising conference on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York next month.

State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said the US would "intensify dialogue with the United Nations, host governments and international stakeholders about new models and new approaches" for assisting needy Palestinians. But Hugh Lovatt, an Israeli and Palestinian affairs analyst at the European Council on Foreign Relations, said Washington would find scant support for its push for an alternative aid conduit. He said it was an attempt to "unilaterally take the Palestinian right of return off the table". "But US actions are misguided, dangerous, and won't work... neither Lebanon or Jordan can be expected to play along," he said. — Agencies

## Defense minister orders officers'...

Continued from Page 1

According to the statement, Sheikh Nasser stressed on taking all necessary actions against the responsible officers and that he will follow up the investigations of the committee directly to monitor all the proceedings and access to the results so that the culprits can be held accountable.

He also emphasized his concern for students' safety and provision of full care for them throughout their training at the military academy. Sheikh Nasser

thanked Minister of Justice and Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Fahd Al-Afasi and Health Minister Sheikh Basel Al-Sabah for their cooperation with the ministry of defense to form a joint investigation committee, which reflects the role and importance of efforts among the various ministries of the state.

Later yesterday, Sheikh Nasser left the country to continue his medical treatment abroad in response to the medical team's advice. The ministry of defense affirmed in a statement that Sheikh Nasser had come back to Kuwait to take part in funeral of the two student officers.

The minister on Thursday chaired a session of the military defense council, ordering firm and immediate measures to determine the circumstances of the students' demise. — KUNA



Sports



# Son beams at precious gold, host Indonesia eye Olympics

## Son is set to be spared almost two years of military service

SNIPPETS



**JAKARTA:** Tottenham Hotspur forward Son Heung-min avoided a spell in the military and hosts Indonesia unveiled ambitious plans to host the Olympics as the Asian Games reached a climax yesterday. Son's bid to avoid military service by winning football gold was the talk of the Games, but South Korea left it perilously late before downing Japan 2-1 in extra time at Pakansari Stadium.

It uncorked unbridled jubilation from Son, who had set up both South Korean goals and leapt around beaming as he celebrated with his teammates—including his fellow World Cup star, goalkeeper Jo Hyeon-woo. A late header from Ayase Ueda gave South Korea an almighty fright, but they saw out a nervous last few moments to win a record fifth Asian Games title. Korean captain Son, substituted in the dying seconds to buy precious time, sprinted from the bench to embrace goalkeeper Jo Hyeon-woo, sobbing tears of joy as they rolled on the turf together.

The Koreans dominated the final but wasted several decent opportunities before substitute Lee broke the deadlock by smashing a left-foot shot into the roof of the net three minutes into extra time. Son delivered a free kick for Hwang to ram home a towering header eight minutes later, before Ueda's goal triggered late drama. South Korea could have been three goals up by halftime, with Lee Jin-hyun blazing just over from distance and Son bundled over in the box for what replays suggested was a clear penalty.

Hwang Ui-jo went close as the Japan-based striker went in search of his 10th goal of the tournament before Japan captain Koji Miyoshi forced a sharp save from Jo.

Roared on by thousands of flag-waving "Red Devils" fans, the Koreans continued to press as Hwang ripped the side-netting just after the hour mark but both sides wilted in the sapping conditions as the game went on.

Failure to win gold could have been disastrous for Son's career as the multi-millionaire footballer faced swapping his tracksuit for a camouflage kit and 21 months of national service, compulsory Son's career-saving gold was the highlight of a busy final full day of competition, with 44 gold medals in play as today's closing ceremony looms.

But President Joko Widodo raised the prospect of greater things to come as he said Indonesia,



**BOGOR:** South Korea's players toss their teammate Son Heung-min in the air after the victory ceremony for the men's football competition at the 2018 Asian Games in Bogor yesterday. — AFP

buoyed by its mostly smooth hosting of the Games, would bid for the 2032 Olympics.

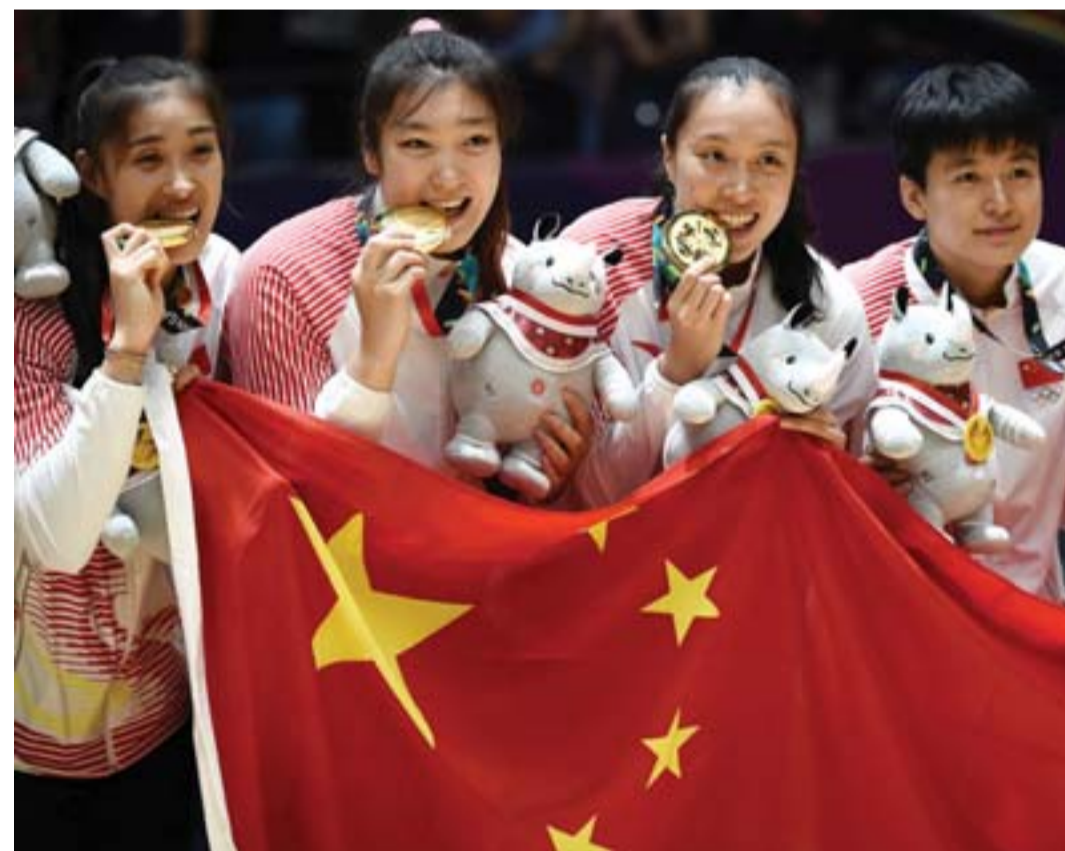
"Indonesia has planned to immediately register itself as a candidate for the 2032 Olympics host," Widodo said, after hour-long talks with Olympics chief Thomas Bach. Indonesia's announcement reflects the growing clout and resources of countries in Asia, which is hosting three Olympics within the space of four years. After this year's Pyeongchang Winter Olympics, Tokyo is holding the 2020 Summer Games and Beijing will host the winter edition in 2022 — becoming the first city to organise both the summer and winter Games.

