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Mol affirms Kuwait's deep military relations with US



Two killed in Kashmir as Trump offers to mediate



Cardinals drop Brewers;
D-backs hold off Rockies





# MPs urge quick approval of unified public sector wages

# Quotas mulled for expat communities • 12,422 deported after failing health tests

# Customs seizes 4m Captagon pills





KUWAIT: The Customs Department yesterday foiled an attempt to smuggle nearly four million Captagon tablets into Kuwait. The tablets were inside plastic material in a 40-foot container that arrived from an Arab country. — KUNA

By B Izzak and A Saleh

KUWAIT: MPs yesterday called on the government to quickly complete the long-awaited unified pay scale for government employees to achieve justice and equality among all employees. The new pay scale was submitted by the government to the National Assembly a few years ago, but was withdrawn after criticism that it does not achieve equality among employees in various government departments and takes away some benefits from some.

MP Majed Al-Mutairi said the strategic payroll alternative, as the new pay scale is referred to, should be accepted and approved quickly if it is based on a scientific and comprehensive study. But the lawmaker said that any such study must be first reviewed by specialists, and warned against taking away any benefits currently enjoyed by employees. The lawmaker said the new pay scale must not be applied to vital sectors like the oil sector and the national guards, adding that attempts to reduce benefits to such sectors will not be accepted.

He said the new pay scale must be transparent, achieve justice and equality, and above all, provide for raising salaries to help citizens cope with the high cost of living. The new pay scale should be fair with employees who do not get the same wages and benefits like their counterparts in other ministries. Mutairi also insisted that the wages of Kuwaiti employees must not be touched.

MP Saleh Ashour blamed the government for delaying

the new pay scale, recalling that it was the government which withdrew the draft it had submitted to the Assembly, adding the government now puts the blame on the Assembly. He said the new pay scale, if implemented correctly, will have important positive results among government employees, as under the scheme, the employee will get the same salary and benefits regardless of the place of appointment in any government department.

MP Khalil Al-Saleh said the proposed pay scale will be difficult to implement under the current employment policy and stressed he will reject any cuts to the wages and benefits of Kuwaitis. He said the existing gap between government employees despite having similar qualifications is the cause of social and financial disparity among employees. The lawmaker however ruled out the possibility of approving the pay scale in the coming term, because it may not be very popular, especially with elections around the corner.

Meanwhile, informed sources said State Minister for Economic Affairs Mariam Al-Aquel said she will present a study to the Cabinet calling for passing a technical recommendation related to implementing a quota and decide the percentages of expat labor allowed in the country. She said the quota will start with new work permits until it develops in the future to set a percentage that no community will exceed, which is 25-30 percent of the number of Kuwaitis.

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# Trump accuses Jewish voters of 'great disloyalty'

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said Tuesday Jewish Americans who vote for Democrats display "either a total lack of knowledge or great disloyalty," sparking accusations that he is promoting and politicizing anti-Semitism. His comments, which drew fierce rebuke from Jewish groups, came amid his ongoing dispute with Democratic Muslim congresswomen Ilhan Omar of Minnesota and Rashida Tlaib of Michigan, both of

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# Iran warns if oil exports cut as Aussies join Gulf mission

GENEVA: If Iran's oil exports are cut to zero, international waterways will not have the same security as before, its president said yesterday, cautioning Washington against raising pressure on Tehran in an angry confrontation between the longtime foes. The comment by President Hassan Rouhani coincided with a remark by Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif that Tehran might act "unpredictably" in response to "unpredictable" US policies under President Donald Trump.

"World powers know that in the case that oil is completely sanctioned and Iran's oil exports are brought down to zero, international waterways can't have the same security as before," Rouhani said while meeting Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, according to Khamenei's official website. "So unilateral pressure against Iran can't be to their advantage and won't guarantee their security in the region and the world."

Tensions between Tehran and Washington have risen since the Trump administration last year quit an international deal to curb Iran's nuclear ambitions and began to ratchet up sanctions. Tehran has denounced the new penalties as "economic warfare".

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TEHRAN: Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei speaks alongside Iranian President Hassan Rouhani during a cabinet meeting yesterday. —AFP

# Sudan swears in civilian-majority ruling council

KHARTOUM: Sudan took further steps in its transition towards civilian rule yesterday with the swearing in of a new sovereign council, to be followed by the appointment of a prime minister. The body replaces the Transitional Military Council (TMC) that took charge after months of deadly street protests brought down longtime ruler Omar Al-Bashir in April. As a result of yesterday's move, it was the first time that Sudan was not under full military rule since Bashir's coup d'etat in 1989.

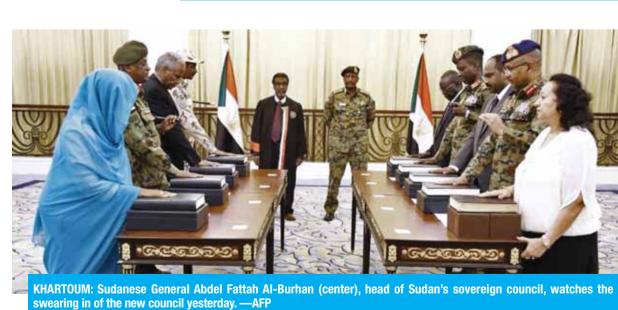
The first steps of the transition after the mass celebrations that marked the Aug 17 adoption of a transitional constitution proved difficult however. The names of the

joint civilian-military sovereign council's 11 members were eventually announced late Tuesday after differences within the opposition camp held up the process for two days. General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, who already headed the TMC, was sworn in as the chairman of the new sovereign council in the morning.

Wearing his usual green beret and camouflage uniform, Burhan took the oath in a short ceremony, one hand on the Koran and the other holding a military baton under his arm. He will be Sudan's head of state for the first 21 months of the 39-month transition period, until a civilian takes over for the remainder. The council's 10 other members were sworn in shortly afterwards and Abdalla Hamdok, who was chosen by the opposition last week to be prime minister, was due to be sworn in later yesterday.

HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday sent a cable of congratulations to Burhan. In the cable, the Amir congratulated him on

Continued on Page 24



# Trump scraps Denmark visit, slams premier

**COPENHAGEN:** Denmark was left stunned yesterday by Donald Trump's decision to postpone a state visit after the government told the US president its autonomous territory Greenland was not for sale. Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen, who has called the idea of selling Greenland "absurd", told reporters that she was "annoyed and surprised" at Trump's decision but insisted that US-Danish relations remain strong.

Trump tweeted on Tuesday that "based on Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen's comments, that she would have no interest in discussing the purchase of Greenland, I will be postponing our meeting scheduled in two weeks for another time". "The Prime

Minister was able to save a great deal of expense and effort for both the United States and Denmark by being so direct."

Yesterday, Trump snapped back at Frederiksen, saying her blunt refusal to consider any negotiation was "nasty". Trump told reporters he had taken offense at her description of any such deal as "absurd". "It was not a nice way of doing it. She could have just said no, we'd rather not do it," Trump said. "She's not talking to me, she's talking to the United States of America."

The decision to postpone the visit confirmed just how interested Trump was in purchasing Greenland, an idea initially dismissed as a joke by some, but which the White House later insisted had a serious purpose because of its strategic location. The territory - which is mostly covered in ice - has been essential to US defense since World War II.

The postponement has sparked strong reactions in Denmark. "Reality transcends imagination... this man is unpredictable," said Morten Ostergaard of the Social Liberal Party, which is part of the ruling coalition. "For no reason, Trump assumes that (an autonomous) part of



COPENHAGEN: Denmark's Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen talks to the press after US President Donald Trump cancelled his state visit yesterday. — AFP

our country is for sale. Then insultingly cancels visit that everybody was preparing for," tweeted Rasmus Jarlov, a member of the opposition Conservative Party. "Are parts of the US for sale? Alaska? Please show more respect."

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# Saudi eases travel curbs on women

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia on Tuesday began implementing a landmark reform allowing women over the age of 21 to receive passports and travel abroad without permission from a male "guardian", authorities said. The reform, announced earlier this month, weakens the restrictive guardianship system. "The passport department has started receiving applications for women aged 21 and above to issue or renew passports and to travel outside the kingdom without permission," the department said on Twitter.

Women in the kingdom have long required permission from their male "guardians" - husband, father and other male relatives - for these tasks, a restriction that drew international censure. The reform comes after high-profile attempts by women to escape alleged

guardianship abuse despite a string of reforms by

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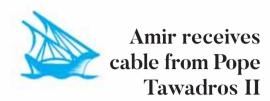
# Iraqi officials inquire about Kuwait Amir's health

# Sheikh Sabah receives cables from Arab League chief, Libya's GNA Chairman

Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a phone call yesterday from Iraqi Prime Minister Dr Adel Abdul-Mahdi who inquired about His Highness' health condition following successful medical tests. His Highness Sheikh Sabah thanked the Prime Minister for his kind feelings, expressing appreciation for his concern.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah had also received a phone call on Tuesday from Iraqi parliament speaker Mohammad Al-Halbousi who inquired about his health. His Highness the Amir thanked Al-Halbousi for his phone call and wished him good wellbeing. Furthermore, His Highness the Amir received a phone call from Ammar Al-Hakim, head of the Reforms and Construction alliance and head of Al-Hikma party in Iraq, to inquire about his health yesterday a congratulatory cable from Chairman

for his phone call.



In the meantime, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah condition. His Highness the Amir thanked Hakim of the Presidential Council of Libya and prime minister of the Government of National Accord (GNA) Fayez Al-Sarraj over his recovery from a recent minor health setback. Sarraj uttered his sincere congratulations over His Highness the Amir's recovery and he wished him a good health. His highness the Amir addressed a cable to Sarraj, expressing his gratitude for his kind words.

Moreover, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received separate cables from the Arab League's Secretary General Ahmad Abul-Gheit and Egypt's Pope Tawadros II, congratulating him on recovery from his recent health trouble, and wishing His Highness Sheikh Sabah wellbeing. In response, His Highness the Amir sent cables to Abul-Gheit and Pope Tawadros, thanking them for their kind sentiments. — KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

### **Crown Prince** receives senior state officials

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem. His Highness Sheikh Nawaf also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. His Highness the Crown Prince then received Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah. — KUNA



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets

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

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



### NBK and Loyac concluded 'KON' Training Program



**KUWAIT:** National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) and Loyac concluded the Training Program 'KON'. More than 64 interns participated in this program that consisted of six weeks training sessions.

NBK sponsored this program as part of its commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility as well as towards supporting students, youths and self-building initiatives in Kuwait. Mohammad Al Othman, NBK General Manager, Consumer Banking Group attended the closing ceremony alongside Loyac officials. Commenting on this occasion, Yaqoub Al-Baqer, NBK Team Leader, Communications and Public relations said "We are proud of the outcome of

this program and the great number of interns who participated. NBK sponsorship to this program goes with our continuous support to Loyac's activities and events."

NBK always strives to empower youth to realize their potentials, providing career and training opportunities," Baqer added. Bager stressed the importance of development programs in shaping the youth and preparing them for the job market and even more so the importance of employers supporting such programs.

As a platinum sponsor, NBK provided lectures and guidance on business models during the training sessions that started on the 2nd of July until the 7th of August 2019.

Throughout the six weeks program, leaders, mentors and trainers encouraged the participants to create a profitable business plan that solves social challenges.

NBK continues to promote a range of philanthropic missions and social welfare programs as part of its corporate social responsibility to assert its leadership in supporting Kuwait's social development standing as a model in serving all aspects of the community. LOYAC is a nonprofit organization that runs several programs for the youth to develop their professional skills, enhance their personal growth and help them find their sense of purpose by extending themselves to others.

# Kuwait looks to adopt technologies found in Qatar airport

**DOHA:** Kuwait Assistant Undersecretary for Ports Affairs in the Interior Ministry Major General Mansour Al-Awadhi praised the state-of-the-art security systems used by Hamad International Airport to maintain safety and security of passengers and civil aviation traffic in Qatar. Awadhi made his remarks on Tuesday after a tour at the airport where he headed a Kuwaiti delegation, expressing appreciation for such experience and thanking Qatari airport officials who facilitated the tour. Awadhi also hailed Qatar's experience in the issuance of visas and procedures for entry and exit of passengers to Qatar that affected the speed and completion of procedures to passengers' security.

Awadhi said that the Kuwaiti delegation was briefed during the tour on the modern methods used, including devices, technical and electronic capabilities used at Hamad International Airport to facilitate the movement of passengers, and discussed the possibility of using them in Kuwait. He added that the visit comes within the framework of cooperation and exchange of experiences between the two countries. He explained that the delegation listened to a presentation on the tasks offered by Airport Passports Department and the technological development adopted by the department on the entry and exit counters of passengers. The delegation also witnessed at first hand modern technology applied to electronic gates in the arrivals and departures lounges and a number of advanced devices used that contribute to enhancing security inside the airport and other ports.



DOHA: Major General Mansour Al-Awadhi is seen during the tour around Hamad International Airport. — KUNA

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# Mediate regional differences to defuse tension in Gulf waters: Kuwait

### Kuwait stresses maintaining Yemen's unity, sovereignty

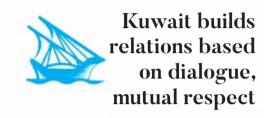
**NEW YORK:** Kuwait has anew confirmed importance of strengthening regional security since the establishment of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in 1981, through resolving differences between countries of the region since its first years of independence. Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi made this statement while speaking during a UN Security Council meeting on challenges of peace and security in the Middle East.

Otaibi pointed out that Kuwait is seeking to strengthen its relations with Iran based on dialogue and mutual respect. He said that the dialogue is based on adopting confidence-building measures and avoiding unilateral measures, which would increase the tension of the Gulf waters, disturbing the safety of waterways and undermining the security in the world. The issues of the Middle East are intertwined and complex, currently taking up a large part of the Security Council's agenda, ranging from 30-40 percent of the agenda, as the region witnessed many wars and crises for more than seven decades, he said. He added that this region, which is the ground of three monotheistic religions, human civilizations, cultures, some of the oldest cities worldwide, contains tremendous natural resources and vast human resources. in which it unfortunately witnesses crises.

#### Region's woes

Otaibi said that both the UN and Security Council deal with the Palestinian issue, Syria, Yemen, Sudan and Libya, that are currently under occupation of parts of their territory. The region is confronting terrorism, witnessing six internal conflicts in six Arab countries out of 14 peacekeeping operations, in addition to the crisis of refugees and displaced people, he said. It has been reiterated in more than one meeting that the solution to the Palestinian issue lies in restoring the right of their owners to their land and their state, reaching a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement through the implementation of

the relevant Security Council resolutions, ending the occupation and establishing a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, he said. Israel's policies since joining the UN are united by a common factor: noncompliance with its charter, non-implementation of Security Council resolutions and international legitimacy, also nonstop violations in the absence of any accountability, he mentioned. The UN Charter is his primary means of conflict prevention, he said pointing out that there have been initiatives for years that Israel has rejected, such as suggesting Middle East to be free of mass destruction weapons.



On the humanitarian side, Otaibi underlined that his work must be human-centered and the law is its source, to seek a decent life for the people peacefully. Adding that Kuwait has joined with France and a group of countries in defending civilians and generating facilities such as hospitals and schools to prevent targeting them during wars. He brought up witnessing the occupation of Kuwait, which had numerous violations of international humanitarian law, so because of that, doubled thoughtfulness is ensured that everyone respects the international humanitarian law. He pointed out that the number of refugees and displaced people in the Arab countries rose to 24 million. Political solutions to the region's problems remain a priority and ending the occupation is the first of these solutions. He underscored that investment in education is one of the most prominent areas of Kuwait's assistance. Crimes of terrorists such as the so-called Islamic State and others resulted to the destruction of monuments and civilizations, as the impact of wars devastated cities, erasing memories preserved by previous generations, he said.

#### Yemen's unity

Separately, Kuwait has stressed the importance of preserving unity and sovereignty of Yemen, expressing concern over the latest developments in the city of Aden and is looking forward to the efforts exerted by Saudi Arabia in hosting talks in Jeddah between the Yemeni government and representatives of the Southern Transitional Council. This came in Kuwait's speech at the Security Council session on Yemen which Otaibi delivered Tuesday night.

Otaibi expressed hope that the final outcome of the talks will lead to the return of security and stability in a way that preserves Yemen's unity and sovereignty over its territory. "Eight months have passed since the Stockholm Agreement entered into force, during which it witnessed the continuation of the impasse and the lack of any tangible progress," he said. He stressed that the political solution is based on the dialogue sponsored by the United Nations and through resolutions 2451, 2452 and 2481 adopted unanimously by the Council as well as several press statements emphasizing the need for full implementation of this agreement.

Otaibi pointed out that the Stockholm agreement did not witness any constructive measures that lead to achieving the desired objectives, as the city of Taiz is still under siege for the past four years and have not witnessed any concrete measures towards achieving or even starting to implement the Taiz understandings, in addition to the continuous stalemate to implement the



**NEW YORK: Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the** UN Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi speaks during a UN Security Council meeting on challenges of peace and security in the Middle East. — KUNA

agreement for the exchange of prisoners and detainees. He pointed out that the Hodeidah agreement is still struggling to reach the starting point and get out of the first phase of implementation, which will be done only by respecting the understandings and agreements reached through the Redeployment Coordinating Committee on the concept of operations.

Otaibi welcomed the efforts of the Special Envoy in this regard by submitting proposals to break the stalemate associated with the elements of the Stockholm Agreement, stressing at the same time that these efforts should be based on understandings to ensure the full exercise of the sovereignty of the Yemeni government on its territory. He reiterated Kuwait's firm position that there is no military solution to the crisis in Yemen, stressing the statement of the Special Envoy on the need to reduce the pace of military escalation and reiterated that the utmost importance lies in the full and concrete implementation of all three elements of the Stockholm Agreement. —KUNA

# Kuwait Interior Minister affirms deep military bond with US

Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah yesterday affirmed the deep-rooted cooperation in all fields with the US, especially in the security arena. Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah made the remark during a meeting with the US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman, accompanied by US Deputy Chief of Mission

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Larry Memmott, where the two sides discussed a number of issues of common concern, the Ministry of Interior said in a statement. Ambassador Silverman praised Kuwait's vital role in stabilizing security and peacekeeping in the region, expressing his country's aspiration to continue coordination and cooperation with Kuwait, the statement added. — KUNA



# Kuwait army chief meets British military official

**KUWAIT:** Kuwaiti Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Al-Khuder met vesterday with the defense attache at the UK embassy in the country. During the meeting, they discussed issues of common interest, especially in

the military aspects, according to a Defense Ministry statement. Delegation Affairs Colonel Musaed Al-Hamdan and Commander of British Military Mission in Kuwait Brigadier Andrew Barr also attended the meeting. — KUNA

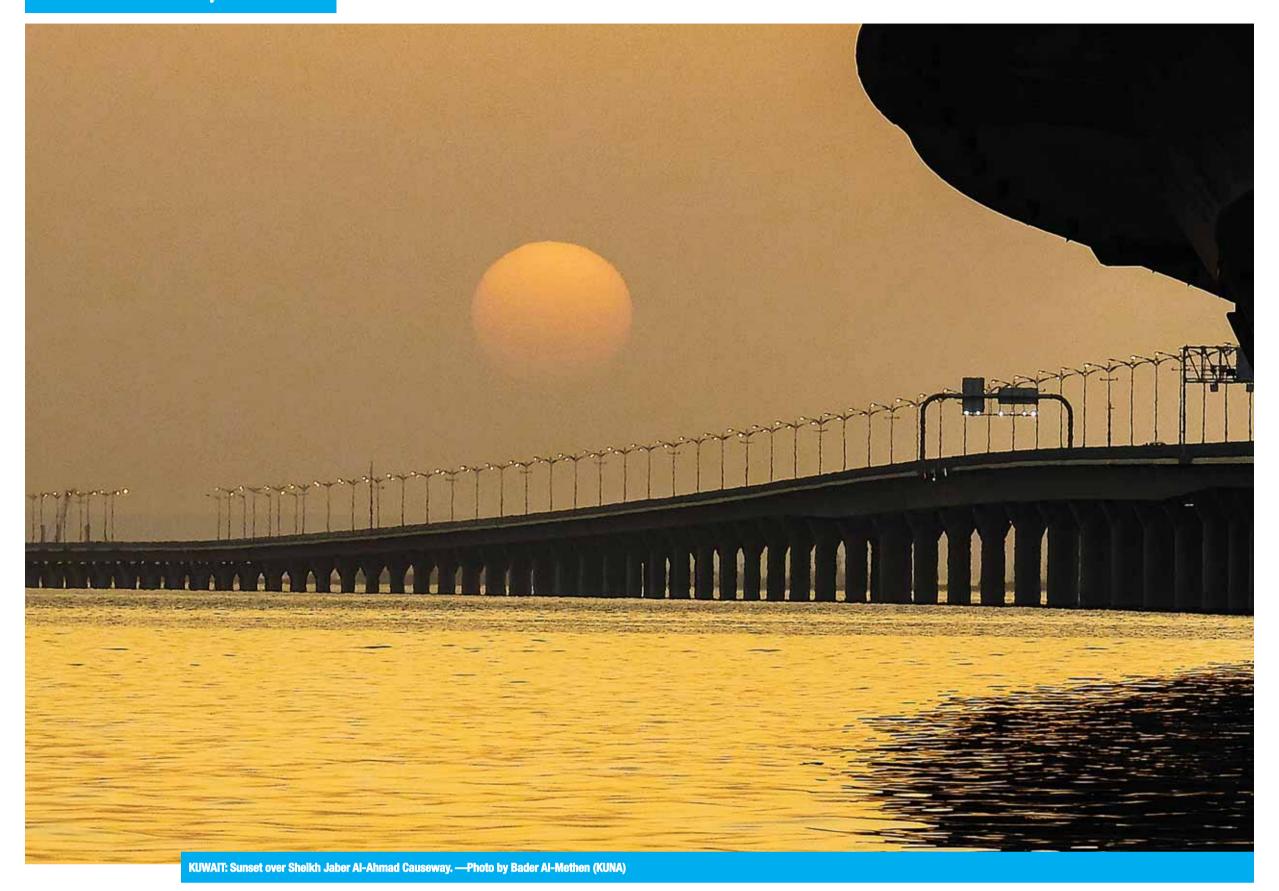


KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Al-Khuder meets with the defense attache at the UK embassy in the country.



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#### Photo of the Day



# Manpower authority denies allowing small projects' laborers transfer to private sector

### Alternative energy to produce power at state departments' buildings

#### News in brief

#### Foreign ministry defends Kuwait's reputation

KUWAIT: Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah said that the foreign ministry wrote to concerned authorities in other countries where people allegedly made disparaging remarks against Kuwaiti institutions to take legal action against those who insulted Kuwait. Responding to a question from MP Abdullah Al-Kandari in regards to legal action taken against parties who allegedly insulted the Kuwaiti judiciary, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled said that based on its founding decree which states taking care of Kuwaiti interests abroad and taking measures to protect them within laws, regulations and international treaties, the foreign ministry "takes the responsibility of writing to concerned authorities to take legal and penal action against all those who committed an act that forms an insult or aggression against Kuwait. It also does not hesitate in making statements whenever anything that means insult is received." He said the foreign ministry takes all diplomatic and legal measures regarding issues that concern Kuwait and its citizens. —Al-Jarida

#### Bedoon students rejected

KUWAIT: The education ministry has stopped the admission of bedoon children in government schools until further notice. Informed educational sources said education zones halted procedures of admitting bedoon children in their schools due to high numbers of students in them, adding that guardians were asked to refer to the ministry. They said despite Minister Al-Azmi's instructions to ease procedures for this group, where some students were admitted with a written approval by the minister, the zones refused to register students. Their guardians then went to the ministry, where they were told there is no place in schools and "we are waiting for the start of the school year to consider classes' budget". They said the ministry advised them to go to the private education department and register their children as a precaution against any unknown development. —Al-Anbaa

#### ePassport gates

KUWAIT: Kuwait International Airport will use ePassport gates to allow Kuwaitis to travel abroad and return to the country without the need to stop at passport control, starting next year. Informed sources said the project, which was approved by the IT department at the interior ministry, will allow citizens to place their passports on a scanner linked to an ePassport gates that reads stored information and opens. The sources said this service will be limited to Kuwaitis with electronic passports. —Al-Qabas

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** The Public Authority for Manpower denied issuing a decision or circular allowing the transfer of small projects' laborers to the private sector. A local newspaper had said according to informed sources, the authority is contemplating a

decision regarding expat labor in small projects.

