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# Amir in Washington; Kuwait's customs, NNSA ink agreement

## Kuwait, US strengthen strategic partnership

### MP Muwaizri vows to grill Prime Minister

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Opposition MP Shuaib Al-Muwaizri yesterday said he prepares to file to grill HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah over a variety of alleged violations, stressing that the grilling has become a "national and legal duty." The lawmaker named a number of what he described as violations for which the government is responsible which include the death of two cadets at the military academy, fake degrees, schools not ready for the start of the new academic year and others.

He said that one of the violations was threatening the chairman of a government company after referring a corrupt official to court in addition to illegal appointments of senior officials. Muwaizri said he will file the grilling but he gave no date for the submission. The National Assembly is currently in summer recess until the middle of next month when the new term opens. So far, several ministers have been threatened with grillings in the Assembly in the new term.

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WASHINGTON: His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, accompanied by Deputy Head of National Guard Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah arrived at Andrews Air Force Base in Washington DC on Monday for summit talks with US President Donald Trump. His Highness the Amir was received upon arrival by White House Chief of Protocol Sean Lawler, the US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Timothy Linder King and Kuwait Ambassador to US Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir was accompanied by Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Jarrah Al-Sabah, Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf, head of His Highness the Amir's office Ahmad Al-Fahad, Amiri Diwan Advisor Mohammad Abulhassan, head of Amiri Diwan Protocols Sheikh Khaled Abdullah Al-Sabah, Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah, Board Chairman and Executive Director of Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) Salem Al-Athaina, head of Amiri Diwan Media and Cultural Affairs Yusuf Al-Roumi and Director General of Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) Sheikh Dr Mishal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

#### Bilateral relations

His Highness the Amir's visit to US comes within the framework of the historical ties between the two countries for more than 100 years, Jarallah said in a statement. He stressed the keenness of the two friendly countries in strengthening their strategic partnership.

Continued on Page 24



WASHINGTON: Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah welcomes His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah upon his arrival at Andrews Air Force Base in Washington, DC. — Amiri Diwan photo

### Qaeda trying to regain primacy; IS loses ground

JERUSALEM: Al-Qaeda is trying to regain its primacy over international militancy as Islamic State loses ground, a senior NATO official said yesterday, seeing a potentially increased risk to the West from the groups' rivalry. But Arndt von Loringhoven, the alliance's assistant secretary general for intelligence and security, said

Islamic State retained some personnel strength despite its combat losses, including fresh recruits among women and children. "ISIS-Daesh weakening has provided Al-Qaeda with an opportunity to attempt to regain its former status," Von Loringhoven told a security conference hosted by Israel's IDC Herzliya college, using a term for Islamic State.

"While ISIL-Daesh has occupied the world's attention for the last four-five year, Al-Qaeda has been quietly rebuilding its global networks and capabilities," he said, citing activity in Kashmir, Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, Somalia and North Africa. "Rather like ISIL-Daesh, Al-Qaeda's strategic aim is to regain leadership of like-minded militants and extremists. The competi-

tion for legitimacy, affiliates and recruits among the two major global extremist groups potentially increases the terrorism threat to NATO and our partners." Al-Qaeda carried out the Sept 11 attacks on the United States, prompting US-led wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

US forces killed Al-Qaeda's leader, Osama bin Laden, in a Pakistani hideout in 2011. Soon after, Islamic State, which is guided by a similarly extremist form of Sunni Islam, arose. Islamic State's fiefdoms in Syria and Iraq have been largely dismantled in recent years by offensives launched by Damascus and Baghdad with the backing of various foreign coalitions. Von Loringhoven said NATO estimated that Islamic State's peak strength of around 39,000 fighters in Syria and Iraq had been halved

between 18,000 and 20,000, most of them dispersed around the two countries and "gone underground".

"A very worrisome trend is the group's concerted effort to use propaganda to radicalize women and minors, who have emerged as a new target for recruitment relatively recently," he said. "This trend may have led to increased involvement of women and minors in the planning and execution of a number of attacks, including in NATO countries," he said. Citing the arrest in June of a Tunisian man suspected of planning a ricin attack Germany, von Loringhoven said militants could increasingly try to turn to homemade chemical or biological arms or attacks using commercially available drones. — Reuters

### Yemen foes head to peace talks as 'ugly war' rages

DUBAI: Yemen's warring parties will meet in Geneva tomorrow for a new round of peace talks with little hope of a breakthrough in an "ugly war" between the Saudi-backed government and rebels linked to Iran. They are the first public meetings between the government of Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi and Yemen's powerful Houthi rebels since 2016, when 108 days of negotiations in Kuwait failed to broker a power-sharing deal.

But the chance of face-to-face sitdowns between Hadi's delegation and the rebels in Geneva are slim to none, Yemeni foreign minister Khaled Al-Yamani said.

Continued on Page 24

### Deadly 'rat fever' kills 14 in Kerala

KERALA: "Rat fever" has killed at least 14 people with another 54 suspected fatal cases in the southern Indian state of Kerala since August, after the worst floods in almost a century, authorities said yesterday. A total of 372 people have been infected with the disease, known properly as leptospirosis and transmitted in water, soil or food containing urine from rodents and other animals. The bacteria can enter the body through cuts or abrasions on the skin, or through the mouth, nose and eyes, according to the World Health Organization.

Person-to-person transmission is rare. Early symptoms of leptospirosis such as high fever, muscle ache, vomiting, red eyes and chills are similar to those of other diseases, making it difficult for health workers to diagnose. Other disease outbreaks including dengue fever following last month's floods — which killed almost 500 people and forced more than a million from

their homes — have left 28 dead. More than 50,000 people have acute diarrhoea, authorities said. Cases of malaria and chicken pox have also been reported.

"We had anticipated leptospirosis due to contaminated water and are taking all measures to distribute preventive drugs in camps," Kerala health director Sarita R L said. The floodwaters have now largely receded and fewer than 10,000 people remain in temporary camps, down from 1.4 million at the height of the crisis. The monsoon, which lasts from June to September, causes widespread death and destruction across South Asia each year. The death toll in India this year currently stands at around 1,400 across 10 states, and heavy rainfall is forecast across several areas in the coming days.

In the north-eastern state of Nagaland, 11 people have died and 50,000 others are stranded across some 530 villages, with roads including the national highway into the state cut. Nagaland's chief minister Neiphiu Rio took to Twitter to appeal for donations, posting photos of widespread damage and saying that 10 relief camps had been opened. In the northern states of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand around 270 people



ALLAHABAD: A rat looks out of a hole in the ground in Allahabad. Indian authorities in the southern state of Kerala said yesterday that 'rat fever' and other diseases have killed 14 people in the wake of the worst floods in almost a century. — AFP

have perished. Earlier this year Kerala was also the epicenter of an outbreak of the Nipah virus, spread mainly by bats, which claimed 13 lives. — Agencies

### Iran moving oil export terminal out of the Gulf

TEHRAN: Iran is to move its main oil export terminal from the Gulf to the Oman Sea, President Hassan Rouhani announced yesterday, sparing its tankers from using the strategic Strait of Hormuz. Rouhani said exports were already being shifted from the Kharg Island terminal, deep in the Gulf, to Bandar-e-Jask in the Oman Sea and would be completed by the end of his term in 2021. "This is very important for me, it is a very strategic issue for me. A major part of our oil sales must move from Kharg to Jask," Rouhani said in a televised speech as he inaugurated three new petrochemical plants in the southern energy hub of Asaluyeh.

To reach the oil terminal on Kharg Island, tankers must currently pass through the narrow Strait of

Hormuz, slowing down deliveries. Iran has in the past repeatedly threatened to block the Strait of Hormuz — which is used by its Gulf rivals including Saudi Arabia — when faced with sanctions on its oil exports and possible military action by the US. The latest threat was in July when Rouhani said Iran has always guaranteed the security of the strait but warned the US "should not play with the lion's tail." Moving its terminal to the Oman Sea would in theory allow Iran to continue exporting oil even if the strait was closed.

The US pulled out of the 2015 nuclear deal in May and will reimpose sanctions on Iran's oil sector in November. The last time there was a major disruption in the flow of oil through Hormuz was in 1984 during the Iran-Iraq war when both sides attacked each other's oil facilities and tankers. The strait is the world's most important oil chokepoint with roughly 35 percent of all seaborne oil passing through it, according to the US Energy Information Administration. Bloomberg reported that Iran exported 2.1 million barrels per day (bpd) of oil in August, but analysts say US sanctions could reduce sales to around 1 million bpd. — AFP



Iranian military speedboat patrols the waters as a tanker prepares to dock at the oil facility in the Kharg Island, on the shore of the Gulf. Iran is set to move its main oil export terminal from the Arabian Gulf to the Oman Sea, President Hassan Rouhani announced yesterday. — AFP

## Local

## Crown Prince receives UAE ambassador

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday UAE's Ambassador to Kuwait Rahma Hussein Al-Zaabi. During the reception, Zaabi handed His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince an invitation from Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, to attend the Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. The meeting was attended by Amiri Diwan Advisor Lieutenant General Khaled Abdullah Boodai and Director of Protocols and Ceremonials at His Highness's Diwan Sheikh Mubarak Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with UAE's Ambassador to Kuwait Rahma Hussein Al-Zaabi. — KUNA photos



**His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah reads an invitation from Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, to attend the Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.**

## Wataniya Airways face 'unexpected' circumstances forcing suspension: Chairman

**KUWAIT:** Wataniya Airways said yesterday that 'unexpected and unavoidable circumstances' have disrupted its operations for the current travel season, forcing temporary suspension of operations. Wataniya Airways "is committed to complying with all decisions and regulations of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), and is keen on offering its services at highest standards," Ali Al-Fozan, Board Chairman of the privately-owned carrier, told a news conference.

Wataniya Airways was planning to have six airplanes as of August 12 "but the company unexpectedly faced a major problem, three planes of its fleet went out of service," he explained. One of the planes, an Airbus 320, had a failure in one of its engines, and the company could not find a replacement in the market, said Fozan. He added Wataniya Airways hired two planes from Olympus Airways but DGCA refused to register the aircraft because "of the reputation of the (Olympus) company and there were some reservations over it."

These factors, he added, slashed operations by 50 percent. Fozan further said Olympus Airways' planes suffered repeated malfunctions which also disrupted opera-



**KUWAIT:** Board Chairman of Wataniya Airways Ali Al-Fozan (right) attends the news conference. — KUNA

tions of Wataniya Airways, which was very frustrated at the way Olympus dealt with the Kuwaiti carrier prompting termination of the contract. He said Wataniya Airways could not operate with one plane "so we decided to suspend operations temporarily until return of the second plane."

"The Board is determined to take necessary measures to revive Wataniya in near future," he said. Wataniya and DGCA, said Fozan, were discussing compensations for passengers whose flights were delayed or cancelled. He underlined that the carrier's financial position was good. Fozan apologized for all passengers and thanked the government of Kuwait for instructing Kuwait Airways to bring back citizens

stranded abroad due to cancellation of their flights on Wataniya Airways.

DGCA addressed, on August 25, an ultimatum to Wataniya Airways to resolve problems such as recurring flights' delay and cancellation. The DGC warned in a statement that in case the company failed to fulfill its duties properly, its permit would be suspended, effective September 6 for three months as an initial penalty, while compelling it to fulfill its financial and legal liabilities toward passengers. If Wataniya Airways fails again to tackle these problems, it will be stripped of the license permanently. Wataniya Airways resumed operations in July 2017, launching routes to the Middle East, Europe, Africa and Asia. — KUNA

### News in brief

#### Kuwait, Russia discuss Int'l issues

**MOSCOW:** Kuwait's Ambassador to Russia Abdul-Aziz Al-Adwani discussed Monday with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov developments on the nuclear agreement with Iran. The two sides looked a number of international issues, including developments on the nuclear agreement with Iran, the Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement. Ryabkov is responsible for the Russian-US relations. — KUNA

#### Ambassador presents credentials

**KUWAIT:** Kuwaiti Ambassador to Mexico Meteb Al-Mutawteh presented a copy of his credentials to Manuel Estuardo Roldan, Guatemala's Deputy Foreign Minister, as non-resident Ambassador in Guatemala City. Mutawteh commended during the meeting Guatemala's 'historic support' of Kuwait during the 1990-91 Iraqi invasion of the Gulf country, a statement by Kuwait Embassy to Mexico said. He also thanked Guatemala for supporting candidacy of Kuwait as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for 2018-19. Roldan, said the statement, said Guatemala was looking forward to boosting relations and cooperation with Kuwait in different domains. He hoped Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) would contribute to infrastructure projects in Guatemala. — KUNA

#### Citizens in Japan cautioned

**TOKYO:** Kuwait's embassy in Japan has advised citizens residing in the country to exercise maximum caution as a powerful typhoon is expected to make landfall west of the capital Tokyo. The storm is very likely to cause heavy rains, landslides and floods, the Kuwaiti mission said, calling on nationals to abide by security regulations to ensure their safety. It went on to say that emergency help is a quick phone call away at emergency hotline 03-3455-0361, or send an e-mail to: consular@kuwait-embassy.or.jp. Japan issued evacuation advisories for more than a million people and canceled hundreds of flights as Typhoon Jebi hammered large swathes of the Asian nation, killing at least six people. — KUNA

#### Environmental fuel project

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) yesterday announced igniting the first permanent flame in its environmental fuel project in Mina Abdullah refinery. In a press statement released yesterday, KNPC's CEO Mohammad Al-Mutairi said that this is a huge step towards fully launching the project. Vice CEO for Mina Abdullah refinery Mutlaq Al-Azmi noted that the process was executed following environment and health safety measures. The project aims to improve the quality of Kuwaiti petroleum products, allow Kuwait to enter the international markets and reduce polluting emissions. — KUNA

#### \$111.6 million factory

**KUWAIT:** Egypt Kuwait Holding Company announced that one of its subsidiaries is set to launch a Medium-density fiberboard (MDF) wood production factory with a cost of \$61.4 million for the first phase. In a statement published on Boursa Kuwait website yesterday, the company expected a \$50.2 million cost for the second phase, while the project's total cost would be at \$111.6 million. The 300,000 square meter project is located in Beni Suef city in Egypt. The factory is expecting to launch performance operations in H1 2020, with a production capacity of 150,000 square meters. Egypt Kuwait Holding Company was established in 1997 with a capital of \$500 million and was enlisted in Boursa Kuwait in 2001. — KUNA

## 'KAFO' holds second forum in October

**KUWAIT:** Supervisory Committee of Kuwait Achievers for Future Opportunities (KAFO) announced yesterday that it will hold its second annual forum on October 9, 2018 at the Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center (JACC). 'KAFO' is a national e-platform that enables the search, connection and collaboration among achievers in Kuwait for better future opportunities, building networks for knowledge sharing and communities around common interests.

Chairman of the Supervisory Committee of KAFO Project Dr Youssef Al-Ibrahim stated that the project was developed to meet youth aspirations as per the recommendations of the National Youth Project, which was initiated by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al Sabah in 2013 as a nationwide campaign to outreach youth and involve them in national development plans.

Ibrahim, Advisor at the Amiri Diwan, said that this year's forum would focus on different topics; Science and Technology, Environment, Media, Culture and Art, Nutrition, Business, Education, Humanitarian and Sports. Those topics would be found on KAFO's website for people who share the same expertise for discussion, and exchange knowledge and experiences of the same areas of interests. At the forum, there will be different activities and various seminars given by people who are registered on the website to participate and share their experiences, in addition to business owners to display their products on the website where it encourages young Kuwaiti efficiencies. The main objective of KAFO is to have access to Kuwaiti achievers and talents through a platform that can display their efforts and empower them to attain more and collaborate with others. — KUNA

### FOR THE CITIZENS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION STAYING IN KUWAIT

Embassy of the Russian Federation in the State of Kuwait announces that the additional voting to elect the member of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation (Nizhniy Novgorod constituency No. 129) will be held at the premises of the Embassy of Russia in Kuwait:

**Daiya, Block 5, Diplomatic Campus, Al-Yemen street, plot 17, on Friday, September 7, 2018 from 8:00 till 20:00.**

All Russian citizens staying in Kuwait, who have reached the age of 18 years are invited to take part in the elections.

Make sure you keep your valid passport of the citizen of the Russian Federation with you.

For any information related to the forthcoming elections please address the Consular Section of the Embassy. For enquiries you are welcome to contact: 22560427, 22560428.

## Gulf row not insurmountable

**MUSCAT:** Despite the ongoing political disparities among countries from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), an end to the crisis remains in sight, Oman's Foreign Minister Youssef Bin Alawi said yesterday.

"We are confident that the GCC will remain a cohesive unit," the state-run Oman News Agency cited the foreign minister as saying after joint Omani-Bahraini talks, where he underlined that the bloc has managed to overcome past discord. One cannot overlook the heap of achievements the GCC has piled up since its inception, the Omani foreign minister went on to say, citing that the main objective in these talks is to attempt to bring GCC member nations closer together. "In Oman, we always strive to cooperate with our brothers in Bahrain in order to bring our common goals to fruition," he said. — KUNA

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Local

# US, Kuwait share long history of friendship, cooperation

## Relations rooted in 'shared values, democratic traditions, and institutions'

**WASHINGTON:** His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah arrived at Andrews Air Force Base in Washington, DC on Monday for summit talks with US President Donald Trump.

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Kuwait and the US, the two countries have enjoyed a long history of friendship and cooperation rooted in "shared values, democratic traditions, and institutions," a State Department report affirms. According to a State Department report, Kuwait is an "essential partner in the fight against Daesh," and is also "an important partner in US counterterrorism efforts, including efforts to block financing of terrorist groups." In September 2017, the US and Kuwait co-chaired the second US-Kuwait Strategic Dialogue in Washington, DC, a dialogue that advances the strategic partnership in defense, security, trade, investment, education, consular, customs, and border protection issues. The strategic dialogue is a process that commits the two countries to increased cooperation in the areas of "greatest practical benefit" for the governments and peoples.

**'Very strong'**

In an exclusive interview, a US official who requested anonymity said that the US-Kuwait relationship is 'very strong,' as Kuwait is one of the US "most important strategic partners for regional peace and stability, as is evidenced by Kuwait's long-term willingness to host multiple US military bases and thousands of US troops." The official added that Kuwait "has long been a critical partner for regional security." The official stressed "we continue to make progress together on the important initiatives that were undertaken during HH the Amir's last visit to the White House and last year's Strategic Dialogue to address a number of important issues related to defense, security, trade, investment, and education." The official noted that Kuwait "also played a central role in diplomatic efforts to find a resolution to the ongoing Gulf dispute."

"We value Kuwait's consultation on many important issues that come before the UN Security Council," the official added. The official stressed that Kuwait "also responded to President Trump's speech in Riyadh last year with greater commitments to confront terrorism and violent extremism." "Kuwait is making critical

investments in regional stability and is a global humanitarian leader, generously providing critical assistance to refugees throughout the region and to those countries hosting them," the official remarked.

**Strong relationship**

Gerald Feierstein, Senior Fellow and Director at the Center for Gulf Affairs at the Middle East Institute said that the US-Kuwait relationship "is strong and has been strong for many years." He affirmed that this strong relationship between the two countries is a "reflection of the common outlook that they both have on regional issues particularly the situation in Syria and in Iraq where Kuwait has played a very positive role." He shed light on the "important role Kuwait played in trying to promote political stability and economic development in Iraq, where Kuwait stepped forward first with very positive measures to try to support Iraq and help Iraq," saying Kuwait has been a "leader" in that regard. "Same thing in Syria, where Kuwait has been an important partner for us in the coalition in the fight against violent extremism also in Iraq and Syria in assisting and trying to stabilize the situation for the Syria people," he added. He stressed that "consistently we see Kuwait stepping forward, a role it has continued to play for many years now," and that Kuwait "has always stepped forward and played a positive role in the region which is much appreciated here in the US."

**Strategic Dialogue**

Dr Kristin Smith Diwan, who is a specialist on Kuwait at the Arab Gulf States Institute, said that the Kuwait-US relations "continue to be strong as evidenced by the ongoing Strategic Dialogue started in 2016." She said that the cooperation between the two countries "extends across the board from commerce to security, with bilateral trade, investment, and defense cooperation important for both countries." She added that Kuwait also "showed leadership in coordinating regional assistance for Iraq reconstruction."

Furthermore, the Kaufman fellow at The Washington Institute who focuses on the political dynamics of Middle East countries David Pollock affirmed that Kuwait and the US "have been especially close partners" ever since the liberation of Kuwait in 1991, "a campaign in which I personally and proudly served as a diplomat on the front lines." He added that "most recently, Kuwait continues to be a valuable asset for



**WASHINGTON:** His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is welcomed upon his arrival at Andrews Air Force Base in Washington, DC. — Amiri Diwan photo

the US, both as a significant global energy exporter, and as a bulwark against terrorism, violent instability... in the region." "The US also appreciates Kuwait's efforts," in the region, including "by hosting major aid, investment and conferences or negotiations concerning Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and other hard issues," he stressed.

In September of last year, the US Chamber of Commerce and the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry in partnership with the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority hosted the first of its kind US-Kuwait Economic Forum. The event was held on the sidelines of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's visit to Washington for talks with US President Donald Trump. In this regard, Steve Lutes, Vice President of Middle East Affairs at the US Chamber, said that the economic relationship between Kuwait and the US "has a promising future." He shed light on last year's forum, noting

"we have continued to build on that momentum through a series of activities to educate American businesses on commercial and investment opportunities in Kuwait." "While we strongly support the strong existing ties in the energy, finance and defense sectors, we are eager to see new partnerships and greater collaboration in the new economy sectors, like health, cyber, and e-commerce," he added.

Trump welcomes HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to the White House today for a 'working visit', which will be their second meeting at the White House. Last year, Trump had affirmed during his meeting with HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah at the White House that the US and Kuwait share a "strong and enduring partnership." He recognized Kuwait's "critical contributions to regional stability," and thanked Kuwait for its "humanitarian leadership and for its partnership in the fight to destroy (IS). —KUNA



### Amir meets Trump today

## Amir's fifth visit to US continues partnership legacy



**WASHINGTON:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with former US President Barack Obama in this archive photo. — KUNA photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with former US President George W Bush in this archive photo.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with former US President Bill Clinton during the latter's visit to Kuwait.

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah will be on an official visit to Washington, DC where he is scheduled to meet with US President Donald Trump. The visit of His Highness the Amir to the United States comes at a time when the two countries enjoy excellent relations, strong and close partnership in various fields.

This is the fifth official visit of His Highness the Amir to the United States since taking office in Kuwait. He last visited the US in February. During His Highness the Amir's first visit to the United States in September 2006, he met with then US President George W. Bush, who affirmed that Kuwait was a friendly nation and a strong ally to the US. In August 2009, His Highness the Amir met with former President Obama, who expressed his country's gratitude to Kuwait as a host of the US armed forces during its operations in Iraq. Before becoming the Amir of Kuwait, His Highness visited the United States in September 2003 after he was appointed as Prime Minister. US-Kuwaiti relationship dates back many years. The United States recognized the State of Kuwait three months after the independence of the Gulf state on September 22, 1961, thus, kicking start the diplomatic relations between the two countries. Kuwaiti-American relations have gone through four stages until they reached their current level.

In the 1960s and 1970s, relations with



His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with former US President George HW Bush.

America were friendly, whereas in the mid-1980s they moved into a partnership when US flags were hoisted on Kuwaiti oil tankers during the Iran-Iraq war. Then came the stage of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the period of liberation, where such ties expanded to take a strategic framework between the two countries in the nineties of the last century. Kuwaiti-American relations deepened after the US administration in 2004 classified Kuwait as an ally outside NATO. During the past 56 years of relations between Washington and Kuwait, ties of friendship and cooperation have been established in various fields and reflected the depth and strength of strate-

gic partnership between the two countries.

His Highness the late Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah paid a visit to the United States in December 1968. He discussed with then US President Lyndon Johnson the bilateral relations between the two countries and means of supporting them. The preservation and stability of the Arab Gulf region as well as the Arab-Israeli conflict focused upon. His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah visited the United States during the brutal Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and met with former US President George W. Bush, discussing developments related to the war of libera-



His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with former US President Bill Clinton during his visit to Washington, DC.

tion of Kuwait.

In October 1991, late His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad, visited Washington, DC in a tour that included most of the countries that contributed with their armed forces in liberating of Kuwait. On the fifth anniversary of the liberation of the State of Kuwait in February 1996, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad, visited Washington, DC, where he met with US President Bill Clinton and discussed with him the bilateral relations in addition to Gulf security and the peace process in the Middle East.

During the historic visit by former US President Bill Clinton to Kuwait in October

1994, the late Amir of Kuwait decorated the president with the highest Medal of Honor (Mubarak Al-Kabeer Medal). His Highness also decorated former US President George Bush senior with the same medal in 1993 when he visited the country after the end of his term of office, thanking him for the role of this man in the leadership of the war to liberate Kuwait. In January 2008, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received former US President George W Bush during his visit to Kuwait. The talks included the distinguished relations between the two friendly countries and means of enhancing them in all fields to build a common ground. —KUNA

## Local

## Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Kuwait Towers paint a beautiful picture with their bright colors. —Photo by Amani Al-Shahaab (KUNA)

## Kuwait marks UN's international day of charity



**KUWAIT:** The United Nations marks the International Day of Charity today in recognition of humanitarian efforts to ease the suffering of those in need globally. Kuwait is known as one of the top countries in the field of charity and it was recognized by the UN in 2014 as a 'Humanitarian Center.' His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah was also granted the title of 'Humanitarian Leader' by the UN.

Kuwaiti charitable societies and citizens were always keen on donating aid to those affected by natural disasters, war, famine, and poverty around the world. In 2015, donations given to charitable societies by Kuwaitis reached KD 18.2 million, compared to KD 14.8 million in 2014, and KD 5.6 million in 2013. Kuwait's humanitarian efforts also include executing projects to boost living standards in poor countries, provide better education and develop the use of work force. Since the Syrian war began in 2011, the State of Kuwait had played a pivotal role in aiding Syria's refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey, organizing in Kuwait as well as co-hosting abroad various conferences, which raised billion of US dollars to help ease the horrors of

the conflict. Kuwait also held other conferences aiding those affecting by war in Yemen, Iraq, Sudan, and Palestine.

Most recently, the GCC country hosted the Kuwait International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq (KICRI) back in February of 2018, ending with a pledge of \$30 billion of which Kuwait generously donated a sum of \$2 billion. While Kuwait, in governmental and non-governmental capacity, is a force reckoned with in the charity world, the state — small in stature and big in action — had produced numerous individuals always keen on lending a helping hand to the world. The one name that stands out above the rest was late philanthropist Dr Abdul Rahman Al-Sumait who, since passing away on August 13, 2015, had left a huge void in the hearts of Kuwaitis. Sumait was awarded with the highest honors by His Highness the Amir and after his death the annual Al-Sumait Prize for charity was founded to ensure that his legacy will remain. In 2012, the UN chose September fifth to celebrate charity work, which is also the anniversary of Mother Teresa's death. She was an icon of humanitarian work worldwide. —KUNA



### Home visits among services rendered to disabled

**KUWAIT:** Director of the Rehabilitation Medical Center at the Public Authority of the Disabled (PAD), Dr Yacob Al-Zayed said yesterday that among the services undertaken by the Authority is home visits. Zayed said in a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that this service comes in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs represented by the Department of Elderly Care and is provided for some clinical cases that cannot come to the apparatus due to health conditions. He added that the Authority is striving to provide the best services to all groups of people with disabilities and will not hesitate to provide everything that would make them happy and ease burden of life on them. Zayed explained that the mechanism for applying for this service is through the Authority's Lounge (Medical Records Section). —KUNA



Dr Yacob Al-Zayed

### 28th meeting for GCC food safety kicks off

**KUWAIT:** The 28th session of the Standing Committee for the Safety of Food in the Gulf kicked off yesterday with the participation of representatives of food safety committees in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition Issa Al-Kandari, stressed in an opening speech the importance of the meeting which would come up with decisions and recommendations ahead of the fourth meetings of the Preparatory Committee and the fourth for the Gulf Food Safety Committee slated for December. Kandari stressed that one of the most important recommendations is the adoption of the Gulf Common Food Guide, expressing hope that the recommendations will help facilitate food trade movement among the GCC states. —KUNA



KUWAIT: GCC officials attend the 28th session of the Standing Committee for the Safety of Food in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries. —KUNA

## Local

# Studying suspended at some schools due to AC problems

## Humidity to continue until September 20th: Meteorologist

By Meshaal Al-Enezi and A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Hamed Al-Azmi toured a number of schools yesterday to inspect the situation there following complaints about lack of preparations ahead of the start of the school year. The minister then gave order to suspend studying at a number of schools for 24 hours, due to failure in the air conditioning systems there. Meanwhile, the minister called for a meeting for directors of educational zones and ministry officials to overview the air conditioning maintenance operations done ahead of the school year.

In other news, the Education Ministry completed the contracting procedures to hire teachers from Jordan and Tunisia, as Jordan's teachers are expected to start arriving next week. The Education Ministry booked tickets on Kuwait Airways for contracted teachers from Jordan, according to the cabinet's instructions to use the national carrier. Sources said that another plane bound for Tunisia was booked, and teachers will arrive via Roma. Meanwhile, the administrative affairs department at the ministry is currently coordinating

with the office of the interior minister to finish procedures of hiring Palestinian teachers as quickly as possible.

### Humidity

Veteran meteorologist and astronomer Dr Saleh Al-



**Unlicensed nursery made KD 2,000 a month**

Ojairi said the current humidity Kuwait is witnessing will continue until September 20th, due to a trough. Humidity appeared late this year, as it normally arrives in August,



Dr Hamed Al-Azmi

and this promises for a rainy season in the winter, he said.

### KD 2,000 per month

The Criminal Investigations Department (CID) remanded in custody an Indian woman who ran an unlicensed nursery inside a bachelors' residence. The suspect said that she was making KD 2,000 per month from her business, and was caring for 16 children at the time of her arrest.

### Toll roads

A study is currently ongoing to charge fees for using some roads in Kuwait, said Director General of the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation Engineer Ahmad Al-Hossan, adding that this would be considered a service for motorists in order to help alleviate traffic congestions, further explaining that it would be up to drivers who 'wish

to be distinguished'. Hossan further indicated that the authority is ready for the rain season.

### Fake employment

Inspections made by the Public Authority for Manpower for the past two years showed that 85 percent of Kuwaiti workers in the private sector are carrying out their duties in the companies where they are hired. Director of incentives payments in the Manpower and Government Restructuring Program (MGRP), supervisor of service centers Hiyam Al-Duwailah said that MGRP exerted much efforts to fight fake employment in the private sector through many committees and teams.

She said inspection of fake labor during the period from 2016 until this past Monday revealed that 8,018 Kuwaiti employees worked in the private sector and received labor allowances. MGRP took administrative and legal procedures by halting support to 1,225 employees who were not performing their jobs, she added, explaining that referring such cases to prosecution was the authority of the Public Authority for Manpower.

### Bayt.com Report

## Kuwait job market robust with over 9 in 10 employers hiring

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait remains a booming and competitive market, with many talented professionals looking to make their next big break. The latest MENA Job Index Survey from Bayt.com, the number one job site in the Middle East, and global online market research company, YouGov, indicates that hiring intentions are on the rise. The majority of Kuwait employers (85 percent) are planning to hire in the next three months, and the outlook continues to improve as 92 percent of employers are planning to hire in the coming year.

Seven in 10 working respondents (70 percent) claim that their company has hired new employees in the last 6 months, with 52 percent having hired new employees in the last 3 months. Looking ahead, six in 10 Kuwait employers who plan to hire over the next three months expect to fill up to 10 different jobs. The remaining companies will hire for 11 to 20 jobs (11 percent), 21 to 50 jobs (4 percent), and more than 51 jobs (6 percent). Overall, the hiring index in the MENA region has increased by 12 points showing significant growth in hiring activity when compared to the past year.

### Hiring intentions in MENA

The outlook looks positive for job seekers across the MENA region as three in every four (73 percent) employers plans to make new hires in the next three months, and even more in Kuwait (85 percent). Overall, hiring intentions by sector remain consistent. Notably, 76 percent of multinational companies as well as small-medium local companies plan to hire in three months. In regards to hiring potential by industry, automotive (84 percent) and real estate/ construction/ property development (81 percent) demonstrated the highest intention of hiring in the short term. As we look to the coming year, the outlook con-

tinues to be positive with almost nine in 10 MENA respondents claiming that they will be hiring across the private sector (88 percent) and 84 percent will be hiring for the public sectors. Jobseekers will be pleased to know that in the coming year, hiring intention across many sectors is extremely positive, and real estate/ construction/ property development (97 percent), and domestic services (94 percent) will be hiring the most.