Elsewhere, the Unified Korea wept tears of sadness as they were denied an emotional women's basketball gold medal in a 71-65 defeat to China.

China also won the men's basketball when NBA-linked Abudushalamu Abudurexiti inspired an 84-72 comeback victory against Iran.

In card game bridge, one of the quirkiest sports on the programme, India's 60-year-old Pranab Bardhan became the 18th Games' oldest gold medalist in the men's pairs. Earlier in Palembang, the Games' co-hosting city, Japan's Jumpei Furuya won the men's triathlon, a day after team-mate Yuko Takahashi won the women's race.

Today's mixed race in the swimming, biking and running event will be the 465th and final gold medal, rounding off two weeks of competition in 40 sports. China lead the medal standings on 132 golds, while Japan have 74 and South Korea 49. Hosts Indonesia have 31. — AFP



**JAKARTA:** Gold medalists China celebrate during the victory ceremony for the women's basketball competition at the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta yesterday. — AFP

## N Korea boxing coaches kicked out of Asian Games for ring protest

**JAKARTA:** Two North Korean coaches were kicked out of the Asian Games yesterday for mounting a protest in the ring after one of their boxers lost the women's flyweight final. Coach Pak Chol Jun refused to leave the ring and incited boxer Pang Chol Mi to remain behind in protest against the judging after China's Chang Yuan won gold on a 3-2 split decision.

Both were eventually forced to leave by police and security staff after the nasty standoff marred the finale to the Asiad boxing competition. Another coach, Pak Il Nam, got into an angry frenzy outside the ring as he tried to whip up the crowd to jeer the decision. Both coaches had their Asian Games credentials immediately revoked and will now face disciplinary action by the International Boxing Association (AIBA). The large contingent of North Korean delegation members in the crowd and a big section of South Korean fans then jeered Chang unsportingly as she received her gold medal.

Pang stood stony-faced as she received the silver medal, refused to acknowledge any cheers, then turned away from the Chinese flag during the anthem and would not join the other medal winners for the usual group photo afterwards. There was no immediate comment from AIBA or the Olympic Council of Asia as to whether Pang would face any disciplinary action. The unsavoury scenes cast a pall over what had been a memorable day of action in the ring, and overshadowed two memorable achievements in the subsequent two women's finals.

**'TAKE ACTION'**

"The coaches' credentials have been revoked and they will be sent forward to the disciplinary commission for them to review and take action," AIBA executive director Tom Virgels told AFP. "We are going to get the message across to our people to accept decisions. At the same time AIBA has a responsibility to ensure fair play happens," he added. The seven men's finals had passed off without incident with Uzbekistan winning five golds before Chang and Pang squared up in the first of three women's finals at the Jakarta International Expo. They fought at a furious pace and Pang was convinced she had won only to be disappointed before her coaches began their protest. After a delay caused by the incident, all eyes turned to the women's featherweight final between North Korea's Jo Son Hwa and China's 2014 Asian Games gold medalist Yin Junhua, who was looking to make history. Yin took it on a 4-1 split decision to become the first woman to win two Asian Games boxing golds. This time, the judges' verdict was accepted in good grace with both boxers embracing and congratulating each other's corners. — AFP

## China break all-Korean hearts in women's basketball thriller

**JAKARTA:** China dashed the Unified Korea's hopes of an emotional women's basketball gold medal when they won a tense final 71-65 at the Asian Games yesterday. Lim Yung-hui top-scored with 24 points in a losing cause as China pulled away from 38-38 at half-time before holding off the Koreans in the final quarter.

Park Ji-su was tearful after the game as the Korean team, featuring players from both sides of the heavily fortified Korean border, came up short. "As a player... I am disappointed," Park said, breaking into tears.

"All our team-mates played very well. It was a close game," she sobbed. Lim and coach Lee Moon-kyu said the squad, which only came together shortly before the Games, hadn't had enough time to practise together. "I feel sorry because we weren't able to live up to the expectations of the Korean people," said Lim.

"We have been able to participate in the Asian Games as a joint team, and it has been a special time for us. Also it was a meaningful time because the South and North were one," she added.

The Koreans were supported throughout the tournament by vocal fans brandishing blue and white Korean unification flags and wearing "One Korea" T-shirts. Despite the loss, the Korean fans were still celebrating after the match, waving their flags and applauding the players.

"At first I heard that there were difficulties because of the language difference and so I was worried when I came," said Park, who plays in the WNBA. "But having spent a month with the other players I could understand them all and there was no problem with communication. And because we're all around the same age, we bonded easily."