In other news, sources said the information ministry is carrying out a comprehensive study to re-evaluate work in the special programs budget, adding that rewards were not paid to workers in such programs since March. They said the financial ceiling for such programs is open and surpasses the allowed limit for Kuwaiti employees at KD 1,200 and expats at KD 600. They said rewards of programs with special budgets were stopped until the rules of such programs are amended to suit the ministry's budget, as the ministry seeks solutions for the issue including the unification of rewards and make sure they do not vary in all programs.

Alternative energy

Ministry of Electricity and Water's undersecretary for technical services and main workshops Fuad Al-Oun said the ministry plans to use alternative energy technologies as a basic element of the



'Pioneer' cardiologist visits Kuwait

components of new ministry buildings, and is set to commit to power produced from renewable energy sources in new buildings at no less than 10 percent to alleviate load on the power grid. He said the ministry will use 10 current buildings to implement projects with a capacity of 3.6 megawatts. Our said the ministry is studying the possibility of constructing multilevel parking lots for the ministry with 900 parking places to serve ministry employees as a solution due to the increasing number of employees. He said the parking building will have an Islamic architectural design, and its roof will be used to install photoelectric panels with a capacity of 483 KW.

#### Visiting cardiologist

Sabah Al-Ahmad Heart Center will host an Italian cardiologist as part of the center's policy to attract the best medical experts and provide all aspects of care in the field of heart diseases. Prof Carlo de Mario is one of the pioneers in the field of heart disease and highly skilled in surgical procedures. The visit will be from Aug 25 to 29 to carry out several delicate procedures and treatment. Kuwaiti patients can inquire about making appointments with the visiting cardiologist by calling 22272608.

# Injuries in Riggae gas cylinder blast



By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** A cooking gas cylinder blast injured three persons in an apartment in a five-storey building in Riggae. Industrial Shuwaikh and Ardiya fire



stations responded and found most injuries were burns, which were handled by paramedics. The fire was brought under control and put out. An investigation was opened to reveal the cause of the fire.

# PAAET participates in World Skills' competition

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait will be represented by the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training at the World Skills' international skills competition to be held in Russia. Head of Kuwait's delegation Deputy Director General for Training Affairs Eng Tariq Al-Omairi said that this competition is unique, noting that an elite group of people with technical and vocational specialties from 63 countries will participate, in addition to pioneering companies that support occupational education. Kuwait will participate in four skills: welding, wiring, air conditioning and cooling, and health care, he indicated. The competition will be held with 63 countries participating in 56 skills, featuring 1,300 competitors, 1,300 experts and 3,500 volunteers.



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# Zain Cash, UNHCR and IrisGuard collaborate to introduce iris technology for cash disbursements to refugees in Iraq

### New revolutionary technology helps expand UNHCR cash assistance in a blink of an eye

BAGHDAD: Zain Group, the leading mobile telecom innovator in eight markets across the Middle East and Africa, announces that Zain Cash, its award-winning mobile wallet, money transfer, electronic bill payment, and funds disbursement service in Iraq will introduce a revolutionary EyePay Cash platform enabling refugees to cash-out their financial assistance via iris identification.

The program has been developed by Zain Cash in partnership with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and IrisGuard, a UK-based electronic payment solutions company and the leading supplier of end-to-end iris recognition biometric technology, to ensure the highest level of protection against fraud and improved accountability in transferring cash assistance to the beneficiaries of UNHCR.

Currently over 120,000 vulnerable families in Iraq and approximately 30,000 refugees in the country receive cash support via UNHCR, with the agency disbursing over \$60 million through its partners in 2018 alone. The introduction of iris technology for payment of cash assistance will improve identification accuracy, efficiency and speed as it is the most accurate, fast and secure biometric personal identifier available today. Only the entitled refugee will be able cash-out without any need for any other identification tools, it massively reduces fraud and as such, the much-needed aid is provided to those who it is intended for. It is worth mentioning that UNHCR has in place a high level of security and encryption for its registration data. A streamlined disbursement process will significantly aid UNHCR and other humanitarian organizations in Iraq who are targeting more than 1 million displaced Iraqis and refugees for cash assistance in 2019.

Ayman Gharaibeh, UNHCR Iraq Representative said, "UNHCR always looks for new and improved technologies that can help enhance protection services to refugees, including cash assistance. We have been utilizing iris scan technology to facilitate assistance in the MENA region - in Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt - and it has proven to be a most effective and efficient channel. Iris scan reinforces the dignity of the beneficiaries ensuring their identity through their iris and thus is fraud free. UNHCR is glad that Zain Cash is taking the lead in rolling out the use of iris scan technology in Iraq in cooperation with IrisGuard."

Commenting on the adoption of the EyePay Cash platform in Iraq, Zain Cash CEO, Yazen Altimimi said, "Zain has a strong commitment to the people of Iraq and its residents. We are steadfast in our desire to play



an important role in the socio-economic development of this great nation, and as such our collaboration with



UNHCR and IrisGuard allows us to return greater dignity, privacy and ensure financial inclusion of vulnerable people throughout Iraq, and we expect the streamlined

Number of families assisted by destination of Zakat funds in the fir



disbursement of critical cash assistance to these in need will have a marked and immediate positive impact on their lives."

Imad Malhas, Founder and CEO at IrisGuard commented, "We are proud to be leading the way in providing financial inclusion for vulnerable populations in the blink of an eye. We are delighted to be partnered with Zain Cash and the UNHCR providing a reliable, 100% accurate solution which removes risks, increases beneficiary privacy, improves speed and ultimately ensures that those who need it receive aid faster and in a more secure way."

By integrating the iris technology in the registration and cash-out of assistance to refugees, the disbursement process is set to become more streamlined and secure and quick in comparison to previous process which took over 15 days. The on-boarding process for iris biometric capture is fast and simple - the IrisGuard imager captures a greyscale image of the iris, convert-

ing it to a reliable and permanent Unique Verifiable Identity (UVI) that is used for cross-matching purposes. IrisGuard's EyePay Phone is the first of its kind; and capable of authenticating identity on a global scale within 3 seconds. This new smartphone combines IrisGuard's expertise in iris recognition technology with mobile capability, providing the world's only one to millions iris comparison in real-time.

IrisGuard was founded in 2001 and is a UK-based electronic payment solutions company and the leading supplier of end-to-end iris recognition biometric technology for large-scale deployments, focused on managing trusted human identity requirements for large populations. Zain Cash was launched in late 2015 by Zain and Iraq Wallet, allowing users to deposit, withdraw, transfer money and pay for goods and services via their mobile phone. The service was subsequently chosen by UNHCR as a disbursement mechanism for refugees in Iraq.

# UNHCR assists 648,000+ forcibly displaced people in the first half of 2019

**DUBAI:** A new report by UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency revealed that 648,476 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees were assisted in the first half of 2019 with Zakat funds received through its 'Refugee Zakat Fund'. The report released today by UNHCR is a mid-year review that shows the impact of its Refugee Zakat Fund which was introduced earlier this year. The Fund is a globally trusted, effective, and Sharia compliant structure that harnesses the power of Zakat to make a long-lasting impact on the lives of the most vulnerable displaced communities around the world.

According to the report, \$38.1 million was raised through the Fund thanks to generous contributions from donors across the globe; surpassing the fundraising target of \$26 million originally set for 2019. The report also revealed that for the first time, Zakat was raised online by UNHCR offices in Canada, the United Kingdom and in a number of countries in South East Asia.

Donations received through the Fund have so far helped over 111,209 of the most vulnerable refugee and IDP families (approximately 648,476 individuals) in Yemen, Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, and Mauritania through cash assistance. In Yemen alone, \$13.5 million has already been disbursed as emergency cash to support displaced families in desper-

Turnilles in 111,209
families automated

111,209
families automated

1230
families in 1,327
families in 1,030 families in fami

ate need of humanitarian assistance. Multi-purpose cash assistance supports refugee and IDP families in meeting their most basic needs including rent, food, health and education. In May this year, The Fund expanded its geographical scope of support to cover displaced Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, making it the first crisis outside the MENA region to receive Zakat assistance. This will support UNHCR's ongoing efforts in providing life-saving assistance to Rohingya refugees displaced due to conflict from Rakhine State in Myanmar.

"The impact of the contributions to UNHCR's Refugee Zakat Fund on the lives of refugees and internally displaced persons is remarkable. It is a

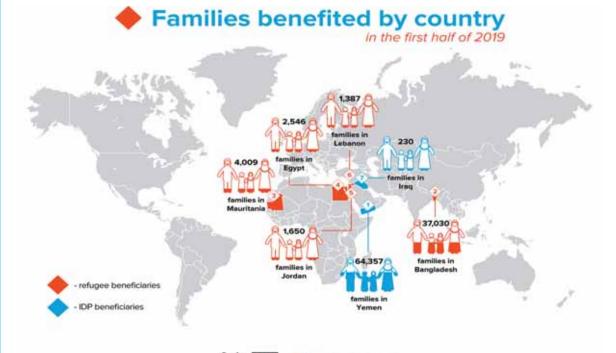


testament of the instrumental role that Islamic philanthropy can play in the humanitarian response to displacement crisis globally," said Houssam Chahin, UNHCR's Head of Private Sector Partnerships in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. "We are grateful to all individuals and institutions who continue to entrust UNHCR with their Zakat and for their resolute support for displaced persons around the globe."

UNHCR aims to substantially scale up its support through Zakat funds to support a total of 1 million displaced persons by the end of 2019. UNHCR has consequently revised the Fund's target to \$44 million in Zakat donations for 2019. The Fund's impact will

be supplemented through its Sadaqah Jariyah campaign (voluntary charity contributions Muslims make at their discretion), launched post Ramadan to support refugees in Bangladesh as a priority.

Rafi-uddin Shikoh, CEO and Managing Director at DinarStandard, growth strategy firm working with UNHCR on the production of the report, said "The Refugee Zakat Fund has gained substantial momentum since its launch earlier this year. With its expansion to Bangladesh and already exceeding the original target of \$26 million for 2019, the Refugee Zakat Fund is gearing up to showcase the impact it can have on the lives of millions of displaced families."



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# Internations ational

### Australia's Cardinal Pell loses child sex abuse appeal

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EU, UK clash over Johnson's Brexit backstop demand

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# Italy Prime Minister Giuseppe resigns

### Conte denounces Salvini for sinking government

**ROME:** Italy's prime minister resigned after launching a blistering attack on his own interior minister, Matteo Salvini, accusing him of sinking the ruling coalition and endangering the economy for personal and political gain. Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, addressing parliament after it was recalled from its summer recess to decide the future of the 14-monthold government, accused the far-right League party chief Salvini of seeking to cash in on his rising popularity.

In a shock move on Aug 8, Salvini declared that his alliance with the anti-establishment 5-Star Movement was dead and called for elections, but the gambit could yet prove a big political blunder and open the door to power for his rivals. Politicians from 5-Star and the centre-left Democratic Party (PD) are openly discussing forming a new coalition which would push the League into opposition and give Italy a more centrist, pro-European government. "The interior minister has shown that he is following his own interests and those of his party," Conte told a packed Senate, a stony-faced Salvini sitting by his side. "His decisions pose serious risks for this country."

He described Salvini's actions as reckless and "liable to tip the country into a spiral of political uncertainty and financial instability". After the Senate debate Conte, who belongs to

neither of the coalition parties, handed his resignation to President Sergio Mattarella, who said he would begin talks with parliamentary groups to see if a new coalition can be formed. Failing that, Mattarella would have to dissolve parliament, 3-1/2 years ahead of schedule, to allow for autumn elections

The consultations with party delegations will begin with minor groups at 1400 GMT. Mattarella will hear all the main parties on Thursday, concluding with 5-Star at 1500 GMT. The PD's leadership is also scheduled to meet to discuss the prospect of hooking up with 5-Star. The two parties have been bitter political foes for years. Financial markets rallied on Conte's resignation, seemingly hopeful that snap polls could be avoided.

#### Challenging Europe

Salvini at times shook his head, rolled his eyes or nodded to League senators as the prime minister accused him of being "irresponsible", "reckless", "alarming" and "disrespectful". Conte said he was worried by Salvini's threat to call people into the country's squares if his drive for elections were thwarted, as well as his demand for "full powers". "We do not need men who have 'full powers', but people who have institutional culture and a sense of responsibility," he said in an hour-long speech in which he also denounced Salvini's habit of brandishing the cross at his

Touching on a particularly sensitive subject, he also said Salvini should provide explanations over allegations that the League attempted to obtain illegal funding from Russia through a covert oil transaction. Salvini rejected Conte's comments, saying other parties were afraid of going to elections and losing their influence. He said his political goal was to challenge the European Union's fiscal rules,

Jihadists exploit weaknesses to make gains

which he has blamed for impoverishing the country. Rome should spend at least 50 billion euros (\$55 billion) to stimulate the chronically weak economy, he added.

"I am not afraid," he said. "I don't want Italy to be a slave to anyone, and I don't want Italy to be given a long chain like a little dog. I don't want any chain at all." Italy has not held an election in the autumn since World War Two because the final months of the year are traditionally dedicated to drawing up the budget-a key moment for a country with one of the world's largest debt mountains. At the end of the parliamentary debate the League withdrew the no-confidence vote in the government that it had tabled earlier this month, but Conte said the move had come too late.

"I see that the League's leader Matteo Salvini lacks the courage to take responsibility for his actions. If there's a lack of courage, don't worry, I'll take responsibility before the country that is watching us," said Conte. Mattarella is likely to push for a swift decision by the 5-Star and PD on whether they can work together. Failing that, he will probably dissolve parliament and call a vote in late October or early November. "They won't be able to run away from elections for ever," Salvini told reporters as Conte met the president. — Reuters

# US school district sued for coloring black pupil's scalp

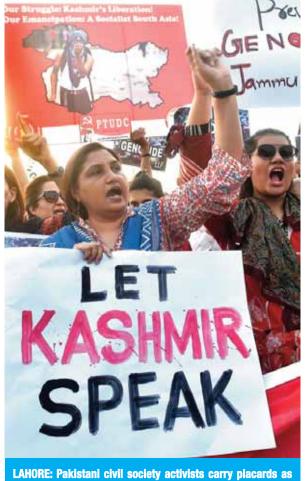
WASHINGTON: Parents of a black teenager in Texas are suing their Houstonarea school district after three white middle school personnel used a marker to blot out a design in their son's scalp. The federal civil rights lawsuit was filed Sunday against the Pearland Independent School District and the three staff members of Berry Miller Junior High who used the marker to color the student's scalp.

The three claimed that his "common African American 'fade' haircut violated the Pearland ISD dress code policy," the lawsuit reads. The school's assistant principal threatened to suspend the boy if he did not have his scalp design colored. The design stood out even more when that was done, so school personnel proceeded to color his entire scalp with black marker. "They laughed as they took many minutes to color 13-year-old J.T.'s scalp which took many days of scrubbing to come off. J.T. was immensely humiliated and shamed," the lawsuit states.

"There are hardly any African Americans in America with jet black skin and, of course, neither does JT," the court document reads. "It is commonly understood among scholars and the general public that depicting African Americans with jet black skin is a negative racial stereotype. During the Jim Crow era [of racial segregation] slaves were often depicted as happy in their slave existence and with jet black skin as a means to disguise their humanity and imply that they are unlike 'white' people."

As news of the incident spread and outrage grew, the Pearland ISD issued a statement saying that it was "extremely disappointed to learn of a situation," but insisted that the boy's hair cut violated district dress code. Nevertheless, a "campus administrator mishandled disciplinary action," and the practice that is "not condoned by the district," it said. The unnamed administrator was placed on administrative leave over the incident. The statement said that ISD officials contacted the student's family "to express our sincerest apology and extreme disappointment in this situation."

However, according to the lawsuit and the school website, the assistant principal involved in the incident has since been promoted to school principal. In a related incident southeast of Pearland, in Galveston, Texas, two white police officers on horseback were recently photographed in early August leading a hand-cuffed African-American by a rope - a scene that evoked past lynchings of black people. Those officers will not face a criminal investigation for their actions, officials said — AFP



they shout slogans during a protest rally in Lahore, as they condemn the India stripped the disputed Kashmir region of its special autonomy and imposed a lockdown. — AFP

### Teenagers swept up in night raids in Kashmir

SRINAGAR: Ali Mohammad Rah sat on the pavement outside a police station in Kashmir's main city of Srinagar on Tuesday, waiting to see his teenage sons, who were swept up in government raids overnight. "Soldiers violently banged windows of our home while we were sleeping," Rah told AFP, saying his sons-aged 14 and 16 - were taken away before dawn in the Srinagar neighborhood of Mehjoor Nagar.

"They just barged in and dragged my two sons away." Government sources say at least 4,000 people have been detained in Kashmir since India revoked the restive Himalayan region's autonomy on August 5 and imposed a massive security lockdown on the restive region. Protests have broken out frequently, prompting raids by police and paramilitary forces.

In Nowshera, in an old quarter of the city, residents said several young men were taken away and detained by police on Sunday night. Locals from other neighborhoods reported similar blitzes. To try and stop the raids, residents in Srinagar's Soura area have erected barricades and dug trenches in roads that lead to their cluster of homes. Sitting outside the police station

alongside Rah on Tuesday were dozens of other locals who said their relatives were also in custody-among them 21 boys from the most recent night raid.

They say soldiers used ladders to scale the walls of their compounds. Widow Rozi, who only gave one name, said a gun was put to her head and she was told to "keep quiet" by soldiers as they led her 20-year-old son Suhail Mohiuddin from the house. Another woman, Mubeena, said a soldier "sprayed something on my face" when her brother was seized. "I fell down in pain and couldn't see for a while. When I gathered myself my brother had already been taken away," she said.

Nearby, Ulfat cradled her one-monthold son as she waited to find out about her breadwinner husband Mushtaq Ahmad, who she said was taken away by police. "I don't have money to buy medicines for myself and other things for my baby," she said. Officials at the station did not respond to a request for comment. Authorities have declined to speak on the numbers of people behind bars. Those picked up include local politicians, activists, business leaders and lawyers. Kashmir has been divided between India and Pakistan since independence from Britain in 1947, and has been the spark for two major wars and countless clashes between the two nuclear-armed arch-rivals. In justifying the scrapping of Kashmir's autonomy, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said last week that "fresh thinking" was needed after seven decades of failure to ensure harmony in the former Himalayan kingdom, where tens of thousands have died in the past 30 years.—AFP

# Yemen's separatist chief in Saudi amid Aden standoff

### Takeover of Aden by separatists exposes cracks in coalition

Aden crisis

complicates

peace efforts

RIYADH: The leader of southern Yemeni separatists has regional allies Saudi Arabia and the UAE, which in June arrived in Saudi Arabia for talks aimed at ending a standoff in Aden port between the separatists and Yemen's Saudi-backed government, who had been nominal allies under a Sunni Muslim military coalition. Saudi Arabia, the coalition leader, called for a summit after the separatists on Aug 10 took over Aden, interim seat of the government, in a move that fractured the

The ousted Yemeni government and coalition partner the United Arab Emirates traded blame over the crisis late on Tuesday. It was not clear if a delayed meeting involving both Yemeni sides would go ahead

after the separatists extended their grip on the south on Tuesday by seizing government military camps in nearby Abyan.

The separatist fighters are part of the Saudi-led alliance that intervened in Yemen in March 2015 against the Houthis, who ousted President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi from power in the capital Sanaa in late 2014. His gov-

ernment rebased to Aden. However, the UAE-backed nent U.N. representative said in New York. His remarks separatist Southern Transitional Council (STC) has a rival agenda to Hadi's government, which has refused to participate in any talks unless the southern forces reverse what it calls a coup.

Trading accusations

The standoff has complicated efforts to end the ruinous war and has exposed differences between scaled down its presence in Yemen while still backing thousands of southern separatist fighters.

STC chief Aidaroos al-Zubaidi arrived in the Saudi Red Sea city of Jeddah late on Tuesday for the talks, the STC said. Hadi's government asked Abu Dhabi, which has called for dialogue, to stop funding and arming separatist forces. "If it were not for the full support provided by the United Arab Emirates ... this rebellion would not have happened. This scheme of fragmentation continues and is escalating despite calls for deescalation led by Saudi Arabia," said a government letter to the United Nations Security Council on Tuesday.

The UAE responded by reaffirming its commitment to the coalition and criticizing the "weak performance" and "ineffectiveness" of Hadi's government and its inability to engage in constructive dialogue with other Yemeni parties. "It is not appropriate for the Yemeni government to hang its political and administrative failure on the UAE," Abu Dhabi's deputy perma-

were carried on state news agency WAM yesterday. The STC said it would hold Aden until elements of the Islamist Islah, which the UAE regards as an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, and northerners are removed from power positions in the south. It also wants a say in Yemen's future. Yemeni sources have said the delayed summit could discuss reshuffling Hadi's government to include the STC, which seeks self-rule in



Transitional Council (STC), stands atop a military vehicle near the south-central coastal city of Zinjibai in south-central Yemen yesterday. —AFP

the south and blames Islah, a key Hadi ally, of being complicit in a Houthi assault on southern forces earlier this month. The Islah party denies the charge.

The Houthis point to Aden as proof that Hadi is unfit to rule. The group, which holds Sanaa and most big

urban centers, has recently stepped up attacks on Saudi cities. The conflict, which has killed tens of thousands and pushed Yemen to the brink of famine, is widely seen in the region as a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran. —Reuters

### Brazil bus hijacker armed with fake gun shot dead

RIO DE JANEIRO: A hijacker armed with what turned out to be a fake gun was shot and killed by police in Rio de Janeiro on Tuesday after he held a busload of passengers hostage for several hours on a major bridge in peak-hour traffic. Dozens of people were trapped on the bus on a heavily transited bridge connecting Rio with the neighboring city of Niteroi after it was commandeered by the man, who police said was also carrying a stun gun lighter and plastic bottle filled with gasoline.

Describing the man as "psychotic," Lieutenant Colonel Maurilio Nunes told reporters a sniper was given the green light to shoot the hijacker when he briefly exited the bus for fear he was about to set the vehicle alight. The man had placed plastic bottles cut in half and partially filled with gasoline throughout the bus, said Nunes, a member of an elite police squad.

He was taken to hospital where he died, military police said in a statement. Thirty-seven people were in the vehicle when it was hijacked. Of those, six were freed during the terrifying, nearly fourhour ordeal. None of the hostages was hurt, police said. The man, identified by

Islamists make

quest in Tunisia

TUNIS: Tunisia's moderate Islamists are

hoping the genial Beethoven fan they

have nominated to run in next month's

presidential elections will break the

mould in the Arab world by turning suc-

cess at the ballot box into uncontested

rule. Abdelfattah Mourou is a lawyer

who has distanced himself from the more

socially conservative positions of his

Ennahda party in the past, has friendly

relations with opponents and is known

via the election to be held on Sept 15 in

which he will face 25 other candidates,

including prominent secularists such as

Prime Minister Youssef Chahed, his

Defense Minister Abdelkarim Zbidi and a

TV tycoon. "If I am elected I will be

president of all Tunisians, not president

for Ennahda supporters," Mourou, 71,

His aim, he says, is to unite Tunisians

for a jokey manner.

Moderate

new power

local media as 20-year-old Willian Augusto da Silva, had been carrying what turned out to be a fake gun, military police said, without specifying if it was a pistol. Heavily armed police had surrounded the bus as they negotiated with the hijacker.

A live broadcast of the scene showed several ambulances parked nearby, receiving hostages as they were released one by one. The man boarded the Riobound bus at around 5:40 am (0840 GMT) and began threatening passengers. "He said the bus was being hijacked and didn't ask for our belongings," Hans Moreno, one of the passengers, told Globo TV. "He was very calm, very quiet." Walter Freire, another passenger, said he thought he was "going to die. "Thank God the police performed well," Freire told Globo TV.