### Roles and experience

The majority of Kuwait companies will be hiring junior and mid-career positions, with maximum requirement emerging for junior executive (53 percent). This is followed by coordinator (30 percent), executive (30 percent), and manager (23 percent). Still, some companies are looking to fill top management positions, with 9 percent looking to hire C-Suite and managing director positions. Project manager (18 percent) and mechanical engineer (18 percent) emerged among the top roles that Kuwait respondents are hiring for overall. This is followed by accountant (16 percent), customer service representative (16 percent), and administrative assistant (14 percent).

Nearly three in 10 Kuwait respondents state that they are looking for candidates with sales and marketing experience (28 percent), another 28 percent are looking for mid-level experience (3-7 years), while a quarter are searching for those with managerial experience and 19 percent want IT/computer experience. When it comes to skill sets in Kuwait, good communication skills in both the English and Arabic languages are highly sought after (78 percent). This is followed by being a team player (54 percent), having the ability to work under pressure (46 percent), and being passionate/ having the desire to make a difference (43 percent). Business management (36 percent) and engineering (25 percent) are most sought-after academic qualifications amongst employers in Kuwait, followed by administrative qualifications (18 percent), commerce (16 percent), and computer science (15 percent).

### Industries attracting top talent

Oil, gas and petrochemicals (30 percent) emerges as the industry that attracts top talent across Kuwait. This is followed by

banking/finance (27 percent), business consultancy (24 percent), IT (24 percent), and real estate and construction (22 percent). Banking and finance, and oil, gas and petrochemicals emerge as the main industries attracting national talent (33 percent), while fresh graduates are most attracted to banking and finance (25 percent) and IT, Internet and e-commerce (25 percent). When it came to female talent, advertising, marketing and public relations was considered the most attractive (42 percent), followed by banking and finance (34 percent), healthcare/ medical services (28 percent), and education and academia (27 percent).

"Our goal at Bayt.com is to arm job seekers with the tools needed to thrive in today's increasingly competitive job market. The question of job availability and requirements across the region and different industries matters to all professionals. The results of our latest survey indicate that employment opportunities will most likely increase and many will be geared towards the younger generation who are looking for entry-level positions. For them to increase their eligibility, young job seekers need to focus on fine-tuning their communication and leadership skills, and can tap into the various tools offered on Bayt.com that are designed to improve their skills and differentiate them from the competition," said Suhail Masri, Vice President of Employer Solutions, Bayt.com. "We are proud to be able to provide tens of thousands of jobs on a daily basis and to connect many companies and organizations to our database of more than 33 million CV's."

"It is refreshing to note that hiring across the region is on an upward trajectory. Hiring intentions are a measure of the economic wellbeing of the region, and also a reflection of the growing competitive environment that will drive job performance," said Kerry McLaren, Director - Data Services at YouGov MENA. Data for the August 2018 Middle East Job Index Survey was collected online from 31st May 2018 to 31st July 2018. Results are based on a sample of 1,709 respondents, 1,505 of whom were of working status, from the following countries: UAE, KSA, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Palestine, Syria, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Sudan, and Pakistan.

## Kuwaitis among highest spenders on halal tourism

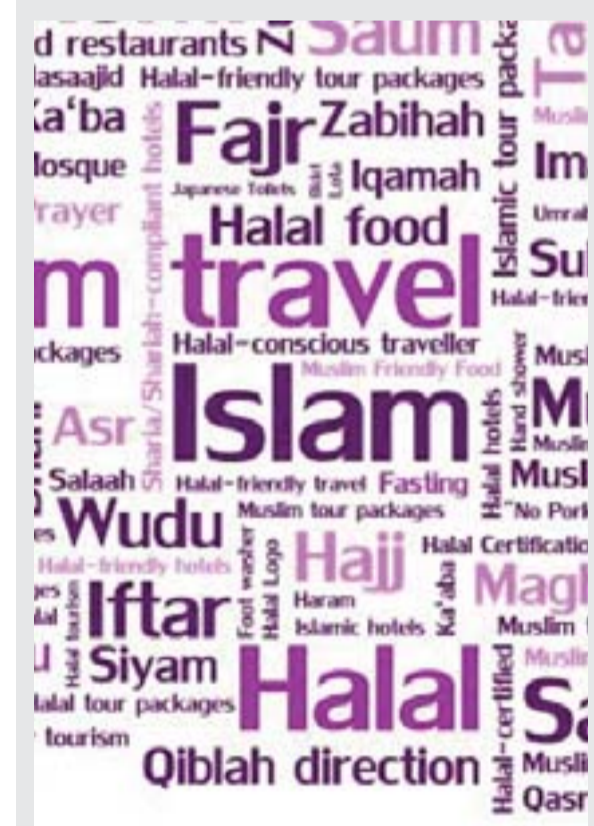
By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry issued a study specialized in halal tourism, which indicated that the United Arab Emirates (UAE) ranks first internationally in spending on halal tourism, at a total of \$17.6 billion during 2017.

The study shows that Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and UAE lead the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region as far as the availability of competitive work environments for investment in traveling and tourism, and availability of advanced technology, while presenting the infrastructure for aviation around the world.

The study further indicates that due to the high per capita income, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries top the list of Muslim tourist sources based on spending abroad, as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait placed second and third respectively, while south east Asia remained first.

The study expects the number of Muslim travelers to grow from 131 million or 10 percent of the total number of world tourists to nearly 156 million by 2020. Furthermore, the study shows that during 2017, the average spending by a Muslim traveler was nearly \$1,374, which is expected to rise to \$1,400 by 2020 due to the increased income in the market economies where most Muslim passengers live.



## 3rd Arab Entrepreneurs Forum kicks off

**MUSCAT:** The Third Arab Entrepreneurs Forum Kicked off in Muscat, Oman yesterday to increase awareness of the digital economy and entrepreneurship. The previous forums were hugely successful and gained a positive feedback from the participants, said the Honorary President of the forum Sheikha Jawaher Al-Khalifa in her speech at the forum.

Reports of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) said that the value of electronic commerce reached about \$22 trillion between companies, where the volume of e-commerce between companies and consumers exceeded \$2 trillion per year, she confirmed.

Head of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Dhofar Hussein Al-Buthari said that the forum is a great opportunity to benefit from the expertise in the fourth informatics revolution and to meet with investors and business leaders from various Arab countries. It is also an opportunity to form business partnerships, identify the industrial and tourism zones and investment opportunities available to support economic development, he added. The three-day forum include participation of investors from the GCC, Libya, Iraq, Sudan, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Tunisia, Morocco and Malaysia. — KUNA

## Health Ministry closes unlicensed clinic in Mahboula

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Health announced yesterday the closure of a pharmacy and a clinic in a basement of a residential building in Mahboula. "As soon as the ministry heard about this illegal place, in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Justice, the medications were seized," the ministry said in a press release. The amounts of medical drugs and equipment used in the clinic and pharmacy were confiscated by the authorities and being processed according to regular procedures. After inspection, the seized drugs and equipment turned out to be illegal and unlicensed. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Medications found inside the unlicensed pharmacy. — KUNA

## Man tortured over extramarital relationship

**KUWAIT:** An Egyptian man sought police's help, telling them three men and a woman entered his brother's apartment, stripped him naked, tied him up, then the men stabbed him in various parts of his body while the woman recorded the happenings using a cellphone camera. The suspects then left the place and threatened the victim of causing him further harm. Police went to the apartment and found the man in pain, bleeding and almost unconscious. Paramedics were called in and the man was transferred under guard to the hospital. His brother said he knows one of the suspects, and gave police his details. The main suspect was arrested, and he told police about the other two men, while stating that the woman is his wife. He explained his actions, saying that he discovered an affair between his wife and the victim, which was the motive behind his crime. All four were placed under arrest in waiting for the victim's statement, for further legal action against the suspects.

### Smuggling foiled

Abdali customs officers foiled an attempt to smuggle a large quantity of shabu (methamphetamine) and captagon, hidden in parts of a bus's engine and air conditioning. Abdali customs' supervisor Mohammad Al-Humaidi said an officer became suspicious of a Gulf national driving a bus, who became very nervous when the officer approached

him, at which point he asked passengers to disembark. Humaidi said inspection systems indicated unusual intensity in the air cylinders, so one of them was opened and 35,000 captagon tablets were found inside. The second cylinder contained 55 tablets and a large quantity of shabu with an estimated weight of 3.850 kg. The driver and drugs were sent to concerned authorities.

### License 'stolen'

A Bangladeshi man told Ahmadi police that an SUV hit his car from the back, then when he pulled over, a man came out of the SUV, identified himself as a detective, then asked him for his license and KD 50 to repair the vehicle. The man refused to give him the money, but the suspect snatched the license and escaped.

### Accident

A security source said the Interior Ministry plans to investigate reports about a traffic accident involving a woman who claims that the accident happened after she was harassed by an unidentified driver. The woman said that she was driving on Fahheel Highway, and accompanied by members of her family, including children, when a harasser hit her vehicle multiple times, causing her to lose control over the car which turned upside down. The driver then fled the scene, before eyewitnesses called police. Detectives are also investigating claims made by an eyewitness who said that the runaway driver was wearing a police uniform.

### Theft

Ahmadi detectives are looking for an individual who stole KD 1,100 in cash from an Egyptian man's car in Mahboula. — Translated by Kuwait Times from Al-Rai and Al-Anbaa

## A Major Local Company Announces

### the Need to Fill the Following Positions:

- 1- Logistics Supervisor (Controller):**
  - With minimum 5 years' experience in the same field
  - A valid driving license
  - Age doesn't exceed 50
- 2- Technician (Electrical – Electronics):**
  - With minimum 5 years' experience in the same field
  - A valid driving license
  - Age doesn't exceed 30
- 3- Maison:**
  - With minimum 5 years' experience in the same field
  - Age doesn't exceed 30
- 4- Driver:**
  - A valid driving license (knowledge of Kuwait traffic rules and roads)
  - Age doesn't exceed 30
- 5- Labor:**
  - Age doesn't exceed 30

Candidates meeting the above conditions and requirements should send their CV's to:

Info.career.kw@gmail.com



German leftist promises to win back far-right

## Taleban announce death of Haqqani network founder

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OSAKA: Damaged traffic boards and telecommunication relay poles are seen after they were brought down by strong winds caused by typhoon Jebi. — AFP

# Strongest typhoon in 25 years hits Japan

## Violent winds, rains kill six and injure many more

**TOKYO:** The strongest typhoon to hit Japan in 25 years battered the west of the country yesterday with violent winds and heavy rain, killing six and injuring scores more. Powerful gusts ripped sheeting from rooftops, overturned trucks on bridges and swept a tanker anchored in Osaka Bay into a bridge to Kansai International Airport.

The damage to the bridge left the airport cut off from the mainland and stranded around 3,000 people there, an official said. The airport was now conducting safety tests on the undamaged section of the bridge, the official said, but it remained unclear when the passengers could leave. High waves whipped up by the storm also flooded parts of the airport, where all flights were cancelled, and the severe weather caused power outages and travel chaos across much of the country.

Typhoon Jebi made landfall around noon, slamming into the west of the country with winds of up to 216 kilometers per hour. The fast-moving storm quickly crossed the mainland, and by nightfall was heading out to sea from Ishikawa in central Japan. Public broadcaster NHK reported at least six deaths in the storm, including a 71-year-old man killed in western Shiga prefecture after being trapped under a warehouse that

collapsed in strong wind. NHK said 164 people had suffered mostly minor injuries.

In Osaka television footage showed the large tanker smashing into the bridge connecting the city of Izumisano with Kansai airport, with its superstructure battering away part of the bridge. Local TV also showed footage of a 100-metre tall ferris wheel in Osaka spinning furiously in the strong wind despite being switched off. "I've never seen such a thing," a 19-year-old boy at the scene told NHK. Elsewhere, the winds whipped away part of the ceiling from Kyoto station and peeled off multi-storey scaffolding on a building in Osaka.

### Evacuations urged

The storm left more than one million households without power and evacuation advisories were issued

at one point for nearly 1.2 million people, with another 16,000 under stronger — though still not mandatory — evacuation orders. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe had urged people to evacuate early and ordered his government to take all necessary measures to protect residents, after the weather agency warned of landslides, flooding and violent winds, as well as high tides, lightning and tornadoes.

"I urge the Japanese people to take action to protect your lives, including preparing and evacuating early," he said. Arriving on land, Jebi had winds of up to 162 kilometres (100 miles) per hour at its centre, making it a "very strong" typhoon, the weather agency's chief forecaster Ryuta Kurota told AFP. "This is (the strongest) since 1993."

Local media warned that the wind was strong enough to topple traditional-style wooden houses as well as power poles, and urged people in affected areas

to avoid non-essential travel. Primary and middle schools in the storm's path were closed while regional businesses including Universal Studios Japan in Osaka and factories for several large manufacturers shut down. Nearly 800 flights were cancelled, including several international flights departing and arriving at Nagoya and Osaka, along with ferries, local train services and some bullet train lines.

Jebi had a similar trajectory to Typhoon Cimaron which made landfall on August 23, disrupting transport but causing limited damage and few injuries. Japan is regularly struck by major storms during the summer and autumn. The country has been sweating through a record deadly heatwave that followed devastating rain in parts of central and western Japan that killed over 200 people.

The sustained rain caused widespread flooding and landslides in July, devastating entire villages and forcing thousands from their homes. The flooding and landslides proved so deadly in part because many people did not heed evacuation warnings, which are not mandatory. Since the disaster, authorities have urged people to take the warnings more seriously and prepare to leave home immediately they are issued. — AFP

“ Take action to protect your lives ”

## Israeli president gives lecture to Duterte on Hitler

**JERUSALEM:** Israeli President Reuven Rivlin gave a brief lecture on Hitler to Rodrigo Duterte yesterday after the Philippine leader's 2016 remarks comparing himself to the Nazi dictator who carried out the Holocaust.

"Hitler was actually representing the devil himself," Rivlin said when the two men met at his Jerusalem office. "He was the devil on earth." Rivlin went on to say that Duterte's visit to Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial on Monday must have illustrated to him the sensitivity surrounding any reference to Adolf Hitler. "Probably you have realised yesterday the feelings when you have visited the museum of Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, to really feel the atmosphere, to feel the feelings of all the people that were part of this disaster," said Rivlin, whose position is mainly ceremonial.

Duterte appeared to be listening attentively during Rivlin's brief comments. He later spoke about trade and cooperation with Israel. The controversial Philippine president spoke of Hitler in 2016 when talking about his violent drug crackdown that has killed thousands. "Hitler massacred three million Jews. Now there are three million drug addicts (in the Philippines). I'd be happy to slaughter them," Duterte said then. Historians say six million Jews died in the Holocaust. Duterte later apologised and said the comments were aimed at critics who had likened him to the Nazi leader.

### 'Crimes taking place'

Duterte also told Rivlin he had ordered his mili-

tary to only buy military and intelligence equipment from Israel. He said the United States was a "good friend," but buying such equipment from US firms meant the country would "also be listening", seemingly meaning gathering intelligence on the Philippines. Duterte said the same would be true for countries such as China or Germany.

The comments seemed to contradict Duterte's previous remarks. In November, he said he planned to buy more weapons from Russia. A few dozen people opposed to arms sales to the Philippines protested outside the presidential compound in Jerusalem during the meeting. "We're protesting against Israel's involvement in the crimes taking place there," lawyer and human rights activist Eitay Maack told AFP.

Further arms deals were expected to be part of Duterte's discussions in Israel. The Philippine president met Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday. In comments before their working lunch, Duterte thanked Israel for supplying him with unspecified defence equipment that was "critical" in "winning the war"—a reference to his government's battle against jihadists in the city of Marawi last year. — AFP

Today, he will lay a wreath at a memorial near Tel Aviv commemorating the Philippines' acceptance of 1,300 Jews fleeing the Holocaust. He will travel to Jordan later in the day. Duterte's trip to Israel began on Sunday night with him apologizing to former US president Barack Obama for having called him a "son of a whore" in 2016, one of several foul-mouthed remarks that have caused outrage.

He lobbied the insult in response to steady criticism from the United States at the time over his violent drug crackdown. Fresh controversy awaits Duterte back home. Yesterday, he ordered the arrest of a lawmaker fiercely critical of his drug war, the second presidential critic from the Senate to be threatened with detention. — AFP

## Spain cancels sale of bombs to Saudi

**MADRID:** Spain said yesterday it has cancelled a 2015 deal to sell 400 laser-guided bombs to Saudi Arabia, which is leading a coalition fighting rebels in Yemen. A defense ministry spokesman confirmed a Cadena Ser radio report that said Spain's new Socialist government planned to return the 9.2 million euros (\$10.6 million) already paid by the Saudis for the arms under a deal signed by the previous conservative administration. The spokesman declined to elaborate but the announcement comes after an August air strike by the Saudi-led coalition battling rebels in Yemen that killed dozens of civilians, including 40 children.

The incident sparked a wave of international anger and calls by the United Nations Security Council for a "credible and transparent" investigation. The coalition had claimed to have targeted a bus carrying rebels. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and other allies intervened in Yemen in March 2015 after Shiite Houthi rebels linked to Iran ousted President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi's government from the capital Sanaa and seized swathes of the country.

Nearly 10,000 people have been killed in the conflict since then, 2,200 of them children, and sparked what the UN has described as the world's worst humanitarian crisis. Amnesty International says Spain is one of the biggest arms exporters to Saudi Arabia. It and other rights groups, including Greenpeace and Oxfam yesterday urged Spain to stop all arms sales to Saudi Arabia during a meeting with Spain's secretary of state for trade, Xiana Mendez.

The government did not make any commitment to limit other arms sales to Saudi Arabia during the meeting, Oxfam spokeswoman Lara Contreras said. While the 400 bombs which Spain will no longer send to Riyadh represent just

"one percent of total arms sales to Saudi Arabia, it sends a clear message that it is important" to the Spanish government, she added. Spain signed an agreement with Saudi Arabia in April to sell the Gulf Arab state five warships in a deal estimated to be worth around 1.8 billion euros.

### 38 rebels killed

In another development, the Saudi-led coalition fighting in Yemen killed 38 rebels in the past 24 hours in air strikes on the strategic port of Hodeida, military and medical sources said yesterday. The latest raids come just days before peace talks in Geneva between the internationally recognized government backed by the coalition and the Shiite Houthi rebels linked to Iran. Pro-government military sources told AFP the coalition targeted Houthi sites, including a roundabout in the south that leads to the centre of Hodeida city and near a naval academy to the west.

Four military vehicles belonging to the rebels were also targeted near Hodeida's airport. Medical sources in Hodeida said 38 Houthi rebel fighters were killed and 26 were wounded. Hodeida's port serves as an entry point for some 70 percent of imports in a country where eight million people face imminent famine. The Red Sea port has been controlled by the rebels since 2014, when they drove the government out of Sanaa and much of the country. The government and the coalition accuse the Houthis of receiving smuggled weapons through Hodeida and have demanded their unconditional withdrawal from the city.

Pro-government forces backed by the alliance have paused their assault on Hodeida port after launching an offensive in June in what they say is a bid to give UN-led peace efforts a chance. Tomorrow's talks in Geneva are expected to focus on the fate of embattled Hodeida, as well as a prisoner exchange deal. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and other allies intervened in the conflict between Yemen's government and rebels in March 2015, aiming to push back the Houthis and return the government to power. Nearly 10,000 people have been killed in the conflict since then, 2,200 of them children. — Agencies

## International

# Walkout, media bust ensure fiery start to Pacific summit

## Diplomats storm out, journalists detained as sparks fly

**YAREN:** The Pacific Islands Forum in Nauru began in dramatic fashion yesterday, with Chinese diplomats storming out of a meeting and a New Zealand journalist detained for interviewing refugees held on the tiny island nation. After a low-key opening ceremony late Monday, tensions erupted almost as soon as formal business commenced yesterday, when China's Du Qiyen attempted to address a meeting about climate change.

The meeting chairman, Nauru President Baron Waqa, stopped him from talking, prompting Du and the rest of the Chinese delegation to walk out. The exchange highlighted sensitivities over Beijing's rising influence in the region, where Nauru backs Taiwan over arch-rival China in the battle for diplomatic recognition. A few hours later, police took veteran TVNZ journalist Barbara Dreaver into custody as she was interviewing an asylum-seeker held on the island under Australia's headline immigration policies.

The plight of the refugees, particularly children, has threatened to overshadow the summit, despite attempts by Nauru authorities to control visiting journalists. Dreaver said she was held for three hours, her footage was confiscated and her PIF media accreditation was revoked. She described herself as "fine and dandy" after her release but said she was now barred from attending PIF press conferences. "I can do Forum stories but I'm not allowed to report on anything to do with the refugees," she told TVNZ.

Australia's Lowy Institute think-tank said earlier this

year that Nauru's government "has recently lurched towards authoritarianism". Opposition figures have been arrested and judges sacked for making decisions the government disagrees with. Authorities have also muzzled the media, strictly controlling journalists' access to the tiny island.

### Boycott averted

Few foreign reporters have made it into Nauru in recent years, with many hampered by a decision to charge Aus\$8,000 (US\$5,800) for media visa applications, non-refundable even if not granted. The fee was temporarily waived for the PIF but the government curbed the number of reporters allowed into the country to cover the region's biggest annual diplomatic meeting. It also banned Australia's public broadcaster ABC after taking exception to its coverage.

Reporters who did make it in are subject to unprecedented restrictions at the usually media-friendly event, under threat of visa revocation. "You are only authorized to report on, or take photos or videos of the PIF. Any other subjects must be approved by the RON (Republic of Nauru)," the media visa restrictions said.

After Dreaver's release, the Nauru government said the only restrictions it had placed on journalists were for safety reasons. "No journalist on Nauru has been prevented from talking to any person, including refugees," it said. "However, in order to protect the safety and security of all, journalists were required to follow procedures."



**NAURU:** Leaders attend the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) at the Civic Center in Aiwo on the island of Nauru. — AFP

The controversies have left Nauru struggling to control the agenda at the 18-nation summit, where official business is focused on climate change and regional security. It was revealed yesterday that the China issue almost derailed the entire event, when some member nations threatened to boycott it over Nauru's treatment of Beijing's delegation.

Nauru refused to stamp entry visas into Chinese diplomatic passports, instead saying it would only process their personal passports. While seemingly a minor detail, it provoked a furious response from other

PIF members, many of whom receive development aid and concessional loans from Beijing. Samoa Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi said Nauru's actions risked undermining "the integrity, credibility and foundation of our organization".

"Your unilateral action as President of Nauru is a dangerous precedent that I believe may not be accepted by forum leaders," he wrote in a letter to Waqa obtained by AFP. While a compromise was reached, this year's PIF continues to be one of the most ill-tempered since the organization was established in 1971. — AFP

“I’m not allowed to report on anything”

## Yemen: At war since 2014

**SANAA:** Yemen, an impoverished country on the Arabian peninsula, has been mired in a deadly conflict between troops loyal to President Abdrabbho Mansour Hadi and Shiite Houthi rebels since 2014. The conflict escalated in 2015 after a Saudi-led coalition launched military operations in Yemen, helping the government to push back against rebels who had seized the capital and several provinces. The violence has since killed nearly 10,000 people and triggered what the United Nations has described as the world's worst humanitarian crisis. Here's a timeline of key events:

### Rebellion in Sanaa

In July 2014, Houthis, who come from a branch of Shiite Islam and consider themselves sidelined after the 2011 uprising against former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, launch an offensive from their northern stronghold of Saada. They have opposed the government for the past decade and are backed by Iran, which denies military involvement. In September, the rebels, allied to military units who have remained loyal to Saleh, enter the capital Sanaa. They seize government headquarters and state radio after several days of fighting. In October they seize the Red Sea port of Hodeida, then move towards the centre of the country. On January 20, 2015, after two days of deadly fighting, the Houthis seize the presidential palace in Sanaa and surround the residence of Hadi, who flees south to Aden a month later.



**SAADA:** In this file photo taken on August 10, 2018 Yemenis dig graves for children, who were killed when their bus was hit during a Saudi-led coalition air strike, that targeted the Dahyan market the previous day in the Houthi rebels' stronghold province of Saada. — AFP

### Saudi air strikes

A Saudi-led coalition launches air strikes on the rebels in March 2015 to counter their advance on the south. Hadi takes refuge in the Saudi capital Riyadh. In July, Hadi's embattled administration announces its forces have retaken the southern province of Aden in their first success since the coalition stepped in. Aden becomes the country's de facto capital. By mid-August, loyalist forces have retaken five southern provinces, but struggle to secure them due to the presence of Al-Qaeda's Yemen branch and the Islamic State group. In October, government forces reclaim control of the Bab Al-Mandab Strait, one of the world's busiest and most strategically sensitive shipping routes.

### Negotiations fail

In August 2016 UN-brokered negotiations in Kuwait between the government and rebels break down on several points, notably the withdrawal of rebels from several strategic towns and power sharing with the government.

### Rebels kill ex-president

Splits emerge in the rebel camp in 2017, resulting in violent clashes and the assassination of Hadi's predecessor and former Houthi ally, Saleh, by rebel fighters in December. The rebels strengthen their grip on the capital. Splits also emerge in the government camp, with fierce clashes erupting in Aden in January 2018 between southern separatists and fighters loyal to Hadi. — AFP

## Raucous start to SC hearing as Dems demand delay

**WASHINGTON:** The confirmation hearing for US President Donald Trump's Supreme Court nominee quickly descended into chaos yesterday with Democrats repeatedly demanding a postponement over withheld documents, and protesters loudly shouting their opposition.

"I move to adjourn," said Senator Richard Blumenthal, one of several Democrats who interrupted the hearing, insisting lawmakers needed time to review thousands of documents related to nominee Judge Brett Kavanaugh that were released Monday night by the administration. Republicans had hoped to use the four-day gathering as an opportunity to highlight Kavanaugh's distinguished career as a US Court of Appeals judge in Washington.

But within moments of Senate Judiciary Committee chairman Chuck Grassley banging the gavel, Democrats launched what appeared to be coordinated protests against moving ahead with the hearing on Kavanaugh's lifetime appointment to the highest US court. "This process will be tainted



**WASHINGTON:** US Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh listens during the first day of his confirmation hearing in front of the US Senate on Capitol Hill. — AFP

and stained forever" should it proceed as scheduled, Blumenthal said. "The motion is denied," Senate Judiciary Committee chairman Chuck Grassley responded, as he vowed to carry on through the end of the week, if necessary, to complete the hearing.

Kavanaugh, holding his daughter's hand and smiling broadly as he entered the hearing rooming, sat stone-faced minutes later as lawmakers spoke loudly over one another and protesters erupted in anger from the back of the hearing room, leading police to eject them from the proceedings. The scenes were extraordinary, even for those with decades of

Capitol Hill experience, as lawmakers spent more than an hour debating a pathway forward. "This is something I've never gone through before," acknowledged Grassley.

Senator John Cornyn, the chamber's number two Republican, likened the developments to "mob rule." Grassley argued that the panel has already received more than 400,000 pages of Kavanaugh-related documents. But Democrats repeatedly broke into Grassley's opening remarks to demand a halt in order to be allowed time to study the 42,000 pages released by the White House just 15 hours before the start of the hearing. — AFP

## Abortion in LatAm: Four women's voices

**MONTEVIDEO:** To legalize or not to legalize, that is the question on the lips of many legislators in Latin America since Argentina opted not to decriminalize abortion following a senate vote. It did at least open the way for greater debate on a subject viewed so differently across the region in which abortion is entirely legal in Cuba and Uruguay, but where women can even be jailed for a miscarriage in El Salvador.

Attitudes are changing in some traditionally conservative societies, though, as Guatemala debates contradictory proposals that would either loosen or toughen laws: Brazil's Supreme Court considers a plan to decriminalize abortion in the first 12 weeks; and Chilean legislators debate a bill that would universally allow abortion in the first 14 weeks. Here, four women tell AFP about their abortion experiences.

### Cuba: 'A right but not a game'

Josefa is 46 and lives in Havana. Cuba was the region's pioneer, legalizing abortion in the first eight weeks in 1965. "I got pregnant at 23. I had my first child and supposedly I couldn't have any more. When I fell pregnant again it was a surprise: I was studying and decided to abort." She had three abortions over a decade but later had a second child, who is now 12.

"In Cuba it's my right to choose when I want to have a child. It's not a contraceptive method. "I didn't have the financial means and I wasn't ready to have another child. I preferred to abort at an early stage of pregnancy. We have this right in Cuba but I don't deny that lots of people use it indiscriminately as a contraceptive, and that can provoke very serious health problems. I had a friend who had so many (abortions) that she could no longer have children, and now she regrets that. We have the right to choose but we must also realize that it's not a game."

### El Salvador: 'Law discriminates against women'

Elsi Rosales, 27, lives and works in the countryside, and carries the scars of a traumatic stillbirth. Since 1998, El Salvador's laws in this area have been unforgiving with abortion for any reason and even miscarriages punishable by up to 40 years in prison. "I was 38 weeks pregnant. I have a three-year-old son who was born by C-section, I didn't know what labor pains were."

It happened as Rosales worked in the fields carrying firewood. "I felt pain in my lower back. I didn't know what was happening but felt like I needed to use the bathroom." It was there that her stillbirth happened. "At that point, I lost consciousness. I was taken to hospital with a hemorrhage. The doctor treating me asked what happened and was the one who denounced me." She spent 10 months in jail but now wants to fight for abortion reform. "I'm going to join the fight so that the women in jail feel they're not alone. This justice system discriminates against us for the sole reason that we're women."

### Mexico: 'No guilt'

Since 2007, abortion has been legal in the capital Mexico City up until 12 weeks. In the rest of the 31 states it's allowed in cases of rape or a threat to the mother's life. But in Guanajuato, it's outlawed and carries a maximum sentence of 30 years. Art promoter Monse Castera, 32, has had three legal abortions, the first in France when she was 21.

"It was... very professional, the one in which I felt most secure." The next two were after it was legalized in Mexico City. "They weren't experiences that left me feeling guilty or with emotional pain. Abortion is not something we should feel ashamed about. It should be avoided but what should most be avoided is having unwanted children. "It fills me with infinite sadness that in 2018 a woman cannot make decisions about her own body. If men could get pregnant this discussion wouldn't even be on the table. No law should tell you what you can or can't do with your body."

### Uruguay: 'Example to other countries'

Office worker Mariana Rodriguez, 27, had an abortion in a public hospital in Uruguay, where it has been legal since 2013. "It was never in my thoughts to become a mother. I don't feel psychologically prepared, nor do I have maternal instincts." A torn condom and a morning-after pill that didn't work sent her down the abortion path. "The process was great, I felt well supported and never judged."

"No-one tried to persuade me. The psychologist just asked me if I was sure and I gave my explanation. "I was lucky that I didn't have to listen (to talk of homemade methods) using parsley and a knitting needle. I'm thankful of the law in Uruguay, it's applied in a perfect way and should be an example to other countries. "For me, it's a very personal debate: how each individual views the fetus, embryo, baby, the concept of motherhood, the stereotype that women are born to be mothers... But it has to be law, there's no discussion there." —AFP

## International

# German leftist 'Stand up' movement promises to win back far-right voters

## Working-class voters have drifted to the xenophobic far-right

BERLIN: German leftwing politicians yesterday launched a cross-party populist movement they pledged would address the concerns of the poor and win back working-class voters who have drifted to the xenophobic far-right.

Sahra Wagenknecht, a divisive Socialist leader of the far-left Die Linke party, and other co-founders presented the "Stand Up" alliance a week after extremist mobs in east Germany attacked foreigners and noisily protested against Chancellor Angela Merkel's immigration policies.

Wagenknecht, 49, deplored the neo-Nazis making Hitler salutes and the ugly outbursts of racist hatred, but argued that many citizens had followed the call of the far-right Pegida movement and anti-immigration AfD party out of frustration over their social conditions.

"I am sick of abandoning the streets to Pegida and the far right," she told a Berlin press conference, launching the cross-party populist movement which she said had won more than 100,000 followers since its online debut several weeks ago. "Many people joined not because they hate foreigners but because they feel left behind," she said about the rallies in Chemnitz in the formerly communist East, a region which still lags the west economically almost 30 years after reunification.