She added: "I'm so thankful for all the fans here, and because of that I would like us to gather again." The two Koreas marched together at the opening ceremony and also formed joint teams in canoeing, in which they won a gold and two bronze medals. It follows similar gestures at the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics, which set the stage for an unprecedented thaw in relations between the two countries still technically at war. — AFP

## Sports



# India's Amit stuns Olympic champion, Uzbekistan are new lords of Asian ring

## Rogen Ladon of Philippines stopped because of a cut in the second round

**JAKARTA:** Amit Panghal pulled off a massive upset to outbox the 2016 Rio Olympic champion and win gold for India yesterday, but it was Uzbekistan who became new lords of the Asian Games ring. Kazakhstan had been the dominant force four years ago in Incheon winning six titles, but they handed the baton to Uzbekistan who had boxers in all seven men's finals and took home five golds. Amit, 22, kicked off finals day in pulsating fashion with the performance of the Games, edging a 3-2 split decision to take revenge on Uzbekistan's Hasanboy Dusmatov for defeat in last year's World Championship light flyweight quarter-final.

Amit kept his distance from the reigning Olympic and Asian champion and 2017 world silver medalist, picking off the Uzbek and never allowing him to get in close where his quick hands and inside work are most dangerous. "The strategy worked, I thank my coaches," Amit told AFP after the bout. "The defence and counter was perfect. I will now go for an Olympic gold for my country in Tokyo. Winning a gold for India, I am happy." Amit, India's only finalist at these Asian Games, lost a unanimous decision to the Uzbek a year ago in Tashkent but is maturing fast as a boxer and gave a hugely disciplined performance. "Yes I have taken revenge. It proves India is second to none. I felt pressure because all our boxers had lost (before the final) but I did well."

Uzbekistan underlined their supremacy in Asian boxing, after winning nine golds at last year's continental championships. They got off the mark with gold in the next bout when flyweight Jasurbek Latipov was ahead on points when Rogen Ladon of the Philippines was stopped because of a cut in the second round.

The unlucky Ladon, who had nursed his wound above the left eye through the quarter- and semi-finals, was examined by the ringside doctor who determined he could not continue and Latipov took it 3-1, with one card level.

### 'SHORT-CHANGED'

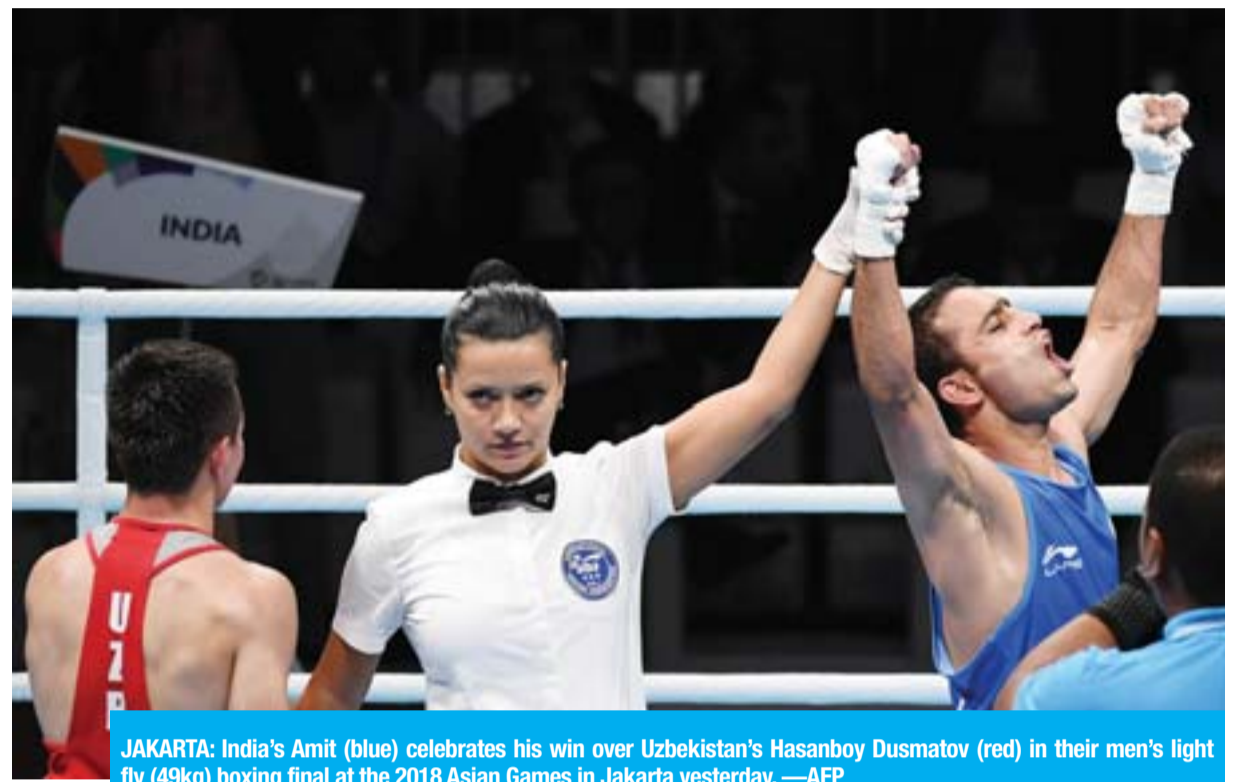
Philippines boxing chief Ed Picson claimed Ladon had been "short-changed" because three of the judges had awarded Latipov the first round. "You tell me, who won that round? Ladon won that round, no doubt," Picson told AFP.

The next final also ended unsatisfactorily on a cut with Uzbekistan's Mirazizbek Mirzakhilov winning bantamweight gold by the narrowest possible score, 1-0, after North Korea's Jo Hyo Nam was ruled unfit to continue in the second round. Cuts caused by accidental head clashes have been a constant problem since the International Boxing Association (AIBA) dispensed with head protection in bouts four years ago. "We have no plans to reintroduce head guards," AIBA executive director Tom Virgetts told AFP when asked what could be done to reduce instances of cuts.

Three fighters lost semi-finals on walkovers in Jakarta because of wounds sustained in earlier bouts. "We are looking at other measures, such as substances that can be applied to the skin to stop abrasion wounds," Virgetts added.