#### 'Save the hostages'

Several lanes of traffic on the busy Rio-Niteroi bridge spanning Guanabara Bay were paralyzed during the hostage situation that gripped the city. Commuters stuck on the bridge could be seen standing outside their cars parked bumper to bumper and taking photos or filming videos with their smartphones.

The bus had been on its way to Rio, a sprawling city of more than six million people where deadly violence is common. "Ideally everyone would have got out of this alive, but we had to take a decision to save the hostages," said Rio

told reporters when he submitted his application earlier this month. Ennahda won the first free parliamentary elections after the Arab Spring pro-democracy uprisings of 2011, but did not stand in the presidential poll after protests by secularists like those against Egypt's freely elected Muslim Brotherhood, which was subsequently banned.

Mourou, kept under police surveillance during the 24-year rule of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, has a good chance of surviving the first round of the election because the secularist vote is split, analysts say. If he wins the second round he would become a standout, elected Sunni Islamist president in North Africa and the Middle East, where many longtime rulers style themselves as bulwarks against radical Islamism. Whether that would happen is less clear in a country with no reliable opinion polls.

Some Tunisians are wary, recalling a 2013 reception Mourou gave to visiting Islamist preacher Wagdy Ghoneim, who was excluded from the United Kingdom in 2009 for "seeking to foment, justify or glory terrorist violence". Mourou later apologized, saying he did not realize the full extent of his views. "Mourou is like a chameleon; his positions change every day like the rest of the Islamists," said



state Governor Wilson Witzel, who was seen pumping his fist in the air after the hijacker was shot. "We are looking after the families of the hostages and of the person who died." A member of the hijacker's family had "apologized to the entire society," Witzel told reporters at

Witzel, whose tough on crime message helped get him elected last year, said he was sure the incident was "linked to organized crime which encourages

this type of terrorism." Police are investigating the hijacker's motivation for commandeering the bus. They said he had no criminal history. This is not the first time a public transit bus has been hijacked in Rio. In 2000, a gunman stormed a passenger bus in a fashionable neighborhood of the city. The hours-long hijacking of bus 174 was later turned into an award-winning documentary. The hijacker and one hostage were killed in that incident.—AFP



Mouna ben Salem, a student in Tunis, capital of the former French colony, where the key tourism sector is recovering from 2015 militant attacks.

Ennadha officials say the party has shown its true colours in its readiness to seek political consensus and is entitled to compete in polls for the president, who

deals only with foreign and defence policy in Tunisia's nascent democracy. Mourou was not immediately available for comment, but he regularly displays moderate credentials, attending annual gatherings of Jews at the ancient Ghriba synagogue, for instance, where he speaks about religious coexistence. —Reuters

# Tanzania truck blast death toll hits 100

NAIROBI: The death toll from a fuel truck explosion in Tanzania on August 10 hit 100 yesterday after several victims perished from severe burns. Aminiel Aligaesha, a spokesman for the National Hospital in Dar es Salaam, told reporters "two people died on Tuesday during the day, and another on Tuesday night", bringing the total number of dead to 100. Officials had put the tally at 95 on Sunday, and another two people were announced dead on Monday. At least 30 of the victims died in the days after the accident, in which a fireball engulfed a crowd thronging to collect petrol from an overturned tanker near Morogoro, 200 kilometers (125 miles) west of Dar es Salaam.

Officials said the explosion was triggered when a man tried to take the truck's battery, creating sparks that ignited the fuel. A doctor at the hospital, speaking on condition of anonymity, told AFP that most of those who survived the initial blast had suffered burns on over 80 percent of their body. "We are doing our best, but most of them are in critical condition," said the doctor. Many of the victims are motorbike taxi drivers who rushed to the scene to try to siphon off leaking petrol.

It was the latest in a string of such disasters in Africa and at least the third this year. Last month, 45 people were killed and more than 100 injured in central Nigeria when a petrol tanker crashed and then exploded as people tried to take the fuel. In May, a similar incident in Niger killed nearly 80 people. In the worst tragedy, 292 people lost their lives in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo in July 2010, while in September 2015 at least 203 people died the South Sudan town of Maridi. —AFP

# Nigerian president assigns new cabinet, appoints oil minister

ABUJA: Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari swore members of his cabinet into office yesterday, assigning a new minister of state for petroleum in Africa's top producer of crude oil. Buhari kept the petroleum portfolio for himself, as in his first term, and appointed Timipre Silva as the junior minister, who is widely expected to manage the portfolio on a day-to-day basis. Silva, a former governor of Bavelsa state in the southern Niger Delta oil production heartlands, replaces former ExxonMobil executive Emmanuel Kachikwu who was the country's main representative at OPEC

Nigeria, which has Africa's biggest economy, remains heavily reliant on crude oil sales despite efforts by Buhari to boost non-oil revenues since he first took office in 2015. Oil receipts account for about 90% of foreign exchange and low oil prices helped to push the country into recession in 2016. The move to assign portfolios comes six months after Buhari won a presidential election and nearly three months after his second term began. The time taken to appoint ministers caused jitters amongst investors and threatened growth

Zainab Ahmed, who became finance minister in September last year after her predecessor resigned, retained the position with additional responsibilities for the budget and national planning. The cabinet of 43 ministers faces a long list of challenges including tepid growth following Nigeria's emergence from recession in 2017, high unemployment and galloping inflation that has hit the poorest people in a nation of 190 million people, most of whom live on less than \$2 a day.

And security forces have been stretched as they try to tackle Islamists waging a decade-long insurgency in the northeast, banditry in the northwest and clashes between nomadic herdsmen and farming communities over dwindling arable land in central states. "The core objectives of this administration are to improve security, achieve diversified, inclusive economic growth and fight corruption," Buhari told his cabinet at the swearing in ceremony. The ministry of power, housing and works - created to address challenges related to the country's ailing electricity and transport infrastructure when Buhari first took office in 2015 was broken up.

Babatunde Fashola, a former governor of commercial hub Lagos state who headed that super ministry in the first term, was named minister for housing and works. Sale Mamman, a businessman and former ministry of works official, was given the power portfolio. His task will be to tackle a poor electricity supply that holds back everything from manufacturing to education, while addressing spiralling debts that have crippled the power sector and held back investment.

"We have seen an exodus of the more capable and technocratic ministers and in their place there are politically connected replacements," said Malte Liewerscheidt, vice president at Teneo Intelligence. He said some of the new entrants were stalwarts in Buhari's ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) party, who appear to have been rewarded for helping him to win February's election, while others were part of a bid to solidify the party's base in some parts of the country ahead of elections in 2023. "There are no real surprises here. The potential for positive change is rather limited," said Liewerscheidt. —Reuters

International

Thursday, August 22, 2019

# Five EU countries to take in Open Arms migrants, ending standoff

# Around 100 migrants stranded at sea for weeks

Second ship,

Ocean Viking

offshore with

356 migrants

**BRUSSELS:** Five EU states agreed to take in scores of migrants stranded for weeks on board a crowded rescue ship, EU authorities said yesterday, ending a prolonged standoff with Rome over their fate. The around one hundred mostly African migrants, picked up in the Mediterranean from early August onwards by the Open Arms, had been forced to remain on the Spanish-registered vessel after the Italian government refused to allow it to dock in line with a closed ports policy it adopted last year.

They finally disembarked on the Sicilian island of Lampedusa on Tuesday night after an Italian prosecutor ordered the shipis seizure and evacuation. Several of the migrants jumped overboard and tried to swim to shore. Spain, France, Germany, Luxembourg and Portugal had agreed to take all of them in, said a European Commission spokeswoman in

Brussels. Authorities in Madrid and Lisbon confirmed their readiness to participate.

#### Steady flow of refugees

A succession of charity vessels has struggled over the past year to bring migrants rescued at sea to Italian shores. The countryis far-right Interior Minister Matteo Salvini has taken a tough line on migrant entry since the coalition government he forms part of took office in June 2018. With the continuous flow of refugees desperate to cross from Africa to Europe, the Commission said it was seeking recipient states for the migrants on board a second charity ship, the Norwegian-flagged Ocean Viking, whose disembarkation Salvini had also sought to prevent. The ship is carrying 356 migrants.

Refinitiv data pinpointed that vessel west of the Maltese island of Gozo. Salvini, who has clashed with Italyis court system over his attempts to veto landings, says the country has borne too much responsibility for handling migration to Europe. This month the coalition his League party formed with the 5-Star movement collapsed.

Signs of the impact of the migration crisis were also evident in Madrid, where the government said the Open Arms was not authorized to carry out rescues, only to provide humanitarian aid. The charity had previously been threatened with a fine if it continued to perform rescues. Asked if the government would sanction Open Arms, Spainís acting deputy prime

minister Carmen Calvo declined to answer directly, telling Cadena Ser radio that no one was above the law, iincluding a ship like this.î European Commission spokeswoman Tove Ernst said the five countries receiving the Open Arms migrants would register them and make necessary checks and transport arrangements, meaning the relocation from Lampedusa would take some time. iThe Commission will ...do its utmost to support and help to ensure that procedures are as swift as possible,î she said. EU states have been at loggerheads over migration since a spike in Mediterranean arrivals



during an awareness campaign organized by Amnesty International in support of migrant rescue boats stuck in limbo for days. —AFP

in 2015, with bitter feuds over how to handle refugees due to discuss the issue again when they meet in and migrants damaging the blocís unity. EU leaders are Brussels mid-October. —Reuters

# Salvini: Italian far-right leader down but not yet out

ROME: With his "Italians first" rallying cry and his tub-thumping against Islam and illegal migrants, Matteo Salvini's stint as Italy's deputy prime minister and interior minister made him the country's most popular and controversial politician. But the leader of the far-right League party was on Tuesday ushered away from the government bench and joined the opposition after his miscalculated power grab that saw Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte tender his government's resignation.

Nevertheless, Salvini's long political career is not over after 14 months of proudly promoting his nationalist, anti-immigrant mantra in the press while dismissing criticism that he uses racist, xenophobic and tasteless language. "Thank you, finally, I would do it all again," Salvini said after he was effectively kicked out of government.

His blunt attacks on migrants, as well as Islam, gay marriage and criminals, have replaced the historic secessionist battle cries of the League and seen his party soaring in opinion polls. But after a stormy 14 months of rows with coalition partner the Five Star Movement, Salvini, 46, pulled his support in the hope of snap elections that would make him premier. The deputy premier was hoping to capitalize on the League's top billing in May's European elections, with opinion polls suggesting the League could double its 2018 election result if a vote were held tomorrow.

#### 'Tricolore doesn't represent me'

Born in Milan in 1973, Salvini joined what was then the Northern League in 1990, aged just 17, rising quickly through the ranks. At the time, the Northern League was known for its campaign to secede from Italy, with Salvini making his name while running its Radio Padania-the wealthier northern region it wanted to see independent. One of his shows was called "Never Say Italy" and in 2011, he won notoriety for boycotting Italy's 150-year anniversary celebrations, putting his desk outside Milan city hall to show he was

"The tricolore doesn't represent me," Salvini said of the Italian flag in 2014. But by 2018, he was campaigning as far south as Matera in the impoverished Basilicata region, where he promised "order, rules, cleanliness" and railed against "out of control" immigration. He has successfully shifted his party's image from defender of the wealthy north against its "parasite" south, to that of guardian of Italy's national sovereignty.

Facing a migrant crisis with hundreds of thousands landing on Italian shores, Salvini furthered his agenda by appealing to a sense of resentment among many Italians who feel Europe has abandoned them. A staunch critic of the EU, he opposes same-sex unions, wants to deport foreign criminals and to bulldoze Roma camps. His blunt language has reminded some Italians of the Mussolini era in the 1920s and 30s, when minority groups were per-

#### Putin admirer

Upon taking up the interior ministry post, Salvini insisted rescued migrants could only land in Italy if other EU countries took them in. A savvy social media user, he has successfully pushed his agenda online, updating his followers daily with live videos, photos and even pictures of what he eats. —AFP

### EU, UK clash over Johnson's Brexit backstop demand

BRUSSELS: Britain and the EU clashed Tuesday over Prime Minister Boris Johnson's demand to scrap the Irish border backstop plan, as fears mount of a chaotic "no-deal" Brexit. London insisted there was "no prospect" of a Brexit deal unless the backstop was abandoned, after Brussels said Britain had still not come up with a workable alternative.

Johnson wrote to EU Council President Donald Tusk on Monday to insist that Britain could not accept what he called the "anti-democratic" backstop a mechanism to avoid border checks between EU-member Ireland and Northern Ireland, part of the UK. Since taking office last month, Johnson has been adamant Britain will leave the European Union on October 31 come what may and has stepped up preparations for a "no deal" departure that would cause major economic disruption.

But the European Commission, the EU executive which has led Brexit negotiations with London, dismissed the proposal in Johnson's letter that the backstop could be replaced with a "commitment" to find "alternative arrangements". "The

### G7 or G5? Trump and Johnson add unpredictability to French summit

PARIS: Brexit Britain's overtures to US President Donald Trump risk further complicating the search for common ground this weekend at a Group of Seven summit already clouded by transatlantic rifts over trade, Iran and climate change. The summit host, President Emmanuel Macron of France, has set the bar low for Biarritz to avoid a repeat of the fiasco last year when Trump threw Canada's G7 summit into disarray by leaving early, scotching the final communique.

Macron, an ardent europhile and staunch defender of multilateralism, will count on incremental advances in areas where a united front can be presented, with the meeting, which runs from Saturday to Monday, officially focusing on the broad theme of reducing inequality. On hot-button issues, they will, when necessary, have to agree to

"We have to adapt formats. There will be no final communique, but coalitions, commitletter does not provide a legal operational solution to prevent the return of a hard border on the island of Ireland," commission spokeswoman Natasha Bertaud told reporters. "It does not set out what any alternative arrangements could be, and in fact it recognises there is no guarantee that such arrangements will be in place by the end of the transitional period."

'No prospect' of deal Downing Street hit back, saying the withdrawal agreement struck in 2018, which includes the backstop, was "simply unviable", having been rejected three times by British lawmakers. "Unless the withdrawal agreement is reopened and the backstop abolished there is no prospect of a deal," a Downing Street spokesman said. The clash comes as Johnson prepares to travel to Berlin and Paris, where he hopes to convince German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron to give ground in the search for a Brexit deal.

Telephone talks of nearly an hour on Monday with Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar failed to yield any obvious breakthrough. Johnson's diplomatic offensive continues at a G7 summit in the French resort of Biarritz at the weekend, where Johnson hopes to show off his warm relations with US President Donald Trump as a signal of post-Brexit Britain's

ments and follow-ups," Macron said. "We must assume that, on one subject or another, a member of the club might not sign up." The G7 groups the United States, France, Britain, Japan, Germany, Italy and Canada, and the European Union also attends. Macron has also invited the leaders of Australia, Burkina Faso, Chile, Egypt, India, Senegal, Rwanda and South Africa, in order to widen the debate on inequality.

#### Tough topics

But the tougher discussions lie elsewhere. The Sino-US trade war has spurred fears of a global economic slump; European powers are struggling to defuse tensions between Washington and Tehran; and Trump has shown little enthusiasm for France's push for a universal tax on digital multinationals such as Google and Amazon, and turned his back on efforts in Europe and around the globe to limit

carbon emissions to slow climate change. The crisis in Kashmir and street protests in Hong Kong may also be touched on during the talks in France's Atlantic coast surfing capital, where some 13,000 police will be drafted in to prevent any violent anti-global-ization demonstrations. "There's no doubt that we will discuss how trade frictions could affect the global economy," a Japanese government official said. "But it is difficult to deliver messages to the outside, since a com-



global ambitions. Johnson said Britain's European partners were being "a bit negative", with Tusk's approach hardly "redolent of a sense of optimism", he told reporters. "But I think, actually, we'll get there. There is a real sense now that something needs to be done with this

He said the EU would not make concessions so long as it thought parliament might block Brexit, "so it's going to take a bit of patience". In another move designed to signal the seriousness of Britain's intent to leave the bloc on October 31, the government announced that British officials will stop attending most EU meetings from September 1. Officials will only go to meetings on "matters of ongoing national interest" such as security, the Brexit ministry announced, saying the time saved could be used to focus on other "national priorities".—AFP



France ahead of a Group of Seven (G7) summit. —AFP

munique won't be issued." Strained relations between the United States and its top allies mean that where once they were in agreement, they now seek the lowest common denominator.

"It won't be productive to push something that someone - whether it's America or some other country - would not agree to

do," the Japanese official added. Moreover, Italy's prime minister resigned on Tuesday, Canada is heading for an election, German Chancellor Angela Merkel's influence on the world stage is waning ahead of her departure, and Britain is probably on the verge of either leaving the EU or a snap

# Tiny Nevada town near secretive Area 51 braces for alien hunters

RACHEL: Connie West, co-owner of an alien-themed motel in the tiny US desert outpost of Rachel, Nevada, believes they are coming no matter what. Not aliens, but alien hunters. A whimsical invitation on Facebook has urged UFO

enthusiasts to gather on Sept. 20 and "storm" nearby Area 51, a US military base long rumored to house extraterrestrials and spaceships. More than 2 million Facebook users have said they plan to go.

Residents of Rachel, a 150-mile drive from Las Vegas and home to roughly 50 people, are split on how to respond. Some sternly warn the public to stay away, fearing large crowds will overwhelm a town with no gas station or grocery store. Others, including West, believe the best course is to welcome them with a music festival dubbed Alienstock.

"We're trying to figure out how to make this a positive from an absolute negative," West said in an interview. "You can fight it, but it's coming." West, with her mother, runs Rachel's only business, the Little A'Le'Inn motel and restaurant, and was inundated with phone calls as soon as the Facebook post appeared. She estimates at least 30,000 people will arrive on Sept. 20, and she's scrambling to order enough portable toilets. As of mid-August, she had

Area 51 was shrouded in secrecy for decades, stoking conspiracy theories that it housed alien bodies and a crashed spaceship from Roswell, New Mexico. The US government did not confirm the base existed until 2013, when it released CIA archives saying the site was used to test top-secret spy planes. The documents made no mention of little green men or flying saucers, but that did not end suspicion. Rachel and its surroundings had long celebrated their spot in UFO lore as a tourist draw. A 98-mile road running through the area is dubbed the Extraterrestrial Highway, a purported hotbed of UFO sightings.—Reuters

Thursday, August 22, 2019 International

# Tens of thousands flee Russia-led onslaught on opposition enclave

# Russia deploys troops in major assault against rebels

Capture of

key gain for

**Assad forces** 

strategic town

**AMMAN:** Ten of thousands of people have fled to the Turkish border in the last few days as the Syrian army pushed a major advance further into the opposition's last major stronghold, residents, rights groups and opposition sources said yesterday. They left Maarat al-Numan, a main city in Idlib province that has been a sanctuary for families fleeing former rebel areas, as a Russian-led campaign has come close to capturing the strategic town of Khan Sheikhoun further to the south.

"The flow of cars and vehicles leaving is not stopping," said Abdullah Younis from the city. Rescuers there said around 60,000 people had fled in the last four days alone.

On Tuesday, Russian and Syrian jets intensified their bombing of scattered villages and towns around Maarat al-Numan, with the al-Rahma hospital in the area struck, residents said. "There were 15

raids on Jarjanaz in less than five minutes," Abdul Rahman al Halabi told Reuters from the area. Rebels concede most of their fighters have fled Khan Sheikhoun but are providing fierce resistance to the Syrian army, which has secured a foothold in the town.

State media, broadcasting from the outskirts of Khan Sheikhoun on Tuesday, said government forces were battling militants but had extended their advance and seized a highway running through the town. Capturing

Khan Sheikhoun would be an important gain for Moscow and its ally into the northwestern region, where Moscow has helped President Bashar al Assad turn the tide against insurgents in the eight year conflict since stepping up its intervention in 2015.

Russia has thrown its weight behind the campaign, which began in earnest at the end of April, conducting thousands of raids and strikes on rebel-held northern Hama and southern Idlib in what Western military

experts and opposition figures say is a "scorched earth strategy". Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov acknowledged on Tuesday that Russia had military personnel on the ground in Idlib province, the Interfax news agency quoted him as saving.

The Russian military has previously downplayed its direct role in the campaign, where it used mercenaries and

special forces as well as directing battles, according to Western intelligence sources. After months of stalemate Russia has increased the intensity of raids in the last 10 days, dramatically transforming the situation on the ground. Hundreds of civilians have been killed and at least 400,000 people displaced, according to medics and NGOs and the United Nations. Moscow and Damascus, who deny indiscriminate bombing of civilians areas, say they are fighting jihadist militants.—Reuters



blanket the body of a victim following a reported air strike on a makeshift clinic in the area of Tallmannis in Syria's northern Idlib province yesterday. —AFP

# Welcome wears thin for Rohingya refugees

COX'S BAZAR: When hundreds of thousands of Rohingya fled Myanmar into Bangladesh two years ago, local communities were mostly welcoming. Today that welcome has worn thin, and resentment, anger and fear are creeping in. "At first, as a member of the Muslim community, we helped them," said Riazul Haque, 28, a laborer from Hakimpara, near the border town of Ukhiya.

Haque allowed around 60 Rohingya families to settle on a piece of his land, thinking they would remain for two or three months at most. "Now it seems the rest of the Rohingva living in Burma (Myanmar) will arrive soon in Bangladesh," he complained. Ukhiya was home to around 300,000 people, but the refugee influx of August 2017 has swelled the population to more than three times that many. Most of the refugees are housed in the sprawling Kutupalong camp, but others particularly those with resources - ventured out in search of opportunity.

Locals blame them from everything from increased pollution and a rise in petty crime, to a lack of work. Mohammad Sojol said he lost his job as a rickshaw driver because vehicle owners now prefer to hire

Indonesia deploys

MANOKWARI: Indonesia's Papua was hit

by fresh unrest yesterday as more than

1,000 security personnel were sent to the

restive region after violent protests that

saw buildings torched and street battles

between police and demonstrators.

Jakarta has called for calm in its eastern-

most territory — where an insurgency

against Indonesian rule has simmered for

decades - following riots triggered by the

detention of dozens of Papuan students in

Yesterday, about 1,000 people

protested in the streets of Timika city,

where an AFP reporter saw demonstra-

tors throw rocks at the local parliament

building as they tried to tear down its

fence. The crowd, which also reportedly

pelted shops and homes with rocks,

began to disperse as riot police fired

warning shots. Hundreds also marched

through the streets of Sorong city, and

hoisted the banned Papuan flag in the

town of Fakfak on the western end of the

island, which is divided between

Indonesia and the nation of Papua New

Java at the weekend.

troops; Papua hit

by fresh unrest

refugees for less pay - even though officially they aren't allowed to work. "They are stealing marginal jobs from us by bribing law enforcers," he said. Some of the Rohingya who settled outside the official camps are now being forced to return and children enrolled in local schools are being

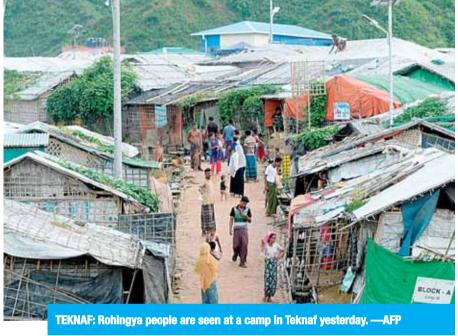
#### Drug gangs

The largely Muslim Rohingya fled a military crackdown in Myanmar that the UN has likened to ethnic cleansing, joining some 200,000 already in Bangladesh. Only a handful have returned, fearing for their safety in a country where they are denied citizenship and treated as illegal immigrants. Ikbal Hossain, the acting police chief of the Cox's Bazar district, said the enforced "idle and workless" lifestyle of the refugees made them "unstable". "They are receiving all sorts of aid, but they have ample idle time as they don't have any other work," he said.