### Populist campaign

The new leftist movement has been compared to the populist campaigns of US Senator Bernie Sanders and Britain's Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, but also to left-wing social movements in Spain and Italy. It is the brainchild of Wagenknecht and her husband Oskar Lafontaine, 74, a firebrand socialist, ex-finance minister and defector

from the centre-left Social Democrats (SPD).

Because "Stand up" (Aufstehen) is, at least initially, a movement rather than a registered political party, anyone can join—the main target groups being disenchanted followers of the SPD and Greens. The movement's declared goal is to counter the "neoliberal policies" of Merkel's centrist coalition government and fight for secure jobs and pensions, environmental protection and "a true democracy not ruled by banks, corporations and lobbyists".

Its website declares boldly that "no politician, no party will solve our problems if we don't do it ourselves". Unsurprisingly, the leaders of the three leftist parties all reject the plan, arguing it further divides and weakens them. Linke chairman Bernd Rixinger attacked Wagenknecht for splitting her own party. "Especially in times when the brown mob is once more hunting people in

the streets, the left must demonstrate unity and a clear line against the right," he said. Spiegel Online commented that if the notoriously divided opposition party Die Linke "still had a hint of self-respect, it would kick Wagenknecht out of the party". "Why tolerate a woman who is closer to the AfD's refugee policy than her own party's, and who is now launching a new counter alliance?"

### No 'open borders'

Wagenknecht, who hails from the former communist East, is a polarizing TV talk show regular, but sometimes awkward with voters. She has courted controversy by criticizing the European Union and defending Vladimir Putin's Russia. She has also broken with the left's "open borders"



BERLIN: Sahra Wagenknecht of the far-left Die Linke party arrives for a press conference on the new left-wing cross-party political grouping "Stand up" (Aufstehen). — AFP

orthodoxy on immigration by arguing that "economic immigrants" take jobs from low-income Germans and strain public services.

However, unlike the anti-Islam AfD, she defends Germany's asylum law for those escaping war, persecution and human rights abuses in their homeland. The idea of a

German cross-party leftist alliance has repeatedly come up and been dismissed in large part because of Die Linke's uncompromising hard-left positions, such as wanting to abolish NATO. In last year's elections, which saw the shock entry of the AfD into the Bundestag, combined support for the left parties dropped below 40 percent. — AFP

“Many people] feel left behind”

”

## Sweden's election: Possible scenarios

STOCKHOLM: Sweden holds legislative elections on Sunday, with polls predicting a parliamentary deadlock as neither Prime Minister Stefan Lovfven's left-wing bloc nor the opposition centre-right are seen winning a majority, while the far-right makes gains. "It's difficult to single out the most likely (government) scenario" after the election, University of Gothenburg political scientist Ulf Bjereld told AFP. "Instead you have to look for the least unlikely scenarios," he said.

One thing is certain: Sweden is headed for a period of uncertainty, with a weak minority government triggering fears of new elections, at a time when economists are forecasting a likely downturn during the next four-year mandate. Traditionally in Sweden after the election, the outgoing speaker of parliament consults with party leaders to nominate a candidate for prime minister tasked with forming a government. Parliament votes on the speaker's choice, and can reject his proposal four times, after which new elections must be called. Sweden

has not held a snap election since 1958.

### Status quo

The post-election scenario seen as most likely by political observers is a new Lovfven government, albeit with an even weaker minority than it has now. The outgoing "red-green" bloc — made up of the governing Social Democrats and the Greens, with the informal support in parliament of the ex-communist Left Party — is leading in the polls ahead of the centre-right Alliance.

If Lovfven were to stay in power with a weakened minority, he would likely try to rally the support of two Alliance members, the Centre Party and the Liberals, to pass legislation, finding common ground on issues like immigration, integration and gender equality. The far-right Sweden Democrats however have vowed to topple a minority left-wing government, for example during the vote on the autumn budget bill.

### Opposition takes power

The conservative Moderates Party leader Ulf Kristersson is intent on ousting Lovfven. Despite some ideological differences, notably on immigration, the four centre-right Alliance parties which governed between 2006 and 2014 (the Moderates, Centre, Liberals and Christian Democrats) have agreed to build a coalition government.



LANDSKRONA: In this file photo taken on August 31, 2018 Sweden Democrats party leader Jimmie Akesson gives a speech as he campaigns. — AFP

Easier said than done: the Alliance would need the support of the far-right to pass legislation, and the far-right would make demands in exchange for its backing. It would either ask for policy concessions — which the four parties have so far ruled out — or key positions on parliamentary commissions that draft legislation. One uncertainty in this scenario is the score of the

Christian Democrats. Opinion polls have long credited the party with less than the four percent required to be represented in parliament, though towards the end of the campaign they appeared to be comfortably above the bar. If the two previous scenarios were to fail, the Social Democrats could choose to invite the Liberal and Centre parties to the negotiating table. — AFP

## Spain trial over 'stolen babies'

MADRID: Spain's first trial linked to thousands of suspected cases of babies stolen from their mothers during the Franco era resumed at a Madrid court yesterday, decades after the scandal broke. Eduardo Vela, 85, a former gynaecologist at the now-defunct San Ramon clinic in Madrid, is accused of having in 1969 taken Ines Madrigal, now aged 49, from her biological mother and given her to another woman, who then raised her and was falsely certified as her birth mother.

A handful of activists protested outside the Madrid court as Vela arrived at the court in a wheelchair. "It's an important day. We hope the trial will wrap up today and enter the sentencing phase," Madrigal told reporters as she arrived at the court. Activists say hundreds of similar cases dating back to the right-wing dictatorship of 1939 to 1975 have failed to make it to court in Spain because of a lack of evidence or because the time limit to file charges has passed.

In a dark and often overlooked chapter of General Francisco Franco's dictatorship, the newborns of some left-wing opponents of the regime, as well as of unmarried or poor couples, were removed from their mothers and adopted. New mothers were frequently told their babies had died suddenly within hours of birth and the hospital had taken care of their burials, but in fact they were given or sold to another family.

Baby stealing began in the 1950s after Franco came to power following the 1936-39 civil war pitting left-wing Republicans against conservative Nationalists loyal to the general. It was part of an effort to purge Spain of Marxist influence. It was expanded to take newborns from poor families as well as illegitimate babies.

### 'Historic'

Enrique Vila, a lawyer who has written extensively about the "stolen babies" scandal, said Vela's trial could provide "moral" encouragement for other victims to bring forward lawsuits. "There are dozens of doctors and nuns across Spain who are guilty" and who are still alive, he told AFP. During questioning in the opening session of the trial on June 26, Vela said he could not remember details of how the clinic, which he ran for 20 years up to 1982 and is believed to have been a centre for baby trafficking, operated and that the signature on Madrigal's birth certificate was not his.

Vela—the first person prosecuted over the "stolen babies" scandal which broke in the media in the 1980s—was due to return to the witness stand the following day but instead he went to hospital after falling ill. No date has been given for when the three-judge panel hearing the case will hand down its verdict although Madrigal's lawyer, Guillermo Pena, said it could come within a month. "This day could be historic (because) we could have a sentence with proven facts. Up until now we have only had accusations," he added.

### French journalist testimony

Aside from Vela, six other people are scheduled to testify, including a journalist with French public television station France 2 who used a hidden camera to record Vela as he appeared to confess to having given Madrigal away as a "gift". She will answer questions by video conference, according to a court source. Prosecutors are seeking an 11-year jail sentence for falsifying official documents, illegal adoption, unlawful detention and certifying a non-existent birth.

The baby theft system outlived Franco's death in 1975 and carried on as an illegal trafficking network until 1987 when a new law that regulated adoption more tightly was introduced. Campaigners estimate tens of thousands of babies may have been stolen from their parents over the decades. The cases echo events that took place during Argentina's 1976-1983 military dictatorship. Courts there have since handed down lengthy jail terms for the systematic theft of babies from political prisoners. — AFP

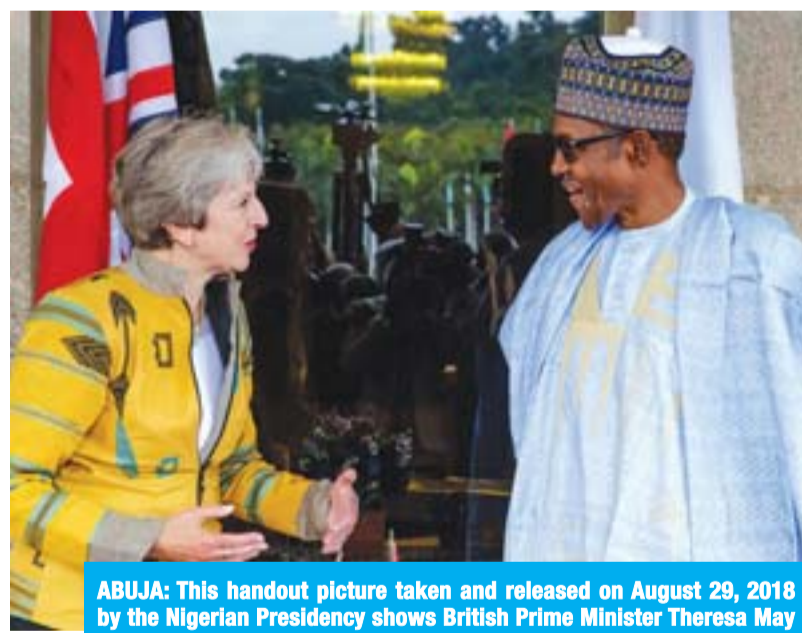
## Nigerian ex-VP attacks 'uncompromising, power-drunk' Buhari

LAGOS: Nigeria's former vice-president, Atiku Abubakar, has said he has "fears" for the country's election next year as he attacked President Muhammadu Buhari for intransigence and wanting to cling on to power. "The characters that are involved this time, as far as the leadership of this country is concerned, are different from 2015," he said Monday evening.

Abubakar, 71, was vice-president under President Olusegun Obasanjo between 1999, when civilian rule was restored in Nigeria, and 2007. Since then, he has been a presidential candidate three times for three different parties but failed to make it through the primaries. He left the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and joined the All Progressives Congress (APC) before the last elections in 2015 that saw Buhari become the first opposition candidate to unseat an incumbent president.

Atiku, as he is referred to across Nigeria, praised Buhari at the time but has since dumped the APC and rejoined the PDP, accusing it of failing to deliver on promises. He said last December the APC had become as factionalised as its rivals amid a "draconian clampdown on all forms of democracy within the party and the government it produced".

Abubakar on Monday described Jonathan, who was lauded for conceding defeat to Buhari, as "much more level-headed" and a "peaceful,



ABUJA: This handout picture taken and released on August 29, 2018 by the Nigerian Presidency shows British Prime Minister Theresa May (L) speaking with Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari at the Aso Rock Presidential Villa (The State House). — AFP

very patriotic Nigerian. We are dealing now with a retired general (Buhari), very uncompromising, also power-drunk who will not be ready to leave power without a fight—or at least those are some of my fears for the current elections," he said.

Buhari, 75, is a no-nonsense former army general who headed a military government in the 1980s but ran a campaign four years ago calling himself a "converted democrat". He has been accused of ignoring the rule of law and using security services to silence perceived political opponents, as well as targeting opposition figures as part of his high-profile anti-corruption drive.

Questions have been raised about whether he is well enough to run for a second term at the February election, after he spent months undergoing treatment for an undisclosed illness in London last

year. Previous polls in Nigeria have been marked by extreme violence but last week Buhari assured visiting British Prime Minister Theresa May that he was "all out for free, fair and credible elections".

Security will be a major issue, with Boko Haram Islamists still not defeated in the remote northeast, despite Buhari's promises to end the nine-year insurgency that has killed at least 20,000 and displaced more than two million. More than 1,500 people have also been killed since September last year in renewed clashes between farmers and herders in central states. Atiku did not disclose how he would tackle Boko Haram, whose home state of Adamawa has been among the three most-affected by the violence and the humanitarian aftermath. But he declared that "there must be something wrong somewhere" and vowed to investigate further. — AFP

## Merkel 'underestimated' challenges: Salvini

BERLIN: Italy's hardline interior minister Matteo Salvini said Chancellor Angela Merkel "underestimated" the troubles that mass immigration would bring, linking her open borders stance to the racist violence that has rocked the German city of Chemnitz.

"I would say that Angela Merkel certainly underestimated the risk of a social clash when she claimed that there was space for hundreds of thousands of people in Germany," Salvini told German public broadcaster Deutsche Welle in an interview late Monday. "I still remember what happened during the New Year's Eve celebrations in Cologne in 2015, and also elsewhere," he added.

Hundreds of women suffered sexual assaults by groups of mainly north African men that night in scenes that shocked Germany and inflamed debate about Merkel's decision that year to allow in a large number of asylum seekers at the height of Europe's migrant crisis. Several high-profile crimes committed by migrants since then have further hardened the public mood, fuelling the rise of the far-right, anti-Islam Alternative for Germany (AfD) party.

Most recently, far-right extremists have rallied in the eastern city of Chemnitz after a German man was stabbed to death on August 26, with an Iraqi asylum seeker the prime suspect. Images of far-right protesters chasing down foreign-looking people in violent demonstrations and of neo-Nazis giving the Hitler salute in front of lines of police officers have stunned the nation.

"Violence is never a solution," Salvini told Deutsche Welle. "Violence calls for violence, but the German government has been underestimating the problem for years, and the rise of the AfD is clearly a reaction." Salvini has taken a tough anti-immigration stance since his hard right League party formed a government with the populist Five Star Movement last June. He has refused NGO migrant rescue ships access to Italian ports, and accuses Brussels of having abandoned Italy as it struggles to deal with the arrival of hundreds of thousands of migrants since 2013. — AFP



International

# Taleban announce death of Haqqani network founder

A key figure in entrenching jihad in the conflict-ridden region

**KABUL:** Jalaluddin Haqqani, a one-time CIA asset who went on to found a brutal militant group that is now a top US target in South Asia, has died after a long illness, the Afghan Taleban announced yesterday. Jalaluddin, whose eponymous Haqqani network is known for its heavy use of suicide bombers against Afghan civilians, security forces, and US-led NATO troops, was a key figure in entrenching jihad in the conflict-ridden region over the past 40 years.

His group is at the heart of regional tensions, with Washington and Kabul long suspecting the Haqqanis of having links to Pakistan's shadowy military establishment. Jalaluddin, believed to have been born in Afghanistan before migrating to Pakistan's tribal areas, first came to prominence as an Afghan mujahideen commander fighting the Soviet occupation in the 1980s with the help of the United States and Pakistan.

Known for his organization, courage and entrepreneurial skills, Jalaluddin was nicknamed "kabari", Pashto for scrap metal dealer, for reselling parts of tanks that had been destroyed on the battlefield. He became a CIA asset and received a personal visit from US congressman Charlie Wilson, who helped secure arms for the mujahideen.

Over the following decades, the media-friendly Jalaluddin used his Arabic language skills to foster close ties with Arab jihadists, including Osama bin Laden, who flocked to the region during the war. He became a minister in the Taleban regime which took power in Afghanistan in 1996 — one of the only major mujahideen leaders to join the group—and was close to its late founder Mullah Omar.

But after the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001

toppled the regime, he pulled back from the public eye, making only a handful of appearances in later years as the fearsome reputation of the Haqqani network began to grow. The group, designated a terrorist organization by the US in 2012, has been blamed for spectacular attacks across Afghanistan since the Taleban, and is one of the most merciless and effective groups operating in the region.

Jalaluddin, thought to be in his 70s or 80s, once told AFP that eating honey was the secret to a long life. He had been bedridden for years and had already passed the leadership to his son Sirajuddin, who is also the Taleban's deputy leader. Jalaluddin "was from among the great distinguished Jihad personalities of this era", the Taleban said in a statement posted on Twitter.

The Haqqani family confirmed the patriarch's death in a WhatsApp message to journalists. It was not clear where or when he died. Unverified reports have placed him in Pakistan in recent years. There had been rumors of his death before, including widespread reports in 2015, though this is the first time the Taleban and his family have confirmed it.

**Devastating attacks**

Afghan and foreign analysts and diplomats played down the significance of Jalaluddin's death for the group's operations. Analyst Michael Kugelman of the Wilson Center in Washington tweeted: "Given how long he'd been ill, his death won't have a big impact on the war." The Haqqanis were described by US Admiral Mike Mullen in 2011 as a "veritable arm" of Pakistani intelligence.

Washington has long pressured Islamabad to crack



**MIRANSHAH:** This picture taken on April 2, 1991 shows Afghan commander Jalaluddin Haqqani (C) with two top guerrilla commanders Amin Wardak and Abdul Haq at his Pakistani base. —AFP

down on the group, and recently cancelled assistance worth hundreds of millions over Pakistan's lack of "decisive" action against militants. Islamabad has repeatedly denied it is sheltering militants on its soil. But Jalaluddin's son Sirajuddin was running the network "with major ISI involvement", a foreign diplomat in Kabul told AFP, referring to Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence agency.

Apart from devastating bomb attacks, the Haqqanis have also been accused of assassinating top Afghan officials and holding kidnapped

Westerners for ransom. They include the Canadian Joshua Boyle, his American wife Caitlan Coleman and their three children, who were released last year, as well as US soldier Bowe Bergdahl, who was freed in 2014. In Kabul, the group is widely believed to have been behind many recent attacks on the capital that were claimed by the local wing of the Islamic State group. Some analysts believe the Haqqanis work with IS—which at the same time is involved in a bloody turf war with the Taleban—to avoid blame and political blowback. —AFP

## Myanmar defends Suu Kyi's silence over reporters

**YANGON:** A global outcry over the jailing of two Reuters journalists has been met with silence from Myanmar's civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi, a stony response that an official defended yesterday as a reluctance to criticize the judiciary. Wa Lone, 32, and Kyaw Soe Oo, 28, were arrested while reporting on atrocities committed during the bloody expulsion by the military of some 700,000 Rohingya Muslims last year. A Yangon court on Monday found them guilty under the Official Secrets Act and handed them each seven years in prison, sparking outrage from the UN, EU and US as well as media and rights groups. Suu Kyi was herself subjected to house arrest for some 15 years, relying on foreign media to highlight her plight. A UN report last week accused her of failing to use her moral authority to stem the violence last year and called for the generals to be prosecuted for "genocide".

Her silence on this case and the verdict — the sternest test in recent years to free speech in the country — has shredded her reputation even further. But Aung Hla Tun, a former Reuters journalist who now works for the government as deputy Minister of Information, defended the Nobel Laureate's reticence. "Criticizing the judicial system would be tantamount to contempt of court," he told AFP. "I don't think she will do it." A whistleblowing policeman had corroborated the defence argument that the reporters had been entrapped by police, who handed them documents over dinner shortly before their arrest. But the judge chose to ignore the testimony.



**YANGON:** Pan Ei Mon (L) and Chit Su Win (R), wives of detained Reuters journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, attend a press conference held yesterday. —AFP

**'Sad Day for Myanmar'**

Lawyers for the pair will appeal the verdict although the lengthy process could take months, if not years. The country's president, a close ally of Suu Kyi, could also pardon the reporters but experts say any immediate intervention is unlikely. In April 8,500 people were set free in an amnesty, including 36 deemed to be political prisoners but there were still some 200 others, including the two Reuters journalists, facing trials linked to political activities.

Erstwhile Suu Kyi advocates overseas have been left dismayed by her attitude to the journalists' ordeal so far. Her one public reference to the Reuters journalists during the court case — telling Japanese broadcaster NHK that the pair had broken the Official Secrets Act — was criticised by rights groups for potentially prejudicing the verdict. —AFP

## Pakistan elects Imran Khan ally as president

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistan yesterday elected a close ally of Prime Minister Imran Khan as its new president, further cementing the ruling party's power after a controversial general election victory. Former dentist Arif Alvi, one of the founders of Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, will replace Mamnoon Hussain after the vote by more than a thousand lawmakers from both houses of parliament and the four provincial assemblies.

Former cricket champion Khan became prime minister last month following his party's controversial victory in the mid-July parliamentary elections. Khan's critics accuse him of having benefited from an underhand intervention by the military in his favor, and from fraud on the day of the vote. State-run Pakistan television announced the unofficial results just over an hour after the voting ended yesterday, with Alvi claiming victory in televised remarks. The official result is expected to be announced by the election commission today.

Alvi told reporters he was "thankful to God", and vowed to be a president for all of Pakistan. TV footage showed him shaking hands with parliamentarians after the vote, with many handing him sweets in celebration. Hussain, a close ally of ousted premier Nawaz Sharif, had kept a low profile during his tenure. Alvi, a father of four and active Twitter user,



**ISLAMABAD:** In this handout photograph released by the National Assembly yesterday, leader of ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party and president candidate Arif Alvi casts his ballot during the president election at the National Assembly. —AFP

was shot and wounded during a protest against military dictator Ayub Khan in Lahore in 1969. He still has a bullet embedded in his right arm.

He studied at the University of Michigan and the University of the Pacific in San Francisco, as well as in Lahore, before making a career as a dentist and then entering politics. He served as PTI's secretary general for eight years from 2006, and was elected an MP in the southern megacity of Karachi in 2013, winning re-election in the July vote. —AFP

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## Analysis

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## Turkey's Saturday Mothers defy ban in search for sons

**H**anife Yildiz, 66, says she last saw her only son, Murat, in 1995 - when he was 19 and she handed him to Turkish police for questioning. She had brought Murat to a police station in the western city of Izmir, where he was wanted for interrogation over a cafe brawl. He never came back. The police later told Yildiz that Murat, who had been six months from starting his military service - fled during the night, jumping from a ferry while being transported to Istanbul. Doubtful of this version of events, Yildiz joined a group of Turkish women with similar questions about the whereabouts of their loved ones. Calling themselves Saturday Mothers, the organization moulded itself on those Argentinean women who protested for news of relatives who disappeared under the dictatorship of the 1970s and 80s.

Since May 1995, the Turkish group - made up in large part of elderly women - has met in an Istanbul square on Saturdays. Police prevented the group from holding any protests for a decade from 1999 to 2009, but they then resumed without interference. Until last month, that is. On what would have been the women's 700th such protest, the police clamped down, using rubber bullets and water cannon to forcibly disperse them.

Almost 50 were briefly detained, including 82-year-old Emine Ocak, a Saturday Mothers leader whose arrest shocked observers. The group has not been allowed to gather ever since, with the government accusing it of being exploited by a "terror organization". In the latest confrontation, police deployed in large numbers on Saturday and erected metal barricades to stop the women from protesting. Defiant, Yildiz insists she will not back down. "We will not give up on our cause until the authorities show us our sons' gravestones. That's how I will prove my motherhood," she told AFP at the offices of the Human Rights Association in Istanbul.

### 'Never-ending mourning'

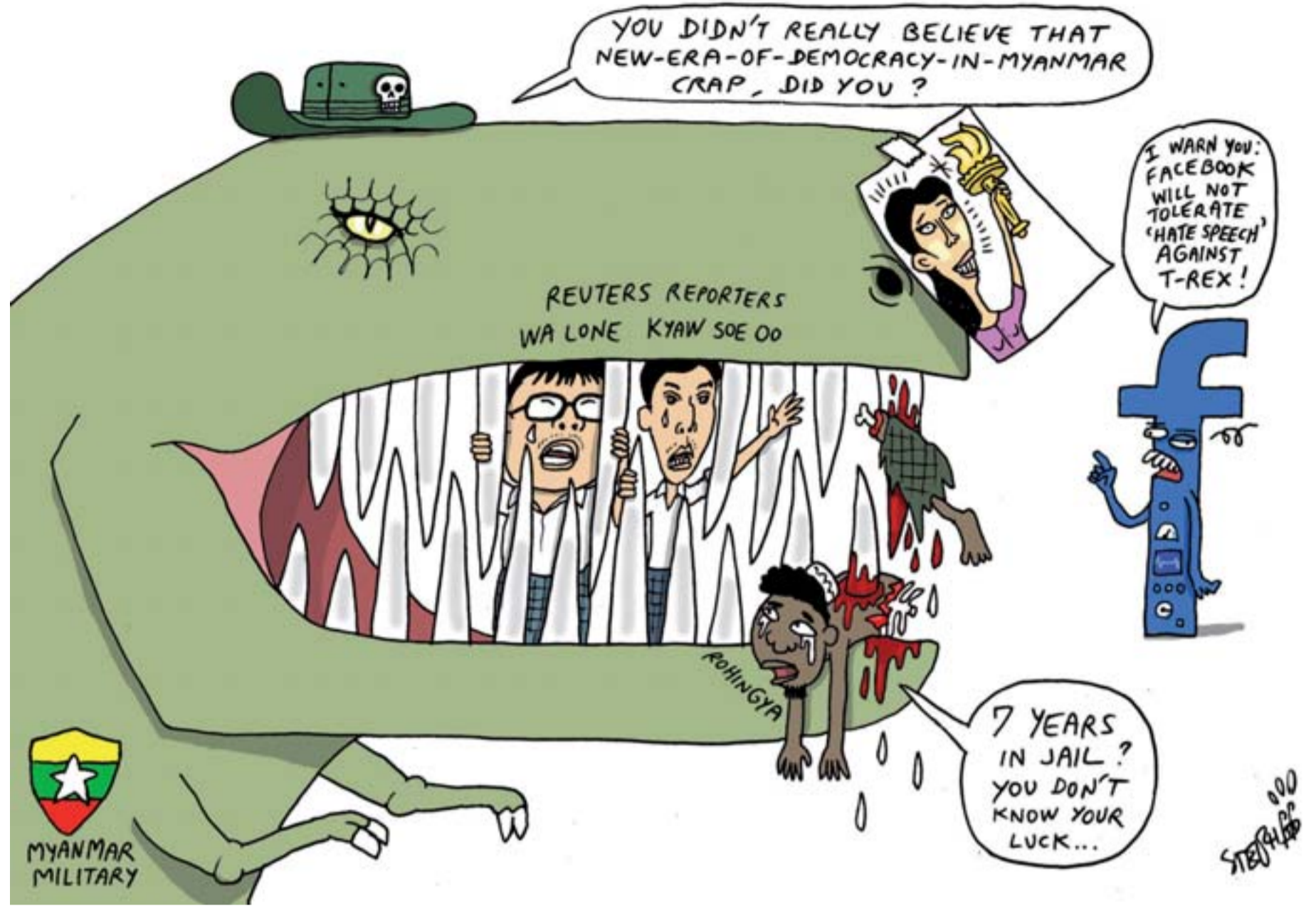
Yildiz' fellow Saturday Mothers are equally determined. "There is a never-ending mourning over disappearances under detention. It will never come to an end unless we have a grave," Ocak's daughter Maside said. The 1980s and 1990s were among the most turbulent periods in the history of modern Turkey, with the state fighting Kurdish rebels in the southeast, and left-wing extremists in urban centers. Activists accuse the secular authorities of the time of abuses in the arrest and treatment of hundreds of detainees.

Saturday Mothers fear the current government under President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is not enthusiastic about unearthing the truth. The authorities have defended the clampdown on the group, which they claimed was being used by the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). "Should we have turned a blind eye to motherhood being abused by a terror organization?" Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu asked a conference last month. Istanbul's authorities have claimed that calls to attend Saturday Mothers rallies were made through social media channels linked to the PKK.

### 'Continue the search'

Maside Ocak's brother, Hasan, has not been seen since March 21, 1995, when his family say he was detained by police in Istanbul. Soylu said Hasan had belonged to a far-left extremist group, and that he was killed in a dispute between members. Even if this is true, "we demand a fair trial and that the culprits be punished," insisted his sister. "I saw pictures of Hasan's tortured body in forensic records. I was 19. (The image) has not left my eyes ever since," she said.

"As long as this crime remains unpunished, we will continue to be here," Erdogan, when he was prime minister, met representatives of Saturday Mothers, including Yildiz, in 2011. His government's current crackdown on the group, however, is seen as a sign that official attitudes have hardened. Yildiz insisted she, too, would not give up. "If a mother does not search for her child then that motherhood has no meaning," she said. "He is my son." —AFP



## Who are the Haqqanis - the most feared insurgents?

**T**he Taliban announced yesterday the death of Jalaluddin Haqqani, a former CIA asset whose eponymous militant group is now considered one of the most dangerous factions fighting Afghan and US-led NATO forces in Afghanistan. The Haqqani network was founded by Jalaluddin, an Afghan mujahideen commander fighting the Soviet occupation in the 1980s with the help of the United States and Pakistan.

Now a Taliban affiliate, it is blamed for some of the most shocking and brutal attacks across Afghanistan since the US invasion of 2001. Designated a terror group by Washington, targeting it is one of the top US priorities in the region. Long suspected of links to Pakistan's shadowy military establishment, the network was described by US Admiral Mike Mullen in 2011 as a "veritable arm" of Pakistani intelligence.

### Who are they?

Jalaluddin gained notoriety for his organisation and bravery during the Afghan conflict of the 1980s, garnering attention from the CIA and a personal visit from US congressman Charlie Wilson. A fluent Arabic speaker, Jalaluddin also fostered close ties with Arab jihadists, including Osama bin Laden, who flocked to the region during the war. Later, Jalaluddin became a minister in the Taliban regime. He is believed to have been ill for several years.

The network has been led by his son Sirajuddin, who doubles as the Afghan Taliban's deputy leader, for some time now. The Haqqanis are known for their heavy use of suicide bombers. Analysts have long suspected them of being behind some high-profile attacks in Kabul

that have been claimed by the Islamic State group in recent years.

Among many spectacular assaults, they were accused of killing around 150 people in the heart of Kabul with a truck bomb in May 2017 - though Sirajuddin later denied the accusation in a rare audio message. The network has also been accused of assassinating top Afghan officials and holding kidnapped Westerners for ransom. That includes Canadian Joshua Boyle, his American wife Caitlan Coleman, and their three children, who were released last year. They also held US soldier Bowe Bergdahl, who was released in 2014 in exchange for five Afghan Guantanamo Bay detainees.

### Where are they now?

Following the US invasion of Afghanistan, Taliban fighters flooded across the border into Pakistan, where they regrouped before launching an insurgency against the Americans. That included the Haqqanis, who coordinated attacks on NATO from across the border in their stronghold of Miranshah, the biggest town in North Waziristan, one of Pakistan's loosely governed tribal areas along the border with Afghanistan.

The US launched repeated drone attacks against the group, while Pakistan's military conducted successive clearing operations, though sceptical Afghan officials have noted they always seemed to miss the Haqqanis. Islamabad intensified military operations in North Waziristan in 2014, however, and now insists that there are no militant safe havens left on Pakistani soil. Some militant sources say the pressure forced many of the Haqqanis underground or over the border into their Afghan strongholds, claims that AFP

could not confirm. Unverified reports have placed Jalaluddin in Pakistan in recent years. There is no confirmation yet of where he was when he died.

### Linked to Pakistan

Pakistan sees its arch-nemesis to the east, India, as an existential threat, and has long sought influence over Kabul as a bulwark against New Delhi. The Haqqanis have frequently been accused of targeting Indian installations in Afghanistan, spurring speculation they were overseen by Pakistani intelligence. Analysts say Pakistan appears to view the Haqqanis and more broadly the Afghan Taliban as an asset holding India at bay in Afghanistan. Politicians and retired military officials in Islamabad acknowledge privately that having open channels with the Haqqanis is vital, with many insisting that maintaining contact is not the same as offering support.

### What happens next?

With Sirajuddin firmly in charge, Jalaluddin's death may not have much strategic impact on the network's operations. Washington, which believes Pakistan is playing a double game, has long pressured Islamabad to crack down on militant groups, with the Haqqanis a top priority. Islamabad has repeatedly denied the claims.

On Saturday, the Pentagon announced it was cancelling \$300 million in aid to Pakistan over its lack of "decisive" action against militant groups. The cut, part of a broader freeze announced by the Trump administration in January, is seen as another attempt by Washington to bend Pakistan to its will. However, analysts have said the moves are too



Photo shows Afghan commander Jalaluddin Haqqani at his Pakistani base in Miranshah. The Afghan Taliban have announced the death of Jalaluddin Haqqani 'after a long battle with illness'. —AFP

little, too late, and that until the US addresses Pakistan's fears over India, Islamabad will not shake its support for militant proxies. At any rate, a crackdown on the Haqqanis might not be easy on either side of the border because of their strong local links in a society where tribal ties matter more than what outside powers want. —AFP

## The far-right Sweden Democrats' rocky path to 'normalization'

**T**he far-right Sweden Democrats (SD) who originated from the neo-Nazi movement, have sought to clean up their image in recent years with a sweeping revamp that has widened their appeal. Narrowly trailing in the opinion polls behind the Social Democrats, which heads the current coalition government, and neck-and-neck with the conservative Moderates, SD leaders are hoping to cause an upset in Sunday's legislative elections.