The Uzbek gold march was halted, temporarily, when Mongolia's Erdenebat Tsendbaatar earned lightweight gold on a 3-2 split decision over Shunkor Abdurasulov.

But with Uzbek International Boxing Association president Gafur Rakhimov ringside, Ikboljon Khodarov



**JAKARTA:** India's Amit (blue) celebrates his win over Uzbekistan's Hasanboy Dusmatov (red) in their men's light fly (49kg) boxing final at the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta yesterday. —AFP

repeated his 2017 Asian Championship light welterweight final win over Mongolia's Chinzorig Baatarsukh on a unanimous 5-0 decision.

Uzbekistan's Bobo Usmon Baturov (welterweight) and Israil Madrimov (middleweight) rounded off their five-gold haul. —AFP

## The alchemist behind India's heptathlon gold

**JAKARTA:** As she climbed down the steps at the Gelora Bung Karno Stadium, Swapna Barman, India's newly-minted Asian Games heptathlon champion, handed over her gold medal to a bearded man and bent down to touch his feet. "It's quite heavy," Subhas Sarkar said once she had moved on, weighing the piece of yellow metal in his palm before unzipping his rucksack and stuffing it inside.

Minutes earlier, Sarkar had been in the media tribune, capturing the proudest moment of his coaching career on a modest mobile phone as Barman stood on the podium shrouded in India's tricolour flag with the gold medal around her neck.

It had taken seven rollercoaster years for the combined talent of the 21-year-old athlete and her 55-year-old mentor to forge India's first heptathlon gold in the continental Games. "Sir made a lot of sacrifice for me," a respectful Barman, who won the gold with a career best 6,026 points, told Reuters.

"Just before the Games, he left his family to spend a month in Patiala to oversee my preparations at the training camp. He has so many trainees under him but I always got special attention. I guess I've given him a lot of stress too. He has developed diabetes and I'm partially responsible for that."

Sarkar laughed off that suggestion but admitted it had not been easy mentoring his talented but temperamental protege. "She has given me many sleepless nights for sure. I lost count how many fights we've had over the years," he said with a gentle laugh. "And it got pretty serious on a couple of occasions, when she quit training. In 2015, she left for home and returned only after three months."

He's headmasterly and she's headstrong and Sarkar reckons it's a miracle that they stuck together. "She is extrovert, loves to eat out and likes to be on social media. My fear is these might distract her. Sparks naturally fly," he said added with a wry smile.

A Sports Authority of India (SAI) coach posted in Kolkata, Sarkar discovered Barman, then pursuing the high jump, in his home town of Jalpaiguri in 2011. His first impression was she was too short to be a jumper. There was also the matter of Barman's feet, each boasting an extra toe, which would mean a life-long struggle to find suitable shoes for a girl whose father pulled a rickshaw and whose mother picked tea on a plantation. It was after learning that Barman had won the gold in a national inter-school meet that Sarkar asked her to move to the SAI hostel in Kolkata.

"She improved her personal best rapidly at the hostel, from 1.53 metres to 1.78 in just two years," he recalled. "But then I realised she'd never grow tall enough to be a quality jumper."

Not that Sarkar did not try to remove that handicap, making her hang from a bar, pop growth pills and do special stretches for those extra inches.

He then pulled her leg, literally. "I had four persons - two holding her legs and two her arms - mildly pulling her for 10 seconds at a stretch. I tried everything I could," Sarkar said. "There was no guarantee these things would work but we had to take a chance. I don't know if it helped, but she grew eight inches during her years in the hostel."

Once the realisation dawned on him that none of this was going to work, Sarkar made her switch to heptathlon in 2013. Barman responded well and within one year, she had qualified for the Incheon Games, finishing fifth on her Asian Games debut.

"She always had that fire and part of my dream came true here. If she can stay healthy and add a bit more discipline, she can do even better," Sarkar said. For that, he reckoned, Barman would need to make some tough lifestyle choices. —Reuters

## Shoe company to design special footwear for India's 12-toed champion

**NEW DELHI:** An Indian athlete with six toes on each foot who won gold at the Asian Games is to receive special custom-made shoes after a company boss was touched to hear of the pain she suffered while running in the heptathlon. The 21-year-old Swapna Barman spoke after winning the regional Olympics title on Thursday of how her rare deformity caused agony with each step in her final event, the 800m. A government-run enterprise in the southern city of Chennai has come forward to help Barman get customised shoes.

"After she won the gold I saw on TV that she had a deformity in her feet," said Sudhanshu Mani, general manager of Integral Coach Factory, a railway coach manufacturer that also funds training for athletes. Mani

told AFP that Barman needs four different pairs of shoes for the heptathlon's seven events.

"We are in touch with Nike. We are waiting for her to come back so that we can get her size and get the customised shoes made for her," he said, explaining that his company would bear the cost. Barman comes from an impoverished family in the West Bengal city of Jalpaiguri and her plight has touched the nation.

Her rickshaw-puller father has been bedridden for several years since suffering a stroke. Her mother Basana Devi left her job as a tea garden worker to look after her husband. They have relied on the earnings of their son, a stone mason. A video of the family watching Barman's gold-winning feat on TV has become a social media sensation in India. The weeping mother can be seen rushing to a temple outside to thank a deity for Barman's fairytale finish.

Basana Devi told local media that surgery to fix her daughter's feet had been impossible because of the cost. "How could I get that done? I myself was born with six toes on one foot. It is because of me that Swapna is this way. I managed. We thought she would too." The West Bengal government has promised a reward of one million rupees (\$14,110) and a government job for Barman. —AFP



Swapna Barman

### HIGHLIGHTS - DAY 15 OF THE ASIAN GAMES

#### JAPAN WIN MEN'S HOCKEY GOLD

Japan beat Malaysia 3-1 in a shootout to claim the men's hockey gold after clawing their way back from 5-2 down to secure a 6-6 draw. India beat arch-rivals Pakistan to claim the bronze.