This is driving many in the hands of drug gangs, he said. Tens of millions of methamphetamine pills enter Bangladesh from Myanmar through Cox's Bazar and drug kingpins frequently use Rohingya as mules to carry the narcotics to nearby cities. At least 13 Rohingya were shot dead in what police said were gunfights with officers while allegedly carrying thousands of the

The presence of the narcotics mafia has in turn led to violence inside the camps, prompting police to increase their presence. Crime and murder rates in the camps were

local media reported.



higher than national statistics, according to police, which record roughly 3,000 murders annually in a country of 168 million. Police chief Hossain said some 318 criminal complaints had been filed against Rohingva since August 2017 - including 31 murder cases. But experts warned the number of murders in the Rohingya camps were far higher than the figures quoted by police.

This has added to mistrust by locals. Rabeya Begum, a housewife living in Madhurchhara hamlet near Kutupalong

said the refugees were violent at times, and she was scared of their sheer numbers. "We don't feel secure at night but I cannot simply leave my homestead or else the rest of my land will be occupied by the refugees as well," she said. But Rohingya community leader Mohib Ullah said the refugees have "very good relations" with the host community. "We thank Bangladesh for sheltering us. We help each other because we are neighbors," he said. "We'd do the same thing for them." —AFP

# MANOKWARI: Protesters take to the street to face off with Indonesian police in Manokwari, Papua. —AFP

Papuan issues. "I'm really afraid this is getting out of control," she added.

The government has moved to slow down Internet connections in parts of Papua to stop the spread of online hoaxes it said could spark more demonstrations. Anger boiled over at reports that authorities tear-gassed and detained some 43 Papuan university students in

the country's second-biggest city, Surabaya, on Saturday - Indonesia's independence day. Police in riot gear stormed a dormitory to force out students who allegedly destroyed an Indonesian flag, as a group of protesters shouted racial slurs at them. Authorities said the students were briefly questioned and set free. —AFP

#### Guinea. Police fired tear gas to disperse crowds in Fakfak after they set fire to a market and destroyed ATMs and shops, Several cities in resource-rich Papua were brought to a standstill this week, including Manokwari where businesses and the local parliament building were set ablaze by angry demonstrators. Authorities are hunting for more than 250 inmates who had escaped from a prison in Sorong that was torched during the riots. Several police officers had been

'Getting out of control'

injured, authorities said, and there are

unconfirmed reports of wounded demon-

strators. No deaths have been reported.

Some 1,200 extra police and troops have been deployed to Manokwari and Sorong from other parts of the country, according to the government and Papuan authorities. But security personnel were not equipped with live bullets, and the situation was "generally under control", National police spokesman Muhammad Igbal said yesterday. "It is standard that if things escalate (authorities) will deploy additional personnel," he added. But the move could aggravate tensions, observers warned. "It's making Papuans even more angry," said human rights lawyer Veronica Koman, a frequent commentator on

# Australia's Cardinal Pell loses child sex abuse appeal

MELBOURNE: Disgraced Cardinal George Pell lost his appeal against child sex abuse convictions yesterday, prompting relief from victims who fought to bring one of the Catholic Church's most powerful men to justice. A former Vatican treasurer, Pell had been trying to overturn the verdicts and six-year sentence for sexually assaulting two 13-year-old choirboys at a Melbourne

cathedral in the 1990s.

The high-profile case pitted 78-year-old - who previously helped elect Popes, was a trusted papal aide and was involved in the church's response to child sex abuse claims - against a former choirboy now in his thirties. Pell, dressed in a dark suit, occasionally bowed his head as Chief Justice Anne Ferguson dismissed his arguments and described his victim as "very compelling" and someone who "was clearly not a liar, was not a fantasist and was a witness of truth."

The ruling prompted cheers to ripple into the courtroom from a large crowd gathered outside, and produced emotional statements from victims, their families and advocacy groups. The now-adult victim - who cannot be named for legal reasons - said the "stressful"

four-year legal fight had taken him "to places that, in my darkest moments, I feared I could not return from." Dismissing vocal conservative media critics, the man said the death of his friend, the second choirboy, from a drug overdose had prompted him to break his decadeslong silence.

"After attending the funeral of my childhood friend... I felt a responsibility to come forward," he said in a statement read by his lawyer. "I am not an advocate. You wouldn't know my name. I am not a champion for the cause of sexual abuse survivors." A lawyer for the father of the second victim said he felt "a weight had been lifted." "He feels that justice has been delivered today. He has a real sense of relief that George Pell is behind bars tonight," Lisa Flynn told AFP. —AFP

### Two killed in Kashmir as Trump offers to mediate

SRINAGAR: A suspected militant and a policeman were killed in the first gun battle since New Delhi stripped Indian Kashmir of its autonomy, police said yesterday after US President Donald Trump offered to mediate the "explosive" situation. In a further sign of rising tensions, Pakistan said meanwhile that three of its civilians died in Indian gunfire from across the de-facto border in Kashmir known as the Line of

The Press Trust of India news agency quoted officials as saying one Indian soldier died and four were wounded when Pakistani troops opened fire on forward posts and villages along the LoC in the Poonch district on Tuesday. Both India and Pakistan are nuclear powers and the situation in Kashmir, divided between them since 1947, is further complicated by the fact that China also claims part of the Himalayan

Trump - who has previously spoken of his willingness to mediate — said he would raise the situation over the weekend with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Both men are expected in France for a summit of the Group of Seven industrialized nations. "Kashmir is a very complicated place. You have Hindus and vou have the Muslims and I wouldn't say they get along so great," Trump told reporters at the White House. "I will do the best I can to mediate," he added.

At least 4,000 people have been detained in Indian-controlled Kashmir, according to security and government sources, since early August when authorities imposed a communications blackout and restricted freedom of movement in the region. Highlighting the growing international concern, a senior US official, who has just returned from a visit to the region, called on India Tuesday to quickly release detainees and restore basic liberties.

"We continue to be very concerned by reports of detentions, and continued restrictions on the residents of the region," the State Department official told reporters. "We urge respect for individual rights, compliance with legal procedures and an inclusive dialogue," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity. Officials in France said that President Emmanuel Macron would bring up Kashmir with Modi when the two meet in Paris ahead of the G7 summit.

#### Johnson speaks to Modi

Earlier this year India and Pakistan again came close to all-out conflict over the region after a militant attack in Indian-held Kashmir in February was claimed by a group based in Pakistan, sparking tit-for-tat air strikes. India has bristled at any suggestion of foreign mediation and strenuously denied a claim by Trump last month that Modi had invited him to act a peacebroker. It was also left seething when the UN Security Council held its first formal meeting on Kashmir in nearly half a century last week, saying it would not accept "international busybodies... tell(ing) us how to

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson told Modi in a phone call on Tuesday that the Kashmir dispute must be resolved between India and Pakistan alone, Downing Street said. An Indian statement said Modi had raised with Johnson the "violence and vandalism perpetrated by a large mob against the High Commission of India in London" on August 15. Several thousand people had protested in London that day over India's Kashmir move. Police separated them from a smaller pro-Indian counter-demonstration and made at least one arrest.

#### 'Terrorist' killed

Clashes are common between Indian security forces and militants opposed to Indian rule, with tens of thousands of people killed in the past 30 years, most of them civilians, adding to public resentment towards New Delhi. But the latest gun battle north Kashmir's Baramulla district, reported by Kashmir police yesterday, since the August 5 move. —AFP

### Analysis



THE LEADING INDEPENDENT DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF ESTABLISHED 1961

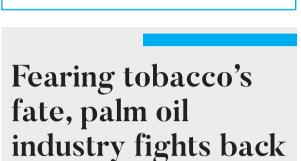
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n the morning of Feb 26, executives from a Washington consultancy presented a strategy paper to some of the most powerful officials in the Malaysian palm oil industry. The message: Don't allow environmental activists and Western governments to tarnish palm oil to the extent that it ends up a pariah product, like tobacco. The \$60 billion palm oil trade has been vilified by environmentalists because of the vast areas of tropical rainforest they say have been cleared to grow the commodity that is consumed by billions of people.

Malaysia and Indonesia, which together produce about 85 percent of the world's palm, had been largely passive in response, comfortable in relying on the sustainability of demand for an oil used for cooking and in items like soaps and shampoos, snack foods, pizza, bread and biodiesel. Food accounts for nearly 70 percent of global consumption of palm oil. But last year, Malaysia launched a global public relations and lobbying offensive to protect the reputation of its key export, particularly in Europe. Reuters has pieced together a picture of the sweeping effort from internal public relations strategy documents as well as interviews with dozens of palm oil industry participants.

The European Union passed an act earlier this year to phase out palm oil from renewable fuel by 2030 due to deforestation concerns. While demand for palm oil used in EU biodiesel accounts for a fraction of global supply, palm oil producers in Malaysia and Indonesia worry the law could spur calls for regulation in its usage in food. Malaysia has led the PR offensive since the EU began working on the law, as it is far more reliant on exports than larger rival Indonesia, and ships about 85 percent of its total palm oil production overseas annually.

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has said the EU law was "grossly unfair" and was an attempt to protect alternative oils that Europe produced itself. The publicity campaign aimed at critics of palm oil has been coordinated by the Malaysian Palm Oil Council (MPOC), a state agency responsible for promoting palm oil and looking for trade opportunities for the product. The agency is funded at least partly by a fee paid by plantation companies based on palm oil production. MPOC's board includes representatives from plantation companies, including Sime Darby Plantation Bhd, the world's biggest oil palm planter by land, and IOI Corp.

Its campaign is centred around small holder farmers, carried out by platforms that say they represent farmers but are created or run by PR firms hired by the MPOC, the strategy documents dated Aug 6, 2018 and Feb 26, 2019, show. MPOC has also approved funding news sites, researchers, op-eds and former politicians to speak up for palm oil and undermine the EU law, the documents show. None of the groups or individuals identified in the proposals have been transparent about their funding and have often claimed to be independent voices. At least three PR firms hired by the MPOC are running these campaigns, copies of their proposals seen by Reuters show. The MPOC approved all their proposals, according to two sources with direct knowledge of the matter.

#### Lobbyist for tobacco, oil

The main company involved in the strategy is the DCI Group, a Washington-based public relations firm that has previously developed campaigns for tobacco and oil multinationals. Its clients have included Altria and the former Burmese military junta, according to US public records and DCI itself. Asked by Reuters for comment on its strategy, DCI said it was engaged in the Malaysian campaign but did not give details. "We are proud to work with Malaysia's palm oil industry in its fight to defend the jobs and livelihoods of small farmers against unfair trade and environmental policies which perpetuate global poverty," said Justin Peterson, managing partner at DCI Group, in an e-mail.

The MPOC has not spoken publicly about the campaign. It told Reuters that it uses various methods, including engagement of PR agencies and advisory firms, to pursue its objectives, but for competitive and client confidentiality reasons, it would not disclose details. "Industries and governments across the world engage in an array of efforts to defend their national interests. In MPOC's case, however, we ensure that all such activities are above board and are in accord with local rules and regulations governing such engagements," the MPOC said. — Reuters

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(Left) Signs promoting plastic free products and packaging are seen as shoppers browse the shelves at Budgens supermarket in Belsize Park in north London on July 2, 2019. (Right) A paper carrier bag promoting the use of plastic-free packaging is seen at the supermarket. — AFP

# UK supermarkets test plastic-free zones

British supermarkets are starting to go "nude". Bowing to pressure from environmentally conscious consumers, big brand shops have begun taking steps to strip their shelves of plastic wrapping over concerns about saving the oceans from waste. "Nude zones" and "Food in the Nude" campaigns are already being rolled out in places such as New Zealand and South Africa, where many fresh fruits and vegetables are grown within relatively easy reach. Now retailers in Britain - where even bunches of bananas are often sealed in plastic to keep them fresh and undamaged during long-distance shipping -are gradually following suit.

shipping -are gradually following suit.

"I've just done my first-ever plastic-free shop," said May Stirling, who travelled 60 km from the village of Ramsbury to Oxford for the university city's "unpackaging" event at the local Waitrose supermarket. "It's so liberating," the 49-year-old mother said, carrying her own containers for the loose products. The Oxford branch of the upmarket chain was selling 160 types of vegetables and fruits, plus cereals, grains, couscous, lentils, wine, beer and other items in bulk, in what was initially planned as an 11-week trial. "I just wish there were a few more things I could have got today," said Stirling, who added in particular that she would have liked more choice of non-packaged cereals for her son.

#### Commercially viable?

Currently, British stores rely greatly on plastic to ship, store and sell items. The country's 10 largest grocery chains produce 810,000 tons of single-use plastic packaging every year, a figure that does not include bags, Greenpeace and the UK-based Environmental

Investigation Agency said in November. Like Stirling, other shoppers have also been pressing the Oxford Waitrose supermarket to do more to stop plastics pollution via a wall, set up by staff, where customers have pinned hundreds of suggestions, many asking for refillable bottles for items like milk and cleaning products. It has now extended its trial in the branch and announced that it would soon introduce the scheme in three other stores. Waitrose has said however that it has yet to establish whether plastic-free zones would work in all of its 344 locations across Britain. "While the priority is the environmental benefit, we clearly need to ensure (the trial) is commercially viable," spokesman James Armstrong said.

#### 'Not that difficult'

Plastic packaging is cheaper than some of the other possible options. So, are shoppers ready to pay more for their groceries to come wrapped in more ecological packaging? Fran Scott, a 55-year-old marketing consultant, is unsure. "I genuinely don't know," she said, while also shopping at Waitrose, armed with her own plastic containers. "I would like to think that," she added however.

Other big supermarket chains have signed up to "The UK Plastics Pact". The pledge's four tenets include eliminating all single-use packaging and making the remainder recyclable or compostable by 2025. Tesco and Asda, a low-cost retailer, have promised to stop using plastic for online shopping deliveries. Morrisons, which like Tesco and Asda is among the biggest five supermarket chains in Britain, intends to install plastic-free produce zones in 60 locations by the end of the year.

Others are going further. Budgens Belsize Park, a

London branch of the smaller supermarket chain Budgens - part of a 147-year-old company of nearly 250 franchises - has already ripped the plastic off more than 2,300 of its 14,000 products. "We did this to show the other big supermarket chains that it wasn't as difficult as they said it was," Andrew Thornton, who runs a Budgens in north London, told AFP, of the reorganisation which took 10 weeks. But among those products still delivered to the shop in plastic is cheese, which the staff cut into slices and then re-wrap in cling film made of sugarcane. "If all the big players globally start to deal with this in their own shops and put pressure on the big manufacturers, things will shift," Thornton said.

#### 'Great material'

Materials scientist Mark Miodownik, of University College London, said that plastic had become a victim of a global business model focused on "disposability and consumption". Part of the problem, he said, stemmed from the marketing of plastic in the 1960s when it came to symbolize modernity and practicality. "Plastic is a great material," he said, pointing to its advantages for hospital materials, pipes and technological equipment. He said that plastic is good for packaging too, but only if it can be recycled well.

Britain's Food Standards Agency notes that plastic limits the exposure of produce to air and moisture, extending its shelf life and "helping to reduce food waste". But Budgens shopper Richard Brady still said he felt guilty about being caught holding a plastic container of sushi. "Well, there is nothing else," he said. "It comes like that and my wife is hungry. It's up to the supermarket to (make the switch) as opposed to us, isn't it?" — AFP

# Vocational education and training in Xinjiang

#### From the State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China

injiang is a key battlefield in the fight against terrorism and extremism in China. For some time Xinjiang has been plagued by terrorism and religious extremism, which pose a serious threat to the lives of the people in the region. Between 1990 and the end of 2016 separatists, religious extremists and terrorists plotted and carried out several thousand acts of terrorism such as bombings, assassinations, poisoning, arson, assaults, and riots in Xinjiang. Many innocent people were killed and several hundred police officers died in the line of duty. The property losses incurred were enormous.

Exploiting people's religious beliefs, extremist forces spread religious extremism through Xinjiang's large religious population, among people who have limited means of communication outside their own communities, limited employment opportunities in farming and animal husbandry, limited sources of information, and limited knowledge of modern science. To strengthen their psychological control over religious believers, extremist forces have incited people to boycott the standard spoken and written Chinese language and reject modern science.

They act in accordance with fabricated "religious law" and "domestic discipline", and defy the Constitution and state laws. They spread word about a "next life where one's fate is predestined", and deceive religious believers into rejecting the kind of vocational skills training by which they can improve their economic conditions and their capacity for self-development. A large part of the population could not read and write in the standard spoken and written Chinese language, and they had no basic knowledge

Faced with this severe and complex problem, addressing both the symptoms and root causes and integrating preventative measures and a forceful response, Xinjiang has established vocational education and training centers in accordance with the law. To meet the needs of fighting terrorism and extremism, these centers deliver a curriculum that includes standard spoken and written Chinese, understanding of the law, vocational skills, and deradicalization. After graduation, the trainees can choose their own jobs, or employment can be arranged for them with the assistance of relevant authorities.

The only criterion for education at the centers is whether the trainee has been convicted of unlawful or criminal acts involving terrorism and religious extremism. It has nothing to do with their region, ethnicity or religion. These centers are education and training institutions in nature. The number of people participating in education and training at the centers is not fixed; some are coming in while others are going out. However, as education and training has played its role, most trainees have reached the required standards and graduated.

In organizing the training programs, the education and training centers strictly follow the provisions of the Constitution and the law to prevent any violation of the basic rights of trainees.

The personal freedom of trainees at the education and training centers is protected in accordance with the law. They employ a residential education model

which allows trainees to go back home on a regular basis and ask for leave to attend personal affairs. The trainees also enjoy the freedom of correspondence. The customs of all ethnic groups and the right to use their spoken and written languages are fully protected at the centers. The regulations, curriculum, and menus at the centers all use local ethnic languages as well as standard Chinese.

The customs of all ethnic groups are fully respected and protected, and a variety of nutritious Muslim food is provided free of charge. Education and training at the centers never interferes in the trainees' freedom of religious belief and the centers have never made any attempts to have the trainees change their religious beliefs.

No terrorist incidents have occurred in Xinjiang for nearly three years since the education and training started. As the infiltration of religious extremism has been curbed, public order and security have returned to society, where equality, solidarity and harmony among ethnic groups and religions have prevailed, and people are enjoying peace and stability.

In 2018, tourism in Xinjiang grew rapidly: Tourists from inside and outside China totaled over 150 million, a year-on-year increase of 40 percent; foreign tourists numbered 2.6 million, a year-on-year increase of nearly 12 percent. From January to June 2019, nearly 76 million tourists visited Xinjiang, an increase of 46 percent over the same period in 2018.

Since the end of December 2018, nearly 1,000 people have visited Xinjiang. They include foreign diplomatic envoys to China, UN officials, Genevabased senior diplomats of various countries, as well as more than 40 groups (or delegations) of people from political parties, civil society organizations, news media, and religious organizations of various countries. Through field trips, many have realized the truth and understood the urgency, necessity, legitimacy and rationality of corrying out oducation and training.

rationality of carrying out education and training.

They have all recognized that violent and inhumane terrorist activities in the autonomous region, provoked by religious extremism, were causing outrage. Through rehabilitating trainees poisoned by terrorist and religious extremist ideas, education and training has made an important contribution to international efforts to fight terrorism and extremism, and generated valuable experience that is of great reference value. At its 46th session, the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation adopted a resolution commending China's efforts in providing care to its Muslim citizens.

"China respects ethnic minorities and their religious beliefs," says a report in Saudi Arabia's newspaper Al Riyadh entitled "Xinjiang: Gateway to China on the Belt and Road" published on May 15, 2019. "The Chinese government at all levels and its departments have formulated a series of policies and regulations to respect and accommodate the dietary habits, clothing, festivals, weddings and funerals of ethnic minorities." "In Xinjiang, all ethnic groups have the right to maintain or change their own lifestyles or customs, which is China's consistent policy."

A report from Turkey's DHA says: "The centers provide human-based management and services for

the trainees. There is no maltreatment or restrictions on personal freedom. The trainees are happy to study and live there. What I saw and felt during the visit was very different from the negative propaganda of the US and other Western countries, and I felt their double standards simply rude and unreasonable."

US magazine International Focus published Val Thompson's "A Journey to the Autonomous Region of Xinjiang, China" in its May 2019 issue: "A visit to Kashgar Vocation Skills Educational and Training Center, which I found well organized with young people, was mostly of the UYGHUR ethnicity. The young people, men and women, were, or could be, victims of extremist teaching, now were learning a vocational skill and being taught a better way of life... They were well fed, and they had good sleeping conditions... I interviewed several of them; they seemed very happy; and they were treated well by their supervisors. For those who want to believe these young people may have been coerced, I say you can't fake happiness; and happiness is exactly what I saw."

Terrorism and extremism are the common enemies of humanity. Over the years, in response to the threats posed by terrorism and extremism, and in order to prevent them from breeding and expanding, and to guarantee individual safety and social stability, many countries have explored measures based on their own conditions, and gained experience in effectively combating terrorism and extremism.

Practice has proved that vocational education and training in Xinjiang can effectively eradicate the conditions that enable terrorism and religious extremism to breed and spread; it can protect the rights to life, health and development of the various ethnic groups of the region. It ensures social stability in Xinjiang and regional security and stability. The practice conforms to the basic principles of international efforts in countering terrorism and extremism, and accords with the fundamental interests and needs of the peoples all around the world.

However?some people, for reasons of ideological prejudice or other ulterior motives, are doing all they can to blacken the reputation of Xinjiang's vocational education and training centers. Their censure of Xinjiang's huge effort in countering terrorism and extremism will be firmly rejected by the Xinjiang people. A number of countries, organizations and individuals apply double standards in their approach to terrorism and extremism, which will in effect shield and incite terrorism and extremism. Such acts go against international morality and human conscience, and are scorned by all just people of goodwill.

Xinjiang still has much to do in the fight against terrorism and extremism, and improvements can be made in this regard. In the context of local conditions, and complying with the spirit of documents such as the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, Xinjiang will put prevention first while taking resolute action against terrorism and extremism. We will make unremitting efforts to improve vocational education and training, protect the people's basic rights, and ensure long-term social stability and security in Xinjiang.

# Business

THURSDAY, AUGUST 22, 2019

In high-tech Japan, cash is still king





'GAC GS7 2020' provides modern and more efficient driving experience



KFH-Germany: Free of charge money transfer from Europe to Turkey





# IMF to Trump: It's not working

# US tariffs and rate cuts will only harm domestic and global growth: Economists

WASHINGTON: US tariffs on China won't fix the trade deficit, and neither will weakening the US dollar through interest rate cuts, International Monetary Fund

economists said yesterday.

In unusually-blunt language, the blog post seemed targeted straight at President Donald Trump who has loudly and constantly demanded the Federal Reserve cut interest rates to weaken the US dollar and juice the economy, while imposing round after round of tariffs on China to reduce the deficit he describes as theft.

But the US policy moves are counterproductive, won't achieve the desired results, and will slow the global economy, IMF chief economist Gita Gopinath said. "Higher bilateral tariffs are unlikely to reduce aggregate trade imbalances, as they mainly divert trade to other countries," Gopinath warned in a blog titled

"Taming the Currency Hype," co-authored by fellow

IMF researchers Gustavo Adler and Luis Cubeddu.

"Instead, they are likely to harm both domestic and global growth by sapping business confidence and investment and disrupting global supply chains, while raising costs for producers and consumers."

And any plans to weaken a country's own currency value "are cumbersome to implement and likely to be ineffective," they said, adding that pressure on the central bank will not achieve that goal either.

The authors warned that "one should not put too much stock in the view that easing monetary policy can weaken a country's currency enough to bring a lasting improvement in its trade balance." "Monetary policy alone is unlikely to induce the large and persistent devaluations that are needed to bring that result ...

especially within a 12-month period," they said. With the US presidential election coming in November 2020, Trump is especially focused on the next 12 months.

#### 'Bearing the burden'

With the IMF and others warning that his trade war is slowing global growth, and as warning signs of a US recession flashing red, Trump has doubled down on his attacks on the Federal Reserve and on China. And he and his advisors have been talking up the economy to counteract the increasing jitters on US stock markets.

But Trump confirmed Tuesday he is considering some kind of tax cuts to boost the economy. However, he said "We're far from the recession. If the Fed would do its job, I think it would have a tremendous spurt of growth." Just last month, the IMF again

downgraded its global growth forecast, and said the trade tensions make for a "precarious" 2020, and said the tariffs threaten to exacerbate the slowdown of China's economy.