"We know that we are underestimated (in the polls) as we have been historically, I therefore don't exclude the possibility of us becoming the largest party," SD leader Jimmie Akesson told AFP on the sidelines of a rally in the southern city of Ystad in late August. The party currently has 42 of the 349 seats in parliament after six members left, including the leader's mother-in-law, while another lawmaker was excluded over anti-Semitic remarks at the end of 2016.

The Sweden Democrats were formed in 1988 in the southern city of Malmo during a meeting attended by former Nazi group members and an ex-volunteer in the SS, among others. The turning point came in the 2000s, when SD leaders decided to turn the party "into an ordinary one", a goal that upset core members by shifting its race ideology to anti-multiculturalism, according to Anders Sannerstedt, a political scientist.

"The initial links with white and Nazi supremacist organizations have been effectively abandoned," he said.

### 'Try to normalize'

In October 2012, Akesson was forced to announce "zero tolerance against racism and extremism" and several members were kicked out. But his orders have been regularly defied by some local party representatives and grassroots activists. Senior SD member Bjorn Soder, the second deputy speaker in parliament, said last year that Jews should not be considered Swedish unless they assimilate.

"For their leadership, the crucial issue has been to try to normalize the party, although a lot of statements indicate there's still a long way to go," said Jens Rydgren, a sociologist specializing in radical groups in Europe. The anti-racist magazine Expo and the daily Expressen recently revealed that several SD local election candidates-whose votes will be held one the same day as the legislative polls - were former members of the National Socialist Front (NSF) and other small neo-Nazi groups. Some continue to pay their party contributions.

According to the Sweden's statistics authority, a quarter of SD's supporters are men aged 18 to 24. Emil Pettersson, 18, is among them and admits that he was attracted by the party's tough immigration policies. "They haven't really said anything racist," he insisted ahead of Akesson's appearance at the Ystad rally. The SD were able to capitalize on the migration crisis of 2014 and 2015. Sweden at the time welcomed nearly 250,000 asylum seekers, a bigger proportion of its (10 million) population than any other European



In this file photo Sweden Democrats party leader Jimmie Akesson gives a speech as he campaigns in Landskrona, southern Sweden. —AFP

country. The Sweden Democrats' rise, however, began before the migration wave, making gains in the polls from 2010 to 2014.

### Growing influence

Their influence in public debates also continues to grow. In 1998, only three percent of Swedish voters cited migration as a reason for choosing who to elect. Twenty years later, it's one of their main concerns along with health-care and education. In early 2016, the Scandinavian country reinstated border controls and introduced several measures intended to dissuade asylum seekers. Both turned into a symbolic victory for the far-right. "The SD have been able to say 'we warned against this situation for many years, now the other

parties start to imitate our policy," Anders Sannerstedt said.

On this particular issue, the SD's views do not differ much from the centre-right Alliance including the conservative Moderates, the Centre party, the Liberals and the Christian Democrats, Sannerstedt added. At the local level, some members of the Alliance have already begun to crack under pressure from voters. In Akesson's southern hometown of Solvesborg, the Christian Democrats and the Sweden Democrats announced the opening of negotiations before the municipal elections. The Moderates, with 40 percent of their supporters spread across the nation, say they are open to discussion with the Sweden Democrats, to beat the local left. —AFP

## Business

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FRANKFURT MAIN: The European Central Bank headquarters in Frankfurt Main. Too much debt has made the world's financial system as vulnerable as it was 10 years ago, Europe's top central banker during the 2008 global meltdown has warned as he looks back on the crisis. — AFP

# Global finance 'as vulnerable' as in 2008

## Excessive debt levels pose risk to advanced economies: Ex-ECB chief

**PARIS:** Too much debt has made the world's financial system as vulnerable as it was 10 years ago, Europe's top central banker during the 2008 global meltdown has warned as he looks back on the crisis.

"There is now agreement that the excessive debt level in advanced economies was a key factor in the triggering of the global financial crisis in 2007 and 2008," Jean-Claude Trichet, who ran the European Central Bank between 2003 and 2011, told AFP in an interview. "The growth in debt, especially private debt, in advanced countries has slowed, but this slowdown has been offset by an acceleration of emerging country debt," said Trichet, a Frenchman who ran his country's central bank, the Banque de France, before taking the helm at the ECB.

"This makes the entire global financial system at least as vulnerable as it was in 2008, if not more so."

Trichet was only the second president at the ECB, which was barely a decade old when US bank Lehman Brothers collapsed in September 2008, a date widely seen as the trigger of the global crisis.

### 'Unheard of since WWII'

But Trichet said the bank had detected big trouble much earlier. "I witnessed the real start of the financial crisis that was about to sweep the world in the morning of August 9, 2007, when we were confronted with a complete interruption of the eurozone money market," he remembered.

After claiming its first bankruptcies in the US in the summer of 2007, the budding crisis quickly made world stock exchanges wobble too. The contagion reached Europe when German bank KfW issued a profit warning, prompting the German government to extend it a lifeline of more than three billion euros (\$3.5 billion).

Then, on August 9, French banking giant BNP Paribas froze three of its US funds specializing in securitized mortgages whose value plunged by 400 million euros within a few days. Panic gripped financial institutions, causing the money market, where banks lend each other short-term liquidity, to suddenly dry up.

"This had been unheard of since World War II," Trichet said. "There was none of the usual business, no transac-

tions between banks, no market interest rates," said Trichet. Trichet and the ECB responded by bringing on heavy monetary artillery. "I decided with my colleagues to provide all the liquidity that the banks were asking for, without limit," he said.

In the end around 50 eurozone banks came looking for a total of 95 billion euros in liquidity—a sum exceeded in recent history only by the nearly 110 billion the ECB injected after the 9/11 attacks in the United States in 2001.

### 'Extremely bold'

Trichet was in his French summer house that day, far from the Frankfurt-based ECB, and "in constant electronic contact with the ECB and the council members. After two and a half hours we decided to give the banks the 95 billion". The move was a watershed because "it showed that the ECB was able to take extremely bold decisions very quickly".

There were two competing views of what was going on, Trichet remembered. "There were those who thought that the subprime crisis was the harbinger of something big

and dangerous to come, and those who thought that this was a simple market correction, quite healthy and without any systemic importance. I subscribed to the former view." True enough, the financial situation continued to worsen over the subsequent months, until the Lehman Brothers crash sparked the crisis proper.

Lehman may have been the smallest investment bank on Wall Street, but "it was the detonator for the worst financial crisis since World War II", Trichet said.

By the time Lehman started to crumble, Trichet said he and his central banker colleagues, including Fed chief Ben Bernanke, "were very much aware that we were looking at a completely systemic major global crisis".

"We said that the Lehman's bankruptcy would have catastrophic consequences, but I realized that the US government was not going to save Lehman if the private sector failed to find a solution," he said.

"It was my understanding that the American government at the time did not have the political leeway to intervene with public money. So I got ready for the catastrophe," Trichet said. — AFP

## Venezuela to hike fuel prices by October: Maduro

**CARACAS:** Venezuela will hike the price of its heavily subsidized gasoline by October, President Nicolas Maduro said on Monday, as the crisis-stricken government seeks to shore up its coffers amid hyperinflation that is accelerating a broad economic collapse.

Despite the crisis, fuel prices are set so low that the equivalent of \$1 buys nearly 400,000 gallons of fuel. That cripples the state's hard currency earnings and drives a lucrative smuggling trade. The government will launch a new payment system using a state-backed identification card in border states to limit smuggling, Maduro said, and will increase prices to international levels once that system is in place. "During the course of September, October, once that system is working, we will establish the subsidy systems and the price of gasoline will be set at the international price," he said during a televised broadcast.

Maduro did not offer additional details. Any increase would mark the first time in

20 years that Venezuela has significantly raised fuel prices, which have been a sensitive issue ever since riots broke out in 1989 in response to austerity measures that included higher gasoline prices.

Government regulations have kept prices steady at the pump despite inflation that is expected to hit 1,000,000 percent this year, according to the International Monetary Fund.

Drivers have for years paid for fuel in loose change, often tipping service station workers more than they pay to fill their tanks. Experts estimate Venezuela - where shortages of food and medicine have fueled hunger, disease and a mass exodus of citizens - loses at least \$5 billion a year as a result of not selling gasoline at international prices.

Critics have questioned how Venezuelans, whose salaries have been destroyed by unchecked inflation, could afford to pay the same fuel prices as those facing drivers in the United States.

The new system revolves around a state-backed ID known as the Fatherland Card, which Maduro says is meant to provide better services to citizens through data collection.

Opposition critics say the identification cards are meant to channel subsidies and scarce food and medical services to government supporters, while withholding them from Maduro's adversaries. — Reuters

## Carney says he is ready to stay longer at BoE

**LONDON:** Bank of England Governor Mark Carney said yesterday he was ready to extend his time in charge of the central bank to help Britain's economy as it leaves the European Union.

When Carney moved to London from his native Canada in 2013, he agreed to stay at the BoE until 2018. Two years ago, after Britain voted for Brexit, he extended his term by a further year, until June 2019. That would keep him in his job until shortly after Britain's scheduled exit from the EU in March next year. But London and Brussels have not yet agreed the terms of their future relationship, raising the prospect of a damaging Brexit.

"Even though I have already agreed to extend my time to support a smooth Brexit, I am willing to do whatever else I can in order to promote both a smooth Brexit and an effective transition at the Bank of England,"

Carney told lawmakers on parliament's Treasury Committee.

"The Chancellor (finance minister Philip Hammond) and I have discussed this. I would expect an announcement to be made in due course." The Evening Standard newspaper said last week that Hammond wanted Carney to stay longer at the BoE, a move which would allow the finance ministry to focus squarely on Brexit negotiations over the next few months.

The pound recouped some losses yesterday after Carney said he was ready to stay, but concerns over Brexit kept a lid on the currency's gains. It suffered its biggest daily drop against the euro in more than three months on Monday after European Union chief Brexit negotiator, Michel Barnier said he strongly opposed Britain's latest proposal.

Carney won plaudits from investors for his response to the Brexit vote shock in 2016, when the central bank promised to pump liquidity into markets if needed and cut interest rates to a historic low.

But the Canadian has angered many Brexit supporters who accuse him of overstepping his remit by warning, before the referendum, of a hit to Britain's economy in the event of a vote to leave the EU, and of

over-reacting to the referendum result.

Carney said yesterday it might be easier for the government to find his replacement once the terms of Brexit are known. "There are some advantages for that process to be run in the context of full knowledge both of the government of the day and the applicants, those interested parties in the position, of the exact form of Brexit that the country has decided to take," he said.

As well as chairing the nine-member Monetary Policy Committee which sets official British interest rates, the governor of the BoE has powers over the banking sector.

The extent to which Britain will set its own banking rules will be determined by the terms of any Brexit deal with the EU. Carney also reiterated that Britain's economy would suffer a shock if the country leaves the EU without reaching a deal, saying households would feel a renewed squeeze on their incomes for a few years.

The fall in the value of the pound after the 2016 Brexit vote pushed up inflation in Britain at a time of only modest wage growth.

Carney said a no-deal Brexit would cause sterling to fall again although it would rise if there is an agreement. — Reuters



## Business

# China-Africa summit rejects criticism of debt-laden projects

## Summit concludes with a new \$60bn aid pledge for continent

BEIJING: Chinese and African officials yesterday rejected criticism of Beijing's debt-laden overseas development projects as they wrapped up a summit that included a new \$60 billion assistance pledge for the continent.

President Xi Jinping hosted leaders from across Africa amid criticism that his country's Belt and Road global trade infrastructure project is worsening debt problems in some countries.

"Everything we do with China is perfectly under control, including on the financial and debt side," said Senegal's President Macky Sall, whose country took over the co-chairmanship of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) for the next three years. "We shouldn't let our conscience be disturbed by criticism made regarding the nature of our relations with China," Sall said in remarks alongside Xi and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa to close the triannual FOCAC summit.

For his part, Xi said the summit "opened a new chapter in the history of China-Africa relations".

Ramaphosa, who handed over the co-chairmanship to Sall, said another achievement at the summit was an agreement to "work hard to increase Africa's value-added exports to China".

He had called on Monday for the two sides to work to "balance" trade relations, noting that Africa exports raw materials to China while Chinese factories send finished products back to the continent.

### 'Vanity projects'

Xi opened the meeting on Monday with an offer of \$60 billion in funding for projects over the next three years, saying there were "no political strings attached" but warning against spending on "vanity projects".

Xi also said China would write off the debt of some of the poorest African countries, without specifying which. The money comes on top of \$60 billion offered at the last summit in 2015. China's special envoy for African affairs, Xu Jinghu, said Beijing would be "very conscientious" in its cooperation with Africa and conduct feasibility studies before choosing projects. "China has not increased the debt burden of Africa," she told reporters.

"The reasons behind the African debt are quite complex. It has been accumulated for a long time," Xu said, adding that the prices of raw materials exported by Africa have fallen and reduced countries' revenues. "There are many countries in Africa. Even for the countries that are heavily indebted, China is not the main creditor. So it doesn't make sense and it's groundless to put the blame on China for the African debt," she said.

The new financing includes \$15 billion in grants, interest-free loans and concessional loans, \$20 billion in credit lines, the creation of a \$10 billion fund for development financing and a \$5 billion special fund to pay for imports from Africa.

Chinese companies were encouraged to invest at least \$10 billion on the continent. Johan Burger, director of the NTU-SBF Centre for African Studies at



BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping (center) attends with South African President Cyril Ramaphosa (left) and Senegalese President Macky Sall (right) a joint press conference during the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing yesterday. — AFP

Singapore's Nanyang Technological University, said Xi's warning against vanity projects showed the "severity" of the issue. "Should this money be spent on vanity projects, it will lend credence to the charges against

China," Burger said. "China itself does not have an never-ending source of funding, and would not want to see its financing be wasted, with no returns for itself and no real benefit for the countries involved." — AFP

## Japan finmin seeks record 2019 budget to boost welfare, defense spending

TOKYO: Japanese Finance Minister Taro Aso said yesterday initial budget requests for fiscal 2019 would likely reach a record high around 102 trillion yen (\$918 billion), given an ageing population and defense challenges from China and North Korea. The finance ministry was still in the process of finalizing the figure for next fiscal year starting in April, Aso told reporters.

An increase in planned welfare spending and a request from the defense ministry to increase its budget to a record were pushing up overall expected spending, he said. "An expected increase in welfare spending is a big factor behind next fiscal year's budget request," Aso said.

"We have to figure out how to accommodate the defense ministry. There are also items we need to include related to the next sales tax hike." It is possible for the finance ministry to cut the final size of next fiscal year's budget to below initial requests, but this is unlikely to ease concern about Japan's debt burden, which is proportionally the highest in the world at more than twice annual gross domestic product.

In comparison, the US debt burden is around 125 percent of gross domestic product, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Japan's ageing society puts constant upward pressure on welfare and healthcare spending.

The government has taken steps to trim some of this expenditure, but the average age is rising so rapidly



TOKYO: Japan's Finance Minister Taro Aso answers a question during an upper house parliamentary session in Tokyo yesterday. — Reuters

that spending cuts have not stopped the overall increase in welfare outlays.

The defense ministry has requested 5.3 trillion yen for next fiscal year, a 2.1 percent increase from the current fiscal year to help pay for major upgrades of defense systems designed to shoot down North Korean ballistic missiles. If approved, the budget will mark a seventh straight annual before-inflation increase as Prime Minister Shinzo Abe reinforces Japan's military in response to China's growing air and sea power and North Korea's missile program.

The government plans to raise the nationwide sales tax to 10 percent from 8 percent in October 2019. The government is planning stimulus measures to help soften the blow from the tax hike, Aso said, which need to be included in next fiscal year's budget. — Reuters

## US factory activity races to 14-year high in August

WASHINGTON: US manufacturing activity accelerated to more than a 14-year high in August, boosted by a surge in new orders, but growing concerns over rising raw material costs as a result of import tariffs could restrain further growth.

The Institute for Supply Management (ISM) said yesterday its index of national factory activity jumped to 61.3 last month, the best reading since May 2004, from 58.1 in July. A reading above 50 indicates growth in manufacturing, which accounts for about 12 percent of the US economy.

The ISM described demand as remaining "robust," but cautioned that "the nation's employment resources and supply chains continue to struggle." According to the ISM, respondents to the survey were "again overwhelmingly concerned about tariff-related activity, including how reciprocal tariffs will impact company revenue and current manufacturing locations."

President Donald Trump's "America First" trade policy has led to an escalating trade war with China and tit-for-tat import tariffs with other trading partners, including the European Union, Canada and Mexico. Trump has defended the duties on steel and aluminum imports and a range of Chinese

goods as necessary to protect American industries from what he says is unfair foreign competition.

Economists have warned that the tariffs could disrupt supply chains, undercut business investment and slow the economy's momentum.

The ISM's new orders sub-index increased to a reading of 65.1 last month from 60.2 in July. Factories reported hiring more workers last month, with production increasing sharply.

The survey's supplier deliveries index jumped to a reading of 64.5 last month, highlighting the rising bottlenecks in the supply chain, from 62.1 in July. It hit a 14-year high of 68.2 in June.

US stocks were trading lower while yields of US Treasuries were higher. The dollar was stronger against a basket of currencies.

### Construction spending

In a separate report yesterday, the Commerce Department said construction spending barely rose in July as increases in homebuilding and investment in public projects were overshadowed by a sharp drop in private nonresidential outlays.

Construction spending edged up 0.1 percent. Data for June was revised up to show construction outlays declining 0.8 percent instead of the previously reported 1.1 percent drop.

Economists polled by Reuters had forecast construction spending increasing 0.5 percent in July. Construction spending increased 5.8 percent on a year-on-year basis. Spending on private residential projects rebounded 0.6 percent in July following two straight months of declines. — Reuters

## Australia mints its most valuable coin ever

SYDNEY: Australia has minted a gold coin encrusted with rare pink diamonds worth Aus\$2.48 million (US\$1.8 million) to meet growing demand for high-end collectables from the ultra-rich.

The two-kilogram treasure, which depicts a sailing ship, a gold prospector and boab trees found in Western Australia, is considered legal tender and will be sold to the highest bidder.

It is the most valuable coin ever made in Australia and is expected to be sold to a buyer from Asia or the Middle East. It was "released in response to the distinct increase in demand for exclusive luxury items", said Perth Mint chief executive Richard Hayes yesterday.

"The coin showcases rare pink stones handset in the most famed of precious metals, telling the inspirational rags to riches tales of mining for these prized resources."

Called "Discovery", it was modelled after the "Holey Dollar", one of Australia's first coins, with a private collector paying Aus\$495,000 for one of those in 2013.

A key attraction is the four pink diamonds from the renowned Argyle mine in Australia's remote western Kimberley region, including a 1.02-carat emerald cut.

"In terms of pink diamonds themselves, you can fit the whole year's production literally into the palm of your hand," said Hayes. Miner Rio Tinto holds a pink diamond sale each year which attracts global interest. Stones can fetch US\$1-2 million a carat. As a basic rule of thumb, pink and red diamonds are worth about 50 times more than white diamonds. — AFP

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## Business

## BAYAN MONTHLY MARKET REPORT

# Boursa Kuwait equities close August trading in red zone

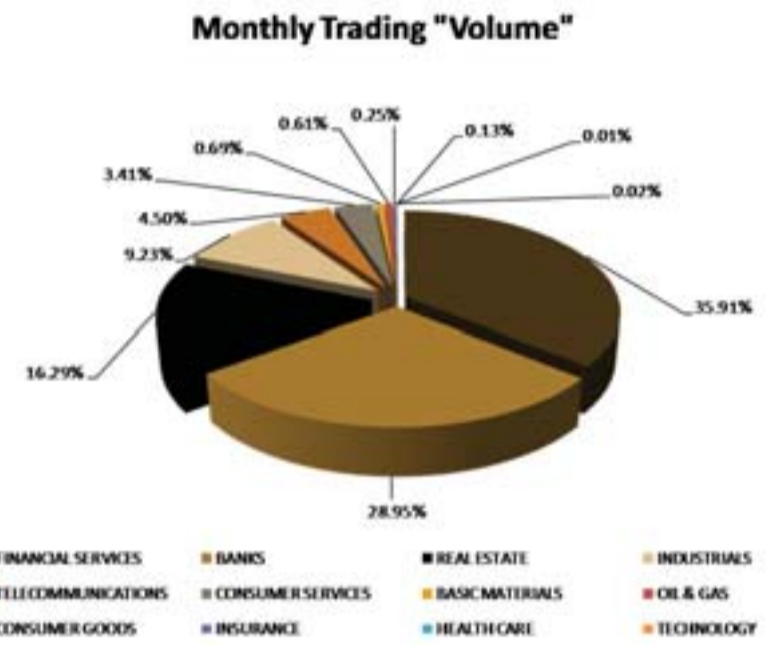
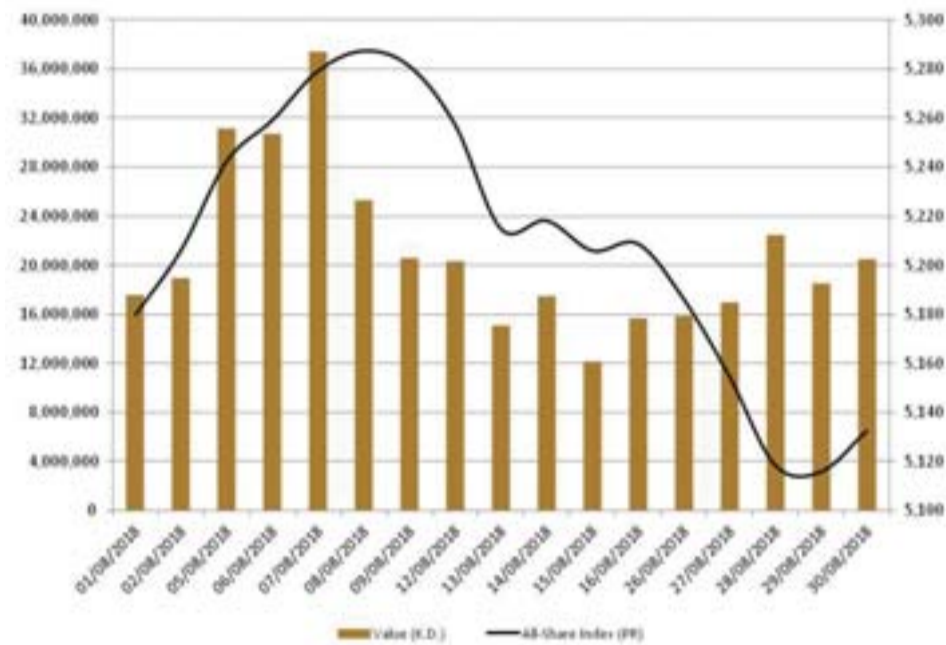
## Premier Market index, Main Market index edge down

**KUWAIT:** Boursa Kuwait ended August in the red zone. The Premier Market Index closed at 5,261.82 points, down by 0.66 percent, the Main Market Index decreased by 0.72 percent after closing at 4,897.46 points, whereas the All-Share Index closed at 5,132.31 points down by 0.68 percent. Furthermore, last month's average daily turnover decreased by 23.85 percent, compared to the preceding month, reaching KD 20.97 million, whereas trading volume average was 105.26 million shares, recording a decrease of 16.98 percent.

Post to the outstanding and large gains recorded by the Boursa Kuwait during the month of July, supported by the purchasing powers that were strongly present then, the profit collection operations interfered to stop the Boursa boost and forced its indices to decline and end the month of August's trading in the red zone. The Boursa decrease came as a result to the selling pressures that many of the listed stocks were subject to, especially the ones that witnessed strong increases previously, headed by the leading and heavy stocks listed in the Premier Market, for profit collection purposes and building new price positions to restart once again.

Also, the Boursa witnessed during the month of August a contraction in the purchasing operations and weak cash liquidity, which declined by the end of the month by around 44 percent compared to its level in the previous month, as a result to the long Eid Al-Adha holiday during the month, in addition to the watch state of many traders as the Boursa promotion to the developing markets getting into effect, which contributed relatively into the decline of the liquidity levels and pushed the market indicators to end the month's trading in the losses area.

Moreover, the market capitalization of the Boursa recorded monthly losses of over KD 211 million, as it reached by the end of last month KD 28.71 billion, down by 0.73



percent of its level in the previous month, where it was KD 28.92 billion. The Boursa gains contracted since the application of the new market segmentation phase reaching KD 855.29 billion and 3.07 percent. (Note: The market capitalization of the listed companies in the Market is calculated based on the weighted average number of outstanding shares as per the latest available financial statements).

On the other hand, the month of August witnessed an end to the legal period for the listed companies to disclose its first half of 2018 financial results, whereas the number of disclosing companies reached 167 out of 175 listed company in the Market, with around KD 1.09 billion in net profits, and up by 11.64 percent for the

same companies' results for the same period of 2017, where it was KD 972.92 million. In addition, after five months of the application of the Market Segmentation, the Premier Market Index's gains reached 5.24 percent, while the Main Market Index losses contracted to reach 2.05 percent, and the All-Share Index growth reached 2.65 percent.

### Sectors' indices

Seven of Boursa Kuwait's sectors ended last month in the red zone, four recorded increases, while the Health Care sector's index closed with no change from the month before. The Technology sector headed the losers list as its index declined by 10.53 percent to end the month's activity at 865.73 points. The

Telecommunications sector was second on the losers' list, which index declined by 1.39 percent, closing at 931.63 points, followed by the Banks sector, as its index closed at 1,062.19 points at a loss of 1.19 percent. The Consumer Services sector was the least declining as its index closed at 1,056.99 points with a 0.05 percent decrease.

On the other hand, last month's highest gainer was the Basic Materials sector, achieving 4.48 percent growth rate as its index closed at 1,118.21 points. Whereas, in the second place, the Oil & Gas sector's index closed at 1,097.18 points recording 3.89 percent increase. The Real Estate sector was the least growing as its index closed at 986.77 points with a 0.17 percent increase.

### Sectors' activity

The Financial Services sector dominated a total trade volume during the last month of 642.56 million shares changing hands, representing 35.91 percent of the total market trading volume. The Banks sector was second in terms of trading volume as the sector's traded shares were 28.95 percent of last month's total trading volume, with a total of 517.98 million shares. On the other hand, the banks sector's stocks were the highest traded in terms of value; with a turnover of KD 175.28 million or 49.17 percent of last month's total market trading value. The Industrial sector took the second place as the sector's last month turnover of KD 70.79 million representing 19.86 percent of the total market trading value.

## Alaa Selim new GM at Cophorne Kuwait City

**KUWAIT:** Millennium & Cophorne Hotels Middle East & Africa announces the appointment of Alaa Selim as the new General Manager of Cophorne Kuwait City Hotel (formerly known as Holiday Inn Downtown). Prior to his current appointment, Selim was the General Manager of Cophorne Al-Jahra Hotel & Resort in Kuwait for the past 5 years.

Alaa has more than twenty years of experience in the hospitality industry and has held senior management positions with, Millennium & Cophorne Hotels, Le Meridien Hotels, JW Marriott, Courtyard by Marriott, and The Palms Beach Hotel & Spa in Kuwait City.

With his 20-year career in the hospitality industry and extensive knowledge and experience of Kuwait hotel market, Alaa will be a great asset to Cophorne Kuwait City, which will be shortly celebrating its 1st anniversary as a Millennium hotel in January 2019.

Commenting on his new appointment, Selim said "I am honored to be given this wonderful opportunity as General Manager at Cophorne Kuwait City. I am also fortunate to work with a very dynamic and motivated team whom we will work together to continue to provide guests with memorable experiences and uphold the great reputation of which the property has been always renowned for, while striving to further enhance service quality and brand value into the future.

Alaa is an Egyptian national, born in Kuwait in 1975, and holds a bachelor degree in tourism and hotel management from Cairo obtained in 1996. He is also a certified project management professional from the project management institute (PMI). Married and having a 7-year-old son and a 9-month daughter, Selim loves to entertain his friends with his cooking skills and enjoys scuba diving in his spare time.

## Danske Bank shares plunge after fresh money laundering claims

**COPENHAGEN:** Shares in Denmark's largest lender Danske Bank plunged on the Copenhagen Stock Exchange yesterday, hit by fresh allegations of money laundering through its Estonian subsidiary.

The stock fall of over six percent cut the bank's market value by 1.6 billion euros (over \$1.8 billion) within an hour of trading after the Financial Times reported that up to \$30 billion from Russia had flowed through

## Dutch bank ING settles money laundering probe

**THE HAGUE:** Dutch banking giant ING has paid 775 million euros to settle a criminal investigation over money laundering after it failed to ensure its accounts were not misused, prosecutors said yesterday.

The bank swiftly apologized as it acknowledged that "serious shortcomings" in its systems had enabled customers with criminal intent to misuse its accounts.

"ING Bank NV in Amsterdam has accepted a settlement agreement and paid 775 million euros (\$897 million) as proposed by the Dutch public prosecutor's office," a statement from the prosecutor said.

The amount included a 675 million euro fine and a reimbursement to the Dutch government of 100 million euros. ING was guilty of "serious omissions in the prevention of money laundering", the statement added.

"Clients were able to use accounts held with ING NL for criminal activities for many years, virtually undisturbed," it said, adding that the bank did not prevent customers from laundering "hundreds of millions of euros between 2010 and 2016". Financial investigators two years ago launched a probe after their investigations revealed that many white-collar crime suspects held bank accounts at ING. "ING NL missed potential signals of money laundering," by not properly monitoring these suspects' accounts, the prosecutor's statement said.



AMSTERDAM: In this file photo taken on November 07, 2012 an employee arrives at the Dutch bank ING in Amsterdam. — AFP

Danske's subsidiary in 2013 alone. It was not clear how much of the amount was actually suspicious.

"We are not able to verify the specific information mentioned in the media," Danske Bank said in a statement. The bank has been at the centre of a financial scandal since Danish daily Berlingske last year claimed that it had been involved in the laundering of around \$3.9 billion of dirty money from several eastern European countries.

But after seeing bank statements dating back to 2007 and 2015 from 20 companies with accounts in Danske's Estonian branch, the paper reported in early July that the figure was actually more than twice that. Denmark's state prosecutor for serious economic and international crime Morten Niels Jakobsen said in August that Danske Bank was being investigated and prosecutors would determine whether charges would be pressed.

Danske has launched an internal probe of its own

regarding the allegations, and it plans to publish its findings before the end of the month.

It has also pledged to cooperate with the prosecutor's investigation. "As we have previously communicated, it is clear that the problems related to the portfolio were significantly larger than we originally anticipated when the investigations began," the bank said. Other major European banks have been ensnared in massive laundering scandals in recent years including France's BNP Paribas and Germany's Deutsche Bank.

The bank statements from 20 companies at Danske Bank are linked to a fraud case exposed by the Russian lawyer Sergei Magnitsky, who was jailed for revealing high-ranking Russian officials' involvement in stealing massive tax payments from several companies, including the investment fund Hermitage Capital. Magnitsky died in 2009 aged 37 after being held for a year and denied medical care. — AFP

### Bribes and lingerie

Prosecutors detailed several examples of misused accounts. Among them was an international telecommunications provider that "transferred bribes worth millions of dollars via its bank accounts with ING to a company owned by the daughter of a former Uzbek president."

In another case a women's underwear trader laundered 150 million euros through a bank account held at ING. "It should have been clear to the bank that the monetary flows had little to do with the lingerie trade and were therefore unusual," prosecutors said.

When ING's monitoring system did generate alerts, they were never further investigated and described by the bank as "not unusual." In a statement, ING said it "acknowledges serious shortcomings in the execution of customer due diligence policies to prevent financial economic crime at ING Netherlands in the period investigated". It also said it "sincerely regrets that these shortcomings enabled customers to misuse accounts of ING Netherlands". CEO Ralph Hamers said the bank "takes full responsibility" for failing to ensure no crime was committed. "As a bank we have the obligation to ensure that our operations meet the highest standards, especially where it comes to preventing criminals from misusing the financial system," he said.