#### CHINESE DIVERS RULE THE POOL

Chinese diver Yang Jian won gold in the men's 10 metre platform event after finishing second in Incheon four years ago. His compatriot Shi Tingmao earlier claimed gold in the women's three metre springboard competition.

#### IRAN DEFEND MEN'S VOLLEYBALL TITLE

Iran defended their men's volleyball title with a clinical 3-0 victory over South Korea in the final. China claimed the women's crown, beating Thailand by a similar scoreline.

#### CHINA CROWNED BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS

China beat Iran 84-72 in the final to clinch the gold medal in the men's basketball competition. The women's team had earlier beaten a combined Korean team 71-65 in the title clash.

#### FAN GOES ONE STEP FURTHER WITH TABLE TENNIS WIN

China's Fan Zhendong improved on his silver medal from the 2014 Games, winning the men's singles table tennis event. He beat compatriot Lin Gaoyuan in the final.

#### S KOREA STRIKE GOLD WITH BASEBALL WIN

South Korea claimed their third consecutive Asiad gold in baseball with a 3-0 win over Japan at the GBK Baseball Field.

#### WANG SEALS TABLE TENNIS GOLD

Wang Manyu extended China's Asian Games dominance in table tennis, edging compatriot Chen Meng 4-3 in the title clash to win the women's singles gold.

#### S KOREA'S JUN WINS MODERN PENTATHLON

South Korea's Jun Woong-tae won the gold medal in the men's modern pentathlon, beating compatriot Lee Ji-hun. Jun scored a total of 1,472 points, 13 points ahead of Lee.

#### INDIA ENJOY BEST-EVER MEDAL TALLY

India took take their overall medal tally to 67 yesterday, surpassing their previous best of 65 set in 2010. Boxer Amit Panghal won gold in the men's 49kg category, beating Hasanboy Dusmatov of Uzbekistan in the final. India's bridge team then won the men's pair event.

#### THAILAND CONTINUE SEPAKTAKRAW DOMINANCE

Thailand beat Vietnam 2-0 to win the women's quadrant event in sepakatakraw. The country has now won 12 of the 16 women's events in sepakatakraw at the Games. Indonesia won the men's quadrant competition beating Japan 2-1 in the final.

#### CHINA'S ZHOU WINS WOMEN'S KAYAK DOUBLE 500M GOLD

Zhou Yu won her third Asian Games gold medal by triumphing in the women's canoe/kayak 500m sprint double with Li Yue. She had also won the women's kayak single 500m title in 2010 and 2014. It was China's seventh overall gold medal in the event.

#### FURUYA GIVES JAPAN 70TH GOLD AT 18TH GAMES

Junpei Furuya won the men's triathlon to give Japan their 70th gold medal at the 18th Asian Games. It was Japan's third successive victory in the event.

#### KAZAKH KLINOVA DEFENDS WOMEN'S KAYAK SINGLE 200M GOLD

Inna Klinova from Kazakhstan won the women's 200m kayak single gold for the second time, defending the title she won in Incheon four years ago. — Reuters

## Legend Hawk slams Malaysian skater haters as Games teen trolled

**JAKARTA:** Skateboarding legend Tony Hawk and Malaysia's sports minister have leapt to the defence of a teenage skateboarder who was viciously targeted online over her poor performance at the Asian Games.

Fatin Syahirah Roszizi, 16, finished in eighth and last place in the women's street final on Wednesday, falling off within seconds of the start in two of her runs. The Philippines' Margieilyn Didal bagged gold with a score of 30.4 — compared to Fatin's 5.4.

But Fatin's Asiad experience sunk to a new low after the final when she found herself subject to a tide of vitriolic comments on Facebook. Choudhry Sundaram Padiachee said the final was a "disgrace towards the nation", while Wan Noraziah Aziz asked: "Did she go there (to the Asian Games) using her own money?"

Others said there were better Malaysian skaters but they hadn't been given a chance to go to the Games. The abuse prompted Fatin to delete all her posts on Instagram, before posting a message apologising for her performance.

However, skateboarding impresario Hawk was one of thousands who rushed to the teenager's defence. "Don't give up! If I had listened to the haters throughout my life, I would have stopped skating way too soon," Hawk wrote on Instagram.

"They are simply projecting their insecurities on you because they wish they had the courage to follow their dreams. You can be an inspiration to a new generation of Malaysian skaters." Malaysia's sports minister Syed Saddiq said on Twitter that "this (abuse) should never happen".

"It's easy for people to criticise, but we are not in her place. To be 16 and representing your country, the pressure must be unimaginable," he posted. Fatin is not the only athlete to be targeted by trolls.

Seventeen-year-old gymnast Izzah Amzan, also representing Muslim-majority Malaysia, was criticised over the outfit she wore to compete in Jakarta, with some saying it was too skimpy.

It comes after Malaysia's Farah Ann Abdul Hadi was criticised for wearing revealing clothing at the 2015 Southeast Games. Some Facebook users slammed the then 21-year-old for her attire, saying they could see the shape or her "aural" (genitalia) in her leotard. —AFP

Sports

# Liverpool extend winning streak despite keeper's Alisson blunder

## Goals from Mane, Firmino give Liverpool a unassailable lead

**LEICESTER:** A goalkeeping howler from Alisson saw Liverpool concede for the first time this season, but they held on to win 2-1 at Leicester and extend their 100 per cent start to the Premier League season.

Goals from Sadio Mane and Roberto Firmino in the first half gave table-toppers Liverpool a seemingly unassailable lead. Leicester deservedly reduced the arrears through Rachid Ghezzal, who punished an embarrassing blunder from Alisson. It was the first goal Jurgen Klopp's side had conceded in 418 minutes of Premier League football going back to May 6 and the first Alisson had let in club football since last season's Champions League semi-final when he was playing for Roma, against Liverpool.