The IMF blog repeats much information released in separate reports, but highlights the key points and brings them together. While economic theory states that a weaker currency tends to make a country's exports cheaper and more competitive, the IMF notes that many products are priced in US dollars on the global marketplace.

So in reality, "US importers and consumers are bearing the burden of the tariffs. The reason: the stronger US currency has had a minimal impact thus far on the dollar prices Chinese exporters receive because of dollar invoicing." — AFP

# World stocks rise fears over recession fade

**LONDON:** Stock markets mostly rose yesterday as investors appeared willing to set aside fears of a world-wide recession, instead focusing on bargain hunting, analysts said. They also seemed to largely shrug off political turmoil in Italy.

"Recession nerves look to have settled a little following last week's panic, which has brought some relief to markets," said Craig Erlam at OANDA. Global bond yields stabilized, indicating that markets are becoming less pessimistic about the outlook for the world economy. Key European equity markets were more than one percent higher by the mid-afternoon. That included Milan's FTSE MIB index that rallied as Italian President Sergio Mattarella began talks with key players in a bid to end political limbo in the eurozone's number three economy.

The index had dived 1.1 percent on Tuesday after the shock resignation of Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte. "The markets have seemingly taken the latest political upheaval in Italy in their stride and are gaining," noted XTB analyst David Cheetham. US stock markets also made a better start, "aided by some stabilization in global bond yields which had plunged recently to exacerbate market uneasiness and growth concerns", said Charles Schwab analysts.

#### Euro turns flat

The euro flatlined against the dollar as Italy's crisis offset optimism that Germany's government could unveil measures to avert a downturn. Conte resigned this week, hitting out at far-right Interior Minister Matteo Salvini for pursuing his own interests by bringing down the government coalition.

President Sergio Mattarella must now decide to form a new coalition or call an election, throwing up more uncertainty and another possible budget standoff with the European Union. "It is not clear whether or not the President will try and put a caretaker government in place at first — though it seems likely that Salvini will be given the reins sooner or later," Rabobank analyst Jane Foley said.

"The confusion, combined with Salvini's spending pledges, is potentially a negative factor" for the European single currency, she added. VTB analyst Neil MacKinnon was more downbeat. "There is an increasing risk of a fresh eurozone debt and banking crisis," he cautioned.

#### Powell speech looms

Investors' focus was starting to turn to a key speech by Federal Reserve boss Jerome Powell at the end of the week. Powell's talk at the central bankers' gathering in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, is the key event and will be closely pored over for clues about the bank's plans for next month, with experts unable to agree on whether or not he will announce further cuts. The Fed releases minutes of its July meeting later which will provide an insight into its deliberations when it cut interest rates for the first time since the financial crisis. — AFP



NEW YORK, NY: Traders and financial professionals work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) at the opening bell in New York City. — AFP

# Japan, US ministers meet for trade talks as hopes for early deal fade

TOKYO: Japan and the United States will seek to narrow gaps on trade when their top negotiators meet this week, but hopes for a deal in September are fading as both sides fail to make concessions on agriculture and automobiles, sources say.

Japanese Economy Minister Toshimitsu Motegi and US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer will hold two-day talks in Washington D.C. from today, which will be their second meeting this month.

The talks aim to lay the groundwork for a possible meeting between Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and US President Donald Trump on the sidelines of a Group of Seven summit later this month in France, where the two could discuss trade. As separate trade talks with China and Europe have made little headway, Trump is keen to clinch an early deal with Japan that would open up its politically sensitive agriculture sector, as well as curbing Japan's US-bound auto exports.

Japan also hopes for a timely deal to avoid being slapped with up to 25 percent tariffs on automobile exports to the United States. Trump threatened to do so on national security grounds in May, but put off imposing the duties by six months.

During previous round of talks, Motegi and Lighthizer had agreed to aim for a broad deal by the time Abe and Trump are scheduled to meet on the sidelines of a UN General Assembly meeting in New York in late September. But progress towards reaching a deal has been slow, Japanese government officials with knowledge of the negotiations say.

"It will be a very tough negotiation," said one of the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter.

"If there is to be an 'agreement' we need to have something we can formally announce, which is tough," said another Japanese official, adding that it will be difficult to agree on a deal in September unless Washington makes more concessions. The US Trade Representative had no immediate comment on the meetings.

#### Sticking points remain

The key sticking points are agriculture and automobile. Under his "America First" policy, Trump has been urging Japan and other trading partners to take steps to fix what he sees as unfair trade imbalances with the United States. Washington is targeting Japan's auto exports, which account for about two-thirds of the US trade deficit with Japan at roughly 7 trillion yen (\$65.82 billion) a year.

Trump also wants to open up Japan's market for agriculture goods and beef. One demand Washington is making is for Tokyo to cut tariffs on US beef imports. US farmers have been lobbying Trump to push Japan to agree to the same low tariffs for their products applied to imports from Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)?signatory countries like Australia and Canada. Trump pulled the United States out of TPP when he took office in 2017. Japan, on the other hand, wants the United States to cut tariffs on imports of car parts and industrial goods something Washington is reluctant to.

US auto industry officials said this week the deal is likely to involve Tokyo offering US farmers new access to its market, in return for Washington reducing tariffs on certain Japanese auto parts. US automakers are also urging the US Trade Representative to include in the deal with Japan a provision prohibiting both countries to engage in currency manipulation. Japanese officials are opposed to adding such language in the deal, for fear of having their hands tied in battling any unwelcome yen spike that hurts the country's exports.—Reuters

Thursday, August 22, 2019 Business

# In high-tech Japan, cash is still king

# Japan's ageing population still prefers physical money

**TOKYO:** Once a pioneer in cashless transactions, Japan payment system and was forced to scrap the scheme. is now lagging behind as the world's biggest economies increasingly embrace electronic payments-because its ageing population still prefers physical money.

Four out of five purchases are still made with cash in Japan, despite its reputation as a futuristic and innovative nation. In South Korea, some 90 percent of transactions are digital, while Sweden aims to be a cashless society as early as 2023. But in Japan, where crime and counterfeiting is virtually non-existent so people feel more comfortable carrying cash, consumer response has been sluggish.

At Katsuyuki Hasegawa's bike repair shop customers are invited to settle their bills using PayPay-a tie-up between Softbank and Yahoo-using a OR code via their smartphones. But only "two or three" people a week are using the service, Hasegawa tells AFP.

"In a place like this, everything is very slow. We get lots of old people who like to chat while getting out their money. They don't need quick transactions," says the 40-year-old shopkeeper. "Personally, I prefer cash. With PayPay, you don't keep track of your money," he adds. With Japan becoming the first "super-aged" society with more than 28 percent of people 65 or over, it is harder to persuade consumers to take up new technology, according to Yuki Fukumoto, an analyst at the NLI Research Institute.

"The challenge from now on is how to motivate people" to change their habits, said Fukumoto. This is a serious challenge in a country with more than 200,000 ATMs and where most small shops will only take cash to avoid high transaction costs. Many were also put off when retail giant Seven & I Holdings suffered a hacking attack immediately after launching a new QR-code

#### 'Outdated and collectable'

Yet it was way back in the 1990s that Japanese firm Denso Wave developed the first QR codes now frequently used in cashless payments, while Sony has offered a chip used on public transport and for payments since the 2000s. Payment cards for transport systems in Tokyo and other cities are also often used for small purchases from vending machines or convenience stores, but cash remains preferred for other transactions. The Japanese government is hoping to seize on a wave of tourists expected to flood in for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics to double the amount of electronic payments to 40 percent by 2025.

It also plans to introduce a points system to partially reward customers paying by cashless means as a way to mitigate a controversial hike in consumption tax from eight percent to 10 percent from October. Tokyo perhaps has an eye on the costs of such a dependence on cash, estimated by a Boston Consulting Group survey at two trillion yen (\$18 billion) to maintain ATMs and transport money around securely. Companies too are doing their best to promote a cashless society-earlier in the year, mobile company Rakuten started "100-percent cashless" stadia for its baseball and football teams.

Akiko Yamanaka, who runs a chic restaurant called "Koguma" ("bear"), said a 10-percent discount introduced by PayPay for diners who settle the bill using their system had attracted several people.

"The more campaigns there are like this, the more people will convert to cashless," said the 54-year-old. And Rakuten boss Hiroshi Mikitani is convinced that the future is cashless, even in Japan.



economies increasingly embrace electronic payments because its ageing population still prefers physi-

collectable as vinyl discs are now," he said in a recent

"One day soon, money as we know it-notes and blog. Nevertheless, he admitted that "security has to be coins that we carry with us-will be as outdated and improved" for this to happen, especially in the wake of

# Scottish budget deficit at 7-year low, but exceeds **UK** average

LONDON: Scotland's budget deficit has fallen to a seven-year low but remains much larger as a share of the economy than the average deficit for Britain as a whole, official figures showed yesterday-figures that were seized on by opponents of Scottish independence. Scottish public spending was 13.6 percent higher per head than the average for the United Kingdom, the biggest margin since records began in 1998-99. Revenue collected in Scotland was 2.6 percent lower per head than the UK average.

During Scotland's 2015 independence campaign, the public debate included arguments about whether Scotland's high public spending could be sustained. The country ultimately voted to remain part of the United Kingdom. However, its pro-independence first minister, Nicola Sturgeon, has told British Prime Minister Boris Johnson that she wants to hold a second referendum because of Brexit. Wednesday's figures showed Scotland's net fiscal balance, including revenues from North Sea oil in its territorial waters, dropped to 12.6 billion pounds (\$15.3 billion), or 7.0 percent of gross domestic product in 2018/19, down from 8.1 percent in 2017/18.

This was the lowest since 2010/11, but exceeds the equivalent deficit for the United Kingdom as a whole, which stood at 1.1 percent of GDP, down from 2.0 percent in 2017/18. Across advanced economies, the average budget deficit was 2.1 percent in 2018.

Scotland - which accounts for about a tenth of Britain's population and economic output - is now responsible for more than half of the United Kingdom's total government borrowing in cash terms. The Scottish government's finance secretary, Derek Mackay, focused on the reduction in borrowing.

"With a deficit that is falling at a faster rate than the rest of the UK, strong economic growth and a near record low unemployment, Scotland's economic and public finances are strong," he said. Supporters of independence say Scotland's economy would perform better if the country had greater control of fiscal and industrial policy, especially with the United Kingdom due to leave the European Union, a decision opposed by Scottish voters. —Reuters

# BA owner slams spiralling costs of Heathrow's third runway

LONDON: IAG, the parent company of British Airways, hit out yesterday at the spiralling costs linked to the controversial construction of a third runway at London Heathrow, Europe's busiest airport.

In a submission to Britain's Civil Aviation Authority, IAG accused Heathrow of trying to cover up the real costs and passing on the burden to airlines and, in turn, to passengers. "Advance costs are spiralling out of control and total expansion costs are being covered up," IAG chief executive Willie Walsh said in a statement. IAG said the airport had originally put the cost of the expansion-both of the runway and the additional terminal and aircraft stand capacity-at £14 billion (15.3 billion euros, \$17 billion). "However, its latest masterplan says that now only builds the runway. The total cost is £32 billion," the statement said. "The airport's chief executive thinks expansion is a 'fait accompli' but with judicial, environmental and political hurdles ahead, there's no guarantee," Walsh said.

Spending £3.3 billion before receiving planning permission is irresponsible and it's completely unacceptable to expect passengers to pick up the tab.'

IAG said it had "no confidence in Heathrow's ability

And its "submission urges the CAA to regulate Heathrow effectively and stop the airport from steamrolling through massive cost increases". Britain's gov-

to deliver cost-effective expansion.'

# BRITISH AIRWAYS LONDON: IAG accuses Heathrow of trying to cover up the real costs and passing on the burden to airlines and, in turn, to passengers.

ernment last year finally approved the third runway after decades of acrimonious debate. In June, the airport published its plans, including the re-routing of rivers and roads as it sought to allay environmental

Construction is expected to start in 2022, with the runway built by around 2026. New terminals will not be ready until about 2050. The hub, west of London, aims to increase its total capacity to 130 million passengers per day, compared with the current level of about 78 million.

London Mayor Sadiq Khan, along with environmental charities and local councils, recently lost a court battle to prevent the Heathrow expansion. Britain's Conservative government argues that the project will provide a major boost to Britain's post-Brexit economy and could create up to 114,000 local jobs by 2030. —AFP

### Court blocks Ryanair pilots' strike in Ireland

**DUBLIN:** Ireland's High Court yesterday blocked a planned strike by Ryanair pilots in the country due this week that had been triggered by a row over pay. "The immediate industrial action (due today and tomorrow) is restrained," Justice Denis McDonald told the court in Dublin.

A total 180 directly-employed Ryanair pilots-members of the Irish Airline Pilots' Association (IALPA) had intended to match planned action by British pilots, which may yet be blocked also at a separate hearing in London. The no-frills airline said the High Court's decision to impose an injunction against the strike in Ireland 'will come as a huge relief to thousands of Irish passengers and their

The airline called on IALPA members-working with parent union Forsato return to mediation, but reiterated its hardline stance on pay negotiation. "Small groups of workers, earning sixfigure salaries should not be threatening to disrupt the holiday travel plans of Ryanair customers and their families," the carrier said in a statement. The Dublin-based airline is also taking the British Airline Pilots Association (BALPA) to the High Court in London yesterday in a last minute bid to cancel

A five-day strike by Ryanair cabin crew in Portugal meanwhile began vesterday, but disruption was limited after the country's government ordered workers to deliver at least a minimum service. Elsewhere, Ryanair cabin crew in Spain have called for ten days of strikes in September. The Irish court dispute centred on a 2018 agreement between pilots and management. Ryanair argued that was an "overarching" text which outlined how industrial action should not be taken until a mediation process had been completed.

The carrier also said Forsa had not outlined specific pay demands, had been hasty in their movement to strike and conducted the strike ballot improperly. Forsa said the 2018 agreement was limited to matters of the time only and Ryanair had been "dismissive and showed no desire to engage in a reasonable manner with the pay proposal".

Justice McDonald said there was a 'gap in the evidence" regarding the strike ballot, in which 61 percent of members voted. His injunction was made on the condition that all parties returned for a fuller hearing

0.041881

#### **EXCHANGE RATES**

#### Al-Muzaini Exchange Co. **EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES** Euro Sterling Pound Canadian dollar Turkish lira 229.950 54.570 US Dollar Buying ASIAN COUNTRIES Japanese Yen Indian Rupees Pakistani Rupees Srilankan Rupees Nepali Rupees Singapore Dollar Hongkong Dollar Bangladesh Taka 38.854 Philippine Peso Thai Baht 5.838 Malaysian ringgit 77.954 GCC COUNTRIES Saudi Rival 81.334 Qatari Riyal Omani Rival Bahraini Ďinar **UAE Dirham** 83.040

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash

Egyptian Pound - Transfer

Yemen Riyal/for 1000 1.224 109.640 Jordanian Dinai Lebanese Lira/for 1000 0.000Morocco Dirhan

# Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd.

Dollarco E	axchange Co. Ltd
Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	304.440
Canadian Dollar	229.435
Sterling Pound	371.560
Euro	339.305
Swiss Frank	299.700
Bahrain Dinar	809.620
UAE Dirhams	83.290
Qatari Riyals	84.530
Saudi Riyals	82.080
Jordanian Dinar	430.680
Egyptian Pound	18.391
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.711
Indian Rupees	4.248
Pakistani Rupees	1.917
Bangladesh Taka	3.605
Philippines Pesso	5.818
Cyprus pound	18.110
Japanese Yen	3.860
Syrian Pound	1.590
Nepalese Rupees	2.663
Malaysian Ringgit	73.915
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	43.630
Thai Bhat	10.865

Turkish Lira Singapore dollars

#### BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL CURRENCY 0.363103 0.377003 British Pound 0.005084 0.014384 Czech Korune Danish Krone 0.3303990.344099 0.102910 Georgian Lari 0.102910 Hungarian 0.000940 0.001130 0.035029 Norwegian Krone 0.054497 0.071347 Russian ruble 0.004575 0.004575 0.009118 0.019118 Slovakia Swedish Krona Swiss Franc 0.304580 0.315560 Australasia Australian Dollar 0.198332 0.210332 New Zealand Dollar 0.188989 0.198489 Canadian Dollar 0.223483 0.232483 US Dollars 0.300700 0.306000 0.306000 US Dollars Mint 0.301200 Bangladesh Taka 0.002982 0.003783

54.410 220.319

Chinese Yuan Hong Kong Dollar Indian Rupee Indonesian Rupiah Japanese Yen Malaysian Ringgit Nepalese Rupee Pakistan Rupee Philippine Peso Singapore Dollar Sri Lankan Rupee Thai Baht

0.0395230.003726 0.004498 0.000017 0.000023 0.0029560.000243 0.069189 0.075189 0.002682 0.003022 0.005814 0.006114 0.214718 0.224718 0.001923 0.0097840.009604 0.010124

0.045381

Hai Dani	0.005574	0.01012
Vietnamese Dong	0.00013	0.00013
	Arab	
Bahraini Dinar	0.802335	0.81039
Egyptian Pound	0.018663	0.022023
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iragi Dinar	0.000210	0.000270
Jordanian Dinar	0.424997	0.433997
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000151	0.00025
Moroccan Dirhams	0.021054	0.045054
Omani Riyal	0.786557	0.794458
Qatar Riyal	0.083065	0.083899
Saudi Riyal	0.080193	0.081493
Syrian Pound	0.001292	0.001513
Tunisian Dinar	0.102077	0.11007
Turkish Lira	0.046539	0.056384
UAE Dirhams	0.082352	0.083180
Yemeni Rival	0.000991	0.00107

Business

Thursday, August 22, 2019

# 'GAC GS7 2020' provides modern and more efficient driving experience

#### Midsize SUV available now at Mutawa Alkazi showroom



**KUWAIT:** Mutawa Alkazi Co, the exclusive and authorized distributor and dealership of GAC Motors vehicles in Kuwait, through the all-new "GS7" vehicle reiterates the relentless quest to enhance their presence in Kuwait, whilst meeting the requirements of driving enthusiasts wishing to experience the thrill of the latest tech features in driving.

The "GS7" is characterized by the best performance of its powerful engines with advanced technology, which are produced under strict quality control systems based on the strategy of "GAC Motors" Group that makes customers and consumers a top

The "GS7" is a midsize SUV designed especially for consumers seeking modern driving experience. It is equipped with a "GAC" engine that provides a maximum power of 148 kW (201 hp) at a rotation rate of 1,750 rpm.

The glamorous "GS7" expresses the power, speed and agility as a luxurious car reaching highest levels in the global market with its enormous determination and unique and elegantly integrated style. This vehicle enjoys powerful measures to ensure outstanding driving with the world's most advanced and efficient power system. The vehicle embodies the absolute best of renewable and innovative energy group globally through the network of research and development of

the world "GAC Motor", and the relentless efforts in modern technologies and applications to end up with applying the first 50 technologies ever used in the car.

In addition, it features a sophisticated and secure suspension system, automatic emergency braking system(AEB), multi-level strategies and a warm-out warning system, which automatically detects the vehicle's lane departure by audible warning.

When the vehicle exceeds the speed of 30 km/h, the front collision system is automatically activated depending on the different types of risk. The car is equipped with adaptive cruise control to maintain a safe distance between vehicles at all times. It includes powerful features, new interface design, remote monitoring and intelligent security services, in addition to a unique emergency and safety service that provides high-efficiency remote starter which allows to start the car using a remote control.

#### High-quality specifications

The "GS7" reflects the aesthetics of technology with dual U-style tunnel led taillights, and the matrix crystal lens full- led headlights with great design that creates a sense of technology in multi-dimensional spaces. The car features balanced details that explain the spirit of freedom and the power of exploring new horizons. Its beam headlights enable the driver to have



a view up to 600m, and a lighting width of 56m, with a rectangular shape and form and adjustable sensitivity, for ensuring a safe driving in a great manner, showing an elegance of the advanced technology.

The car is spacious with comfortable, roomy and multi-mode smart seating. It has an air-conditioning system and elegantly integrated floating dashboard that redefine the luxurious cockpit and add interior refinement to meet the travel requirements of large

The all-new "GS7" also features very high standards. The three-zone independent air conditioning



with negative ion air cleaners provides comfort with automatic control so that passengers can experience great car journey. The vehicle has central control 10inch touch screens (LCD) and 7 inches for the tablet and mobile phone screen. This allows for smooth transmission of vehicle information and provides a good sense of control with new vision. It features a silencer system that decreases noise at slow speeds shrugging offal roads conditions.

"GAC Motors" ensured that the all-new "GS7" has distinctive rear design with super-size trunk, aesthetical rear bumper and dual U-style tunnel led taillights.

### Texas shale towns grapple with growth as oil bust fears fade

ODESSA, TEXAS: In west Texas, the center of the US oil boom, about 3,800 students at Permian High School are crammed into a campus designed for 2,500, with 20 portable buildings to help with the overflow.

School officials had expected enrollment to fall after the last oil price crash, starting in 2014, but it kept rising - one sign of a growing resilience in the region's oil economy as Exxon Mobil, Chevron and other majors continue pouring billions of dollars into long-term investments here.

For most of the last century, oil money has flowed into this region like a rising tide during booms - but residents here had enough sense to know it would flow right back out again when the next bust hit. That cycle has always made officials, developers and voters wary of investing too much during the good times on everything from school

construction to roads to housing. That hesitance is fading fast as oil majors make ever-larger and longerterm commitments to drill in the Permian Basin and residents grow weary of traffic jams on once-rural roads, long waits for medical appointments, pricey housing and overcrowded schools. Local governments, industry and foundations are joining forces to tackle the region's overwhelmed

infrastructure and public services. "When you have more students, you need more teachers," said Danny Gex, principal at the Odessa school, which was made famous as the home of the Permian Panthers football team in the book and screen adaptations of "Friday Night Lights.'

Texas has a statewide teacher shortage, Gex said, and "when you're in a desert, it makes it a lot more difficult to find them." Also in severe shortage: housing. The median price of a home in Midland, \$311,000 in April, was higher than any other Texas city except the hip tech-industry hub of Austin, according to data tracked by Texas A&M University.

Former convenience store manager Ruben Garcia came to the region and now earns \$2,000 to \$2,500 a week hauling sand to fracking sites. But he had to sleep in his truck until he could

"I had to go where the money is, and the money is here," Garcia said. The city of Midland, the local hospital district and other employers are considering banding together to build apartments for workers, said Jerry Morales, mayor of Midland, the de facto capital of the Permian. In neighboring Odessa, the school district has considered buying a hotel to house new teachers.

"That's crazy to even think that," said Gex, the principal.

#### Staying power

The oil industry, of course, still has its ups and downs, like any business involving global commodities subject to rapid market shifts. Some of the smaller producers that pioneered shale drilling in the Permian, such as Concho Resources, Laredo Petroleum and Whiting Petroleum, are downshifting as West Texas oil prices have lost 16 percent and natural gas has tumbled 36 percent over the past year.

But the world's biggest oil majors are increasingly taking control of the Texas shale business, and their drilling plans - sometimes sketched out in decades rather than years - are envisioned to withstand the usual price drops. That means they will need to lure more staff to live permanently with their families in cities such as Midland and Odessa, rather than depending on "man camps" for transient roughnecks or relying on temporary worker-training schemes.

In Midland, a group of local foundations started by wealthy area families, as well as a consortium of energy firms, recently put up \$38.5 million to finance 14 tuition-free charter schools to relieve the stress on local classrooms. "The mindset is changing," said Mayor Morales. "There are those who understand we're growing and we need these things." But it's a scramble to catch up: "We're behind, because we never invested in ourselves." On the New Mexico side of the Permian, local governments, schools and foundations joined together to build a \$63 million sports complex with a water park in Hobbs. Hotel taxes from visiting energy workers will pay part of the facility's operating costs, said Hobbs Mayor Sam Cobb.

Hobbs' next proposal involves a \$60 million vocational high school that would help turn out welders, electricians and other skilled bluecollar workers. Oil firm executives will consult on the curriculum by offering insight into the skills they



commodities subject to rapid market shifts. —Reuters

need in new hires, he said.