ING said it has taken measures against several senior employees, including freezing salaries and suspension without pay. The Netherlands' largest bank, which posted 4.9 billion euros in profits in 2017, warned that the settlement "will have an impact on ING's third quarter 2018 results." In 2012, ING agreed to pay a record \$619 million to the US authorities to settle accusations that it had violated American sanctions banning transactions with Cuba, Iran, Myanmar and Sudan. ING has over 52,000 employees and customers in over 40 countries. — AFP

## Commercial Bank clarifies on free SMS service

**KUWAIT:** Commercial Bank of Kuwait said its SMS service for its customers has been available free of charge for over 10 years, and this meets the latest instructions of Kuwait Central Bank to prevent possible fraud in the service.

CBK's Digital Services Director Khalil Al-Qattan said "CBK has taken proactive measures by activating this service for over 10 years in order to achieve the highest security and protection for its clients when processing their banking transactions. He said CBK is keen on presenting the most up-to-date digital banking solutions to maintain contact with clients through all communications means including WhatsApp which allows them to contact the bank when abroad. He said clients should update their mobile numbers so that they can set the service correctly.



Khalil Al-Qattan

## Burgan Bank announces winner of Al-Thuraya salary account draw

**KUWAIT:** Burgan Bank, announced yesterday Rola Housni Ibrahim Mohammad Abdulwahed as the lucky winner of the Al-Thuraya Salary Account monthly draw.

The draw rewards new and existing customers who transfer their salary to Burgan Bank by offering them a chance to win a Nissan Patrol SUV every month. With every KD 10 available in the account, the customer receives one chance to enter the draw.

The Al-Thuraya account holders have the option to hold money in Kuwaiti dinar and other major currencies and can access account-related services such as standing orders, loans and credit cards, and benefit from the discounts and offers throughout the year. Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is the youngest commercial Bank and second largest by assets in Kuwait, with a significant focus on the corporate and financial institutions sectors, as well as having a growing retail, and private bank customer base. Burgan Bank has majority owned subsidiaries in the MENA region supported by one of the largest regional branch networks.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Burgan Bank's brand has been created on a foundation of real values - of trust, commitment, excellence and progression, to remind us of the high standards to which we aspire. 'People come first' is the foundation on which its products and services are developed.

Technology & Science

# In India, Google races to parry the rise of Facebook

## Google lures customers with better ad-buying tools

MUMBAI: Google retains only a slight lead over Facebook in the competition for digital ad dollars in the crucial India market, sources familiar with the figures say, even though the search giant has been in the country far longer and has avoided the controversies that have dogged its rival. Facebook's success has shaken Alphabet Inc's Google, led by an Indian-born CEO, Sundar Pichai, who has made developing markets a priority.

Google officials in India earlier this year were alarmed to learn that Facebook Inc was likely to generate about \$980 million in revenue in the country in 2018, according to one of the sources. Google's India revenues reached \$1 billion only last year. Facebook and Google declined to comment on Indian revenue figures or the competition between the two companies.

Google is now pushing back, attempting to lure customers with better ad-buying tools and more localized services. The revamped strategy mirrors initiatives that have succeeded in boosting the time Indian consumers spend with Google services. The battle in India reflects an epic challenge for Google in developing markets around the world that are crucial to the company's long-term growth - many consumers in those countries are gravitating to Facebook and its siblings, Instagram and WhatsApp, at the expense of Google search and YouTube, and advertising dollars are quick to follow.

"Facebook is a far more user-friendly platform even though they haven't created features specifically for Indian advertisers," said Vikas Chawla, who runs a small ad-buying agency in India. Facebook ads, compared with those on Google search or YouTube, tend to transcend language barriers more easily because they rely more on visual elements, said Narayan Murthy Ivaturi, vice president at FreakOut Pte Ltd, a Singapore-headquartered digital marketing firm.

“ Facebook, far more user-friendly platform ”

Pinpointing younger consumers and rural populations is easier with Facebook and its Instagram app, he and other ad buyers said.

And Facebook is succeeding in India, which boasts the fastest-growing digital ad market of any major economy, despite internal turmoil and political controversy. It has been without a country head for the last year, and has faced a series of incidents in which rumors circulating on Facebook and WhatsApp have prompted mob violence. Facebook and Google between them took 68 percent of India's digital ad market last year, according to advertising buyer Magna.

Media agency GroupM estimates digital advertising spending will grow 30 percent in India this year. The Facebook phenomenon is evident close to home for Google. During a recent lunch period, six out of 10 people who walked out of Google's Bangalore offices while looking at their phones told Reuters they were checking WhatsApp. All 10 said they regularly used WhatsApp.

Eight Indian ad buyers interviewed by Reuters were divided on whether Facebook would overtake Google in Indian ad revenue. That such a question would even be debated explains why Pichai, Google's chief executive, has pressed to flip the company's approach to emerging markets. "India is the most important market for the 'Next Billion Users' initiative," Caesar Sengupta, the head of the effort, told Reuters on the sidelines of the annual "Google for India" event in New Delhi last week.

### New tactics

For many years Google designed its services for early adopters of new technology, who tended to be in Silicon Valley, said Nelson Mattos, who oversaw Google's Europe and Africa operations for several years. Great products would



NEW DELHI: A man walks past a Google hashtag during an event in New Delhi. —Reuters

then find a broad global audience. "Over time, as you saw the growth of Facebook, the importance of WhatsApp and other tools in these new markets, and not the same adoption of Google, the company started to realize that maybe they had to change that approach," Mattos said.

Shortly after taking the helm three years ago, Pichai mapped a new strategy for places such as India: More services tailored to locals: more marketing on radio, billboards and TV; more local staff and start-up investment. Google's India workforce has more than doubled since to more than 4,000 employees, or about eight times Facebook's presence, accord-

ing to a tally of LinkedIn profiles and company statements.

Its products evolved too, becoming easier to use with low data plans. Smartphone apps such as Files Go and Tez - rebranded last week as Google Pay - were aimed at Indians. "There's definitely a sea change," said Asif Baki, a user researcher at Google who oversees two-week "immersion trips" in developing markets for senior executives and staff. The efforts are bearing fruit. Indian users during the first half of this year spent more time on Google services than on Facebook services, according to estimates from audience measurement firm Comscore. —Reuters

## Amazon to launch food and drink sales in Mexico

MEXICO CITY: Amazon.com Inc will begin selling food and drinks online in Mexico, including snacks, sweets and wines, it said on Thursday, a move that could intensify its competition with Wal Mart de Mexico to claim shoppers in a nascent e-commerce market. Online shopping represents a fraction of total retail sales in Mexico but has grown swiftly, putting Amazon and its rivals in a race to ramp up investments in logistics, technology and product offerings.

Amazon views food and drink sales as key to growth, eyeing routine purchases to stock pantries as a way to generate other types of sales, but has yet to dominate the category. The new items on its Mexico site, which it launched in 2015, span coffees, teas, liquors, wines and beers, as well as cooking ingredients, non-perishable snacks and sweets. "We're committed to offering our clients as many products as we can," Fernando Ramirez, Amazon Mexico's senior product manager, said in a statement.

The launch shows Amazon's intent to claim more of Mexicans' wallets, said Gene Munster, research head at Loup Ventures. "Non-perishables are the first step to capturing food spending, and likely indicate Amazon's ambitions to increase its offering related to fresh food," he said. In the United States, Amazon moved into online grocery sales through a \$13.7 billion purchase of Whole Foods Market last year. It offers two-hour delivery and lets shoppers pick up Amazon products from Whole Foods stores. —Reuters

## Amazon eyes Chilean skies, seeks to datamine the stars

SANTIAGO: Amazon.com is in talks with Chile to house and mine massive amounts of data generated by the country's giant telescopes, which could prove fertile ground for the company to develop new artificial intelligence tools. The talks, which have been little reported on so far and which were described to Reuters by Chilean officials and an astronomer, are aimed at fuelling growth in Amazon.com Inc's cloud computing business in Latin America and boosting its data processing capabilities.

President Sebastian Pinera's center-right government, which is seeking to wean Chile's \$325 billion economy from reliance on copper mining, announced last week it plans to pool data from all its telescopes onto a virtual observatory stored in the cloud, without giving a timeframe. The government talked of the potential for astrodada innovation, but did not give details. The government did not comment on companies that might host astrodada in the computing cloud.

Amazon executives have been holding discussions with the Chilean government for two years about a possible data center to provide infrastructure for local firms and the government to store information on the cloud, an official at InvestChile, the government's investment body, told Reuters. For at least some of that time, the talks have included discussion about the possibility of Amazon Web Services (AWS), hosting astrodada, astronomer Chris Smith said, based on email exchanges he was part of between AWS and Chilean Economy Ministry officials over the last six months.

Smith was at the time mission head of AURA observatory, which manages three of the US federally-funded telescope projects in

Chile. Jeffrey Kratz, AWS's General Manager for Public Sector for Latin American, Caribbean and Canada, has visited Chile for talks with Pinera. He confirmed the company's interest in astrodada but said Amazon had no announcements to make at present.

"Chile is a very important country for AWS," he said in an email to Reuters. "We kept being amazed about the incredible work on astronomy and the telescopes, as real proof points on innovation and technology working together." "The Chilean telescopes can benefit from the cloud by eliminating the heavy lifting of managing IT," Kratz added.

AWS is a fast-growing part of Amazon's overall business. In July it reported second-quarter sales of \$6.1 billion, up by 49 percent over the same period a year ago, accounting for 12 percent of Amazon's overall sales.

### Star-gazing to shop-lifting

Chile is home to 70 percent of global astronomy investment, thanks to the cloudless skies above its northern Atacama desert, the driest on earth. Within five years, the South American country will host three of the world's four next-generation, billion-dollar telescopes, according to Smith. He and Economy Ministry officials leading the Chilean initiative to store astrodada in the cloud saw potential in more Earth-bound matters.

The particular tools developed for the astrodada project could be applicable for a wide variety of other uses, such as tracking potential shop-lifters, fare-evaders on public transport and endangered animals. Julio Pertuze, a ministry official, told Reuters at the event announcing Chile's aim to build a virtual observatory on the cloud. Smith added that the same technology could also be applied to medicine and banking to spot anomalies in large datasets.

Amazon, whose founder and largest shareholder Jeff Bezos is well known for his interest in space, already provides a cloud platform for the Hubble Telescope's data and the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research in Australia. As Amazon explores the potential in Chile's astrodada, tech rival Google, owned by Alphabet Inc, is already a



FRANCE: The logo of Amazon is seen at the company logistics center in Lauwin-Planque, France. —Reuters

member of Chile's Large Synoptic Survey Telescope, which will be fully operational in Cerro Pachon in 2022. Google also has a data center established in the country. Justin Burr, senior PR associate for AI and Machine learning at Google, declined to comment on any Google plans around astrodada or its involvement in other telescope projects. Separately, a Google spokeswoman said last week that the company will announce expansion plans for its Chilean data center on Sept 12.

### Giant database

Smith said that what the Chileans are calling the Astroinformatics Initiative - to harness the potential of astrodada - could enable Amazon Web Services access to the research that astronomers are doing on projects like the LSST. "We are going to have to go through a huge database of billions of stars to find the three stars that an astronomer wants," Smith said, adding that was not too different from searching a database of billions of people to find the right

profile for a targeted advertisement.

"So a tool that might get developed in LSST or the astronomical world could be applicable for Amazon in their commercial world." Since speaking to Reuters, Smith has moved on from his job heading AURA to a new position at the US National Science Foundation. Amazon's role in the astrodada project would also give it an entry into a market where it is seeking to expand.

Amazon - which controls nearly one-third of the global cloud computing business, ahead of rivals Microsoft Corp and Google - has struggled to lure public institutions in Latin America, including research facilities, to store their data online instead of on physical machines. AWS declined to provide any information on the size of its regional business in Latin America. Economy Minister Jose Ramon Valente said at last week's announcement, "Chile has enormous potential in its pristine skies not only in the observation of the universe but also in the amount of data that observation generates." —Reuters

## Going up! Japan to test mini 'space elevator'

TOKYO: A Japanese team working to develop a "space elevator" will conduct a first trial this month, blasting off a miniature version on satellites to test the technology. The test equipment, produced by researchers at Shizuoka University, will hitch a ride on an H-2B rocket being launched by Japan's space agency from southern island of Tanegashima next week. The test involves a miniature elevator stand-in-a box just six centimeters long, three centimeters wide, and three centimeters high.

If all goes well, it will provide proof of concept by moving along a 10-metre cable suspended in space between two mini satellites that will keep it taut. The mini-elevator will travel along the cable from a container in one of the satellites. "It's going to be the world's first experiment to test elevator movement in space," a university spokesman said yesterday.

The movement of the motorized "elevator" box will be monitored with cameras in the satellites. It is still a far cry from the ultimate beam-me-up goals of the project, which builds on a long history of "space elevator" dreams.

The idea was first proposed in 1895 by Russian scientist Konstantin Tsiolkovsky after he saw the Eiffel Tower in Paris, and was revisited nearly a century later in a novel by Arthur C Clarke. But technical barriers have always kept plans stuck at the conceptual stage. —AFP

## China launches platform to stamp out online rumors

BEIJING: China has launched a platform, which includes a mobile app, that lets the public report "online rumors" and even uses artificial intelligence to identify reports that are false, as Beijing cracks down on what it views as socially destabilizing content. The platform, launched on Wednesday, comes as Beijing steps up efforts to police the internet, especially social media used by people to discuss politics and other sensitive subjects, despite stringent censorship.

Besides a website, the platform Piyao - which means "refuting rumors" - also has a mobile app and social media accounts with social media giants Weibo and WeChat. Via those channels, Piyao will broadcast "real" news, sourcing reports from state-owned media, party-controlled local newspapers, and various government agencies. "Rumors violate individual rights; rumors create social

panic; rumors cause fluctuations in the stock markets; rumors impact normal business operations; rumors blatantly attack revolutionary martyrs," Piyao said in a promotional video of the launch on its website.

Official data show internet regulators received 6.7 million reports of illegal and false information in July, with most of the cases coming from Sina that owns Weibo, Tencent which owns Wechat, Baidu, and Alibaba.

Chinese laws dictate that rumor-mongers could be charged with defamation, and they face up to seven years in prison. Online posts that contain rumors visited by 5,000 internet users or are reposted more than 500 times could also incur jail sentences.

Hosted by the Central Cyberspace Affairs Commission in affiliation with the official Xinhua news agency, Piyao has integrated over 40 local rumor-refuting platforms and uses artificial intelligence to identify rumors. The platform operates under the guidance of 27 government departments, including the Central Party School, which trains rising officials, and powerful planning body the National



BEIJING: Computer code is seen on a screen above a Chinese flag in this illustration photo. —Reuters

Development and Reform Commission.

Chinese media regularly reports on - and refutes - popular rumors that circulate online, though generally only mentions topics involving issues like corrupt

local officials or health scares, rather than anything more salacious about senior leaders. President Xi Jinping said last year that China will build a "clean and clear" internet space. —Reuters

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- ◆ Stomach Balloon Insertion & removal
- ◆ Bariatric Surgery - Lap Sleeve Gastrectomy
- ◆ Gallstones & Abdominal Hernias Surgery
- ◆ Colonic Hydrotherapy & Fecal Incontinence Treatment
- ◆ Laparoscopic mitral bypass
- ◆ Transanal minimally invasive surgery

**Academic Certificates, Trainings & Fellowships:**

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

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

**Tele: 1802 555**

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

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

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

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

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

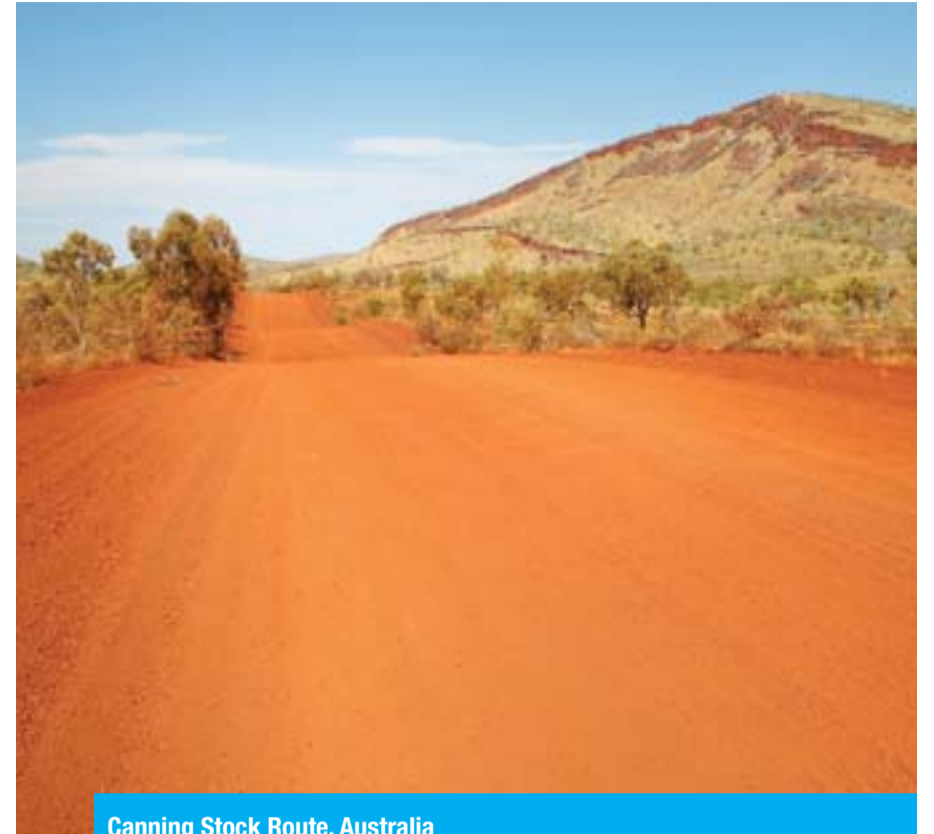
**email: wbuhaimed@gmail.com Tel.: 965 22269411/ Mob.: 965 99212228**  
Jabriya, 4th Ring Road, Block 1A Floor 9 - Clover Center Mazaya Building



Travel



Karakoram Highway, Pakistan and China



Canning Stock Route, Australia

# Strap yourself in: The world's most extreme road trips

Traveling these routes inspires wonder and awe in those willing to shrug off the discomforts and heart-in-mouth moments they entail. Whether you're gazing through a dirt-smudged window on a clapped-out bus, its engine revving desperately to clear a narrow pass, or grinding through an endless expanse of sand in a 4WD, these roads have gained a reputation for being among the most brutal in the world. If you long for white-knuckle adventure, sometimes it really is more about the journey than the destination.

## Karakoram Highway, Pakistan and China

A centuries-old trading trail, which once formed part of the famed Silk Road, the Karakoram Highway (more commonly referred to as the KKH) is the world's highest-altitude paved international road. Its 1200 kilometers slice through the mighty Karakoram Range, passing through some of the world's most remarkable mountain scenery and providing access to top-notch trekking and mountaineering. Blasted through one of the most challenging landscapes on earth, the KKH is a triumphant feat of engineering and a monumental reminder of the more than 1000 lives lost during its construction. A journey here, in the rooftop of the world, is not only a stunning salute to the power of nature but also of man's constant struggle to contain it.

Where: from Abbottabad (near Islamabad) in Pakistan to Kashgar in China.

When: spring (May to June) and early autumn (September to October). Parts of the road are closed during winter due to snowfall and sometimes in summer because of landslides caused by the monsoon. The Sost/Tashkurgan border post along the KKH officially closes between 31 December and 1 May each year but, depending on weather, the annual reopening can be delayed. If you're intending on travelling in early May it's worthwhile checking beforehand.

How: public transport between the main towns on the KKH is cheap and plentiful and many travellers take two to three weeks to cover the full route, allowing time to stop off and explore. Wherever you begin your journey, you'll need to acquire visas for both countries before you set off along the route as they aren't issued on the Sost/Tashkurgan border post which straddles either side of the Khunjerab Pass.

Extensive reconstruction works have been in place since 2010, when a landslide devastated a 22km section of the road. Today the route has been overhauled, with new roads and a high-speed rail link to Pakistan under construction meaning this adventure, while no less adrenaline-pumping, has never been easier to access - now there's no excuse not to go!

## Canning Stock Route, Australia

Crossing the historic Canning Stock Route through Australia's rugged red sand wilderness is a modern-day explorer's dream. One of the world's most remote tracks, the dust-tinged, take-no-prisoners toughness of this 1820km old drover's trail is tempered by the opportunity to meet the traditional owners of this isolated land. The Tjurabalan, Ngurrara, Martu and Birriburu of the

Western Desert still live along, and are the custodians of, the route. The chance to interact with these Western Desert communities and visit rock-art sites which date back tens of thousands of years is an enriching glimpse into the fascinating culture of this region.

Where: running from Wiluna to Hall's Creek in Western Australia.

When: the cooler months of May to September.

How: you can begin at either end and the route takes at least 18 days to complete. There are five communities with fuel and supply amenities along the way but for much of the journey it really is simply just you and the sprawl of the Australian desert. Understandably then, navigating the Canning Stock Route independently requires a lot of pre-emptive planning and a permit must be obtained before travel.

As well as a 4WD, you'll need to carry all the necessary equipment, supplies, and spare parts in case of breakdowns and emergencies. The track is not maintained (although it is signed clearly) and there are hundreds of sand dunes to navigate. Prior desert driving experience and mechanical ability are mandatory for anyone contemplating a journey here. An extremely helpful booklet on preparing for and driving the route is available to download from Four Wheel Drive Australia.

## North Yungas Road, Bolivia

Well it's not nicknamed Camino de La Muerte (Death Road) for nothing. Bolivia's infamous route from La Paz down into the rainforest-clad Yungas region is a dizzying descent of terrifyingly tight turns flanked by sheer cliff on one side and dramatic drop-offs on the other. Notorious for traffic accidents (an estimated 200 deaths used to occur on the 69km route annually), the Bolivian government completed a series of road modernizations in 2007, building an entirely new branch which bypasses much of the original tract. Despite (or perhaps, because of) the road's infamy, the old route has become a tourist attraction in its own right.

Where: from La Paz to Coroico

When: due to safety considerations, it's best to avoid the rainy season from mid-December to early March.

How: for anyone who wants to experience the heart-in-mouth palpitations of the North Yungas Road, the best (and safest) option is the Death Road Cycle; a hurtling, adrenaline-junkie ride down twisting bends. With the opening of the modernized bypass in 2007 cyclists no longer have to worry about the extra danger of dodging trucks and buses as they rush headlong down the narrow ridge chiseled out of the mountainside. The hundreds of tiny crosses scattered along the route are a sobering reminder of the many lives this road has claimed in its perilous history.

The road ends at Coroico, a 1100m drop in altitude from the high Bolivian altiplano (high plain) at its start. Coroico is a popular starting point for further adventures in the Bolivian Amazon and most travelers spend at least a night here before moving on to Rurrenabaque.

## Manali-Leh Highway, India

Flanked alternately by vistas of staggering snow-



North Yungas Road, Bolivia

capped mountains and arid high-altitude plains, this winding 490km route is one of India's most beautiful. Traffic along the Manali-Leh Highway ascends and descends through nail-biting mountain passes, fording across streams and glacial melts, which results in some seriously hair-raising moments but also some of the most incredible photographic opportunities the subcontinent can offer.

Where: beginning in Manali in the state of Himachal Pradesh and ending in Leh in Ladakh.

When: only open during the summer, approximately from June to mid-October.

How: due to snow cover, the highway is only traversable for roughly four months of the year. The cheapest way to travel along the route is by bus, with both public and private transport operators running regular transport along the route during this time. The main public bus company is HPTDC and seats on their buses should be reserved a couple of days in advance. With the highest pass along the route measuring a whopping 5420m above sea level, the bus journey is staggered over two days, with an overnight stop usually spent in the town of Keylong which alleviates your chances of suffering AMS (Acute Mountain Sickness).

Shared taxis are also plentiful but best avoided: completing the journey in a dizzying long haul of 16-18 hours, known as the 'Cannonball Run', is not only tough on your body due to the altitude, but also leaves you no time to contemplate the scenery.

## Trans-Sahara Highway, Algeria, Niger and Nigeria

The ultimate desert adventure. Running for a mam-

moth 4500km through three countries, driving the Trans-Sahara Highway is a test of mettle and guts which attracts the brave, the foolhardy and the crazy. Although plagued by security risks along some sections, the bigger danger is in going head-to-head with one of the world's most intensely harsh environments. Adventure-seekers may covet this route for the all-out kudos involved but its real attraction is the opportunity it affords to savour the Sahara at its most spellbinding.

Where: Algiers in Algeria, via Niger, to Lagos in Nigeria.

When: the cooler months of November to February.

How: this isn't a trip to be undertaken lightly. You'll need a 4WD, extensive desert driving and mechanical experience, and you must be self-sufficient in supplies and equipment. You'll also have to jump through several bureaucratic hoops in order to get the paperwork and visas necessary for this kind of expedition. Anyone contemplating a trip here should be aware that travelers with their own vehicle are required by Algerian law to hire a local escort in Southern Algeria and that the Algeria-Niger border is often closed to foreigners due to instability in northern Niger.

The Trans-Sahara Highway itself is in much better condition these days. The road is sealed all the way through Algeria and Nigeria and most of Niger with only one 150km stretch from the Algeria-Niger border post to Arlit in Niger being a hard sand surface. For the most recent developments and up-to-date advice on driving the Trans Sahara Highway, travelers should check out Sahara Overland.



Manali-Leh Highway, India



Trans-Sahara Highway, Algeria, Niger and Nigeria

Stars

CROSSWORD 2001



ACROSS

- (prefix) Indicating difference or variation.
- North Atlantic rockfish.
- Piece of solid food for dipping in a liquid.
- A quantity that is added.
- A small pouch into which the semicircular canals open.
- An accountant certified by the state.
- A French abbot.
- Of or relating to or characteristic of Ghana or its people or language.
- A former agency (from 1946 to 1974) that was responsible for research into atomic energy and its peacetime uses in the United States.
- The month following February and preceding April.
- Deciduous shrub of North America.
- Squash bugs.
- A white powder with a pleasant taste and odor.
- A compartment in front of a motor vehicle where driver sits.
- A plant hormone promoting elongation of stems and roots.
- French filmmaker (1908-1982).
- Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.
- An acute but unspecific feeling of anxiety.
- Danish physicist who studied atomic structure and radiations.
- Small European freshwater fish with a slender bluish-green body.
- (medicine) Chilly.
- A member of the Uniat Church.
- An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
- Fish eggs or egg-filled ovary.
- South Asian deer with three-tined antlers.
- A Scandinavian language (closely related to Icelandic) that is spoken on the Faroe Islands.
- The compass point midway between east and southeast.
- Greenish-yellow pear.
- Made uninhabitable.
- A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
- A phrase or pronunciation that is peculiar to a particular locality.
- A port city in southwestern Iran.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- Something transitory.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
- A user interface in which you type commands instead of choosing them from a menu or selecting an icon.
- A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
- Having leadership guidance.
- Range of what one can know or understand.
- A mountain peak in south central Sri Lanka (7,360 feet high).
- An agency of the United Nations affiliated with the World Bank.

DOWN

- Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.
- Hungarian choreographer who developed Labanotation (1879-1958).
- A small faint zodiacal constellation in the southern hemisphere.
- Used of a single unit or thing.
- (anatomy) A fold or wrinkle or crease.
- The distinctive spirit of a people or an era.
- Any of numerous low-growing cushion-forming plants of the genus *Draba* having rosette-forming leaves and terminal racemes of small flowers with scapose or leafy stems.
- Make final.
- A ship with a reinforced bow to break up ice and keep channels open for navigation.
- A caustic detergent useful for removing grease.
- Paying particular notice (as to children or helpless people).
- A mark left by the healing of injured tissue.
- An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
- Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
- The cry made by sheep.
- Of or relating to a seizure or convulsion.
- Scarabaeid beetle considered divine by ancient Egyptians.
- A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.
- Having undesirable or negative qualities.
- A long plume (especially one of egret feathers) worn on a hat or a piece of jewelry in the shape of a plume.
- Any monosaccharide sugar containing three atoms of carbon per molecule.
- In truth (often tends to intensify).
- I species.
- A percussion instrument consisting of vertical metal tubes of different lengths that are struck with a hammer.
- A coenzyme derived from the B vitamin nicotinic acid.
- Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
- A genus of Pyralidae.
- Of a tire.
- A Chad language spoken south of Lake Chad.
- A tranquilizer (trade name Mellaril) used to treat schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders.
- Annual and perennial herbs of damp habitats.
- A law passed by US Congress to prevent employees from being injured or contracting diseases in the course of their employment.
- East Indian tree whose leaves are used for fodder.
- Photographic equipment consisting of a lightproof box with a lens at one end and light-sensitive film at the other.
- A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
- Look at with amorous intentions.
- (Old Testament) Cain and Abel were the first children of Adam and Eve born after the Fall of Man.
- A small cake leavened with yeast.
- Surrealist Spanish painter (1904-1989).
- In bed.
- A quantity of no importance.
- The force of workers available.
- A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Sometimes you may question just where you fit in and belong. This is one of those times. You crave a strong foundation. Relationship wise you want stability and a relationship that can stand the test of time. As you are well aware, the only thing that will establish this is strong roots. You have to be as open and honest with your partner as you expect them to be with you. This is a good time to confide in your partner and open your heart to them. You will learn you have to give in order to receive. Showing a more vulnerable side of yourself will be very beneficial to you.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may find yourself getting carried away and not as focused on the reality of what is best for you. You may be too focused on your wants rather than what you truly need. You may find that others will be quick to offer unsolicited advice when your actions aren't what they expected nor see as the best option for you. You may feel as the world around you is one big blur. This is a nice time to take a step back and focus on the decisions you are making and possibly put them off for a time your mind is clear. Taurus. You may find that others are not as drawn to you when you are in this dreamy state. You could greatly benefit from some time alone tonight.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Spread your wings! You are ready to reach beyond your boundaries. This is a desire to reach beyond the norm and reach for a kind of spiritual wanderlust. You may find you know too well where there is change there is always opposition. Stand your ground, Gemini. Reach for the stars. Be prepared to experience life and all it has to offer. New beginnings can bring wonderful things.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Good communication is an asset in any relationship, whether it is business or personal. When people won't listen to you, listen to them. If you are not sure what they are saying, ask questions. Repeat what you heard and ask if you heard it correctly. The listener will appreciate that you are giving your full attention. The more you hear, the better you will understand the speaker. Conversely, when you talk, be sure the other person understands what you are saying. You may need to repeat your message or present it in more than one way.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Knowledge is great to have. But, with age and life experience comes wisdom. You have successfully learned from your mistakes and are able to recognize situations that will be unhealthy for you. Live, learn, and laugh. You are one of the rare few who can laugh at yourself. Looking back on your past is a reminder of where you have been and what you have conquered. With this behind you, you know you are better prepared to make decisions that will put you on a path to success. You have a positive attitude and your strength and determination have you headed in the right direction.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You have come to realize to be successful you have to be standing on solid ground. You need a support system. This is a time you instinctively realize your foundation or root system is the main priority in your life.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You know a plant is only as strong as the roots that support it. You are starting to see just how the same applies to your life. You are only as strong as your support system. You are wise beyond your years. Make your choices wisely and surround yourself with friends and employees or co-workers with like minds and the same work ethic you possess. Wise decisions today could have great financial impact on your life. Insights and breakthroughs concerning your living situation may come to you today.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Leave the major decisions for later. It may seem as if there is a road block at every turn today. These obstacles may cause frustration and you may not feel support from your peers or family. This challenge should be temporary so stay positive and keep pushing forward. Keep your cool and avoid confrontation at all cost. You could easily find yourself in conflict or arguments today. You have a strong desire to be in control of everyone and everything around you. You may want to take a step back as this may be the cause of the conflict are experiencing.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

This should be a very productive day for you. A great day to work with your hands. Today you may find yourself hungry for knowledge. This will be a great day to study for you as you will have a great appreciation for new thoughts and ideas. Your mind is in overdrive and you may find yourself on edge. Take a deep breath and take time to think things through to avoid confrontation and making a decision you may regret. Sagittarius, you may find yourself traveling a bit of a rocky road today. Keep your calm and stay focused on the positive in your world. Maybe a long talk with a loved one will help soothe your mood and smooth your path.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Today finds you yearning to surround yourself with all things beautiful. You may direct much of your energy on your marriage or partnership. This is a great time for you to spend that extra time with someone you love. This will bring great harmony and peace in to your world. Focus on turning your dreams into reality. You need a strong support system and your loved ones will be just the one for the job. Feed your relationship daily and you will reap great reward and support.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

This is a time others may find you marching to the beat of your own drum. There are times you long to be surrounded by friends and family and times that the only thing that appeals to you is time alone. This is a time you crave independence. You seem drawn to everything that is unique and different. A great day for a new outfit, a new hair color, or even time to make some cool new additions to your home. A new you side of you is coming to light. This will be a time of happiness and today will find you with a constant smile on your face. Others may be drawn to your high energy and uniqueness.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Your mind is in overdrive. Ideas are flowing. This would be a great time to break out that journal or update your blog. Days of mental clarity at this level are few and far between. Take advantage of this. Great reward could come from your ideas. You are a pleasure for others to be around today.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Back to School

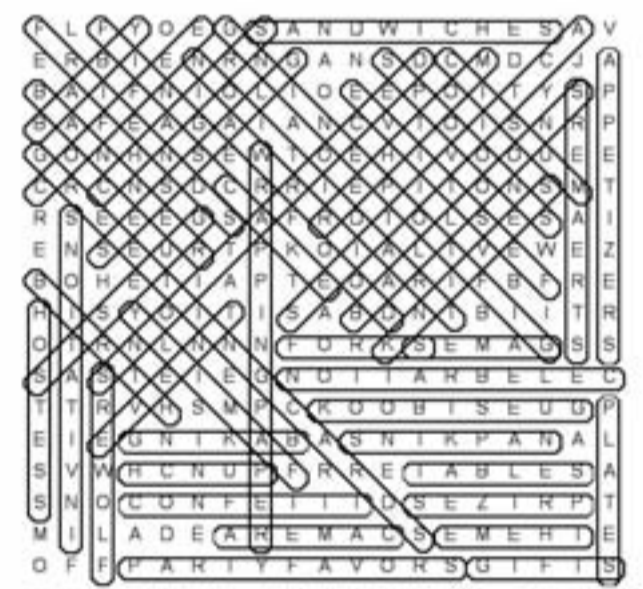
Find and circle all of the School related words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a Mark Twain quotation.