But Leicester couldn't find the equaliser as Liverpool's defence remained firm in front of Alisson to secure their fourth successive win heading into the international break. Alisson's counterpart Kasper Schmeichel, making his 300th appearance for Leicester after signing a new contract in midweek, was into the action within the first three minutes. Mohamed Salah put Firmino through but he could only fire against Schmeichel's legs, and from the rebound, Salah side-footed wide. The Reds took a 10th-minute lead when Senegal winger Mane made the most of his ricochet off Harry Maguire from Andrew Robertson's cross to bury left-footed to Schmeichel's right for his third goal of the season. Liverpool remained on top and Joe Gomez sent a

header looping well over the bar from Trent Alexander-Arnold's corner. Leicester's first chance came in the 22nd minute when Demarai Gray got away from a defender to latch on to Ghezzal's pass and squeezed in a shot that Alisson smothered.

The home side continued to find it hard to open Liverpool up, and were being forced to try their luck from distance as James Maddison fired over from long range.

But they had eased themselves into the game and were finally starting to give Klopp's side something to think about. Just as Leicester might have thought they had turned the tide, Liverpool broke away quickly and doubled their lead. Salah forced Schmeichel to push his shot around the post, and from their second successive corner, Firmino met James Milner's flag-kick with a firm header into the far corner of the net from 10 yards.

Leicester pressed to reduce the arrears following the restart and Ghezzal surprised Alisson with a low cross that bounced just wide of the far post. Maddison was the nearly man again in Leicester's next attack, when only the outstretched leg of the lunging Gomez blocked a goal-bound effort after he wriggled past Alexander-Arnold. Leicester were having their best spell of the game as the hour mark approached. Wes Morgan failed to sort his feet out from point-blank range after Marc Albrighton and Gray also missed contact from Ben Chilwell's low centre.—AFP



**LEICESTER:** Leicester City's French midfielder Nampalys Mendy (L) vies with Liverpool's Brazilian midfielder Roberto Firmino during the English Premier League football match between Leicester City and Liverpool at King Power Stadium in Leicester, central England yesterday. — AFP

## Gayle boosts West Brom, Villa routed

**LONDON:** Dwight Gayle fired West Bromwich Albion to a 2-1 win over Championship rivals Stoke, while promotion chasers Aston Villa were thrashed 4-1 at Sheffield United yesterday. Albion and Stoke were both relegated from the Premier League last season, but it was the hosts who look more equipped for a quick return on the evidence of their success at the Hawthorns.

Gayle scored in the 16th and 59th minutes, while

Benik Afobe missed a penalty for Stoke. Erik Pieters' reply for Stoke came way too late and Gary Rowett's side have only one win from six games.

Villa, beaten in last season's play-off final, are aiming to go one better this season. But at Bramall Lane, Jack O'Connell put the Blades ahead after six minutes and Mark Duffy added a deflected second.

Oliver Norwood made it three before the break and it was four thanks to Billy Sharp's 49th minute strike. Anwar El-Ghazi netted a consolation for Villa. Derby left it late but continued their fine start under Frank Lampard as they won 2-1 at Hull.

Recent signing Martyn Waghorn opened his account from the spot 23 minutes in, but Todd Kane levelled eight minutes after half-time. Derby dug deep and won

it through Florian Jozefzoon with two minutes left.

Jozefzoon's former club Brentford also impressed as they beat Nottingham Forest 2-1. Lewis Macleod got them going and although in-form Matty Cash replied, Ollie Watkins won it deep into second half stoppage-time. Adam Reach and Lucas Joao scored as Sheffield Wednesday won 2-1 at Reading. Liam Moore replying for the winless hosts. Bolton hit back to draw 2-2 at Lancashire rivals Preston. Callum Robinson and Alan Browne put Preston two up inside 16 minutes, but Sammy Amoebi and Pawel Olkowski levelled before the break. Preston's Ben Pearson was sent off late on. James Vaughan's goal 17 minutes from time earned Wigan a 1-0 win over Rotherham, while Birmingham and QPR drew 0-0.—AFP

## Cahill joins Indian Super League side Jamshedpur

**JAMSHEDPUR:** Australia's record goal scorer Tim Cahill has joined Indian Super League (ISL) side Jamshedpur FC, the 38-year-old striker announced yesterday. Cahill struggled for playing time at club level last year and left A-League side Melbourne City in December to return to Millwall — where he first came to prominence 20 years ago — before being released by the Championship club.

"I'm excited to announce that I'm signing for Jamshedpur FC in the Indian Super League. I've been really impressed in my conversations with the club by their professionalism and goals for what they want to achieve," Cahill tweeted. "I know I can help the team on and off the park with my leadership and experience. I want to help grow the game and encourage young kids to play football."

Jamshedpur did not specify specific details of the contract that the former Everton player had signed. Cahill, who scored 50 goals for Australia in a career spanning 14 years, retired from international duty after playing in his fourth World Cup in Russia earlier this year. The hard-working forward will join up with Spaniard Cesar Ferrando's team in their pre-season training camp at Madrid.

Jamshedpur, who were formed 14 months ago and joined the ISL as part of its expansion to 10 teams last season, struggled in front of goal and were fifth in their maiden campaign. The fifth season of India's top flight gets underway on Sept 29. — Reuters



**LONDON:** Chelsea's Belgian midfielder Eden Hazard (C) vies with Bournemouth's Norwegian striker Joshua King during the English Premier League football match between Chelsea and Bournemouth at Stamford Bridge in London yesterday. — AFP

## Pedro, Hazard on target as Chelsea cruise

**LONDON:** Maurizio Sarri's impressive start to life in the Premier League gathered pace as Chelsea maintained their perfect start to the season with a 2-0 win over Bournemouth yesterday. Sarri's side appeared to be in danger of dropping their first points of the season against opponents who were also unbeaten coming into this game.

But everything appears to be going right for Sarri at the moment and his decision to introduce Pedro in the 65th minute was rewarded when the Spaniard struck the opening goal just seven minutes later. Eden Hazard wrapped up the win in the 85th minute at Stamford Bridge to make it four wins from four league games since former Napoli boss Sarri replaced Antonio Conte.