"I think there's more sustainability because all of the supermajors have come back into the area," Cobb said. While many local officials and civic leaders say the region has permanently left its boom-and-bust cycle behind, others remain wary. Alan Herig arrived in Midland in 1977 to sell oilfield equipment and later opened an office supply store. He went from flying to Houston for steak lunches to painting houses after oil prices crashed.

"Midland became a ghost town," said Herig, who now owns three hotels in the area and believes hard times could come again any day.

Still, Herig understands why city officials and civic groups are scrambling to upgrade local infrastructure and services. "Midland is way behind," Herig said. "They need to invest."

#### Orange buckets and folding tables The latest shale boom, which started

about three years ago, has brought jobs and wealth but also many hassles to day-to-day life. Midland resident and energy executive Kaes Van't Hof had a hard time scheduling an eyedoctor's appointment for new contacts before his wedding earlier this year.

"Simple things have to be planned far in advance here," Van't Hof said. Max Campos, a tattoo artist who lives in Odessa, recently sold his motorcycle after concluding it was no longer safe to ride alongside heavy truck traffic. Odessa, a city of 120,000 people, drew unwanted attention last year after a school teacher equipped a classroom with orange buckets and folding tables because of a lack of chairs and desks. The school found tables after photos of students using the makeshift furniture went viral online. Several groups have formed to bring change to the region, and local officials are finding that voters are more receptive to approving new spending on services such as schools and roads.

Priority Midland - a long-range planning initiative formed this year by officials in government, business and philanthropy - plans get-out-the-vote efforts to press for increased school financing and a possible sales tax hike to pay for hospital services or improved roads, Morales said.

The Permian Strategic Partnership, a group of 20 energy companies operating in the area, promises to spend \$100 million to promote training, education, health care, housing and roads. The partnership chipped in \$16.5 million for the charter school initiative, which will open its first campus in August 2020 and plans to offer public education to 10,000 students over time.

One member of the organization is Travis Stice, chief executive at Midland's Diamondback Energy, which has been among the Permian's fastgrowing firms. It's time for the community, he said, to trust that the oil industry is here to stay. "We've allowed ourselves to be rangebound by thinking: 'Don't invest during the boom time because the bust time is coming,' Stice said. —Reuters

# Norway mulls alternatives to sluggish \$1 trillion fund

OSLO: Norway's \$1-trillion-plus sovereign wealth fund, the world's largest, may seek to shift the balance of its investments between Europe, the Americas and Asia, a senior official said yesterday.

North American equity markets have grown faster than European ones since the last time Norway examined the regional weight of the fund's reference portfolio, in 2012. And this year investor confidence in Europe has faltered, as the region's economy slows and that of its largest country, Germany, shrinks amid trade tensions and uncertainty surrounding Britain's departure from the European Union.

This (regional weighting) is exactly the question that we are considering now, and we are giving advice to the (finance) ministry about regional weighting of the equity reference index, by the end of this month probably," Egil Matsen, deputy central bank governor in charge of the fund, told Reuters.

Matsen's remarks refer to the proportion of money it invests in stock, bonds and property, including a stake in London's Regent Street, across different regions globally. The fund is managed by a unit of the central bank. It advises the finance ministry and parliament, which ultimately sets the fund's investment mandate. It is unclear at this stage what the fund will recommend and what the ultimate decision of the

finance ministry will be. The fund has 70 percent of its value invested in company shares but has over time been reducing the proportion held in European companies in favor of other markets such as the United States. The same has happened for government bonds. "One of the questions is whether the current weighting, whether there are reasons to adjust that," Matsen, the top public official responsible for the sovereign wealth fund, said in an interview. —Reuters



OSLO: Norway invests the proceeds of its oil and gas pro duction into a rainy day fund, which is now so big that it is equivalent to \$197,000 for every Norwegian man

Business Thursday, August 22, 2019

# KFH-Germany: Free of charge money transfer from Europe to Turkey up to 5,000 euros

# KT Bank AG launches new service for Turkish citizens living in Europe





**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Finance House-Germany (KT Bank AG), Europe's first participation bank does not charge any money transfers up to 5,000 euros to Turkey by Turkey's citizens living abroad. Mehmet Oral, Executive Vice President in Charge of Retail Banking at Kuveyt Turk said, "Our citizens working and living abroad are now able to transfer money to their homeland Turkey free of charge and value their savings in interest free participation accounts at their homeland."

He added: "KT Bank AG, established in 2015 in Germany has launched a brand-new service for our citizens living in Europe in cooperation with Kuveyt Turk. KT Bank AG does not charge any money transfers up to 5 thousand euros to Turkey by our citizens living not only in Germany but any European country as well."

"Free of charge money transfer to continue till the end of year," Mehmet Oral said, "KT Bank AG opened its first branch office in Germany in 2015 and is now offering services for our people living in Europe in its Berlin, Frankfurt, Mannheim and Cologne branch offices based on participation banking principles. We will open Munich branch office soon. In cooperation with KT Bank AG, we, as Kuveyt Turk, are now offering a brandnew service for all people no matter whether or not they are our customers. Turkish people living in any European countries, no matter whether or not they are customers of KT Bank AG are now able to visit any branch office of KT Bank AG and make free of charge money transfers up to 5 thousand euros to Kuveyt Turk. Above all, they can remit the money to a named recipient in Turkey, so it is not required for them to be a customer of Kuveyt Turk. Our free of charge money transfer service will continue till the end of year. We believe that our citizens living abroad would show great interest in this new service facilitating money transfers to Turkey." Savings of people living abroad grow with 'Our Homeland Account'!

Stating that, in addition to Kuveyt Turk's free of charge service for money transfer from Europe to Turkey, they have also developed a product referred to

as the 'Our Homeland Account' for the citizens living abroad and willing to value their savings in Turkey, Mehmet Oral said, "Our people living abroad and willing to grow up and value their savings in their homeland may open Our Homeland Account with Kuveyt Turk. They can make free of charge money transfer to such account through KT Bank AG in an amount up to 5,000 euros. Our citizens living abroad who are willing to value their savings in TL, Euro, USD and gold participation accounts can check their accounts with Kuveyt Turk via mobile and online branch office and make any EFT and money transfers in Turkey free of charge even if they are not in Turkey. Additionally, they can trade in forex and precious metals 24 hours weekdays with suitable margins via mobile and online branch office as well as they can benefit leased safe-deposit box at 50 percent discounted prices."

What is 'Our Homeland Account' and what are its key benefits? Kuveyt Turk's 'Our Homeland Account' is a service launched in order to encourage Turkish people

living or domiciling abroad to value their savings in Turkey.

- Turkish people living abroad may grow their savings in their homeland using TL, Euro, USD and gold participation accounts.
- They can make free of charge money transfer from KT Bank AG brkanch offices to Kuveyt Turk in an amount up to euro 5,000.
- They can use small, medium and large size safe-deposit boxes for a month, 3 months, 6 months and 1-year periods at a 50 percent discounted rates.

• They can give automatic bill payment instruction

- via Kuveyt Turk's branch offices, mobile and online branch office.

   They can make free of charge money transfer with-
- in the country via Kuveyt Turk's mobile and online branch office.They can trade in forex and precious metals 24
- They can trade in forex and precious metals 24 hours weekdays with suitable margins via mobile and online branch office.

# ABK announces first winners in Emirates Skywards Miles campaign

**KUWAIT:** Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced the first set of winners in its "6 Million Skywards Miles, 60 Winners" summer promotion. Twenty lucky customers each won 100,000 Skywards Miles, which will be credited to their Emirates Skywards Miles membership account and can be used for a return Emirates Business Class ticket from Kuwait to Dubai, or for flight upgrades and other purchases including cultural event tickets.

#### June winners were :

Mohammad Dashti, Sameer Gergi Makhoul, Yousef S M Alsaad, Ahmad A A H Ali, Ahmad Yousef Alnufais, Dr Hamed S Alrefaei, Jasem M A A A Eshkanani, Ahmed Saleh Shalabi, Mohammad A A Dashti, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah, Ali Abdulhussain, Fatemah Qabazard, Abdulaziz H M A Taher, Bader Alkandari, Nour M A A Alramadhan, Abdullah Alsumait, Sheikha Haya Mubarak D Al-Sabah, Mohamad Salamah Ahmad, Nashwa M Waked, Haidar I J Kamal

To participate in the remaining two draws, customers must hold an ABK Emirates credit and/or prepaid card issued prior to June 1. Eligibility for the monthly draw will also be based on a minimum KD 500 per month total transaction spend completed with the following bank cards:

- ABK Emirates Credit cards used in International transactions through POS and cash
- ABK Emirates Prepaid Cards used in International

transactions through POŚ only

The more you spend the more chances you have of winning. Simultaneously, every KD 10 spent abroad or in a foreign currency will award clients three draw entries and for every KD 10 spent locally, ABK cardholders will be awarded with 1 draw point. In addition, online transactions concluded on Emirates.com will award clients six draw entries. The next draw will take place on August 15.

ABK and Emirates Skywards have been in partnership for over 17 years. Every year, ABK holds various campaigns to reward its existing clients with extra Skywards Miles, and has allowed many to travel by simply using their cards in purchases.

# ABK offers new payment solution with Tasdeed service

KUWAIT: Further enriching its portfolio of innovative products and services under its 'Simpler Banking' strategy, Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) recently announced the launch of the new Tasdeed service. A solution that caters specifically to Point Of Sale (POS) & E-Com Online Payment Gateway transactions related to the Kuwait ministries and government authorities. Cardholders cannot use the card for any other form of payment, making it the ideal solution for a messenger or representative that manages this area of the business. The Tasdeed service can be requested through any ABK branch and is exclusively for ABK customers.

# Gulf Bank congratulates winner of monthly salary draw

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank has announced the winner of its seventh monthly Salary Account draw of the year. This month's lucky winner, Hadi Salem Shayea Al-Hajri, will take home a cash prize of 12 times his salary. The draw, which took place at Gulf Bank's Head Office in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce, is the seventh Salary Account draw this year. To date, Al-Hajri, is one of seven winners of this year's monthly draws, each of whom took home cash prizes.

With the new 2019 Kuwaiti Salary Offer, new customers who transfer their salaries to Gulf Bank are automatically enrolled in the monthly draws, giving them the chance to win cash prizes of up to 12 times



their salary. Customers are also enrolled in a yearly draw of Kuwait's largest salary prize, a cash prize of up to 100 times the winner's salary.

Gulf Bank's Salary Account also gives new customers the opportunity to receive either a KD 100 cash gift upon transferring their salaries to Gulf Bank, or an interest-free loan of up to KD 10,000.

Customers must have a minimum salary of KD 500 and are eligible for the offer following their first salary transfer to Gulf Bank. Customers can also enjoy additional benefits like a Visa or MasterCard credit card free of charge for a year. They can also apply for a loan of up to KD 70,000 or a consumer loan of up to KD 25,000.

### GMC 'Forgotten Toy': Raising awareness around risks of rising temperatures

KUWAIT: Keeping safety at the heart of its business, GMC has rolled out its "Forgotten Toy" campaign to raise public awareness around the dangers of leaving children unattended in a vehicle, even for a short period of time. Every year, multiple fatalities in cars are reported around the world, and the Middle East is no exception with outdoor temperatures hitting near 50°C and indoor car temperatures rising up to an additional 30°C in less than 15 minutes.

A common and dangerous practice, leaving children unattended in cars with the windows rolled up has resulted in numerous critical injuries and fatal cases over the years around the world. Studies have shown that children's bodies tend to heat up 3 to 5 times faster than adults, while children are also incapable of cooling themselves down. The negative effects of extreme temperatures on children have been further confirmed by pediatric associations worldwide, with children often falling victim to hyperthermia dehydration and other risks that can be fatal.

GMC designed its "Forgotten Toy" campaign as a metaphorical representation of these dangers to portray the severity of leaving children alone in cars. The campaign's message caters to GMC's fellow community members living in the region, with the hope of helping prevent such injuries or fatalities during the more challenging summer climate.

Daniella D'Souza, Head of Brand - GMC Middle East, said: "The safety of drivers, passengers and the wider community sits at the center of everything we do as a brand. While we are constantly innovating and striving to add value to the safety standards in our GMC vehicles, we also share a responsibility to shed light on



critical and life-threatening issues like this one. Everyone has a role to play to deliver safety and we hope our loyal and growing community around the region joins us in raising awareness around the risks attached to the hazardous habit of leaving children unattended in cars by sharing our "Forgotten Toy" campaign and spreading the message."

The wax model in GMC's "Forgotten Toy" video was made with a combination of three different materials: Silicone, Paraffin wax and Beeswax. The wax model was then carefully textured by sculptors to replicate a real-life scenario in order to bring the dangers and consequences of leaving children unattended in cars to the forefront of viewers' minds.

# Warba Bank to hold Al-Sunbula draw today line with the its offering campaign more than In the r weekly dr throughout

**KUWAIT:** Warba Bank, "the Best investment Bank" and "Best Corporate Bank" in Kuwait, will be organizing its weekly Sunbula draw number 32 today at 11:00am in presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the bank officials.

Al-Sunbula both account and fixed deposits are the perfect choices for customers who wish to save money and achieve steady returns while at the same time gain the opportunity to win prizes throughout the year. In

line with the bank's mission to develop and differentiate its offerings, Warba Bank has enhanced its Sunbula campaign for 2019 with more cash and prizes reaching more than KD 1 million.

In the running campaign, Warba Bank continued its weekly draws for five winners of KD 1,000 each throughout the year, yet introduce the "Mega Draws" that take place on a quarterly basis to reveal five winners, the 1st winner gets KD 100,000 in cash! The four winners thereafter will each get the latest 2019 Land Cruiser 5.7 VXR. And more, as the last Mega Draw will give away 2 more Land Cruisers!

As per the winning chances, each customer will be participating in the draw for each KD 10 in the Sunbula Account. It is also worth noting that the Sunbula Fixed Deposit rewards its investor with both high expected returns, reaching up to 3.5 percent, as well as winning

chances. And such investors have full flexibility in choosing the desired tenure and the profit distribution method.

Furthermore, Warba Bank is leveraging on its Customer Onboarding solution, in line with its ambitious five-year strategy that enables non-Warba Bank customers to request the opening of Al-Sunbula account in a simple electronic manner without having to visit the branch, through 5 simple steps in 5 minutes. New customers will be able to request opening the account at anytime, anywhere, through the new and unique electronic system used to implement this service. Representatives will then contact the customer to determine the appropriate time to visit the branch to get required signatures, verify the customer's identity, deliver his/her debit card, and activate the account.

Thursday, August 22, 2019

### Health & Technology

# Apple debuts credit card as it readies TV+ launch

# The moves come as Apple shifts to emphasize digital content



SAN FRANCISCO: Apple on Tuesday launched a smartphone-generation credit card in the US and moved closer to hitting the hot streaming television market with a new subscription service. The moves come as Apple shifts to emphasize digital content and other services to offset a pullback in the once-sizzling smartphone market.

Arrival of an Apple Card tailored particularly for iPhone fans came with reports that the technology titan is keen to launch its TV+ streaming service before Disney goes live with a rival in November. Apple TV+ will debut with a small selection of original content and a possible subscription price of \$9.99, Bloomberg reported, citing people familiar with the matter. The price would be more than that charged by powerhouse players Netflix and Amazon Prime as well as the announced subscription cost of a Disney+ service to launch on November 12. California-based Apple did not immediately respond to a request for comment about TV+.

#### Spending on shows

Apple has reportedly allocated more than \$6 billion for TV+ original shows, a small number of which would be available when the service goes live. Ads for "The Morning Show" starring Jennifer Aniston, Reese Witherspoon and Steve Carrell began appearing on Twitter. The show was described as "a high-stakes drama that pulls back the curtain on the morning news" coming this fall to those with Apple TV+ subscriptions.

With Hollywood stars galore, Apple in March unveiled streaming video plans along with news and game subscription offerings as part of an effort to shift its focus to digital content and services to break free of its reliance on iPhone sales. The Apple TV+ service, an on-demand, ad-free subscription service, will launch this year in 100 countries, the company said at the event. "We feel we can contribute something important to our culture and to our society through great storytelling," Apple chief executive Tim Cook said when the service was announced.

Apple revealed only a few of the programs in the works but announced collaborations with celebrities on both sides of the camera including Octavia Spencer, JJ Abrams, Jason Momoa and M. Night Shyamalan. The new content will be available on an upgraded Apple TV app, which will be on smart television sets and thirdparty platforms including Roku and Amazon's Fire TV. Apple will also allow consumers to subscribe to thirdparty services like HBO and Starz from the same application. Creative Strategies analyst Carolina Milanesi expected Apple TV+ to be more of a channel at its streaming video service, similar to an HBO, than to be a "one-stop-shop" that would stand alone.

#### Games and Cards

Apple is aiming to leverage its position with some 900 million people worldwide who use at least one of its devices. The company has announced plans to launch a new game subscription service called Apple Arcade internationally later this year. "Apple Arcade will introduce an innovative way to access a collection of brand new games that will not be available on any other mobile platform or in any other subscription service," Apple said in a statement.

The Apple credit card that became available on Tuesday in a partnership with Goldman Sachs was integrated with Apple Pay. Those signing up will get a physical card and one for a digital wallet, with the two companies pledging to refrain from sharing or selling data to third parties for marketing and advertising. Apple Card features that could shake up the credit card industry include not charging fees, giving users cash back on purchases, and providing tools for people to better manage their debt. "Apple Card delivers new experiences only possible with the power of iPhone," the company said in an online post. The card uses machine learning and mapping capabilities to let users keep track of spending, and provides payment options showing interest costs of various options. — AFP

# Study links fluoridated water during pregnancy to lower IQ

WASHINGTON: A study published Monday linked consumption of fluoridated tap water during pregnancy to lower IQ scores in infants, a finding at odds with decades of public health messaging extolling the mineral's benefits in reducing cavities. Several outside experts expressed concern over the research's methodology and questioned its conclusions, though some found the results compelling enough to merit further investigation.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) named community water fluoridation one of ten great public health achievements of the 20th century because of its contribution to the steep decline in tooth cavities in the United States over several decades. But although high levels of fluoride have been found to be toxic to rat brains, the concentrations seen in fluoridated tap water are deemed safe.

"We realized that there were major questions about the safety of fluoride, especially for pregnant women and young children," Christine Till, an associate professor at Canada's York University and the paper's senior author told AFP, adding it was important to base decisions on evidence. The study, published in the influential JAMA Pediatrics journal, analyzed data from 512 mother-child pairs across six Canadian cities, with about 40 percent living in communities supplied with fluoridated municipal water.

After controlling for other toxins in their analysis, they found that an increase in concentration of fluoride in pregnant mother's urine of one milligram per liter was associated with a 4.5-point lower IQ score in boys — but not girls — at age three or four. When estimating the daily maternal fluoride intake instead of fluoride in urine, they found a one milligram increase in intake was associated with a deficit of 3.7 IQ points for both boys and

US and Canadian health authorities recommend capping fluoride concentration at 0.7 milligrams per liter (parts per million) to prevent fluorosis, overexposure to fluoride that leads to mild tooth discoloration. But the actual levels that will be ingested will vary according to how much a person drinks. According to the CDC, fluoridated water is supplied to nearly three in four

Americans (more than 211 million people), while Health Canada estimates 39 percent of its population receives water from fluoridated supplies.

Anticipating controversy, the journal took the unusual step of issuing an editor's note that said the decision to publish was "not easy" and that it had been subject to additional scrutiny. Experiments in water fluoridation began in the early 20th century, and over time its opponents came to be seen as quacks: the 1964 satirical film "Dr Stranglove" features an unhinged general who believes fluoridation is a Communist conspiracy against the US.

Till said that she herself had not been convinced when a graduate student first approached her with the idea to investigate the effects on IQ, but has since come around. "We've had many moments in history where we got new knowledge and changed decisions: look at thalidomide and look at recommendations for hormone replacement therapy," which was once advised for all menopausal women, she said. But experts in fields ranging from statistics to toxicology to neuroscience expressed reservations. "The key words in the paper are 'higher levels,' said Oliver Jones, an environmental chemist at Australia's RMIT University, who noted that fluoride intake appeared to be below one milligram per liter for most people in the study.

#### Precautionary principle

He nevertheless called the work "interesting" and said it justified future research — a conclusion shared by David Bellinger, an epidemiologist at Harvard University who told AFP the results were "highly credible" but would need to be replicated before policy changes were in order. But Stuart Ritchie, a psychologist at King's College London, said it was "inconsistent" that the study's first analysis only found a significant result for boys and not girls, while the second analysis found an overall effect with no sex differences, and deemed the findings "pretty weak."

Critics of water fluoridation argue it is unnecessary because modern dental products like toothpaste contain fluoride, while 97 percent of European residents receive unfluoridated water without a major impact on their dental health. Pamela Den Besten, a professor of orofacial science at UC San Francisco told AFP that while she remained in favor of fluoride for its dental benefits, it acts on teeth topically and concerns over its presence in drinking water should not be dismissed. "My bias, given the findings of this and other studies, is to focus on the delivery of fluoride through strategies that do not require the fluoride to be ingested,"

# Dr Strangelove

she said. — AFP

# Israel seeks to beat PTSD with 'ecstasy' therapy

SDE BOAZ: Nachum Pachenick says he lived a nightmare for nearly two decades after being sexually abused and developing post-traumatic stress disorder — until MDMA therapy came to his rescue. "It's a life full of stress, pressure, nerves, anxiety, fatigue," the 46-year-old Israeli said from his home in Sde Boaz, a wildcat settlement in the occupied West Bank south of Jerusalem. "You can't live like that."

Pachenick said relief came in 2014, when he took part in a clinical trial that included the use of MDMA, the active component in the drug known to nightclubbers as ecstasy. The treatment's success on him and dozens of others has led Israel's health ministry to approve its own pilot for MDMA-assisted therapy for people with treatment-resistant PTSD. Encouraged by trials so far, therapists involved hold out hope for its future treatment possibilities, though there have also been warnings that further

Last year, a research team reported in the journal The Lancet Psychiatry that a trial in the United States showed positive results, but stressed such treatment should only be done hand-in-hand with psychotherapy under professional supervision. During that trial, 85 "adverse events" — including anxiety, headaches, fatigue and insomnia — were reported by 20 participants. It was not clear however whether the MDMA or something else was responsible.

Pachenick had been part of the second phase of three trials conducted in a number of countries under the auspices of the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies. MAPS hopes to receive approval from the US Food and Drug Administration for the process by 2021. The results of the trial's first two phases were "extraordinary", said Dr Keren Tzarfaty, a psychologist in charge of training therapists for MAPS in Israel.

'When we look at these people a year after the end of their treatment, we see that 68 percent of the people who received MDMA-combined therapy don't have (PTSD) anymore or are not defined as having PTSD," she said. Recovery rates are especially impressive when taking into account the fact that "the people who reach us have tried everything", Tzarfaty said from her spacious clinic in the Israeli town of Hod Hasharon."Their trauma is resistant to medication, to psychotherapy; they come to us

#### 'Brought me home'

The third and final phase of the trials began in the second half of 2019, and demand far exceeded the mere 14 spots allotted for Israeli participants. As a result, the Israeli medical establishment has decided to operate its own pilot program and allow dozens more to receive the treatment, which is done in a controlled setting.

"The Israeli health ministry decided to take the humane and responsible measure to start a pilot of 50 people suffering from PTSD who are resistant to other forms of treatment," said Dr Bella Ben Gershon, in charge of trauma for the Israeli health ministry. Tzarfaty has facilitated the training of 30 Israeli therapists to work with MDMA. PTSD is triggered by experiencing an event so traumatic it cannot be fully processed, leaving parts of the brain in a state of hyperarousal and harming its elasticity.