- |             |               |             |                |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|
| ASSIGNMENTS | ERASER        | LUNCHROOM   | ROLL CALL      |
| BACKPACK    | EXAMS         | MATH        | RULES          |
| BATHROOM    | FIRST DAY     | NEW FRIENDS | SCHOOL BUS     |
| BELL        | GYMNASIUM     | NOTEBOOK    | SCHOOL OFFICE  |
| BINDER      | HALLWAY       | NURSE       | SCHOOLYARD     |
| CAFETERIA   | HOMEWORK      | OLD FRIENDS | SCIENCE        |
| CHALKBOARD  | INTERCOM      | PAGELOCK    | SECRETARY      |
| CLASSROOM   | JANITOR       | PAPER       | SEPTEMBER      |
| CLOCK       | LANGUAGE ARTS | PENCILS     | SOCIAL STUDIES |
| COURSES     | LEARNING      | PENS        | STUDENT        |
| DESK        | LIBRARY       | PRINCIPAL   | STUDY          |
| DOORS       | LOCKER        | QUIZZES     | TEACHER        |
| ENROLL      |               |             |                |

Yesterday's Solution

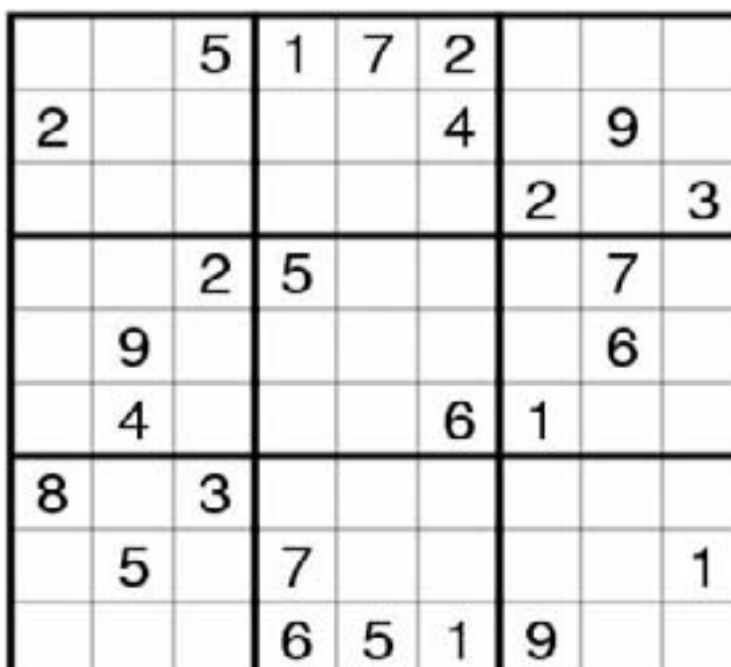
Baby Shower



- |             |              |                |                |
|-------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| ACTIVITIES  | CONFETTI     | GIFTS          | PARTY FAVORS   |
| APPETIZERS  | DECORATIONS  | GLASSES        | PLATES         |
| BAKING      | EVENT        | GREETING CARDS | PRIZES         |
| BALLOONS    | FAMILY       | GUESTBOOK      | PUNCH          |
| BANNER      | FESTIVE      | GUESTS         | SANDWICHES     |
| BIRTH       | FINGER FOOD  | HOSTESS        | SPOONS         |
| CAKE        | FLOWERS      | INVITATIONS    | STREAMERS      |
| CAMERA      | FORKS        | KNIVES         | TABLES         |
| CELEBRATION | FRIENDS      | MOTHER         | THEME          |
| CHAIRS      | GAMES        | MUSIC          | TRADITION      |
| COFFEE      | GIFT OPENING | NAPKINS        | WRAPPING PAPER |

The hidden message is: LOVE AND JOY ARE WHAT BABIES ARE MADE OF

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



# Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2018



A kite-surfer practices at sunset in the French northwestern sea resort of Deauville. — AFP

## Van Gogh was murdered claims new film at Venice

A new film about the artist Vincent Van Gogh claims that he was murdered rather than having shot himself. "At Eternity's Gate" starring Willem Dafoe as the tortured genius, was premiered Monday at the Venice film festival. In it the painter is shot after a struggle with local youths near the village of Auvers-sur-Oise outside Paris, where the

artist spent his final months in 1890. He died 36 hours later after staggering back to the local inn in the dark. While most historians agree that Van Gogh killed himself, renowned painter and Oscar-nominated director Julian Schnabel fuels a theory that he was killed in the film.

Legendary French screenwriter Jean-Claude Carriere—who co-wrote the script with Schnabel—told AFP there "is absolutely no proof he killed himself. Do I believe that Van Gogh killed himself? Absolutely not!" "He came back to the auberge with a bullet in his stomach and nobody ever found the gun or his painting materials," Carriere added. "What we have been fighting against is the dark romantic legend of Van Gogh. In the last period of his life Van Gogh was working constantly. Every day he made a new work," he said. His final weeks, when he painted the "Portrait of Dr Gachet"—which set a world record when it sold for \$82.5 million (77 million euros) in 1990 — were "not at all sad", the writer argued.

### Not suicidal

Schnabel insisted that a man who had painted 75 canvasses in his 80 days at Auvers-sur-Oise was unlikely to be suicidal. The theory that Van Gogh did

not commit suicide was first raised in a 2011 biography of the painter by Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith. Schnabel said neither the gun nor "the painting material he had that day were ever found. It is strange to bury your shit if you are committing suicide." "At Eternity's Gate" is also likely to open a new front in the row over Van Gogh's "lost" sketchbook, which purportedly resurfaced after 126 years in 2016 and was authenticated by two eminent art historians last year. Veteran British expert Ronald Pickvance claimed the book was "the most revolutionary discovery in the history of Van Gogh" studies.

But the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam hotly disputes its provenance and dismissed the drawings as fakes. The book, originally a ledger from the Cafe de la Gare in Arles where Van Gogh stayed at various times between 1888 and 1890, features prominently in the film. Schnabel and his team examined the drawings for themselves with the director pressing Dafoe's hand down into them, he told AFP, to "force a transmission—a connection between me and Van Gogh." It clearly worked, with Defoe, who looks uncannily like the Van Gogh film, already tipped for the best actor prize at Venice.

### 'All history is a lie'

The actor said in shooting the film in the fields around Arles where the artist painted and in the asylum at Saint-Remy where he was held, "we flirted with Van Gogh's ghost". Schnabel said the film was not meant to be a factual biopic, because "all history is a lie". "I don't care if the notebook is real or not real, if he killed himself or didn't kill himself. It's irrelevant. But in the film it is nice to know there is another set of possibilities..." The film was also a chance for "me to say things about painting... and it was a lot of fun to speak through Van Gogh." The ebullient New Yorker also wanted to correct the "bad wrap" that Van Gogh's friend Paul Gauguin gets from history. Van Gogh may have cut off his ear when the painter announced he was leaving him to return to Paris, but "Gauguin really cared about him," Schnabel said. "He is portrayed usually as an asshole. Anthony Quinn (in the 1956 film "Lust for Life") played him like that, but he wasn't." — AFP

## Willem Dafoe: 'I flirted with Van Gogh's ghost'

Actor Willem Dafoe and his wife, director Giada Colagrande arrive for the premiere of the film "At Eternity's Gate". — AFP



When Willem Dafoe was limbering up to play Vincent Van Gogh in a new film about the famously tormented painter, he did something that will give museum curators nightmares for years to come. He was leafing through a "lost" sketchbook of the artist's from his time in Arles, when the film's director—the flamboyant American painter Julian Schnabel—looked at him like a man possessed. "We had the white gloves on and everything," Dafoe told AFP, "and we were gently going through it looking at the drawings. Then at one point Julian grabbed my hand and slammed it down on one of the sketches.

"It was like something out of 'The Exorcist,'" the actor said. "He was forcing a transmission—a connection between me and Van Gogh—and I think it worked." Critics at the Venice film festival agree, with Dafoe an early favorite for the best actor prize after "At Eternity's Gate" was premiered here on Monday. While the authenticity of the sketchbook is disputed—the Van Gogh Museum and two major experts on the artist are at war over the issue—Dafoe believes it is genuine. Both he and the mercurial Schnabel—a famed neo-expressionist artist best known for his huge broken plate paintings—are on familiar territory tackling the furies that drive and sometimes dog great artists. Dafoe had to grapple with the demons of the great Italian director Paolo Pasolini in Abel Ferrara's 2014 film "Pasolini". Schnabel also brought the tortured life of his old friend on the New York art scene, Jean Michel Basquiat, to the big screen in "Basquiat".

### 'It was a trip, man!'

In that film, the painter—who got four

Oscar nods for "The Diving Bell and the Butterfly"—did not pull back from the hell Basquiat endured before his early death from a heroin overdose. But Dafoe said his Van Gogh film is more than a simple biopic. "I hate to be a cheerleader for my own movie but this is quite radical and emotional, it is not conventional in any way. "It is not an awards movie" made with one eye on the Oscars. "It is about painting, it is about being an artist, it is about nature and spirituality... because Van Gogh wanted to be a pastor before he became a painter. He thought the bible was the greatest book ever written," Dafoe added.

"Painting is something Julian really knows—this is where his two loves come together: painting and film-making." "I was painting, Julian was painting, Van Gogh was painting," declared Dafoe with a laugh—"It was a trip, man!" "It is shocking how much I paint in it. Julian was teaching me how to paint and then we were painting together in Van Gogh's style. "You think, 'How interesting can painting be?' But if you have been in the studio with someone like Julian it is beautiful to watch." "I had a shift in my way of seeing and my relationship to nature through playing Van Gogh and reading what he wrote," he said.

Dafoe, who first learned to paint three decades ago for "To Live and Die in L.A.", when he played an art forger, said shooting in the fields around Arles and in the asylum at Saint-Remy where Van Gogh wrote that "one continually hears shouts and terrible howls as of animals in a menagerie", gave him goosebumps. "I felt close to him," said the actor, who looks spookily like the painter on screen. — AFP



Actress Stella Schnabel and actor Mads Mikkelsen arrive for the premiere of the film "At Eternity's Gate".



Member of the Venezia 75 competition jury, English actress Naomi Watts arrives for the premiere of the film "At Eternity's Gate".



Screenwriter Jean-Claude Carriere (center) and his wife, Nahal Tajadod (right) arrive for the premiere of the film "At Eternity's Gate".



(From left) Producer Jon Kilik, actress Anne Consigny, actor Mathieu Amalric, actor Mads Mikkelsen, actor Vladimir Consigny, actress Stella Schnabel, actress Emmanuelle Seigner, screenwriter and film editor Louise Kugelberg, director Julian Schnabel, actor Willem Dafoe, screenwriter Jean-Claude Carriere, actress Lolita Chammah, cinematographer Benoit Delhomme and Carriere's wife, Nahal Tajadod arrive for the premiere of the film "At Eternity's Gate" presented in competition on September 3, 2018 during the 75th Venice Film Festival at Venice Lido. — AFP photos

## Lifestyle | Gossip

**Nile Rodgers and Chic have announced a UK tour**

Nile Rodgers and Chic have announced a UK tour. The 65-year-old musician is set to headline a five date arena tour in December, and the legendary disco group's run will start in Glasgow before heading to Manchester, Birmingham, Cardiff and ending at the London O2 Arena. The announcement comes ahead of the release of his first album in 24 years, which will be released later on this month. The 'Le Freak' hitmaker has collaborated with a variety of stars on his new record - including Elton John, Emeli Sande, Lady Gaga and Craig David. The pioneer has worked with some of the greatest artists of all time, producing for the likes of David Bowie, Diana Ross and Madonna - however it recently came to light that Nile previously refused to work on a disco song for the late Aretha Franklin. The Chic star has revealed he was asked to work on the late soul legend's 1979 song 'Only Star' from her LP 'La Diva', but he told the 'R.E.S.P.E.C.T.' hitmaker to her face, he didn't want the job because he wouldn't want to be known as "the guy who wrote Aretha Franklin's disco hit". He recalled to MOJO magazine: "We only had one meeting but she wanted to write the songs. "And she played this song 'I'm Gonna Be The Only Star Tonight Down At The Disco' [later recorded as 'Only Star'], because for some reason somebody had convinced Aretha Franklin that disco was so happening she had to do a disco record. "And I told her, point blank, 'There's no way I'm going down in history as the guy who wrote Aretha Franklin's disco hit', at least not that one. "She had written it and the guy who did 'The Hustle', Van McCoy, a terrific arranger, he did the album [1979's 'La Diva' with co-producer Charlie Kipps]. I couldn't believe he did it. It's just not a good song..." After hearing the sad news of Aretha's death, Nile tweeted: "I just finished interviews in Berlin, and was informed the mighty @ArethaFranklin has passed. RIPArethaFranklin #Queen of Soul (sic)".

**Kele Okereke announces theatre debut**

Kele Okereke has announced his theatre debut in 'Leave The Remain'. The Bloc Party frontman has announced his first stage project, scoring the new play - directed by Robby Graham - alongside Matt Jones. The production, which opens in Hammersmith in January, follows the story of a young gay couple suddenly faced with an uncertain future. The story is "told through a mixture of music, drama and movement" and the 'Streets Been Talkin' hitmaker drew from his own experiences while creating the soundtrack to the play. He said: "'Leave to Remain' is the story of what happens when a marriage forces two very different families to come together. "For the music for this project I took cues from the records that my parents would play in our house when I was growing up, West African high-life music, and I tried to combine those sounds with the electronic dance music I hear in clubs today. "It was important to me to make something that represented the meeting of two very different worlds." The show will feature Olivier Award nominated actor Tyrone Huntley in the lead role of Obi, with the full cast to be announced shortly. The musical features songs such as 'Not The Drugs Talking', which gives off a similar vibe to the electro-rock sound in Kele's debut solo album and Bloc Party's 'Intimacy'. The musician and his boyfriend of almost 10 years became fathers to a daughter in 2016 to and he knows that gay couples can provide as much love as a traditional family setup. He said: "I don't feel it's my role to explain myself to people or explain how I live my life. There will be some people who don't get it. There are always going to be people that will have a problem with you and you don't have to go round appeasing them. "You just have to do you in the best way you can. That's what I'm going to instill in my daughter."

**CARRIE UNDERWOOD HITS OUT AT REPRESENTATION IN MUSIC**

Carrie Underwood thinks women are underrepresented on the radio. The 35-year-old country star has suggested it could be more difficult than ever for young, hopeful girls to chase their dreams and get "the same opportunities" the male artists are presented with. Speaking on the Women Want to Hear Women podcast, she said: "Even when I was growing up, I wished there was more women on the radio, and I had a lot more than there are today," Underwood said. "I think about all the little girls that are sitting at home saying, 'I want to be a country music singer.' "What do you tell them, you know? What do you do? How do you look at them and say, 'Well, just work hard, sweetie, and you can do it' when that's probably not the case right now? I see so many girls out there busting their rear ends and so many guys out there where some new guy has a No. 1 and I'm like, 'Well, good for you, that's great, but who are you? What's happening?' "And then these strong women who are super talented that totally deserve it are not getting the same opportunities. But how to change it? I don't know. How do we change it?" Carrie - who makes sure to support other female artists by taking the most talented performers on tour with her to give them a deserved platform - also hit out at the way women are placed against each other in the industry. She explained: "None of us feel that way towards each other," she said. "Any time I hear some lady - some strong, awesome, talented woman on the radio with a great song - I'm like, 'Heck yeah!' I don't ever think like 'Aw man!' It never enters my mind. "And I feel like the more we can talk about that and be like 'Please don't put me on your Top Whatever list... just don't do it,' the more people will be like 'Oh, maybe they don't think anything of it. Maybe they don't realize it's offensive. That's why we've gotta tell 'em."

**New Order announce one-off London gig**

New Order have announced a one-off UK show for this year. The 80s synth-pop veterans will headline London's Alexandra Palace on November 9, before heading out on a Latin America tour which kicks off on November 18 in Mexico city, before wrapping in Curitiba, Brazil, on December 2. Announcing the show in the British capital, the band tweeted: London, are you ready? Meanwhile, the 'Blue Monday' hitmaker recently announced a new documentary, 'New Order: Decades', which will give fans a walk through of their history. Bernard Sumner, Stephen Morris and former bassist Peter Hook were all members of seminal indie band Joy Division and went on to create New Order in 1980 after lead singer Ian Curtis died of suicide. The forthcoming Sky Arts film is set to go behind the scenes of their 'So It Goes' debut in 1978, what would be the 'Love Will Tears Us Apart' hitmakers' first TV performance after late singer Ian berated the presenter in Manchester's Rafter's nightclub. The documentary will show footage of the group working with artist Liam Gillick and a synthesiser orchestra for the re-working of 'So It Goes' at the Manchester International Festival 2017. The Mike Christie-helmed film will feature interviews with the band, designer Peter Saville and shows several crucial performances in their 40-year history. A tweet on the band's official Twitter page revealed: "New Order: Decades" will air on Saturday 22nd September at 9pm on @SkyArts. Directed by @mikechristieuk, the part concert, part documentary follows the band's preparations for their appearance at @MIFestival 2017. According to Sky, it's "a rare chance to enter the band's private world, understand the visual philosophy of their aesthetic and design, and witness their collaborative, creative processes first hand." Last year, New Order reached a "full and final settlement" with ex-member Peter after a long-running legal dispute over royalties. The 62-year-old musician claimed to be £2.3 million out of pocket after he quit the band he co-founded in 2007, and filed a lawsuit against his former bandmates Bernard, Stephen and Gillian Morris in 2015. However, the trio revealed their lawsuit had ended after years of back and forth over various issues involving the New Order and Joy Division band names and how much Hook is paid for using them. In a statement posted on their website, the band wrote: "New Order announce that today, a full and final settlement has been reached in the long running disputes with their former bassist Peter Hook. "The disputes were based upon Hook's use of various New Order and Joy Division assets on merchandising and in the promotion of shows by his new band, and the amount of money he receives from the use of the name New Order by his former colleagues since 2011. "The Joy Division and New Order names mean a great deal to so many of the fans, and the band felt it important to protect the legacy. "With these issues now dealt with, Bernard, Stephen and Gillian can continue to do what they do best, make music and perform live. (sic)" 'New Order: Decades' will be broadcast on September 22 on Sky Arts at 9pm GMT.

**Thom Yorke compares writing soundtrack to casting spells**

Thom Yorke has compared composing the 'Suspiria' soundtrack to casting spells. The Radiohead frontman has taken on his first feature film score for Luca Guadagnino's remake of Dario Argento's 1977 film and said the entire process was magical. He told The Hollywood Reporter: "I kept thinking to myself that it's a form of making spells." "So when I was working in my studio I was making spells. I know it sounds really stupid, but that's how I was thinking about it. It was a sort of freedom I've not had before. I've not worked in the format of song arrangement. I'm just exploring." "I'm putting things out into my studio and seeing what my studio is bringing back. It was a sort of maybe a beginning launch of an idea. It was just a really cool way to totally immerse myself in an area I wouldn't normally go with full permission." Thom, 49, also admitted he was initially hesitant to take part because he feared he could not match the original soundtrack by Goblin. He said: "I referred to the original 'Suspiria' film. It was an odd process from the beginning. When they first came to see me, the producers and [editor] Walter [Fasano], I just thought they were mad, because I've never done a soundtrack before. And 'Suspiria' is one of those legendary soundtracks. It took a few months to even contemplate the idea. "It was one of those moments in your life where you want to run away but you know you'll regret it if you do. I watched the original film several times, and I loved it because it was of that time, an incredibly intense soundtrack. Obviously Goblin and Dario worked incredibly closely when they did it together."

**Claire Richards isn't chasing chart hits**

Claire Richards isn't chasing chart hits as she knows she can't compete with today's pop stars. The Steps star says despite signing with Sony Music for her debut solo LP 'My Wildest Dreams', it's more meaningful to her that her fans can relate to the messages behind her collection of heartfelt power ballads than having a song in the top 10. In an exclusive interview with BANG showbiz, she said: "I don't think you can really (compete) because then you just get caught up in second guessing yourself constantly and also disappointment. "I think if you expect it to be number one in the singles charts then in this day and age... I know I'm not gonna be competing with the likes of Rita Ora or Rihanna and Ed Sheeran. "It's not about that for me it's about people listening to the album as a whole and relating to the music." Steps - completed by Lisa Scott-Lee, Lee Latchford-Evans, Ian 'I' Watkins and Faye Tozer - reunited for their 20th anniversary last year for a tour and new LP 'Tears on the Dancelfloor', which hit number two on the UK chart. But unlike the '5,6,7,8' hitmakers' comeback album - which was released independently - Claire has been signed to a major label and is honored to have Sony's backing as she never imagined it was possible. She admitted: "It's amazing. "I never thought for a second that this would be happening with a major label. "I thought that if we did ever manage to do it we would do it like we did the Steps thing and we'd do it independently - but to have the support of a major record company is just incredible and I'm really excited." 'My Wildest Dreams' is released on November 2, lead single 'On My Own' is out now.



Lifestyle | Gossip

## The Man Who Killed Don Quixote handed a release date for Italy and Germany

Terry Gilliam's 'The Man Who Killed Don Quixote' is to open in Italy and Germany on September 27. The long-awaited drama movie - which stars the likes of Adam Driver, Olga Kurylenko and Stellan Skarsgard - had its initial release at the Cannes Film Festival earlier this year and is now set to open in two of Europe's biggest markets later this month. Terry announced the news on Twitter, writing part of his post in Italian: "Buon giorno, Italia.. finalmente!! L'UOMO CHE UCCISE DON CHIS-COTTE si apre 27 settembre! For non-Italian speakers, I think you can work out what that says. And like Rome, the film wasn't built in a day! (sic)" Terry - who is a former member of the Monty Python comedy troupe - has been working on the movie for almost 20 years, but he has faced a number of logistical and legal battles to bring it to cinema screens. The issues have, in fact, already been detailed in documentary called 'Lost in La Mancha'. However, in 2017, Terry made the shock announcement that he'd finally finished the project with a new cast - but a producer then sued him over the rights to the movie. A French court subsequently dismissed that claim and 'The Man Who Killed Don Quixote' finally made its debut at the annual film festival in Cannes.



## Danny Boyle hints at the reason he quit Bond 25



Danny Boyle has hinted at why he walked away from directing the upcoming James Bond movie. The acclaimed filmmaker was originally drafted in to helm Daniel Craig's last outing as the iconic character, but Danny left the project in abrupt fashion due to creative differences with the people behind the franchise. However, in an interview given to the Radio Times before the announcement was made, Danny said that his Bond aficionado status would hamper his ability as the director. He said: "The books were everything to me when I was a kid. I read them multiple times. Like everyone else, I saw the films, but I'd already read the books so I had a different relationship with the characters. "Although I think it'd be impossible for a Bond aficionado to write or direct a Bond film. You'd be hampered by how much you knew. They want you to bring a freshness to it." Meanwhile, an insider previously claimed that Danny's decision to walk away from the movie centered on plans to kill off Bond. The source said: "There were discussions about killing off Bond in dramatic fashion at the end. It would also leave it open for a twist in the next installment - either Bond hadn't died or there could be a 'Doctor Who'-esque regeneration with a new actor. "There were clashes over budget and there's pandemonium among crew with people leaving the production left, right and centre." The decision to quit the project was announced on the movie's official Twitter page. The post read: "Michael G Wilson, Barbara Broccoli [producers] and Daniel Craig today announced that due to creative differences Danny Boyle has decided to no longer direct Bond 25 (sic)".

## Cher: I've never planned one thing in my life

Cher has never planned "a single thing" in her entire life. The 72-year-old icon recently starred in 'Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again' and is set to release 'Dancing Queen' - an album that features songs recorded by the Swedish pop group ABBA - later this month, but Cher has insisted it's not something she's carefully mapped out. She said: "I don't account for things that way. I just do them. I've never planned a single thing in my entire life. It's like this ABBA album. I did the film. I didn't ask to do it. My friend Ronnie Meyer called and said, 'You're doing 'Mamma Mia', and hung up.'" Asked why she didn't refuse, Cher told the New York Times newspaper: "Ronnie used to be my agent. He ran Universal, and he's my dear friend. So when he hung up, I thought, 'Damn!' Then I thought, 'Well, it's going to take five minutes, and no one will even know I'm there.'" Despite the movie being one of the biggest releases of 2018, Cher still hasn't seen the final cut. She shared: "I haven't seen it. But can I tell you, I don't remember doing anything memorable, except singing 'Fernando'. "Afterward, when Jen [her assistant] and I were packing to go home, I said, 'You know what might be fun?' This is how I get myself into all kinds of trouble. 'It might be fun to do an ABBA album.' "The songs are easy to sing, but they're complicated, too. Some of them are hard as hell, which is why I was in the studio again tonight."



## Collette says she's 'too old' for a Muriel's Wedding' sequel

Toni Collette thinks she's "too old" to star in a 'Muriel's Wedding' sequel. The 45-year-old actress starred as Muriel Heslop in the 1994 comedy-drama movie and while Toni has hinted she'd be open to appearing in a sequel, she doubts she'd be able to reprise the same role. Asked whether there would be a 'Muriel's Wedding' sequel, she explained to ITV's 'Lorraine': "I can't imagine what that would be? "They made a musical about it which is about to tour Australia. I was a little dubious and a little concerned about it - it blew my mind. It was so good. I really hope it comes to the West End. It's absolutely brilliant. "It could be a film version of the musical. I'm too old [to reprise my role]. I could maybe play the mum." Meanwhile, Toni previously claimed it feels like "many more roles are opening up for women". The Australian star revealed she's been delighted to witness the way the Time's Up movement has changed the industry for the better. She explained: "I'm now a middle-aged woman and ... it feels like many more roles are opening up for women. That's my personal experience. "It's not just this industry, it's society at large. There's been this ridiculous sense of inequality. Anyway, it's about time. It's such a necessary change and it really is occurring. You can feel it."



## Vaughn encouraged Gibson to join Dragged Across Concrete

Vince Vaughn played a part in encouraging Mel Gibson to sign up for 'Dragged Across Concrete'. The 48-year-old actor stars alongside the Hollywood legend - who directed him in 2016 war film 'Hacksaw Ridge' - in the new thriller movie, and he spoke to the 'Patriot' actor beforehand about taking part in S. Craig Zahler's motion picture, so was delighted when he signed up to the project. He said: "I had worked with Mel on 'Hacksaw' and had overlapped doing 'Brawl [in Cell Block 99]' with Zahler. He came and talked about this other movie, and Mel was the name that he recommended for the character of Ridgeman. "They sent it to Mel, and I mentioned it to him.



Thankfully Mel really responded to it. He's such a terrific filmmaker, and I think Zahler is such a terrific filmmaker." Vaughn admitted shooting the movie was "a little easier" than usual because he had worked with Gibson and Zahler beforehand, and praised the director's "vision" on set. Speaking at the Venice Film Festival, he added: "He [Zahler] really sets out with a vision and a story and he doesn't really compromise on that, in just the most inclusive way. "He just knows what he wants to do. It was just really nice to share the set with those guys, and having a history with those guys makes the job a little easier." 'Dragged Across Concrete' - which premiered at the film festival on Monday - sees police officer partners Brett Ridgeman (Gibson) and Anthony Lurasetti (Vaughn) turn to a life of crime, when they are suspended after a video of the pair using excessive force during an arrest airs on the news.

## McCarthy thinks cat co-star deserves Oscar

Melissa McCarthy feels the cat she worked with on 'Can You Ever Forgive Me?' is deserving of a Cat Oscar. The 48-year-old comedienne - who portrays celebrity biographer Lee Israel in the forthcoming comedy drama - was so impressed with her fluffy four-legged co-star, Towne, who actually is a male in real life but plays a feline named Jersey in the movie, she believes he could win awards. According to Deadline, she said: "I heard there are actually Academy Awards for pets. I can't remember what they are called but I call them the Cat Oscars and this cat should win. "[W]e had to cast for cat actors, so the trainer said 'well this is our best-performing cat'. So how good can this cat be? He's a he by the way. His character Jersey is a girl. He does that very well too." The 'Life of the Party' actress - who won an Oscar nomination for Best Supporting Actress for her role of Megan in 'Bridesmaids' in 2012 - even went as far as to say Towne was "out-acting" her during takes. She said: "The first time I take him, or her, whatever, to the vet, while we are at the counter he sneezed. And I look at him and literally thought 'Are you kidding me? Are you pretending to be sick?' Then Marielle [Heller, director] cuts and I looked to the camera and said to myself, 'This cat is out-acting me.'" 'Can You Ever Forgive Me?' hit screens next month in the US, with a UK release date yet to be announced. McCarthy is currently filming action comedy 'Superintelligence', and she stars in 'The Kitchen' alongside Domhnall Gleeson, Elizabeth Moss and Tiffany Haddish, both of which are due out next year.



## Cronenberg delivers warning to up-and-coming filmmakers

David Cronenberg has told up-and-coming filmmakers to "be careful who you work with". The 75-year-old director - who has helmed movies such as 'Scanners' and 'Videodrome' - once blasted the Weinstein brothers, Bob and Harvey, in a room of aspiring filmmakers before the latter was accused of sexual abuse and harassment by more than 80 women. Asked whether he now feels vindicated, David explained: "What I was really trying to illustrate to them was that you have to really be careful who you work with. "You have to do some research and you have to have a good fit with a producer. So it was in a context of discussing what you need to be aware of if you are going to be a professional filmmaker." David worked with the Weinsteins earlier in his career and even though they were among the most powerful figures within Hollywood at the time, the relationship was far from successful. Speaking to The Hollywood Reporter, David shared: "They did distribute my film 'eXistenZ', but basically I had a contract with Bob Weinstein and his company to release my film in at least 700 theatres, and I think he ended up only releasing it in 30 and was very upset because we had a test screening that didn't go well. "And for guys who say they are marketing geniuses, they were acting very much like a standard studio, which is to say they have one bad test screening and they lose faith in the whole project. "That's not what you would expect from guys who promoted themselves the way the Weinsteins did. But to me that's just normal movie anguish." —Bang Showbiz

*Kurdistan Fashion Week*

Kurdish models present traditional dresses on the catwalk during the Kurdistan Fashion Week (KFW) in Arbil, the capital of the Kurdish autonomous region in northern Iraq. —AFP photos



Hazhar Zahawy, a Kurdish percussionist, plays the daf, a traditional Middle Eastern drum, during the Kurdistan Fashion Week (KFW) in Arbil.