Having seen Liverpool win earlier in the day, Sarri could be satisfied with the way Chelsea responded as they kept pace with Jurgen Klopp's side at the head of the Premier League table. This game provided more evidence that Chelsea are quickly buying into 'Sarri-ball'. Eddie Howe studied the Italian's methods when Sarri was at Empoli and the Bournemouth manager must think he was handed another lesson after his side paid the price for a number of missed chances.

Sarri had warned before the opening game of the league campaign that his side would face a difficult start as he attempted to implement a very different approach to that employed by Conte.

Early results have suggested otherwise, however. Already Chelsea have demonstrated an ability to over-

come different kinds of tests, recovering to claim victory after squandering a two-goal lead against Arsenal in the previous home game and finally breaking Newcastle's resolute defence last weekend.

The visit of Bournemouth was always going to provide another significant challenge with Howe's side having won at Stamford Bridge twice in the last three years. Howe included Jefferson Lerma, the Colombia World Cup player signed for a club record fee of £25 million (\$32 million) from Levante, and left-back Diego Rico for their Bournemouth debuts and switched to a back three to contain Chelsea's threat.

The move had only limited impact during a first half that was dominated for long periods by the home side. Yet while Chelsea enjoyed plenty of possession they created only a few chances and could easily have found themselves trailing at the interval.

It was not until the 44th minute that Chelsea looked likely to find a way past Asmir Begovic, the former Blues keeper, when Marcos Alonso struck a right foot shot against the post from the edge of the penalty box.

Chelsea, though, had also demonstrated a degree of vulnerability at the back, particularly when Callum Wilson was left unmarked as he met Rico's 30th minute cross, only to divert the ball wide.

Sarri's side had offered signs of their strengths and weaknesses and were again fortunate to escape 12 minutes into the second half when Nathan Ake missed another clear chance, spooning over from just four yards following a corner. The Chelsea coach reacted by introducing Pedro and Olivier Giroud in place of Willian and Alvaro Morata and the home side started playing with more purpose.

Jorginho triggered the move that led to the opening goal, playing the ball to Pedro who exchanged passes with Giroud before finishing from the edge of the box in the 72nd minute. And Hazard confirmed the victory five minutes from the end with an incisive finish following another assist from Alonso. — AFP

## Serena crushes Venus in US Open showdown

**NEW YORK:** Serena Williams crushed older sister Venus 6-1 6-2 in a shockingly subdued third round clash at the US Open on Friday to stay on track for a record equalling 24th Grand Slam title. The meeting between the famed tennis siblings had been hyped as the biggest night of the US Open but turned into a flat, uninspired spectacle as Serena simply outclassed her sister.

The only moment of suspense in a contest all but devoid of drama came in the second game when Serena rolled over on her ankle, drawing gasps from the sellout crowd. Serena was able to continue but at the first changeover called a medical timeout and had her ankle heavily strapped.

In the end, though, the only pain being felt was by Venus, who suffered the equal worst defeat in 30 matches against her sister. "I roll my ankles a lot so I just wanted to get it taped as tight as I could for the rest of the match and see how I feel tomorrow," Serena said in an on-court interview.

"This was my best match since my return. I've worked really hard for it ... and hopefully everything will keep paying off," she added. Seven times a Grand Slam winner, Venus held her opening serve but it was all downhill from there as a ruthless Serena swept through the next seven games to take the opening set in a breezy 31 minutes and a 2-0 lead in the second.

Venus would stop the skid holding her serve at 2-1 before Serena resumed the mugging by building a 5-1 lead before finishing off her sister with a thumping forehand winner. The win was met with polite applause, a hug at the net otherwise their was no evident joy in the outcome.

The sellout crowd that surrounded Arthur Ashe Stadium was kept waiting to enter as world number one Rafa Nadal and Russian Karen Khachanov battled inside in a breath-taking clash that set the bar high for the main event.— Reuters

Live	
Matches on TV	
(Local Timings)	
<b>ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE</b>	
Cardiff City v Arsenal FC	15:30
beIN SPORTS HD 2	
Watford v Tottenham Hotspur	18:00
beIN SPORTS HD 6	
Burnley v Manchester United	18:00
beIN SPORTS HD 2	
<b>SPANISH LEAGUE</b>	
Levante v Valencia C.F	13:00
beIN SPORTS HD 3	
beIN SPORTS HD 2 FR	
Deportivo Alaves v Espanyol	17:15
beIN SPORTS HD 3	
beIN SPORTS MAX 4 FR	
Barcelona v Huesca	19:30
beIN SPORTS HD 3	
beIN SPORTS HD 2 FR	
Real Betis v Sevilla FC	21:45
beIN SPORTS HD 3	
beIN SPORTS HD 1 FR	
<b>ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE</b>	
Fiorentina v Udinese Calcio	19:00
beIN SPORTS HD 4	
beIN SPORTS MAX 6 FR	
Atalanta v Cagliari Calcio	21:30
beIN SPORTS MAX 6 FR	
SS Lazio v Frosinone Calcio	21:30
beIN SPORTS MAX 4 FR	
AC Chievo Verona v Empoli	21:30
beIN SPORTS MAX 7 FR	
Torino FC v spal	21:30
beIN SPORTS HD 13 EN	
beIN SPORTS MAX 5 FR	
UC Sampdoria v SSC Napoli	21:30
beIN SPORTS HD 2 FR	
Sassuolo Calcio v Genoa CFC	21:30
beIN SPORTS MAX 8 FR	
<b>GERMAN BUNDESLIGA</b>	
Leipzig v Fortuna D,sseldorf	16:30
beIN SPORTS HD 5	
beIN SPORTS HD 2 FR	
Schalke 04 v Hertha Berlin	19:00
beIN SPORTS HD 5	
beIN SPORTS MAX 5 FR	
<b>FRENCH LEAGUE</b>	
Saint Etienne v Amiens SC	16:00
beIN SPORTS HD 6	
beIN SPORTS HD 1 FR	
Stade Rennais v Girondins de Bordeaux	18:00
beIN SPORTS HD 6	
beIN SPORTS HD 1 FR	
AS Monaco v Olympique Marseille	22:00
beIN SPORTS HD 6	

**25** Son beams at precious gold, host Indonesia eye Olympics

**26** India's Amit stuns Olympic champion, Uzbekistan are new lords of Asian ring

**27** Liverpool extend winning streak despite keeper's Alisson blunder



## Walker winner allows City to celebrate

Newcastle proved durable opponents



MANCHESTER: Manchester City's Argentinian striker Sergio Aguero attempts an overhead kick during the English Premier League football match between Manchester City and Newcastle United at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester, north west England, yesterday. — AFP

MANCHESTER: England right-back Kyle Walker's first goal for almost three years ensured Manchester City celebrated a 2-1 victory over Newcastle on the 10th anniversary of the club's takeover by Abu Dhabi's Sheikh Mansour.