What MDMA has been found to do is "remove all the defences, but also create lots of compassion to others and oneself", Ben Gershon said. The drug can afford the joy and empathy those suffering from PTSD need to begin processing their trauma in the therapy sessions, Tzarfaty said. The treatment includes 12-15 therapy sessions, all attended by both a male and female mental health professional. Two or three of the sessions are under the influence



of MDMA, administered in the form of a small

While the PTSD of most Israelis taking part in the trial was caused by sexual assault, the country has also fought a series of conflicts, resulting in relatively high rates of the disorder, Ben Gershon said. Tzarfaty said because of that, she believed the government had a moral duty to do what it could to help those suffering from it. Most Jewish Israelis must perform mandatory military service.

The current trials with MDMA, a substance created in a laboratory in 1912, are part of the "renaissance" in the research of psychedelic substances and their application in psychiatry over the past decade, Tzarfaty said. Pachenick said the effects of the treatment on him were dramatic. "The process put me back on track, but in a more profound way brought me home, to myself," he said. "I'm a much calmer person today. I have a family that's very dear to me — all these things were very unstable beforehand." — AFP

# Missing hiker in Italy spotlights need for geo location tech

PARIS: Badly injured on a cliffside in southern Italy, a French hiker called emergency services this month, but he could not tell them exactly where he was after a fall that broke his legs. It took rescuers nine days to locate Simon Gautier's body, but it could have been found much sooner had Italy installed a new emergency mobile phone geo-location system that is in operation in a dozen European countries, according to the European Emergency Number Association (EENA).

It might also have saved Gautier's life had emergency services been able to locate him quickly, although it later emerged that the hiker had died soon after making the call from a ravine on the rugged coastline south of Naples. Brussels-based EENA lobbies European Union (EU) countries to adopt the Advanced Mobile Location (AML) system, which can be a matter of life or death in search-and-rescue missions. "Member states have a moral obligation to implement AML but some have not done it yet because there is no pressure," EENA

spokesman Benoit Vivier said. As of December 2020, AML will be required for all EU member states, in line with legislation passed in late 2018 that builds on 2009 and 2002 EU directives. Member states that do not comply will be fined. The new emergency system is up to 1,000 times more precise than older mobile phone geo-location systems, which can triangulate a caller's position to within only about two kilometers in a city or 20 km in the countryside. AML can pinpoint a person's location down to within two metres (yards) and when someone phones emergency services, the system transmits the caller's coordinates at the same time.

Deployed in 12 EU states

The technology has been deployed in 12 European Union countries, including Britain, the Netherlands and Austria, where it was used last year to save a paraglider who had gone off course and hurt his legs upon landing. In Lithuania, a seven-year old boy called emergency services in 2017 to report that his father was unconscious but he did not know his address. The emergency location feature in the Android phone used to make the call located it within 6 meters and allowed emergency services to arrive at the right place.

Geo-location and rescuers' response time are key questions for Italian prosecutors, who have opened an investigation into why it took so long to locate Gautier. The Salerno prefecture, which administers the area where the Gautier disappeared, said a search began immediately but that geo-location was inaccurate and that the search area was as large as 140 sq km (54

The head of Italy's emergency response network, Mario Balzanelli, told Italian media that Gautier would have been swiftly rescued if Italy had applied the EU directive on the geo-location of emergency calls. "This case points to the glaring, absurd and untenable fact that in Italy the 118 (emergency) switchboards still do not have the emergency call geo-location system, despite the fact this was called for by an industry ministry decree in 2009," he was quoted as saying by ANSA news agency. Gautier's friends and relatives have also denounced the slowness of the rescue operation, saying more could have been done. His mother called the operation 'absolutely inadequate."

Italian newspapers quoted medical sources on Tuesday as saying that an initial medical examination had shown Gautier had died about 40-45 minutes after he made his call to 118. He suffered a hemorrhage caused by his broken leg cutting an artery, and even with an active geo-location system, rescuers would not have had time to get to him alive, they said. — Reuters



Health & Science

Thursday, August 22, 2019

# More than 2,300 tigers have been killed, trafficked this century: Report

**GENEVA:** More than 2.300 endangered tigers to protect endangered animals and help govhave been killed and illegally trafficked since the turn of the century, according to a report published Tuesday, urging more action to protect the giant cats. With an average of more than 120 illegally trafficked tigers seized each year which amounts to over two each week — since year 2000, conservation group Traffic warned there was little sign of respite for the species. Report author Kanitha Krishnasamy, who heads Traffic's Southeast Asia operations, said the numbers were deeply concerning. "It looks like we are losing this fight," she

In 1900, more than 100,000 tigers were estimated to roam the planet. But that fell to a record low of 3,200 globally in 2010. Since then, population numbers have inched upwards, but there are still estimated to be fewer than 3,900 tigers left in the wild. "This pernicious trafficking, evidenced by the continuously high number of whole skins, whole animals — both dead and alive – and bones is testament to the ongoing demand for Tiger parts," Krishnasamy said.

"The time for talking is over: words must be turned into action to prevent further Tiger loss," she said in a statement. Traffic, which campaigns

ernments catch those who trade in their parts, published a new analysis looking at 19-years of tiger seizure data from across the globe. It found that an estimated total equivalent to 2,359 individual tigers were seized from 2000 to 2018 across 32 countries and territories. Skins are the single most frequently seized tiger part, with on average 58 whole tiger skins seized each year,

It looks like we are

losing this fight

the report found, also noting a clear increase in

'Undermine conservation efforts'

The study also highlighted the growing role

seizures of whole animals, both dead and alive.

breeding centres play in fuelling the illegal tiger trade, especially in Southeast Asia. The tiger farm industry often argues the trade in captive animals helps to relieve the pressure on wild felines, but wildlife groups argue it reduces the stigma around buying the animals or their body parts and could create new markets for them.

More than half of tiger seizures in Thailand and a third of those in Vietnam over the past two decades were identified as coming from captive breeding facilities, Traffic said. "Seizures of tigers from captive facilities continue and serve as a stark reminder that such facilities seriously undermine conservation efforts to safeguard this species and provide opportunities for laundering and other illegal activities," said senior Traffic crime analyst Ramacandra Wong in the statement.

Tuesday's report was released as parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) meet in Geneva to evaluate and fine-tune the treaty that manages trade in more than 35,000 species of plants and animals. Tiger farms are on the agenda, with the report authors calling for CITES to monitor facilities to ensure they are not helping feed the illegal trade chain. — AFP

# **Everest** region bans single-use plastic

KATHMANDU: Single-use plastics have been banned in the Everest region to reduce the vast amounts of waste left by trekkers and mountaineers, Nepali authorities said. In addition to seeing a record number of climbers this year, a governmentled cleaning initiative on Everest the world's highest mountain — also collected over 10 tons of trash.

The new ban in Khumbu Pasang Lhamu rural municipality, home to Mount Everest and several other snow-capped mountains, covers all

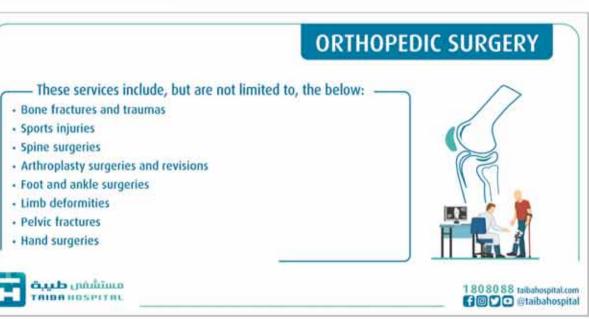
plastic of less than 30 microns in thickness as well as drinks in plastic bottles, and will be effective from January. "If we start now, it will help keep our region, the Everest and the mountains clean long term," local official Ganesh Ghimire said. The region receives over 50,000 tourists every year, including climbers and trekkers.

The local body will work with trekking companies, airlines and the Nepal Mountaineering Association to enforce the ban, though no penalty has yet been decided for violation. Environmentalists are also concerned that the pollution on Everest is affecting water sources down in the valley. Six years ago, Nepal introduced a US\$4,000 deposit per team of climbers on Everest that would be refunded if each climber brought down at least eight kilos of waste, but only half of the climbers return with the required amount. — AFP



Kuwait 📤 Times 248 33 199











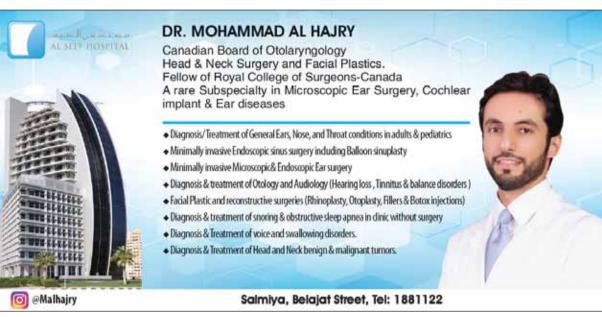


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Thursday, August 22, 2019

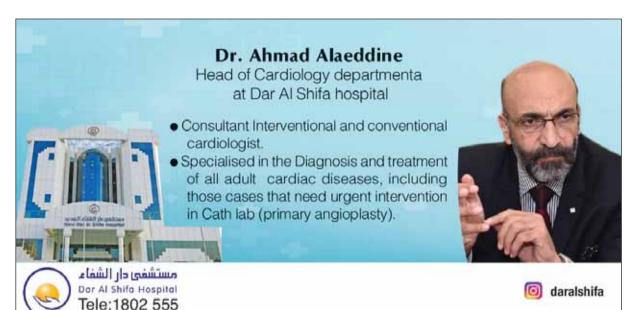


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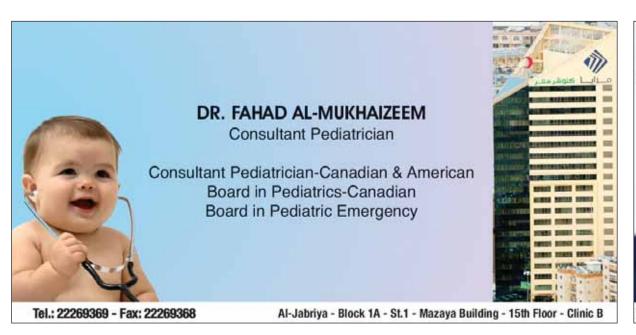
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#### Stars

#### **CROSSWORD 2287**

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#### **ACROSS**

a transmission is sent from Earth to a

- 1. A fraudulent business scheme.
- 5. Type genus of the Giraffidae. 12. The universal time coordinated time when
- spacecraft or other celestial body. 15. French poet and novelist and dramatist.
- 16. 16th President of the United States.
- 17. A resource.
- 18. Any of various plants of the genus Aralia. 19. A disease caused by deficiency of niacin or tryptophan (or by a defect in the metabolic conversion of tryptophan to niacin).
- 21. Tall New Zealand timber tree. 23. Type genus of the Alcidae comprising
- solely the razorbill.
- 24. The state prevailing during the absence of war.
- 26. The branch of engineering science that studies the uses of electricity and the equipment for power generation and distribution and the control of machines and communication.
- 27. Port city in western Saudi Arabia on the Red Sea.
- 29. (anatomy) A somewhat rounded subdivision of a bodily organ or part.
- 33. Struck with fear, dread, or consternation. 37. A chronic inflammatory collagen disease affecting connective tissue (skin or
- joints). 38. Noisy quarrel.
- 40. Put down by force or intimidation.
- 41. Speaking a Slavic language. 43. A byproduct of inflammation.
- 44. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- 45. A very poisonous metallic element that has three allotropic forms.
- 47. A blue dye obtained from plants or made synthetically.
- 50. The termination of a relationship 53. (medicine) A systematic plan for therapy
- (often including diet).
- 55. A public promotion of some product or service. 56. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on
- a skewer usually with vegetables. 57. Any of various small biting flies.
- 58. An official prosecutor for a judicial dis-
- 60. A colorless explosive liquid that is volatile and poisonous and foul-smelling. 61. A genus of Ploceidae.
- 62. Sedative-hypnotic drug (trade name Ouaalude) that is a drug of abuse.
- 66. In a straight unbroken line of descent
- from parent to child. 70. X-ray picture of the kidneys and ureters
- after injection of a radiopaque dye. 71. Without moral standards or principles.
- 74. The capital and largest city of Bangladesh.
- 75. (meaning literally `born') Used to indicate the maiden or family name of a married
- woman.
- 76. Any of several plants of the genus Calochortus having tulip-shaped flowers with 3 sepals and 3 petals.
- 78. The 22nd letter of the Greek alphabet. 79. United States liquid unit equal to 4 quarts or 3.785 liters.
- 80. An organism (especially a bacterium)
- that does not require air or free oxygen to live.
- 81. A master's degree in education.

#### **DOWN**

- 1. (of something seen or heard) Clearly defined.
- 2. French chemist (born in Poland) who won two Nobel Prizes.
  3. Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of
- the Old World.
- 4. A group of island in eastern Indonesia between Celebes and New Guinea.
- 5. Showing or causing joy and pleasure. 6. Being one more than one.
- 7. A radioactive gaseous element formed by the disintegration of radium. 8. The highest level or degree attainable. 9. (used of a horse or related animal) Born.
- 10. A blank leaf in the front of back of a book. 11. Black tropical American cuckoo. 12. (aeronautical) Pertaining to the tail section
- of a plane. 13. (computer science) A kind of computer architecture that has a relatively small set of computer instructions that it can per-
- form. 14. Designer drug designed to have the effects of amphetamines (it floods the brain with serotonin) but to avoid the
- drug laws. 20. Little known Kamarupan languages.22. An Old World plant of the genus Scilla
- having narrow basal leaves and pink or blue or white racemose flowers 25. A person who announces and plays pop-
- ular recorded music. 28. An administrator in charge of a division of
- a university or college. 30. English scholastic philosopher and assumed author of Occam's Razor (1285–1349).
- 31. Capable of wounding.
- 32. A parliamentary monarchy in southwestern Europe on the Iberian Peninsula.
- 34. A person who keeps watch over something or someone. 35. Swift timid long-eared mammal larger
- than a rabbit having a divided upper lip
- and long hind legs. 36. Building material used as siding or roof-
- 39. A blood group antigen possessed by Rh-
- positive people. 42. Light wispy precipitation that evaporates before it reaches the ground (especially
- when the lower air is low in humidity).
- 46. Less than human or not worthy of a
- human being. 48. United States tennis player (born in
- Czechoslovakia) who won several singles championships.
- 49. A Spanish female Gypsy.
- 51. A Loloish language. 52. (Greek mythology) The first woman. 54. Large family of important mostly marine
- food fishes.
- 59. Lap at the front of a coat. 63. The part of the eye that contains the iris
- and ciliary body and choroid.
- 64. A Tibetan or Mongolian priest of
- Lamaism. 65. A member of an Iroquoian people formerly living on the south shore of Lake
- Erie in northern Ohio and northwest Pennsylvania and western New York. 67. Electronic warfare undertaken to insure
- effective friendly use of the electromagnetic spectrum in spite of the enemy's use of electronic warfare.
- 68. A dull persistent (usually moderately intense) pain.
- 69. Set down according to a plan.
  72. The month following March and preced-
- ing May.
- 73. A toilet in England. 77. A metallic element having four allotropic

#### **Yesterday's Solution**

С	Α	Т		R	Е	D	S	T	Α	R	Т		D	Е	В
O	N	О		Α	S	S	Е	S	S	0	R		Е	P	Α
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M	Α	R			Α	R	Н	Α	N	Т		I		P	M
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#### **STAR TRACK**

#### Aries (March 21-April 19)

The opposition and blockage you may be experiencing this morning are temporary—really. Cool it and let this one pass. Jot down inventive ideas that come to your mind today as you will have an opportunity to discuss the ideas with a trusted friend later today. The convention center, a lecture hall or some other place for a presentation could be in order today and you, along with several other work partners, want to hear the message. Follow your instincts and you will not go wrong today. When you notice a need for assisting another, you are quick to either give help or find help. This is a good time to teach and advertise your favorite charity.



#### Taurus (April 20-May 20)

This is a period when you take your work more seriously than usual. There is a lot of energy available and you are determined to get things scheduled and organized. The nail that sticks up is hammered down now. Law, politics, education, travel and religion are some of the areas where an emotionally charged drama may be played. Seeing both sides of an issue and figuring out resolutions to opposing views take on a greater importance. You can really use your mind to make clear choices and think through situations. Some negotiations may be in order. A new cycle also begins that helps you with the progress of your work.



#### Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You are relentless about cutting through appearances and finding the essential in situations. This could involve legal or financial matters. A heightened interest in getting things organized into a rational system is a part of this. There is much mental busywork. A time of good fortune will begin to open up in a very natural way. It will become easy to see the path you decide to take. Because of new opportunities, you may find yourself energized and ready to participate. With your determination to succeed, the time will soon be right to take the lead. You may be able to enjoy and value your own life situation or feel especially kind towards a friend or loved one this evening.



#### Cancer (June 21-July 22)

This is a challenging day in that there is much to be accomplished. You may be especially dynamic and assertive just now. You are helpful with co-workers and, if asked, can give plenty of suggestions or ideas to others. Right now, the key to career moves involves tending to nagging details—whatever you have neglected and put off before today. Take a deep breath and dig in to the work at hand. A good work ethic is rewarded. Do your share to ensure smooth sailing on the job. Attention to matters of efficiency is important. There is a lot of energy available to push forward with your personal plans this afternoon.



#### Leo (July 23-August 22)

You should find everything running in a smooth manner today. Ideas and interaction with authority figures may be in the forecast. Working with rather than against the flow should be easy to do. Outer circumstances and the flow of events make it easy for you to make clear decisions—see the road ahead and move forward. Things seem to fall into place—progress is easy. Be careful not to overextend. Sometimes you say yes too quickly and may hastily try to get too many things accomplished at once.



#### Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You have an urge to strike out on your own in a new direction, to take on new challenges no matter what the risks. You can be bold, perhaps headstrong and impatient. This is a period emphasizing an enhanced sense of personal possibility and potential. There is tremendous psychological growth, which can lead to great personal success, if you follow through with it. You might also find that you will put on the pounds if you are not careful. There is a bout of philosophy or even a little religion now that could have an enormous effect on your career during this time.

#### **Wordsearch Puzzle**

#### Christmas

Find and circle all of the Christmas words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message

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G	1	F	Т	S	F	R	U	1	Т	С	A	K	Е	Т	Ρ	Т
R	E	G	N	A	M	Н	F	R	1	E	N	D	S	F	H	S
S	L	Т	R	E	E	1	E	C	S	C	S	R	R	S	E	E
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L	T	W	0	В	E	C	Α	Ν	C	0	Т	L	E	Ν	S	S
F	E	1	В	E	1	1	C	L	G	0	D	0	E	S	N	J
Α	S	S	0	L	L	E	R	A	F	С	Т	M	E	M	0	0
M	N	E	T	L	N	В	N	В	N	W	Α	s	Y	Α	W	s
1	-1	M	Т	S	0	G	Α	В	A	Ν	0	R	E	R	M	Е
L	0	E	E	J	E	0	L	T	R	G	R	Ν	D	Y	A	P

NYLLOHOSHLYSSNH ANGEL FRUITCAKE MANGER SNOWFLAKES BELLS BETHLEHEM GABRIEL GIFTS MARY MISTLETOE CANDLES CANDY CANE

CAROLS DECORATIONS EGGNOG FAMILY JOSEPH FRANKINCENSE LIGHTS FRIENDS

GOLD GREETING CARDS HOLLY ICICLES **JESUS** 

MYRRH ORNAMENTS POINSETTIA SANTA SHEPHERDS SKATES SLEIGH

SNOWMAN STABLE STAR STOCKING THREE WISE MEN **TOBOGGAN** TOYS TREE WREATH

#### **Libra (September 23-October 22)**

Keep a positive outlook through a challenging dilemma in the workplace this morning. You may not have all the facts at this time so make sure you remove any judgments. Give yourself time and you will have the answers you need. Your intuition is strong and it can guide you accurately in making forecasts or decisions. Hard work and going beyond the call of duty are par for the course today. Friendships and involvement in group activities play a more important part for you this afternoon. Friends are our only true riches and the satisfaction that comes from accomplishing things in cooperation with others is something no one can take away from you. A good conversation with those you love is possible this evening



#### **Scorpio (October 23-November 21)**

This is a good time to concentrate on your career goals. Your organizational abilities and sense of responsibility will be what guides you and proves successful. Your career could assume a more determined and solid form. There is certainly an abundance of paperwork to wade through today. You may think that few people recognize your efforts or accomplishments but instead, there are people that know and appreciate your work. You should, however, throw your efforts into work you really



#### Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Expressing your views regarding some subject matter may be a bit touchy today. You have a sense for power, wealth and passion. Yours is indeed a passionate life. You are not at all superficial and you always seem to get to the heart of things. This is good for business and politics but your words and actions can sometimes be construed as insensitive; listen and learn. You will succeed best if you ask for feedback from those with whom you have been teaching or helping. Be wise in your communication with others by agreeing to disagree occasionally.



#### Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

The support you need for whatever you want to accomplish is now available. This is the time to make your request. You could gain attention with superiors or in relation to your work. As you work to enhance the value of your service, you will enhance your job potential. You may find that you enjoy your job or the responsibility it entails more than usual. Circumstances may stimulate the pleasure of your life situation now. Your ethics deepen, providing you with a better sense of discrimination. That purchasing eye of yours is fine-tuned; others may find you selecting the best buys.



#### Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Someone important or in authority may put a damper on your ideas. Since you are good at creative thinking, there are many more ideas where these came from. Take this as an opportunity to reassess and revamp your thinking. Listen carefully, there may or may not be important points to ponder. Your efforts will not go unnoticed. Your work environment is usually the most practical of environments. You can manipulate every situation and put it to good use. Emotions are seldom a priority and you are always very practical and ambitious.

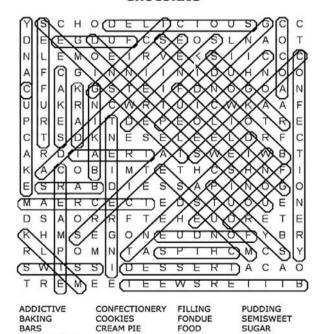


#### Pisces (February 19-March 20)

This is a great time to work and be with others. An authority figure may seek you out as just the person for a particular job. This is a busy but rewarding workday. Fondness and appreciation for the past and for your roots in life take on a greater importance. A co-worker friend may have recently done research on his or her family history and is willing to give you suggestions of how to go about this research. You could make plans to meet at a library this weekend or some day after work to gain that information. Making your home situation more attractive plays a part in this and the sale or purchase of real estate could bring you much gain before this cycle ends. There is a chance to have a special time with someone you love. This is a positive time.

#### **Yesterday's Solution**

#### Chocolate



CHOCOLATIERS MOUSSE COCOA The hidden message is: CHOCOLATE ORIGINATES FROM THE SEEDS OF THE THEOBROMA CACAO TREE

**FUDGE** 

ICING

MILK

ICE CREAM

INGREDIENT

CUPCAKE

DECADENT

DELICIOUS

DESSERT

SWISS SYRUP

TREAT

TRUFFLES UNSWEETENED

BITTERSWEET BROWNIES

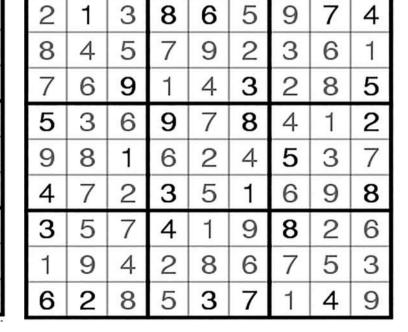
CAKES

CHIPS

#### **Daily Sudoku**

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#### **Yesterday's Solution**



# Lifestyle

THURSDAY, AUGUST 22, 2019



A visitor poses for photographs in front of the eco-art exhibition "Anima Mundi: Soul of the World" by Indonesian artist Mulyana uses discarded materials such as rubber and plastic for his marine creatures knitwork to raise awareness of the environment. — AFP

### French model tycoon at heart of Epstein scandal accusations

formerly powerful French modeling tycoon has emerged as a key figure in the scandal surrounding US billionaire Jeffrey Epstein, who committed suicide in jail while facing charges of sexually trafficking minors. Jean-Luc Brunel, regarded as a close friend and ally of the disgraced US financier, has been accused in court documents of procuring young girls for Epstein, as well as of rape. He has in the past unequivocally denied the accusations. The model scout, an influential figure in the industry, has always been a low-profile figure and like some other former Epstein allies vanished after the financier was charged in early July.