# New York's Fashion Week kicks off month of global presentations

**T**op designers, A-list stars and thousands of fashionistas will converge on New York this week for the annual week-long preview of Spring fashion, which officially kicks off on Thursday following a Wednesday evening show of creations by luxury brand maven Tom Ford. With well over 100 runway shows and presentations plus countless parties at venues around the city - including from top names such as Calvin Klein, Marc Jacobs and Ralph Lauren, which is marking its 50th anniversary on Friday with a Central Park gala - buyers, media and fashion cognoscenti will be hard-pressed to fit in smaller, lesser-known houses.

New York Fashion Week: The Shows returns to its full-week length after last year's curtailed six-day schedule ahead of London, Milan and Paris Fashion Weeks brought an even-more frenetic pace. The social media revolution has brought an immediacy and lighter touch to fashion, experts say, with many designers harking back this season to the free-wheeling 1980s for inspiration. The "80s are a big trend," said Julee Wilson, Essence magazine's fashion and beauty director. "Not only in the fall, but I think it will continue into the spring."

Fashion Bible Vogue concurred, calling the 80s

and 90s "the most-referenced decades in fashion at the moment." "We're getting nostalgic," Wilson said, "kind of crazy with the fashion" and "going back to having a lot of fun," she reflected, citing concepts like pairing socks with heels, sandals or sneakers. An 80s staple she sees coming back is the power suit-not "boring power suits ... but bold, in-your-face," Wilson said. "You're going to stand out and make statement." In keeping with the decade's flash, metallics will feature heavily for spring.

But Fashion Week will have both poignant and pointed notes as well, notably the first show by top

handbag brand Kate Spade since its founder and namesake committed suicide in June. Similarly, Marchesa's Georgina Chapman, the estranged wife of disgraced movie producer Harvey Weinstein who is facing criminal rape and sexual assault charges, is returning after canceling her February presentation. But the show is "by appointment only."

Pop superstar Rihanna will help close the week on a decidedly lighter note with a glitzy party featuring her Savage x Fenty lingerie line, much of it available online immediately after the show, unlike in the old days when shoppers would have to wait for the latest looks to hit store racks. —Reuters

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## Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

**BY DAY:** Hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas with light variable wind changing to light to moderate south easterly wind, with speed of 08 - 32 km/h .

**BY NIGHT:** Humid weather specially over coastal areas with light to moderate south easterly wind to light southerly wind, with speed of 08 - 26 km/h with a chance for fog forming over some areas.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 04/09/2018 0000 UTC	
KUWAIT CITY	40 °C	32 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	44 °C	30 °C		
ABDALY	46 °C	29 °C		
BUBYAN	--- °C	--- °C		
JAHRA	45 °C	30 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	37 °C	31 °C		
SALMIYAH	36 °C	31 °C		
AHMADI	36 °C	31 °C		
NUWASIB	43 °C	28 °C		
WAFRA	45 °C	27 °C		
SALMY	45 °C	31 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Wednesday	09/05	Hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas	44 °C	29 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 35 km/h
Thursday	09/06	Hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas	45 °C	32 °C	VRB-SE	06 - 28 km/h
Friday	09/07	Very hot	47 °C	32 °C	NW-VRB	06 - 26 km/h
Saturday	09/08	Very hot and some scattered clouds will appear	47 °C	31 °C	NW-VRB	06 - 26 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:05
Sunrise	05:27
Zuhr	11:47
Asr	15:20
Sunset	18:07
Isha	19:26

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	43 °C
MIN. Temp.	31 °C
MAX. RH	91 %
MIN. RH	13 %
MAX. Wind	N 39 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

## CHANGE OF NAME

**I, RAJA,** holder of Indian Passport No. M7063824, issued at Kuwait on 04/08/2015 resident of Rampur and presently residing at Apt #2, 1st floor, street 3, block 12, Salmiya, Kuwait, do hereby change my name from Raja to Rameez Raja Mirza with immediate effect.  
**3-9-2018**

## LOST

Original document policy No. 633003907 - 5 to Mr. Fayyaz Ahmed Fayyazi, DV the State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan, Gulf Zone is reported to have been lost. Anyone finding the same or claiming any interest in it should communicate with the Manager Kuwait State Life Office - Ph: 22452208. (C 5416)

**I, Arul Susai Raj Dass,** Passport No: N-1651409, Civil ID 254032601601, changed my name to Abdul Majid Dass. (C 5414)  
**29-8-2018**

Original document policy No. 633004440 - 4 Raja Ghulam Qamar, DV the State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan, Gulf Zone is reported to have been lost. Anyone finding the same or claiming any interest in it should communicate with the Manager Kuwait State Life Office - Ph: 22452208. (C 5417) 3-9-2018

## DATE OF BIRTH CHANGE

**I, Inavali Suresh,** S/o Inavali Ramu, resident of D.No. 4-116/B, Peravali - 534328, W.G. Dist. AP, India, hereby state that my correct date of birth is 15-05-1984. It is mentioned in my SSC certificate (Regn No.1143411). But in my Passport No. J7365344 my date of birth was wrongly mentioned as 02-08-1981, which was issued by Visakhapatnam Passport Authorities.

It is notified for the information that my original qualifying examination certificate of main secondary examination of year 2014 and Roll No. 8105633 issued by CBSE has been actually lost. Name of the candidate BADER MAHMOUD CHAMMOU, address: Hawally, Phone 66844674. (C 5415) 31-8-2018

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Lufthansa	22422493
PIA	22421044
Bangladesh Airlines	22452977/8
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Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)  
**DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION**

Arrival Flights on Wednesday 5/9/2018				Departure Flights on Wednesday 5/9/2018			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
MSC	405	Sohag	00:05	IAW	158	Al Najaf	13:00
JZR	513	Sharm el-Sheikh	00:10	KIS	6033	Mashhad	13:00
THY	772	Istanbul	00:15	JZR	176	Dubai	13:10
IGO	1757	Kochi	00:30	RBG	554	Alexandria	13:10
KAC	102	London	00:50	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	THY	767	Istanbul	13:40
JZR	539	Cairo	01:00	JZR	141	Doha	13:55
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
MSR	618	Alexandria	01:35	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	RJA	645	Amman	14:15
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	CLX	792	Hanoi	14:30
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	JZR	802	Tbilisi	14:50
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:00	FEJ	442	Asyut	14:50
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	KAC	539	Sharm el-Sheikh	15:00
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
WAN	714	AGP	02:20	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
AEE	956	ATH	02:25	FDB	060	Dubai	15:05
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
THY	768	Istanbul	02:40	SWA	501	Jeddah	15:45
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:55
THY	1404	AYT	02:45	JZR	606	Kochi	16:00
JZR	651	Lahore	02:55	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:00
KAC	418	Manila	03:05	KAC	743	Dammam	16:05
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	KAC	619	Doha	16:15
RJA	648	Amman	03:05	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
RBG	215	Sohag	03:05	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
KAC	382	Delhi	03:10	OMA	646	Muscat	16:20
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:40
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:25	SWA	505	Madinah	16:55
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	16:55
KAC	796	Madinah	03:45	SAW	706	Damascus	17:00
JAI	572	Mumbai	04:00	KAC	503	Doha	17:15
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	FDB	052	Dubai	17:20
BBC	043	Dhaka	04:30	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	KAC	361	Colombo	17:35
JZR	1541	Cairo	04:35	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	KAC	381	Delhi	17:45
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	NIA	362	Alexandria	17:50
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	KAC	331	Trivandrum	17:55
KAC	544	Cairo	05:20	KAC	283	Dhaka	18:00
JZR	603	Mumbai	05:25	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	SWA	511	Riyadh	18:15
KAC	154	Istanbul	05:35	JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
JZR	561	Sohag	05:55	JZR	608	Hyderabad	18:25
BAW	157	London	06:10	JZR	240	Amman	18:30
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:25	JAV	622	Amman	18:30
WAN	338	Alexandria	06:25	JZR	538	Cairo	18:35
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:40	KAC	151	Istanbul	19:10
KAC	678	Dubai	06:45	JZR	266	Beirut	19:15
RBG	559	Alexandria	06:50	QTR	1081	Doha	19:20
JZR	505	Luxor	06:55	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
JZR	143	Doha	07:00	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00	FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
JZR	503	Luxor	07:50	RJA	641	Amman	20:00
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
KAC	358	Kochi	08:00	JZR	552D	Alexandria	20:05
KAC	384	Delhi	08:05	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
JZR	529	Asyut	08:10	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	DLH	624	Dammam	20:50
SAW	703	Damascus	08:30	KNE	232	Riyadh	21:00
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	KAC	353	Bengaluru	21:00
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	KAC	357	Kochi	21:00
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:25	OMA	648	Muscat	21:05
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:35
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	JZR	602	Mumbai	21:45
IRM	1188	Mashhad	09:55	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
SYR	341	Latakia	10:05	QTR	1089	Doha	21:50
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	10:20	KAC	205	Islamabad	21:55
JZR	787	Riyadh	10:30	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:05
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KLM	445	Bahrain	22:10
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	KAC	543	Cairo	22:15
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
IGO	1755	Trivandrum	11:10	KAC	383	Delhi	22:25
JZR	903	Baku	11:10	THY	1413	TXZ	22:25
JZR	165	Dubai	11:45	UAE	860	Dubai	22:35
IAW	157	Al Najaf	12:00	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50
KIS	6032	Mashhad	12:00	KAC	783	Jeddah	23:00
WAN	134	Doha	12:20	KAC	411	Bangkok	23:10
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
RBG	553	Alexandria	12:30	SWA	515	Riyadh	23:30
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	WAN	337	Alexandria	23:40
THY	766	Istanbul	12:45	JZR	503	Jeddah	23:45
CLX	792	Luxembourg	12:45	JZR	604	Ahmedabad	23:50
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00				
JZR	239	Amman	13:00				



NARATHIWAT, Thailand: Participants take part in a parade to celebrate Muslim and Buddhist culture in Yi-ngo district of Narathiwat province yesterday. — AFP

## US warns Russia, Iran, Syria against 'human tragedy'

**WASHINGTON:** US President Donald Trump has warned Syria against launching an attack on the country's last rebel stronghold with the help of Russia and Iran, saying the offensive could trigger a "human tragedy." The warning came as Iran's foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif met with Syrian leader Bashar Al-Assad in a surprise visit to Damascus ahead of the looming offensive. Syrian forces are amassing around the northwestern province of Idlib, in preparation for the assault.

"President Bashar al-Assad of Syria must not recklessly attack Idlib Province. The Russians and Iranians would be making a grave humanitarian mistake to take part in this potential human tragedy," Trump tweeted. "Hundreds of thousands of people could be killed. Don't let that happen!" The United Nations and aid groups have warned that a full assault on Idlib could spark a humanitarian catastrophe on a scale not yet seen in Syria's seven-year-old conflict.

But Russia and Iran have insisted that extremist groups in Idlib must be defeated and are expected to back regime forces in any assault. Zarif's trip to war-ravaged Syria also comes just days before a top-level tripartite meeting in Tehran to discuss the Syrian conflict, now in its eighth year. He met Assad to discuss "issues on the agenda for the tripartite meeting," according to the Syrian presidency's account on the Telegram messaging app.

Since early 2017, Iran, fellow regime ally Russia and rebel backer Turkey have sponsored the negotiations track

based in the Kazakh capital to tamp down hostilities in Syria. Last year, they had designated Idlib as a "de-escalation" zone where violence would halt in preparation for a countrywide ceasefire.

Damascus's main sponsor Russia has been sounding the war drums in recent days, all the while seeking to pressure Turkey into reining in jihadists in Idlib, Tehran and Moscow have provided steady political, financial and military backing to Assad throughout the war, which has left over 350,000 people dead since it broke out in 2011. The International Crisis Group, a Brussels-based think tank, said an all-out assault on Idlib and its catastrophic consequences could still be avoided. ICG said Russia, whose air support would be crucial for the offensive to succeed, should understand that a bloodbath in Idlib would jeopardize its own political goals. "By backing an all-out offensive, Russia risks undermining its long-term political objectives in Syria," ICG wrote in a nine-page briefing.

"Russia seeks to ensure not just the regime's military victory in Syria but its full political restoration through international re-legitimation at war's end." Further Iranian engagement in Syria meanwhile risks drawing Israel deeper into the conflict. A series of recent strikes in Syria that have killed Iranians has been attributed to Israel. But Israeli Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman on Monday signaled strikes could be extended to Iraq if necessary. Asked about the possibility of Israel hitting Iranian military positions in "Iraq or Tehran," Lieberman said: "We do not limit ourselves to Syrian territory alone. It must be clear."

Britain, France and the US, which together launched limited attacks on Syrian installations in mid-April in retaliation for an alleged Syrian chemical attack, say their red line against illegal weapon use remains in force. — AFP

## Yemen foes head to peace talks as...

Continued from Page 1

And while the two sides are backed by rival regional powers, their respective patrons will not be present in Geneva. The talks, overseen by United Nations envoy Martin Griffiths, are aimed at charting a path towards reviving formal UN-backed negotiations. They will likely focus on a prisoner exchange deal and the fate of embattled Hodeida, the rebel-held port city at the frontline of the war. Hanging in the balance is the fate of 22 million civilians, in a country where famine looms and a cholera epidemic is threatening a comeback.

"This war has been and remains an ugly war," said UAE minister of state for foreign affairs Anwar Gargash, whose

country is the senior partner in the Saudi-led coalition backing Hadi's government. "We have seen civilians shot at, bombed, killed and unfortunately... this is part of any confrontation." Last month alone saw 66 children killed in air raids believed to have been conducted by the Saudi-led coalition. Both camps have been accused by the UN and rights groups of failing to protect civilians.

Last month, UN-backed experts said all the warring parties have committed a "substantial number of violations of international humanitarian law", many potentially amounting to war crimes. Diplomats and Yemeni officials have set a low bar for the Geneva meetings, the first attempt by Griffiths to bring the warring parties together. One US diplomat described them as "low key" with "low expectations". They "are really not intended to be talks or negotiations but consultations that demonstrate the capability of the UN to bring the sides together," along with "confidence building measures", the diplomat said.

All previous attempts to resolve the Yemen war have failed. Griffiths is the UN's third Yemen envoy since 2014.

The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) of the US Department of Energy signed a cooperation agreement yesterday - setting up efforts to ban trafficking of nuclear and other radioactive materials. The signing came on the sidelines of His Highness the Amir's visit to Washington. "The signing came as a result of long discussions with the American side with a view to the fight against illicit trafficking of radioactive materials," Director General of the Administration of Customs, Counselor Jamal Al-Jalawi said. Jalawi added that the agreement requires the American side to present assistance in this field to help support the Kuwaiti Administration of Customs in the fight against radioactive material across borders. He pointed out that this part of the agreement benefits Kuwait in increasing its supplies of equipment that detect radioactive materials - qualifying Kuwait as one of the developed countries in the forefront of the fight against these dangerous substances. The cooperation agreement will present US contributions on combating radioactive materials, not only in Kuwait International Airport, but also in seaports and land borders. — Agencies

## Amir in Washington...

Continued from Page 1

He underlined the importance of the visit in light of the accelerating regional and international developments, especially those related to the situation in the Gulf region, the developments in the Middle East peace process, and the challenges within the framework of the international coalition against terrorism. The visit also provides an opportunity to review aspects of cooperation between the two countries, especially those related to the economic, investment, trade, security and defense fields. Jarallah added that the visit will witness the signing of a number of bilateral agreements aimed at boosting cooperation.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's General Administration of Customs and

## Prosecutor seeks death penalty for prominent cleric

**RIYADH:** Saudi Arabia's Public Prosecutor sought the death penalty against prominent cleric Sheikh Salman Al-Awda at the start of his trial yesterday in Riyadh, a year after his arrest, media said. Awda faces 37 charges, the pro-government Okaz newspaper and other media close to the Saudi government reported, without offering any details. Awda was among more than 20 people arrested in September 2017 in a widening crackdown on dissent in the ultra-conservative kingdom.

There was no immediate statement by the public prosecutor's office. "Reports that Saudi prosecutors are seeking the death penalty against prominent Saudi cleric Salman al-Awda," tweeted Adam Google, Middle East researcher at Human Rights Watch. "Bringing the death penalty into a case like this is a major escalation in the level of repression." Awda was hospitalized in the western city of Jeddah after almost five months in solitary confinement, Amnesty International said in January, citing family members. The rights group said his family had been denied any contact with him. Amnesty said Awda was arrested a few hours after posting a tweet welcoming

reports of a possible reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and neighboring Qatar. Saudi Arabia and its allies cut off all diplomatic and economic ties with the emirate in June accusing it of links to Islamic extremists, a charge Doha has categorically denied. According to his family, the Saudi authorities had demanded that Awda and other prominent figures publicly back the kingdom in the dispute but he refused. Saudi activists have said Awda's brother Khaled has also been detained for disclosing the cleric's arrest.

### Online satire

Saudi Arabia will punish online satire that "disrupts public order" with up to five years in prison, the public prosecutor said yesterday. "Producing and distributing content that ridicules, mocks, provokes and disrupts public order, religious values and public morals through social media ... will be considered a cybercrime punishable by a maximum of five years in prison and a fine of three million riyals (\$800,000)," the Public Prosecution tweeted late Monday.

Saudi Arabia's legislation on cybercrime has sparked concern among international rights groups in the past. Dozens of Saudi citizens have been convicted on charges linked to dissent under a previous sweeping law, particularly linked to posts on Twitter. In September 2017, authorities issued a public call for citizens to report on the social media activities of their fellow citizens, under a broad definition of "terrorist" crimes. — Agencies

when the Houthis overran the capital Sanaa and drove Hadi's government into exile. Hailing from the Muslim Zaidi minority, the Houthis had complained of marginalization in Yemen long before the conflict erupted in 2014. Riyadh and its allies joined the government's fight against the rebels in 2015, but the Houthis have clung to northern and western Yemen. They regularly fire missiles at Saudi Arabia, which accuses its arch-rival Iran of providing the munitions. In June, the UAE launched a major offensive to retake rebel-held Hodeida, the Red Sea city home to the country's most valuable port.

Faced with escalating international criticism, the pro-government military alliance hit the brakes before reaching the densely-populated city. But UAE minister Gargash has said that "in order to shorten the war, pressure should be continued on Hodeida."

"We are not willing to accept that there will be a strategic shift towards Iran's favor by accepting also the Houthis' domination of Yemen," he said. The Houthis have reportedly offered to let the UN supervise the port, but

the government and its allies have refused anything short of a full rebel withdrawal from both city and port.

### Arms sales

UN Security Council Resolution 2216 recognizes Hadi as the president of Yemen, calling on the Houthis to withdraw from the capital and elsewhere and to hand in heavy weapons. The UN has also blacklisted the Saudi-led coalition for the killing and maiming of children. The Saudi-led coalition has admitted to "mistakes" in an August 9 strike on a crowded marketplace in rebel-held Yemen that killed 51 people, according to the Red Cross.

International rights groups have frequently criticized the inaction of Washington, London and Paris against Saudi Arabia, a strategic ally and key arms customer for all three. At least 6,660 civilians have been killed and 10,563 injured in Yemen since the Saudi-led coalition joined the conflict in March 2015, according to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. The UN says the actual figure may be much higher. — AFP

## MP Muwaizri vows to grill...

Continued from Page 1

In a related development, MP Majed Al-Mutairi described the death of the cadets as a catastrophe and called for depriving the air force commander, who was dismissed because of the incident, from all financial benefits.

He called on the new commander to review all training programs at the military academy in order to avoid such fatal incidents. The National Assembly's Human Rights Panel has decided to open an investigation into the incident and will summon senior officials linked to the case.

MP Al-Humaidi Al-Subaie yesterday sent a series of questions to Commerce and Industry Minister Khaled Al-

Roudhan in what appears to be a preparation for grilling the minister. In his questions, the lawmaker asked for a list of names of employees who have been seconded or transferred to the Commerce Ministry and also demanded to know the salaries of employees working at the minister's office and any overtime received.

He inquired if the minister or one of his closed relatives has a commercial record (business activity) since the start of last year and if the minister and one of his next of kin are partners in a board of directors of a company. He also demanded to know if any employee at his office runs a private business.

Subaie asked if a company in which the minister or any close relative or a member of his office staff are members in its board has won business undertaken by the ministry. The questions also inquired about the practices of the minister and exempting certain people from some legal requirements while dealing with the ministry.



Sports

# Woods, DeChambeau, Mickelson expected to get Ryder Cup nods

## Furyk to reveal three captain's picks

**NORTON:** Tiger Woods, Bryson DeChambeau and Phil Mickelson are expected to be named on the United States Ryder Cup team when Jim Furyk announces three of his captain's picks. Furyk will reveal his selections in Philadelphia but there is little if any suspense, with the players picking themselves for the team to face Europe in France this month.

It is inconceivable that 14-times major champion Woods could be left out after the form he has displayed in his comeback this year from a potentially career-ending back injury. Woods contended in the final two majors and while not winning either, showed he is still a player for the big occasion at the age of 42.

Despite that, Woods has a less than stellar record of 13-17-3 in seven Ryder Cup appearances. He approached the event with all the enthusiasm of a trip to the dentist in his younger days but has warmed to the team format in recent years.

He is already an assistant captain on Furyk's team and would need to be replaced in that position if confirmed. DeChambeau has also made himself virtually impossible to overlook after back-to-back wins at the FedExCup playoffs.

He narrowly failed to make the team automatically, finishing ninth in the standings after the PGA Championship last month, when the top eight locked up the spots. However, he responded to the challenge in the best possible fashion, an emphatic win at last week's Northern Trust all but daring Furyk to leave him out. A follow-up victory at the Dell Technologies

Championship on Monday was hardly necessary, but a nice bonus all the same, a result that lifted him to seventh in the world rankings, ahead of heavyweights such as Rory McIlroy and Jordan Spieth.

Furthermore, DeChambeau and Woods have struck up a rapport that suggests they would be good partners in Paris.

### MICKELSON WANTS AWAY WIN

Mickelson has played a record 11 consecutive Ryder Cups and qualified automatically every time. It is probably not too much to expect one captain's pick in the twilight of his career. "Hopefully it will make it ... easy for (Furyk) to take me," Mickelson said on Monday after shooting 63 to tie for 12th at the Dell.

"I'd love to go over there and give it a shot to win for the first time on European soil for quite some time," Mickelson has never been on a winning team in his five Cup appearances in Europe. The U.S. last won away from home in 1993. The 48-year-old has a middling 18-20-7 Ryder Cup record but would still have a good chance in Paris of becoming the most successful American of all-time in the event. With 21.5 points, he trails only Billy Casper (23.5) and Arnold Palmer (23).

Greater suspense is likely next Monday when Furyk makes one final pick to complete his 12-man team. Tony Finau, Kevin Kisner and Xander Schauffele are the frontrunners, though a dominant performance by someone at this week's BMW Championship may change the picture. — Reuters



**NORTON:** Phil Mickelson of the United States plays his shot from the tenth tee during the final round of the Dell Technologies Championship at TPC Boston on Monday in Norton, Massachusetts. — AFP

## Bryson DeChambeau takes Dell title

**NORTON:** Bryson DeChambeau clinched back-to-back wins in the FedEx Cup playoff series here Monday, sealing victory in the Dell Technologies Championship to all but guarantee himself a place on the United States Ryder Cup team.

DeChambeau, 24, bagged his second win in the space of little over a week after shooting a four-under-par 67 to claim victory by two strokes at TPC Boston. It was a disappointing day for Abraham Ancer, who had started the final round with a one-shot lead as he aimed to become the first Mexican player in 40 years to win a US PGA Tour title.

Ancer carded a closing 73 to finish five off the lead. England's Justin Rose took second place with a three-under-par 68 that left him on 14 under for the tournament, one shot clear of Australia's Cameron Smith in third.

Florida-based DeChambeau had stormed to a four-shot success in last week's Northern Trust in New Jersey and has stretched his lead in the FedEx Cup series. DeChambeau's sensational form means he is almost certain to be handed one of the three "captain's pick" slots for the Ryder Cup which will be revealed by US skipper Jim Furyk.

Phil Mickelson, who is also expected to earn one of the captain's picks, also reminded Furyk of his credentials with a magnificent closing day 63 for a 10-under par total. Tiger Woods, whose return to form is also expected to see him named to one of the three Ryder Cup places today, struggled with a final day 71 to finish at seven under par for the tournament. — AFP

## McLaren driver Norris is a young man in a hurry

**WOKING:** Lando Norris, who will debut for McLaren next year as Britain's newest and youngest ever Formula One driver, is a man in a hurry and the 18-year-old already has the speeding fine to prove it. "It happens to everyone, better own up to it than not," he grinned in an interview with Reuters on Tuesday when the thorny subject was put to him.

Speaking a day after news broke that he will be replacing Belgian Stoffel Vandoorne next year in an all-new lineup with Spaniard Carlos Sainz, Norris relished the excitement of having a dream come true.

"I was smiling for the rest of my flight home," after returning to the McLaren factory from the Italian Grand Prix. "I literally didn't stop smiling. It's been a long time coming, to finally make this step into Formula One with McLaren."

The Formula Two title contender was the frontrunner for the job, as a protege of team principal Zak Brown, who snapped him up after he won the McLaren BRDC young driver of the year award in 2016. But it was not an absolute certainty.

"I was told just before the race in Monza. Just as I was leaving I bumped into Zak, which I didn't mean to do. He said he had something to tell me and I wasn't expecting it at all, to be honest."

"After everyone told me about (Sergio) Perez, (Esteban) Ocon who could get the seat, I was a bit more unsure. So it did come as a bit of a surprise, a bit of a shock. But at the same time I was more or less ready to hear that if it did come."

While following in the footsteps of four-times world champion Lewis Hamilton, the compatriot who started with McLaren in 2007, it is Italian MotoGP great Valentino Rossi that Norris holds up as his boyhood idol. "I was more into MotoGP before I started watching Formula One, and I loved his colour scheme basically," he said. "The yellow, 'The Doctor'. He was always a bit different and changed helmets and had different



**MONZA:** File photo shows McLaren's British test driver Lando Norris drives as it rains during the first practice session at the Autodromo Nazionale circuit in Monza on August 31, 2018 ahead of the Italian Formula One Grand Prix. —AFP

things," he recalled. "My helmet design I have now is pretty much based off of his. He has the sun and the moon and mine is pretty much the sun and...I've adjusted it towards what I like a bit more but it originated from him."

### PRACTICE SESSIONS

The youngster, who obtained his regular driving licence as a 17-year-old, has taken part in Friday practice sessions and tests for McLaren and the next step will not faze him. "I feel ready for it, McLaren obviously think I'm ready for it," he said. McLaren's reputation with young drivers, Hamilton excepted, has been poor of late but Norris said he was not worried about what had befallen Perez, Denmark's Kevin Magnussen and now Vandoorne at the under-performing team.

"I focus on my own job," he said. "I think McLaren need a fresh start. That's why I'm in. For the best progression of the team and getting the team back to

where they need to be and winning I believe having two fresh drivers is the best thing. If we can, hopefully I'll be the one winning."

That prospect remains some way off, with Norris looking to score points and learn as much as he can once he gets into the cockpit. "I'm not going to be aiming for a win (next year)," he said. "It's going to be aiming on beating your team mate but working as a team, developing. Because I want to win and the only way I can do that is by helping the team altogether."

"I don't really know what to expect next year. It's sunk in in terms of people saying 'you're a Formula One racing driver' but in terms of being one, and experiencing it, I don't think it's going to sink in until after the first race." Asked what kind of a driver he was, Norris smiled. "I'm pretty calm. I change. Sometimes I'm a bit under-aggressive and sometimes a bit over. But I think it's good to have both." — Reuters

## Titans' Walker, Orakpo ready for opener

**MIAMI:** Tennessee Titans tight end Delanie Walker and outside linebacker Brian Orakpo said Monday they will be ready for Sunday's season opener against the Dolphins in Miami, while right tackle Jack Conklin is getting closer to a return. Walker, who has been battling an apparent toe injury, and Orakpo (shoulder) each returned to practice last week after missing all of the preseason. The Titans have been extremely tight-lipped about injuries under new head coach Mike Vrabel, but Walker has consistently targeted a Week 1 return, while Orakpo said Monday he's "ready to rock and roll."

Conklin, who tore the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee in the divisional playoffs in mid-January, was activated from the physically unable to perform list before final cuts and did limited work in individual drills at Monday's practice. General manager Jon Robinson said Conklin is "progressing nicely," but no timetable has been given for the tackle's return.

Conklin's activation indicates the team expects him back before Week 7, but he could miss a few weeks while working back to 100 percent. Veteran Dennis Kelly has worked as the starter at right tackle in Conklin's absence.

Orakpo, 32, could be counted on heavily early on, as fellow starter Derrick Morgan and second-round pick Harold Landry are each battling injuries of their own. Morgan returned to practice Monday for limited work, but his availability for Week 1 is in doubt as he recovers from a reported August knee procedure. Landry did not practice Monday after reportedly sustaining a mid- to high-ankle sprain in the preseason finale. — Reuters

## Genia: Wallabies must toughen up mentally

**BRISBANE:** Wallabies scrum-half Will Genia says his teammates must toughen up mentally after admitting lapses of concentration cost them dearly against the All Blacks in the Bledisloe Cup Tests.

Australia have lost six of their past seven games, and ceded the Bledisloe Cup to New Zealand for the 16th consecutive year after a 40-12 hammering in Auckland at the weekend and a 38-13 thrashing in Sydney the week before.

They are working to regroup ahead of a Rugby Championship clash with South Africa in Brisbane on Saturday, with the Springboks also on the back foot after being hammered 32-19 by Argentina in Mendoza.

In both games against the All Blacks, the Wallabies held their own in the first half but were blown away in the second period as they lost focus. "We defended well off turnover ball in both first halves but then they just took us to pieces in the second half of both games," Genia told reporters.

"It's just moments of lapses... in concentration that lets us down." The influential 30-year-old said it was a key area they have been working on. "In the heat of the battle, not listening to that voice in your head which tells you to give up or not chase-it's just things like that," Genia said.

"If we were just half a step earlier, we'd go a long way to solving a lot of those problems in the turnover."



**AUCKLAND:** File photo shows Australia's Will Genia (C) runs in a try while tackled by New Zealand's Sam Cane (L) and Aaron Smith (R) during the second rugby Test match between New Zealand and Australia at Eden Park in Auckland on August 25, 2018. — AFP

Asked why professional athletes, many of them vastly experienced, were having mid-game lapses, the 88-Test veteran said it was something they were still trying to work out.

"The biggest thing for us is that we just have guys

who are-in moments during games-just not doing their jobs," he said. "If we can get guys who are doing their jobs every single time and not covering for other blokes, it makes things a lot easier with and without the ball." —AFP

## Sports

# Rockies rally to top Giants on two-run single by Cuevas

## Frazier, Polanco help Pirates knock off Reds

**DENVER:** Pinch hitter Noel Cuevas delivered a two-run single in the eighth inning Monday afternoon, allowing the Colorado Rockies to survive a late rally by the San Francisco Giants and record a 9-8 victory in Denver. The Giants had scored three times in the top of the eighth inning to take an 8-7 lead in a game they had once trailed 7-2. The Rockies moved into first place in the National League West when the Los Angeles Dodgers lost Monday night. Colorado is a half-game up on Los Angeles and 1 1/2 games in front of the Arizona Diamondbacks. With his team down by one, Ian Desmond led off the Colorado eighth with a single off the fourth Giants pitcher, left-hander Tony Watson (4-6). One out later, Chris Iannetta's pinch-hit double sent Desmond to third. Both runners raced home when Cuevas singled to center field.

### METS 4, DODGERS 2

Brandon Nimmo delivered a pinch-hit, three-run home run in the ninth inning to give New York a victory at Los Angeles. Mets starter Jacob deGrom gave up one run on just two hits over six innings with a walk and six strikeouts. He even drove in a run in his second consecutive game with an RBI single in the fifth. The outing gave deGrom sole possession of a pair of Mets records. He has now allowed three earned runs or fewer in 25 consecutive starts, breaking a tie with Dwight Gooden. He also delivered his 20th consecutive quality start, breaking a tie with Tom Seaver.