In his 52nd appearance for the club, Walker netted for the first time in spectacular style by driving a low shot in the corner from 25 yards early in the second half. It was a goal worthy of winning any game, but this was a laboured performance from Pep Guardiola's side, despite taking the lead through Raheem Sterling in the eighth minute.

Newcastle proved durable opponents, and equalised after half-an-hour, with DeAndre Yedlin making amends for his own goal that handed Chelsea victory last weekend. Walker, though, ensured a day of celebra-

tion for City ended on a high as they marked the anniversary of a takeover that has led to a decade of spending and unprecedented success in their history.

City have been transformed from Premier League also-rans to serial winners during that time, finishing top of the table last season with a record of 100 points. Guardiola's side started this season as favourites to retain the title. Yet it has not been an entirely straightforward start, with last season's player of the year Kevin de Bruyne suffering a long-term knee injury and City dropping points in a 1-1 draw at Wolves last weekend. The issue of Leroy Sane's attitude will not go away either. Last season's PFA Young Player of the Year has failed to impress Guardiola in training of late and the City manager decided to leave Sane out of his squad all together yesterday. At first, it appeared as if he would

not be missed. Sterling, the man selected in the left-sided attacking role that Sane filled last season, marked his 100th Premier League appearance by opening the scoring. The goal came after Jamaal Lascelles played an awful pass out from the edge of his own penalty area, enabling Benjamin Mendy to intercept and feed a pass left to Sterling, who cut inside and drilled a shot into the far corner.

City could have extended that lead. Sergio Aguero ripped a shot just wide from the edge of the penalty area, while an unmarked Gabriel Jesus headed straight at goalkeeper Martin Dubravka after David Silva's free-kick glanced off Paul Dummett's head.

Newcastle hung in there, however, and equalised on the half-hour mark with a well-worked goal. Salomon Rondon found space down the left as he took on

Kenedy's pass, before crossing low for Yedlin to slot in his first Premier League goal.

City were shaken by that equaliser, and were still labouring to find a way back in front when they came up with a goal from nowhere seven minutes into the second half.

Newcastle looked to be comfortable as the home side played their way across the face of the penalty area. Then Walker, from Aguero's run, received the ball 25 yards out, was not closed down and cut a low shot into the bottom corner.

By now, the visitors were showing signs of tiredness. Aguero, in space on the break, produced a cross from which Fernandinho and then David Silva, twice, were denied by brilliant Dubravka blocks to keep the score down to 2-1. — AFP

## Buttler's fifty leaves India with tough run chase

SOUTHAMPTON: Jos Buttler's well-judged 69 helped to leave India facing a record run-chase if they were to win the fourth Test against England at Southampton and so level the series. England were 260 for eight in their second innings, a lead of 233 runs, at stumps on the third day. The most India have made to win in the fourth innings of a Test in England is 174 at The Oval in 1971. That match also saw them achieve their first Test win on English soil. Sam Curran, fresh from his Test-best 78 in the first innings, was 37 not out after adding 55 for the seventh wicket with Buttler.

Adil Rashid (11) was caught behind off a Mohammed Shami leg-cutter off what became the last ball of the day. The paceman led India's attack with three wickets for 53 runs from 13.5

overs. Last week saw Buttler display a well-judged mixture of aggression and defence during his maiden Test century, albeit one made with India well on the way to a 203-run victory that left them 2-1 down in this five-match series.

Those same qualities were on display in Southampton, where Buttler made 85 on his Test debut, also against India, four years ago. They were needed after England slumped to 92 for four—the 33rd time in 64 Test innings they had been four wickets down for 100 or fewer runs.

Shami took two wickets in two balls separated by the lunch break before running out England captain Joe Root for 48 with a direct hit. England resumed yesterday on six without loss. They were then 21 runs behind, after Cheteshwar Pujara's excellent 132 not out, his maiden Test century in England, had guided India to a first-innings total of 27.

It had looked as if Jennings, under pressure for his England place after a first-innings nought, would bat through the morning until Shami, from round the wicket, had him lbw for 36 with what became the last ball before lunch.

England had decided to play Jonny Bairstow as a specialist batsman even though he was

nursing a broken finger suffered in the field at Trent Bridge last week that meant he could not keep wicket. Buttler, as he'd done at Nottingham, took over the gloves.

It was a move that did not pay off, with Bairstow suffering a second nought in three innings when he extravagantly tried to drive a Shami inswinger off the first ball he faced immediately after lunch.

Root had struck six fours when, called for a risky single by all-rounder Ben Stokes, he failed to beat Shami's direct hit from mid-on.

Stokes, as he'd done at Nottingham, showed plenty of grit with the bat in making 30 off 110 balls. His innings ended when he edged a well-flighted delivery from off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin to Ajinkya Rahane at slip.

Buttler achieved a more even tempo, going to fifty by cover-driving an Ashwin full-toss for his fifth four in 96 balls. India took the new ball at a sun-drenched Ageas Bowl with England 223 for six off 82 overs. It had the effect they wanted when Buttler, aiming across the line, was lbw to Sharma. But 20-year-old left-hander Curran struck Bumrah for two fours in as many balls, including an elegant cover-drive. — AFP



SOUTHAMPTON: England's Jos Buttler evades a short ball from India's Jasprit Bumrah during play on the third day of the fourth Test cricket match between England and India at the Ageas Bowl in Southampton, south-west England yesterday. — AFP