### PIRATES 5, REDS 1

Adam Frazier had four hits and three RBIs, including a solo home run. Gregory Polanco launched a two-run homer, and Trevor Williams pitched 6 2/3 shutout innings as host Pittsburgh defeated Cincinnati. With the Pirates nursing a 1-0 lead, Polanco hit his 23rd homer of the season in the sixth, following a leadoff single by Frazier. Frazier drilled a Matt Harvey changeup into the seats in right field in the first inning. It was Frazier's eighth home run of the season, and his fifth since Aug. 5. In the seventh, Frazier drilled a two-run single against reliever Sal Romano.

### PADRES 6, DIAMONDBACKS 2

Rookie Franmil Reyes had his first career two-homer game and drove in four runs, and San Diego extended Arizona's losing streak to four games with a victory in Phoenix. Reyes hit a three-run homer in the second inning and a bases-empty shot in the fourth, his 14th and 15th homers of the season, to extend his hitting streak to nine games and lift the Padres to their fifth victory in seven games. Paul Goldschmidt and Steven Souza had RBIs for the Diamondbacks, who lost for the sixth time in eight games.

### BREWERS 4, CUBS 3

Christian Yelich beat out a potential inning-ending, double-play grounder to give Milwaukee a walk-off victory over visiting Chicago. Erik Kratz walked to open the ninth off Steve Cishak (4-3) before being replaced by pinch runner Keon Broxton. Orlando Arcia was hit by a pitch, and both runners advanced on a passed ball before Curtis Granderson struck out against a five-man infield. Lorenzo Cain was then hit by a pitch to load the bases. Cubs third baseman Kris Bryant backhanded Yelich's grounder and stepped on

third for the second out of the inning, but Yelich easily beat the throw to first to give the Brewers their fifth victory in six games.

### RED SOX 8, BRAVES 2

Ian Kinsler hit a two-run single in the eighth inning and finished with three RBIs as Boston won at Atlanta. Kinsler was 2-for-5 with a walk and a run. His single against Atlanta reliever Jesse Biddle produced two unearned runs. The hit came after a rare throwing error by Braves first baseman Freddie Freeman allowed the bases to be loaded. Brandon Workman (3-0) earned the victory by getting the final two outs of the fifth inning. He was the first of seven pitchers used by the Red Sox bullpen. Craig Kimbrel pitched around a walk to throw a scoreless ninth inning in a non-save situation.

### ASTROS 4, TWINS 1

Dallas Keuchel worked six strong innings, Alex Bregman homered for a third consecutive game, and Houston claimed the opener of a three-game series with visiting Minnesota. Keuchel (11-10) allowed just one run, which was unearned, on five hits and two walks. He struck out six. Brad Peacock entered with two on and two outs in the ninth inning, and he immediately allowed a single to Logan Forsythe that loaded the bases. Peacock then struck out Jorge Polanco for his third save.

### NATIONALS 4, CARDINALS 3 (10 INNINGS)

Bryce Harper tied the game with a two-run homer in the ninth and added a game-winning sacrifice fly in the bottom of the 10th as Washington topped visiting St. Louis. Harper's two-run homer off Bud Norris sent the game into extra innings. Then, in the 10th, Mark Reynolds led off with a double against Chasen Shreve (3-3), and pinch runner Michael Taylor moved to third when Adam Eaton reached on a bunt single. One out later, Harper drove in Taylor with a sacrifice fly to left. Greg Holland (2-2) earned the victory with two innings of shutout relief.

### A'S 6, YANKEES 3

Matt Chapman hit a tiebreaking double in the second inning, and host Oakland gained ground in the American League wild-card race with a victory over New York. Chapman gave the A's a 4-3 lead with a double to the gap in right-center field off CC Sabathia (7-6), and the hit helped Oakland move within 3 1/2 games of the Yankees for home-field advantage in next month's wild-card game. Khris Davis and Jed Lowrie hit RBI singles for the A's, while Mark Canha hit a solo homer. Oakland's other runs scored on a throwing error by Yankees rookie third baseman Miguel Andujar and a bases-loaded walk to Matt Olson.

### ROYALS 5, INDIANS 1

Jakob Junis pitched seven scoreless innings, and Ryan O'Hearn hit two home runs, leading Kansas City to a win at Cleveland. The last-place Royals have won six games in a row and eight of nine. The first-place Indians have lost three straight. All five Royals runs were scored on homers, including shots by Jorge Bonifacio and Hunter Dozier. Junis (8-12) allowed two hits—both singles—and no walks while striking out six.

### MARLINS 3, PHILLIES 1

Jose Urena pitched seven strong innings, and Rafael



**DENVER:** Third baseman Nolan Arenado #28 of the Colorado Rockies throws on the run for the first out of the third inning against the San Francisco Giants at Coors Field on Monday in Denver, Colorado. —AFP

Ortega had two RBIs as Miami defeated visiting Philadelphia. The Phillies lost their third consecutive game. Miami won for just the second time in its past seven games. Urena (5-12) allowed just four hits, no walks and one run while striking out seven. Drew Steckenrider pitched the ninth inning for his third save.

### MARINERS 2, ORIOLES 1

Erasmo Ramirez pitched 5 1/3 strong innings as Seattle defeated visiting Baltimore. Ramirez (2-3) allowed one run on two hits and no walks with five strikeouts. Zach Duke, Nick Vincent, Alex Colome and Edwin Diaz combined for 3 2/3 scoreless innings, allowing just one hit while striking out seven. Diaz fanned the side in the ninth for his major-league-leading 52nd save of the season. Ryan Healy hit an RBI single for Seattle in the fourth inning, and Cameron Maybin tripled and scored on a Dee Gordon sacrifice fly in the fifth. The Orioles managed only three hits, one of them Jonathan Villar's fourth-inning homer.

### ANGELS 3, RANGERS 1

Matt Shoemaker threw five shutout innings in his first start since March, and rookie Taylor Ward broke a scoreless tie with a two-run home run in the seventh inning, leading Los Angeles to a victory at Arlington, Texas. Shoemaker returned to the Angels after spending five months on the disabled list following nerve surgery on his right forearm. He gave up hits to two of the first three batters he faced but no more over his 62-pitch comeback. He walked one and struck out three. Taylor Cole, Jose Alvarez, Justin Anderson, Ty Buttrey and Blake Parker combined to limit the Rangers to one run over the final four innings.

### WHITE SOX 4, TIGERS 2

Matt Davidson hit a game-winning, two-run homer to cap a three-run, ninth-inning rally and give host Chicago a win over Detroit. Davidson ripped the first pitch he saw from Tigers closer Shane Greene (2-6) over the left field wall. Daniel Palka led off the bottom of the ninth with an opposite-field blast off Greene to tie the score. Wellington Castillo followed with a single before Davidson's long ball.

### PIRATES 5, REDS 1

Adam Frazier had four hits and three RBIs, including a solo home run. Gregory Polanco launched a two-run homer, and Trevor Williams pitched 6 2/3 shutout innings as host Pittsburgh defeated Cincinnati. With the Pirates nursing a 1-0 lead, Polanco hit his 23rd homer of the season in the sixth, following a leadoff single by Frazier. Frazier drilled a Matt Harvey changeup into the seats in right field in the first inning. It was Frazier's eighth home run of the season, and his fifth since Aug. 5. In the seventh, Frazier drilled a two-run single against reliever Sal Romano.

### RAYS 7, BLUE JAYS 1

Kevin Kiermaier and Joey Wendle each had three hits, and Ji-Man Choi homered to help Tampa Bay win at Toronto. Yonny Chirinos (3-5) allowed one run on four hits and three walks in seven relief innings to earn the win. He struck out five. Kiermaier tripled, doubled and singled and had one RBI. Blue Jays starter Marcus Stroman (4-9) allowed four runs and six hits in 1 2/3 innings in his first start since Aug. 17. He had been on the disabled list due to a blister on his right middle finger. — Reuters

## Pakistan leaves Hafeez out of Asia Cup squad

**LAHORE:** Pakistan left all-rounders Mohammad Hafeez and Imad Wasim out of a 16-man squad for the six-nation Asia Cup, to be played in Dubai and Abu Dhabi from next week, selectors announced yesterday.

But left-handed opener Shan Masood gets his first chance in Pakistan's one-day squad after scoring 1,200-plus runs in the two domestic one-day tournaments, chief selector Inzamam-ul-Haq said.

The 28-year-old has so far played 12 Tests for Pakistan. Sarfraz Ahmed will lead the side, which opens their Cup campaign against the wildcard entrant on September 16 before taking on arch-rivals India in a highly-anticipated match three days later. Both rounds are in Dubai.

Hafeez, 37 was part of Pakistan's 5-0 one-day series win in Zimbabwe in July, but was not played in any of the matches. "We conducted fitness tests and since there is no compromise on fitness we have not included Hafeez and Imad Wasim," Inzamam told media while announcing the squad in Lahore. The Asia Cup begins September 15 and features India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and a qualifier team. Six teams—Hong Kong, Singapore, Nepal, United Arab Emirates, Oman and Malaysia—are currently facing off in Kuala Lumpur to secure the final berth. Cup teams are divided in two groups. Two sides are culled for the Super Four rounds, after which the top two finishers go to the September 28 final in Dubai.

**Squad:** Sarfraz Ahmed (captain), Fakhar Zaman, Imam-ul-Haq, Shan Masood, Babar Azam, Shoaib Malik, Asif Ali, Haris Sohail, Shadab Khan, Mohammad Nawaz, Faheem Ashraf, Hasan Ali, Mohammad Amir, Junaid Khan, Usman Khan Shinwari and Shaheen Shah Afridi. — AFP

## US gymnastics chief resigns over coach furore: Official

**LOS ANGELES:** USA Gymnastics chief executive Kerry Perry has resigned after just nine months, a statement said yesterday, dealing another blow to the embattled governing body as it struggles to rebuild after the Larry Nassar sexual abuse scandal.

"USA Gymnastics President and CEO Kerry Perry last evening informed the board of directors that she will resign effectively immediately," a statement from the USA Gymnastics board said.

"The board has immediately begun to identify an interim CEO and is in the process of establishing a search committee to find a permanent replacement," it added. Perry's departure caps a tumultuous week for the scandal-tainted organisation following the appointment and subsequent resignation of elite coach Mary Lee Tracy. Tracy's appointment as elite development coordinator last Tuesday triggered outrage amongst victims of Nassar, the former USA team doctor who was jailed for life for abusing more than 250 athletes, including several stars of the USA's 2012 and 2016 Olympic squads. Several former gymnasts lambasted Tracy for comments she made in late 2016 — when the first allegations of abuse against Nassar had already begun to emerge—in which she described the doctor as "amazing." Olympic gold medalist Aly Raisman, who was among Nassar's victims, condemned Tracy's appointment. "USA Gymnastics has appointed someone who, in my view, supported Nassar, victim-shamed survivors, & has shown no willingness to learn from the past," Raisman tweeted.

Tracy later defended her remarks, insisting she had been duped by Nassar and was unaware at the time of any malpractice by the serial predator. However after Tracy later attempted to contact Raisman—who is suing USA Gymnastics over the Nassar scandal—she was ordered to resign by the organisation just three days after being appointed.

That resignation however did little to dispel the storm of criticism swirling around USA Gymnastics, with commentators wondering how the body had failed to anticipate the controversy that Tracy's appointment ultimately caused. The United States Olympic Committee had issued a withering condemnation of USA Gymnastics



Kerry Perry

late Friday, stating that leadership changes were inevitable. "I'm afraid I can offer nothing but disappointment," USOC chief executive Hirschland said in a statement. "Under the circumstances we feel that (USA Gymnastics) is struggling to manage its obligations effectively and it is time to consider making adjustments in the leadership. "We are engaging with the USAG board to offer our perspective, and also our assistance, as they manage the situation."

USA Gymnastics had presided over an unprecedented period of Olympic dominance in women's gymnastics since 2012 but failed to detect Nassar's crimes in what became the biggest scandal in US Olympic history. The scandal had already led to the departure of former USAG chief executive Steve Penny in March 2017. US Olympic chiefs then demanded the entire board of directors be replaced in January while launching an independent investigation into the affair. USA Gymnastics chairwoman Karen Golz said yesterday Perry had led the organisation "under very difficult circumstances." However she said the sport's body had made progress on the road to recovery. "In the wake of horrific events that have impacted our athletes and the entire gymnastics community, USA Gymnastics has made progress in stabilising itself and setting a new path to ensure that the safety and interests of our athletes remains at the heart of our mission," Golz said. —AFP

## Woakes, Pope named in England squad for India finale

**LONDON:** Chris Woakes and Ollie Pope have been included in the England squad for the final Test against India as Alastair Cook prepares for his international farewell at The Oval. Warwickshire all-rounder Woakes and Surrey batsman Pope are added to group that will prepare for the fifth Test that starts on Friday in London.

England wrapped up a 3-1 series success with their 60-run victory in the fourth Test in Southampton. That sets the stage for Essex batsman Cook to take the spotlight on what will be the former England captain's final appearance for his country. The 33-year-old, who announced his retirement plan on Monday, has scored an England record 12,254 runs, including 32 centuries, in his 160 Test matches.

England's squad is the same line-up that faced India in the fourth Test plus the additions of Woakes and Pope. It offers few clues as to the long-term direction of the batting order once Cook departs.

Who plays as wicket-keeper remains uncertain, with Jos Buttler having stepped into the role in Southampton given Jonny Bairstow was struggling with a broken finger. Pope will link up with England on Thursday, after playing for Surrey in the first two days of their County Championship division one clash with Essex in Chelmsford.

### England squad to face India at the Oval:

Joe Root (Yorkshire, capt), Moeen Ali (Worcestershire), Jimmy Anderson (Lancashire), Jonny Bairstow (Yorkshire), Stuart Broad (Nottinghamshire), Jos Buttler (Lancashire), Alastair Cook (Essex), Sam Curran (Surrey), Keaton Jennings (Lancashire), Ollie Pope (Surrey), Adil Rashid (Yorkshire), Ben Stokes (Durham), Chris Woakes (Warwickshire). —AFP

## Sports

# France, Germany to launch inaugural UEFA Nations League

## France boss Deschamps retains World Cup squad

PARIS: World Cup champions France travel to Joachim Loew's under-pressure Germany tomorrow in an eye-catching start to the inaugural UEFA Nations League, a competition introduced to replace most international friendlies.

France boss Didier Deschamps has retained the entirety of the squad that triumphed in Russia, with the exception of captain Hugo Lloris and fellow goalkeeper Steve Mandanda, both ruled out by injury.

As just the third man to win the World Cup as both a player and coach, Deschamps is more aware than most of the increased exposure that comes with such success but believes it can serve his team well. "It's a galvanising effect to have this title, in terms of confidence," Deschamps said. "This title of world champion, you have to manage it but it's not a weight or a burden to carry. It's quite the opposite."

"With all the positive aspects being world champion has brought, on the sporting front but also from a human and psychological standpoint, it's a huge boost."

"It won't prevent them from going through tougher times, but it's not necessarily linked to the tag of world champion," he added. Teenage star Kylian Mbappe, voted the best young player at the World Cup, was sent off for shoving an opponent after he was fouled late in Paris Saint-Germain's 4-2 win over Nimes at the weekend. The 19-year-old will discover the length of his ban following a disciplinary hearing on Wednesday, but Deschamps was reluctant to be overly critical of his young striker.

"It's also human to react. He shouldn't have done it

and he knows that, but I'm not going to make a big issue of it," said Deschamps, whose side then face the Netherlands on September 9. Germany, the team France succeeded as World Cup winners, have plenty to prove after a catastrophic group-stage exit that has left Loew fighting to prove he is still the right man for the job. "We are all being specially observed and put under pressure, I am aware of that," Loew, who has been in charge since 2006, said last week. "However, I am still convinced of our class and quality. The World Cup squad was very, very good, but we did not perform."

Thomas Mueller, an experienced member of Germany's ill-fated squad in Russia, said the sell-out clash in Munich is the ideal opportunity to help the team move on from their World Cup debacle. "France isn't just any old team. A victory against them would be a huge step towards us getting over our huge loss this summer," said the Bayern Munich forward.

### ITALIAN 'LOW POINT'

Roberto Mancini will make his competitive bow as Italy coach at home to Poland on Friday as the Azzurri begin their road to redemption after failing to reach the World Cup for the first time in 60 years.

But he touched upon a similar concern to England counterpart Gareth Southgate, whose side host Spain at Wembley on Saturday, as Mancini bemoaned the lack of opportunities afforded to younger players in Serie A. "There have never been fewer Italians playing the game," Mancini said. "This is a low point. "Often,



MUNICH: Players of Germany's national football team midfielder Julian Brandt (L) and midfielder Thomas Müller attend a press conference in Munich, southern Germany, yesterday. The German national football team will play in the UEFA Nations League against the team of France in Munich, southern Germany, tomorrow. — AFP

the Italians on the bench can be better than those getting a start at some clubs," he suggested. "They need to be playing, especially the young ones."

Southgate last week admitted the Premier League's shrinking pool of homegrown talent could force him to look outside the top flight to fill his England squad in the future. Portugal will be Italy's second Nations League opponent on September 10, although the

European champions will be without Cristiano Ronaldo, who asked to be left out following his move to Juventus.

Ronaldo scored at least 40 goals a season in the last eight seasons at Real Madrid but has yet to score for his new club. World Cup finalists Croatia take on Spain in Elche on September 11 in Luis Enrique's first home game in charge of the country he represented 62 times as a player. — AFP

## Sterling, Lallana pulls out of England squad for internationals

LONDON: Raheem Sterling has pulled out of the England squad for their matches against Spain and Switzerland with a back problem, the Football Association announced on Monday.

The Manchester City forward, who played in six of England's seven matches as they reached the World Cup semi-finals in Russia, has scored twice in the Premier League so far this season.

Manager Gareth Southgate, who celebrated his 48th birthday on Monday, is not expected to call up a replacement for Sterling. The 23-year-old's withdrawal leaves England with just three forwards—captain Harry Kane, Arsenal's Danny Welbeck and Manchester United youngster Marcus Rashford—for the Nations League match with Spain on Saturday at Wembley and a friendly against Switzerland at the King Power Stadium three days later. Earlier, Adam Lallana was forced to withdraw from the England squad ahead of their matches against Spain and Switzerland after the Liverpool midfielder suffered a groin injury.

Lallana had been recalled for the forthcoming UEFA Nations League clash with Spain at Wembley on Saturday and the friendly against Switzerland in Leicester yesterday. But Lallana sustained a groin strain in the first training session at England's St George's Park base and headed back to Liverpool for checks on the problem. It is the latest injury setback for the 30-



MANCHESTER: Manchester City's English midfielder Raheem Sterling (L) celebrates after scoring the opening goal of the English Premier League football match between Manchester City and Newcastle United at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester, north west England. — AFP

year-old, who also missed out on a World Cup place due to fitness issues. Lallana was on the bench for Liverpool's first four games of the Premier League season, with his one appearance coming as a late substitute against Crystal Palace.

"Adam Lallana has returned to his club for further assessment of a groin strain," an FA statement read.

"The Liverpool player was withdrawn from training earlier this afternoon and will play no part in England's forthcoming fixtures against Spain and Switzerland." Lallana's injury blow comes after Manchester City winger Raheem Sterling pulled out of Gareth Southgate's squad on Monday due to a back problem. —AFP

## Cahill to make last appearance for Australia

SYDNEY: Australia's all-time top goal-scorer Tim Cahill will make one last appearance for his country, it was announced yesterday, after calling time on his international career at the Russia World Cup.

The veteran, who has scored 50 times in 107 appearances, will pull on the Socceroos jersey for a final time when they meet Lebanon in Sydney on November 20 so he can bid farewell to his home crowd.

"Tim's contribution to football and the Socceroos especially over the past 14 years has been immense," said Football Federation Australia chief David Gallop.

"When Tim made the decision to retire from international football we swiftly began discussions internally, and with him and his management team, regarding how FFA could provide Tim with an appropriate send-off on home soil." The 38-year-old last played for the Socceroos when he came off the bench for their final group game against Peru at the World Cup. He said he was humbled to be given the chance to play one more time on home soil. "It's going to be incredibly special to represent my country for the final time and I can't wait to say thank you to all the fans who have supported me throughout my career," he said.

Born in Sydney to a Samoan mother, Cahill started his international career playing for Western Samoa under-20s and only became a Socceroo in 2004 after an intense lobbying campaign to world body FIFA.

Two years later in Germany, he became the first Australian to net a goal at the World Cup, going to score in two further tournaments in 2010 and 2014. Cahill spent 14 years in England with Millwall and top-flight outfit Everton, scoring more than 100 goals, before stints in the United States and China. He recently signed for Indian Premier club Jamshedpur.

The Lebanon friendly is part of Australia's preparations to defend their Asian Cup crown in January next year and coach Graham Arnold said they will be treat-



Tim Cahill

ing it "exceptionally seriously" even if it is Cahill's farewell. "Tim has made many sacrifices to play for his country and deserves a final bow in front of Australian fans in Australia," he added. —AFP

## Grindel confident Ozil affair doesn't threaten Euro '24 bid

MONACO: The under-pressure president of the German Football Association (DFB), Reinhard Grindel, has told AFP he is confident the controversy over Mesut Ozil's international retirement will not have a negative impact on Germany's bid to host Euro 2024.

Ozil, capped 92 times, walked away from the Germany set-up in the wake of their disastrous World Cup campaign, complaining of facing "racism and disrespect" and being made a scapegoat for the team's failure. That was after Ozil and teammate Ilkay Gundogan, born in Germany but of Turkish origin, sparked a political storm in May by meeting Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and being photographed together.

Arsenal star Ozil took aim at Grindel in a statement announcing his retirement, saying that "in the eyes of Grindel and his supporters, I am German when we win, but I am an immigrant when we lose".

The DFB chief has vehemently rejected accusations against him of racism, and has dismissed calls to resign over the issue. In July, Germany's biggest selling newspaper, Bild, questioned whether Grindel staying on "represents a threat" to the Euro bid, with Turkey the other contenders.

"Everyone in the DFB and in UEFA knows me very well. I have very deep trust that they can put this into perspective, so I think there will be no influence on the bidding process," Grindel, 56, told AFP in an exclusive interview in Monaco.

Some German politicians have accused Erdogan of using Ozil's retirement to boost Turkey's own bid. Grindel is himself a former politician, serving in the Bundestag in Chancellor Angela Merkel's CDU party for over a decade before moving to the DFB in 2016.

### INTEGRATION DEBATE

The Ozil affair has generated a fierce debate about integration in Germany, a country with a large ethnic Turkish population, but Grindel says his stance on the infamous photographs was about defending his values.

"In the end, it has nothing to do with whether a player of ours has a migration background or not," he said. "If a German player would, in an election campaign, make a photo with, let's say, a far right-wing politician in Germany, we would have the same debate and we in the DFB would react in the same way."

"We stand at the DFB for values: respect, tolerance, fair play, freedom of speech and freedom of press."

"This picture with Erdogan upset our fans, because their President Erdogan doesn't stand for those values."

Also a former journalist, Grindel knows he cannot simply shy away from the Ozil affair despite the importance of the Euro 2024 bid. UEFA will announce the winner on September 27.

Turkey has never hosted a major tournament, while Germany's hosting of the 2006 World Cup was a spectacular success. And the country is ready now, he says.

"I think it is good for football in Europe and UEFA to have a host whose political and financial and economic reasons are stable, and that we have a security that we have a host who has experience in organising such a tournament," Grindel said.

Residents of his home town Hamburg voted against their city bidding for the 2024 Summer Olympics, but this, he insists, is not the same. "We have very good support from all the people in Germany. It is a little bit different to the Olympic Games, because they know that it will not cost so much, because we have all the infrastructure we need," he said.

Grindel stresses the benefits to UEFA of Germany's political and economic stability, and stability is also something the DFB opted for in keeping faith in Joachim Loew as national coach.

In charge since 2006, Loew signed a new contract until 2022 before the ill-fated World Cup campaign in Russia. That saw Germany exit in the group stage after losing to South Korea, with Loew admitting he got his approach all wrong. —AFP

## Tottenham to play all Champions League matches at Wembley

LONDON: Tottenham Hotspur will play all their Champions League group matches at Wembley as they continue to wait for the move into their new stadium, the Premier League club said on Monday. Spurs were initially scheduled to play their first game at the new 62,000-capacity White Hart Lane venue on Sept. 15 against Liverpool but safety issues meant they switched the game along with the next home fixture to Wembley.

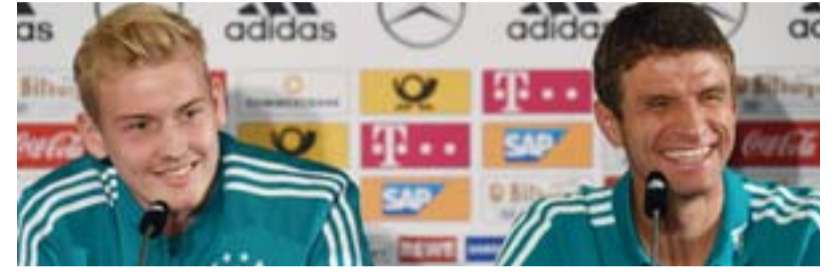
Mauricio Pochettino's side will now host Barcelona (Oct. 3), PSV Eindhoven (Nov. 6) and Inter Milan (Nov. 28) in Group B at Wembley, where they played their home matches last season. Spurs will also entertain Manchester City in the Premier League at the national stadium on Oct. 29.

The match was originally due to take place on Oct. 28, but with Wembley hosting a National Football League game between Philadelphia Eagles and Jacksonville Jaguars, a new date was agreed. Spurs chairman Daniel Levy said the club was doing everything to deliver the new stadium in the shortest possible time. "Amongst the consequences of the delay have been substantial additional costs, not least of which the need for alternative venue hire, along with the inconvenience for our fans and those of our opposition," Levy said in a statement. "Mauricio, his staff and the players, have been exceptional in their support and fully embraced the changes of venue with total positivity. They have my utmost respect. "As soon as we have confidence in our project managers' and contractors' ability to deliver against the revised schedule of works, we shall be able to issue dates for test events and the official opening game." — Reuters

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## Federer, Sharapova crash out at US Open

Millman plays sixth-seed Djokovic next



NEW YORK: Spain's Carla Suarez Navarro hits a return to Russia's Maria Sharapova during their 2018 US Open Women's Singles tennis match at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in New York on Monday.— AFP

NEW YORK: Roger Federer and Maria Sharapova crashed out of the US Open on Monday in back-to-back seismic shocks under the Arthur Ashe Stadium lights. Federer, the five-time champion and looking to end his 10-year wait to add to his total in New York, was beaten by Australia's world number 55 John Millman 3-6, 7-5, 7-6 (9/7), 7-6 (7/3). It was 20-time major winner Federer's first loss against a player outside the top 50 in 41 meetings at the US Open. He finished with 77 unforced errors and 10 double faults. "It was very hot. I felt I couldn't get any air and I was sweating more and more and became more and more uncomfortable," explained Federer.

"I guess I was happy when the match was over." He added: "John dealt with it better—he's from Brisbane, one of the most humid places in the world!" It was the world number two's earliest defeat at the tournament since a fourth round loss to Tommy Robredo in 2013.

The result meant there would be no quarter-final showdown with old rival Novak Djokovic who will now face Millman instead. "I have so much respect for Roger and everything he's done for the game. He's been a hero of mine," said Millman. "Today he was definitely not at his

best. But I'll take it." Sharapova, the 2006 champion, suffered a second successive last-16 exit in New York, blasted off court by Carla Suarez Navarro. The Spanish player marked her 30th birthday in style with a memorable 6-4, 6-3 win over the five-time major champion whose last Slam title was in Paris in 2014.

Federer had cruised through the first set against Millman who was appearing in his maiden last-16 at the majors. But the Swiss, who lost in the quarter-finals at Wimbledon where he was defending champion, began to look every bit the 37-year-old he is as he struggled in the suffocating humidity.

He squandered two set points in the second set and another in the third set tiebreak as the errors piled up. Federer was 4-2 up in the fourth set but was reeled in and two back-to-back double faults sent him 1/4 down in the tiebreak.

### 'BREAK A LEG'

The contest was over shortly before 1 a.m. when he hit a weary forehand wide. Djokovic reached the quarter-finals with a 6-3, 6-4, 6-3 victory over unseeded Joao Sousa.

Djokovic, who ended a 54-week title drought with his 13th Grand Slam title at Wimbledon, said he was relieved to get past 68th-ranked Sousa in straight sets as temperatures soared again.

"Very happy to get this one done in straight sets," said Djokovic, who left the court for a medical evaluation early in the third set but returned to wrap things up in exactly two hours. Marin Cilic, seeded seven, beat David Goffin of Belgium 7-6 (8/6), 6-2, 6-4 and next takes on Japan's Kei Nishikori who saw off German veteran Philipp Kohlschreiber 6-3, 6-2, 7-5.

Cilic defeated Nishikori in the 2014 final when he won his only Slam title. Sharapova, the 2006 champion who was trying to reach the quarter-finals for the first time since 2012, hit 38 unforced errors and dropped serve six times. The defeat also ended the former world number one's perfect record of 23 wins — 22 of them on Arthur Ashe Stadium-in night sessions at Flushing Meadows. "I thought she played really well. I thought in today's conditions, her ball was getting up on me a little bit more, much more than my previous three opponents that I played," said Sharapova.

"I didn't take care of the chances that I had. By 'chances,' I mean the balls that were a little bit shorter." Suarez Navarro, who was also a quarter-finalist in New York in 2013, goes on to face American 14th seed Madison Keys, the runner-up in 2017.

"Maria has played here at night many times so I knew I needed to be aggressive, focussed and play solid," said the 30th seeded Spaniard. Meanwhile, Naomi Osaka reached her first Grand Slam quarter-final, beating Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus 6-3, 2-6, 6-4, tearfully admitting she was prepared to "break a leg" to win the match.

The 20-year-old became the first Japanese woman in the US Open last-eight since Shinobu Asagoe in 2004. Osaka, seeded 20, came back from a break down in the final set to take the tie on a fourth match point when Sabalenka served up an eighth double fault.

"I would never have forgiven myself if I had lost that match," said a tearful Osaka. "When I was a break down in the final set I thought I would even break a leg if needed so I could get to every ball." Osaka will next face Lesia Tsurenko, the 36th-ranked Ukrainian who beat Czech teenager Marketa Vondrousova 6-7 (3/7), 7-5, 6-2.—AFP

## Kuwait shooters win gold at 52nd world championship

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Kuwait shooting continued its achievements in international arenas, as Kuwait's National Trap team of shooters Abdelrahman Al-Faihan, Khalid Al-Mudhaf and Talal Al-Rashidi won the gold medal of the 52nd world championship being held in Changwon, South Korea with the participation of the best shooters in the world, being the first event that qualify shooters for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

Shooter Abdelrahman Nasser Al-Faihan added yet another achievement for Kuwait sport by winning the bronze medal and gained the first qualification for Tokyo 2020 Olympics, as the gold medal went to Spain's Alberto Fernandez while the silver went to Slovak Erik Varga. As for the team's competition, Kuwait's team was first among 31 teams as their score was 360 hits, meanwhile second place went to USA and third place ended with Italy. Kuwait and Arab Shooting

Federations Secretary General, head of the participating delegation Obaid Munahi Al-Osaimi was highly pleased with the achievements Kuwait shooters made in the trap event as Kuwait flag was raised and the national anthem was played in Korea, despite the tough competition with world champions who are participating in this championship to qualify for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

Al-Osaimi lauded the high technical standard of the trap team and the efforts team members made in order to make this achievement in the name of Kuwait.

Al-Osaimi expressed hope that such achievements can be repeated in the coming events of skeet and double trap.

Al-Osaimi dedicated the wins to HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Premier Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and the Kuwaiti people.

Al-Osaimi also lauded the support hon-



Kuwait trap team being rewarded the gold medal.



Slovak Erik Varga, Spanish Alberto Fernandez and Kuwaiti Abdulrahman Al-Faihan.

orary President of KSSC Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, Information Minister, State Minister for Youth Affairs Mohammad Nasser Al-Jabri and the Public Authority for Sports and its Director General Dr Humoud Fulaitch.