Brunel has issued no comment over the latest events, but in a statement in 2015 that itself broke years of silence he vehemently denied involvement, "directly or indirectly", in Epstein's crimes. Jailed ahead of a trial, Epstein was found hanged in his cell on August 10 after being linked to a string of sordid abuses involving underage girls at both his Palm Beach home and on his private island in the Caribbean.

#### 'Investigators must shed light'

But there have been allegations that some abuses may also have taken place in Paris at Epstein's sumptuous apartment on Avenue Foch near the Champs-Elysees. Calls are growing in France for an investigation into what went on behind the walls of the apartment, which was frequented by Brunel. "It is up to investigators... to shed light on the use of this apartment which was owned by Mr Epstein," said Innocence in Danger, a French NGO working to protect children against sexual violence, urging Paris prosecutors to

investigate. Two French government ministers have also demanded action, saying the US inquiry had exposed links with France that needed investigating. So far, prosecutors have said they are carrying out an initial analysis before making a decision over launching a probe.

#### Rape, procuring allegations

Epstein, who at one time counted Bill Clinton, Donald Trump and Britain's Prince Andrew among this friends, was accused of recruiting young girls to

administer massages which frequently led to abuse and even rape. His address book, which was made public in 2015 through the Gawker website, included dozens of names listed under "massages", some 30 of which were in France. Now in his 70s, Brunel began his career as a model scout who in 1978 was involved in setting up the prestigious Karin Models agency.

He then moved to the United States where he co-founded the Miami-based agency MC2. Brunel's name had been linked to Epstein for several years but details emerged only relatively recently during a civil lawsuit launched in 2015 by Virginia Roberts Giuffre against

According to court documents, Giuffre accused Epstein of using her as a "sex slave" and said she had been forced to have sex with well-known politicians and businessmen, including Brunel. She also alleged that Brunel would bring girls as young as 12 to the United States and pass them on to his friends, including Epstein. These claims prompted Brunel to issue his statement saying he had "decided to bring judicial proceedings in France and in the United States against allegations which cause considerable damage to me personally and to my model agencies."

#### 'Omerta in place'?

Long before the Epstein scandal broke, Brunel was accused of rape by several models in a 1988 documentary by CBS. Last week, French investigative website Mediapart released testimony from former Dutch model Thysia Huisman alleging she was "drugged and raped" by him in the early 1990s when she was 18. "We have been contacted by many models who worked for MC2 and Karin about accusations of potential sexual trafficking and sexual abuse," former top model Sara Ziff, who now runs the modeling rights organization Model Alliance, told AFP.

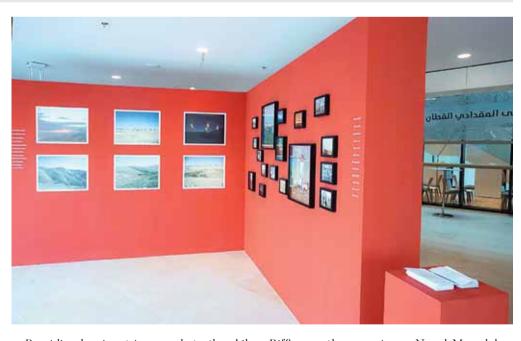
"For years, everyone knew about these practices but said nothing, there was some kind of omerta in place," said Ekaterina Ozhiganova, co-founder of Model Law, a French association that works to protect models' rights. "It's not the first time that people in power benefit from favorable treatment" guaranteeing them years of impunity, she told AFP, pointing to the similarities with the Harvey Weinstein scandal that rocked Hollywood and launched the #MeToo movement. "Potential abusers gravitate towards certain professions linked to the body, like modelling," she said. "That allows them to mix with easy prey." — AFP

# Palestine children document plight of Bedouin villages near Israeli settlements

alestinian children, residing in the Bedouin village of Abu Al-Anwar and other towns, documented the plight of their people via producing unfiltered photos and works of art displaying the vast contrast in living conditions between wealthy Jewish settlers and Palestinian nomads. In an exhibition featuring the works of Abu Al-Anwar village's children and other Bedouin gatherings, 25 youngsters had the courage to show the world that settlers-who enjoy full access to facilities and services-could live only meters away from Palestinians who barely make ends meet.

Speaking to KUNA, Majed Al-Jahleen-one of the children partaking in the exhibition organized by the Abdulmohsen Al-Qattan independent foundation in Ramallah-said that he spent nine years making the long journey to school by foot until recently when buses became available. He contrasted that with how children in Jewish settlements were provided with the finest of services, while he and his brethren had to suffer.

Similarly, Yosra Al-Jahleen and Ali Mousa relayed how settlers made the life so miserable for Bedouin villages nestled between various illegal settlements, restricting their movements and choking them out in a figurative and sometimes literal sense. All of the children had taken numerous photos depicting their lives, which lacked necessities such as electricity, water, and food. To make matters worse, settlers would barged in to destroy whatever makeshift dwellings the Bedouins made, but what irked the children was that settlers would repeatedly demolish their schools, which they had to rebuild from scratch every single time. It is important to note that the Israeli government would backup settlers' actions against Bedouin gatherings. In 2016, the Israeli government allowed the demolition of the six-room school in Abu Al-Anwar village, which served some 56 students.



Providing her input in regards to the children's suffering, chief executive officer of Abdulmohsen Al-Qattan foundation, Fada Tuma revealed that a chance was given to children from over 20 Bedouin villages to display their living conditions-whether in photo or art formin contrast to settler lifestyles. The main purpose of the event is to document what is occurring on the ground to provide an unaltered image of what is happening, he said. Meanwhile, exhibition coordinator and artist Raouf Hajj-Yahya revealed that similar exhibitions and programs were being held since 2017 to encourage Palestinian children to express themselves and champion their righteous stance.

Hajj-Yahya also revealed that alongside the exhibition, numerous workshops were held to develop Palestinian children photographic and artistic skills to better convey their messages.

Riffing on the same issue, Naeel Mazadah-a coordinator for programs developing children photographic and artistic abilities-affirmed that the young ones managed to convey their message to the local community and the world, saying that what is occurring in the occupied lands was not right by any measure or standard. The movie and photos displayed in the exhibition organized by the foundation had clearly shown that the children were reflecting in all honesty how the situation is with one people living in luxury-the Jewish settlers-and others-Palestinian Bedouins-living in misery. Israeli authority is making life unbearable to some 30,000 Bedouins living in around 22 villages between Jericho and Jerusalem. — KUNA





# Lifestyle Gossip



# Fred Rister, French music partner of DJ Guetta, dies after cancer battle

rench electronic music composer Fred Rister, known for his songs such as "I gotta feeling" by the Black Eyed Peas and music partner of the acclaimed DJ David Guetta, has died at the age of 58, according to sources Tuesday. Originally from Dunkirk in the north of France, the DJ and producer had collaborated with Guetta since 2000 and co-wrote several hits with him, winning a Grammy Award for the song "When love takes over" in 2010. He was diagnosed with cancer and stopped his treatment in 2017. "I feel very lonely right now crying in my bed but I guess it's better

this way as his cancer was making him suffer a lot," Guetta said in a statement to AFP. "Rest in peace my friend I'll keep playing our music and I'll think of you every time. We lived our dreams and way beyond and I'm forever thankful," he added. His friend wrote on his Facebook page "he was a sun, for others a good man, a person who we could count on, a man who made us dance". His publishing house, Editions Seguier, which published his book "Make People Dance", also confirmed his death

# **Lovato** joins cast of Netflix's Eurovision

emi Lovato has joined the cast of Netflix's 'Eurovision'. The 'Tell Me You Love Me' hitmaker will play Icelandic singer Katiana in Will Ferrell's comedy - which is based on the real-life annual singing contest - alongside the likes of Rachel McAdams and Pierce Brosnan. In a video announcement posted on Twitter on Demi's 27th birthday Will said: "Hi everyone, Will Ferrell here on the set of my new movie 'Eurovision'. "We are having a great time, we just started filming, and we want to make a very special announcement about a brand new cast member. "It just so happens to be her birthday today and I made her this wonderful cake from scratch. Happy Birthday, yay!" The movie is Demi's first live-action role since 2010's 'Camp Rock 2: The Final Jam'. Will and Rachel play Icelandic musicians Lars Erickssong and Sigrit Ericksdottir respectively. Whilst former James Bond Pierce portrays Will's on-screen father Erick Erickssong. It was recently confirmed that 'Beauty and the Beast' actor Dan Stevens will play Russian contestant Alexander Lemtov. 'Anchorman' star Will is producing the project through his Gary Sanchez Productions company, and he is penning the script with Andrew Steele, while David Dobkin is helming the project. Filming will be taking place in Iceland and Tel-Aviv, Israel, although no release date has been set by the streaming service.

# Robbie Williams teases new music



obbie Williams has teased new music. The 'Let Me Entertain You' hitmaker took to social media to share a black and white photo of himself back in the studio, leading fans to speculate he might be working on a Christmas album. Robbie didn't give the game away, leaving the caption blank but a stamp on the photo says it was taken on May 28, 2019. Meanwhile, Robbie's collaborator Guy Chambers recently revealed his friend's approach to creating new music is often quite spontaneous, and he has to make sure he's always recording just in case the singer does something "really very strong". He said: "[Robbie] gets quite a buzz from a track already in progress. He likes a certain amount of music to ... So what we tend to do when he walks through the room is we immediately give him a mic, a handheld mic, and he immediately starts singing, if he likes the track. We record everything he does, because sometimes his first thoughts are really very strong, and I'm sort of playing along at the same time trying to interact with him. I like jamming with people when I'm writing. I like playing at the same time, I like getting involved, and not just watching it. I like ... I suppose directing it in a way, and that's what it's like with Rob." Earlier this year, it was claimed that Robbie wants to make another swing album after being inspired by his Las Vegas residency. An insider said at the time: "Robbie is a huge fan of swing and believes his performing style of singing and joking with the audience has a direct link with greats like Sinatra and Martin. "Getting on stage in Vegas, where those guys were kings, to sing those tracks again has given him the impetus to make another swing record. He's starting to list the songs



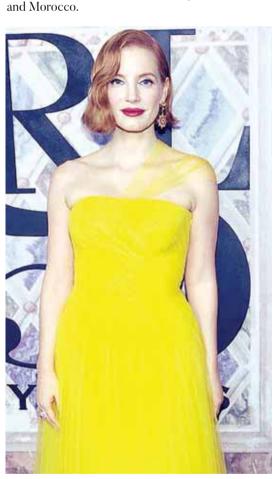
# **Phillips** says there's Joker sequel potential

odd Phillips thinks there's potential for a 'Joker' sequel. The psychological thriller isn't set for release until later this year, but the 48year-old director is convinced there could be a follow-up if Joaquin Phoenix - who plays the mentally ill stand-up comedian in the film - agrees to star in another movie. Speaking to Total Film, Phillips said: "One thing I will tell you: I would do anything with [Phoenix], any day of the week. There's nobody like him. If he was willing to do it, and if people show up to this movie, and Warners came to us and said, 'You know what? If you guys could think of something...' "Well, I have a feeling that he and I could think of something pretty cool." However, the likelihood of a sequel will depend on how successful the original will be when it hits cinema screens at the beginning of October. And Phoenix recently said he fears that the upcoming movie based on the origin of the DC Comics villain may not live up to fans expectations as he and Phillips chose to stray from the original material and focus on the "story of becoming Joker". The 44-year-old actor said: "We didn't follow anything from the comic books, which people are gonna be mad about. We just wrote our own version of where a guy like Joker might come from. "That's what was interesting to me. We're not even doing Joker, but the story of becoming Joker. It's about this man. "The 'Gladiator' actor added that he thought the project sounded "super ambitious" when he first discussed it with Phillips. He explained: "I thought it was crazy-ambitious. Todd said to me 'I have this idea, I wanna tell the origin story of the Joker. I said 'Wow okay'". — Bang Showbiz



# Jessica Chastain's spy thriller 355 gets 2021 release date

Jessica Chastain's spy thriller '355' is set for release on January 15, 2021. The upcoming female-led ensemble movie starring Lupita Nyong'o, Penelope Cruz, Fan Bingbing and Diane Kruger - went into production in June, a year after it first started to be together, and bosses are hoping it'll be finished and ready to hit cinema screens in just under two years' time, according to Screen Rant. The plot will follow top agents from agencies around the globe, who are forced to co-operate with each other when a new threat emerges involving a weapon that could throw the world into total chaos. The new agency's numerical name is inspired by the codename of the one of the earliest spies in the American Revolution, a woman whose identity remains unknown to this day. Chastain, 42, recently teased that although the film is a female-led cast, the forthcoming spy thriller will have some Bond boys for women to lust over. She said: "Oh yeah. We've got some eye candy. I'm going to allow the female audience to sit there and go, 'Wow, isn't he beautiful!" "The 'Dark Phoenix' star went on to explain that although she doesn't want to objectify the men in her movie, she wants female viewers to accept that they have a "female gaze" and are able to view themselves as "sexual creatures". She said: "It's kind of incredible to let women know we have a female gaze and we are also sexual creatures." Chastain is producing the film through her Freckle Films banner alongside Kelly Carmichael and Simon Kinberg, who are using a script from Theresa Rebeck. Filming will take place in London



# **Neil Young** is a 'control freak'

eil Young is a "control freak" when it comes to his music. The 'Rockin' in the Free World' hitmaker's favorite recording engineer John Hanlon has revealed that Neil is a stickler for having things done his way and admits it is "foolhardy" to even think about saying something because Neil is "10 steps ahead". He told the New York Times magazine: "He wants the honesty of what went down, not some pastedtogether overdubbed representation that's not the truth. He's a control freak. If he wants your opinion, he'll ask for it. If he doesn't, it's foolhardy to wade in. He's 10 steps ahead of you in his thought process." Neil created his own online music archive, which features his entire back catalogue along with "unreleased albums". He wrote: "Every single, recorded track or album I have produced is represented. View all albums currently released and see albums still unreleased and in production just by using the controls to zoom through the years. Unreleased album art is simply pencilled in so you can where unreleased albums will appear on the timeline, once they are completed." And the site will be constantly updated with new information. Speaking back in 2017 before its launch, he explained: "We have attempted to highlight the creative process and the creators. A lot of people and work are behind the music we hear. The musical informa-



# Jada Pinkett Smith wanted Will to take Matrix role

ada Pinkett Smith wanted her husband Will Smith to take the 'Matrix' role. The 50-yearold actor was approached to play Neo in the 1999 sci-fi film but he famously turned it down, much to the disapproval of his wife as she tried to encourage him to go for it because she knew in her gut it would be "revolutionary." Speaking to Entertainment Weekly, she said: "I knew it would be revolutionary. I was like, 'Will, you've got to do this movie!' He didn't fully get it, but I did." Smith recently said he turned down the part because he wasn't happy with the pitch by the film's writers, Lana and Lilly Wachowski, but he still regrets the decision to this day after he saw Keanu Reeves play protagonist Neo in the film. Speaking on his YouTube channel, he said: "All right this is one of them stories I'm not proud of but it's the truth. I did turn down Neo in 'The Matrix'. "They came in and it was like they'd only down one movie, I think it was called 'Bound'. And they came in and they made a pitch for 'The Matrix'. As it turns out they're geniuses. But there's a fine line between genius and what I experienced in the meeting." Mimicking the writers at the meeting, the 'Suicide Squad' star said: "So, dude, we're thinking like, imagine you're in a fight and then you, like, jump. Imagine if you could stop jumping in the middle of the jump. But then, people could see around you." Looking unimpressed, Will admitted: "So I made 'Wild Wild West'." The 'Men In Black' star has nothing but praise for Keanu's performance in the 1999 film and the sequels as well as Laurence Fishburne, who portrayed Morpheus. He said: "I'm not proud of it, but ... Keanu [Reeves] was perfect. Laurence Fishburne was perfect." Although Will missed his chance to play Neo, he joked that due to changes in casting if he had been in the film, he probably did fans a "favor". He quipped: "If I had done it - because I'm black - then Morpheus wouldn't have been black because they were looking at Val Kilmer. "I was going to be Neo and Val Kilmer was going to be Morpheus, I probably would've messed 'The Matrix' up, I would've ruined it. So I did y'all a favor."



tion found here is a work in progress, always growing and adapting to new information as we find it. "We have done our best to find all of the background pertinent to this music. The NYA Timeline shows you when and how the music was made. Every single, recorded track or album I have produced is represented. It is always current. You can browse through the music I made between today's date and 1963, when I made my first recording in Canada and it was released as a 45 RPM single."

# Lifestyle Music & Movies

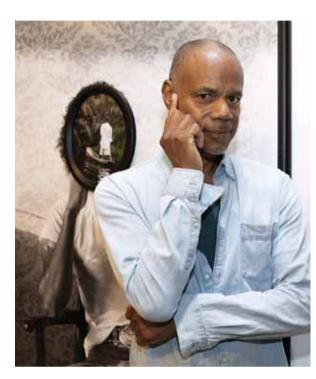


A man arrives for the press visit of the exhibition titled "Michael Jackson: On the Wall" that was inspired by late US iconic pop star at Espoo Museum of Modern Art in Finland. — AFP photos



Men stand next to artworks: US artist Mark Ryden's reworking of the cover for the 1991 record "Dangerous" (left), "Equestrian Portrait of King Philip" by US painter Kehinde Wiley (center) and a painting by US artist Kai Guetta (right) during the press visit of the exhibition titled "Michael Jackson: On the Wall" that was inspired by late US iconic pop star at Espoo Museum of Modern Art in Finland.

# Michael Jackson art show opens in Finland despite controversy



US based artist Todd Gray poses in front of his work Cosmic Speakers during the press visit of the exhibition.

n exhibition of art inspired by Michael Jackson opened Tuesday in Helsinki with organizers insisting it was not a "celebration" of the singer, still dogged by abuse allegations a decade after his death. "Michael Jackson: On the Wall" brings together old and new works depicting the iconic pop star and his impact on popular culture, by artists including Andy Warhol, American photographer David LaChapelle and British potter Grayson Perry. The show of 90 works first hung in London's National Portrait Gallery in 2018 to widespread critical acclaim. It then toured in Paris and Bonn before coming to Helsinki. The German and Finnish shows come after a new raft of allegations that Jackson groomed and sexually assaulted children, detailed in the 2018 documentary "Finding Neverland".

The exhibition will nevertheless run in the Finnish capital "as planned", organizers said, with a text at the entrance acknowledging that "current conversations may have changed the way the exhibition is interpreted". "We can't shy away from these difficult subjects and we of course condemn all kinds of abuse," Arja Miller, chief curator at Espoo Museum of Modern Art, told AFP. "But we also want to provide a platform for open discussion and for artists' voices,"

she said. "This exhibition and these artists are not celebrating Michael Jackson, but analyzing his meaning in our culture," Miller added.

#### Sponsors scared away

Miller said some organizations refused to sponsor the exhibition over concerns about the controversies surrounding the singer, despite not having seen the show. "I'm convinced that if everyone would have seen the exhibition they'd gladly be our partner because the exhibition is so diverse," she told AFP. Many of the Jackson-inspired works veer between the gaudy and the grotesque, including an oversized golden statue of the megastar with his pet chimpanzee, Bubbles, by Paul McCarthy.

Elsewhere, a life-size portrait by Kehinde Wiley, commissioned by Jackson himself shortly before his death in 2009, features the star in jeweled armor on horseback surrounded by cherubs, after a portrait by Rubens of King Philip II of Spain. The Romanian artist Dan Mihaltianu's installation draws on the impact of Jackson's seminal 1992 concert in post-Communist Bucharest, using newspaper photos alongside concert footage.

Mihaltianu said that interest in his piece, from 1994, has grown again every time Michael



Jackson has hit the headlines over the years. "He will stay as an icon somehow, you cannot just erase him," Mihaltianu told AFP. "I remember already when he died, people were kind of, 'OK, now he's got to rest in peace.' But 10 years later, it's a new story coming up."—AFP

Women stand in front of pictures by US photographer David Lachapelle during a press visit.

# **Spider-Man's Marvel** future in peril as Sony deal breaks down

arvel's superhero films could lose their most famous character after Sony confirmed Tuesday that talks over its deal to share Spider-Man with the Disney-owned studio have broken down. The Marvel movies have together grossed \$22 billion at the global box office, and British actor Tom Holland's Spider-Man has become an increasingly central figure in the most lucrative franchise in film history. But while the teen web-slinger has for decades been the crown jewel of the Marvel comic book empire on which the films are based, Sony owns the character's movie rights.

He only began appearing in Disneyowned Marvel's "cinematic universe" after the Hollywood giants stuck an almostunprecedented, and still highly secretive, 2015 deal to co-produce and split profits across the films. A key aspect of that partnership has now broken down. Sony confirmed that Marvel Studios boss Kevin Feige-widely credited with the phenomenal boom in comic book movies of the past decade-will no longer produce Spider-Man films, with a spokesman adding the studio was "disappointed."

"We hope this might change in the future, but understand that the many new responsibilities that Disney has given him... do not allow time for him to work on IP (intellectual property) they do not own," the Sony spokesman said in a statement sent to AFP. The separation makes it "almost certain" that the character Spider-Man will be absent from crossover appearances in future Marvel films, according to Hollywood Reporter journalist Graeme McMillan. Multiple Hollywood media outlets reported earlier Tuesday

that Disney and Sony had failed to agree on financial terms for future Spider-Man

According to Deadline, which broke the news, Disney had wanted to significantly increase its financial stake in new Spider-Man movies, while Sony refused to alter existing terms. Sony said the reports "mischaracterized recent discussions," but thanked Feige for "the path he has helped put us on, which we will continue." In financial terms, Spider-Man is one of the most successful superheroes in movie history. Holland's iteration of Spider-Man has delivered box office gold-he has appeared in a total of five Marvel Studios and Sony films since the collaboration deal, which collectively grossed almost \$8 billion worldwide.

These included Marvel's "Avengers: Endgame," the highest-grossing movie of all time. At Comic-Con last month, Marvel Studios set out a timeline of films and television shows scheduled for the next two vears including new outings for popular characters Thor, Black Widow, Doctor Strange and Loki-but none featuring Spider-Man. Feige is also expected to be busy overseeing new Marvel franchises acquired by Disney in its purchase of 21st Century Fox, which include the popular 'X-Men". Sony last year produced an Oscar-winning Spider-Man animation separate from Marvel Studios' domain, as well as a standalone film centered on popular Spider-Man villain Venom. Disney did not immediately respond to request for comment. — AFP



In this file photo a giant inflatable Spider-Man is displayed on the red carpet for the "Spider-Man: Far From Home" World premiere at the TCL Chinese theatre in Hollywood. — AFP

# 'No Time To Die' revealed as title of latest Bond film

he next James Bond film and the last to feature Daniel Craig as 007 will be called "No Time To Die" and released in April, the franchise announced on Tuesday. The 25th installment of the British spy saga will see Bond drawn out of retirement by his friend and CIA agent Felix Leiter to embark on a treacherous mission to rescue a kidnapped scientist, according to the official plot summary. Filming is already under way, but has been beset by problems. An explosion at Britain's Pinewood Studios in June rocked one of the film sets, causing damage to the stage and one minor injury.

The Sun newspaper said a triple blast hit the set after a stunt went wrong, taking off part of the roof and several wall panels. Craig-who will play the legendary spy for the fifth time-earlier had to undergo minor ankle surgery after an injury on set in Jamaica. Oscar-winner Rami Malek will play a villain in the long-awaited movie, which is set to see Craig bow out after eight years as 007.

"No Time To Die" will also see the return of Ralph Fiennes-as Bond's boss-and French actress Lea Seydoux. Emmynominated "Fleabag" creator Phoebe



Oscar-winning actor Rami Malek (left) and Daniel Craig.

Waller-Bridge has been called upon to liven up the script, at the express request of Craig, who wanted to inject more humor into the film. The production has also been repeatedly delayed over script disputes, with Oscar-winning director Danny Boyle quitting the project last year and "Beasts of No Nation" director Cary Fukunaga stepping in. The film is due to open in cinemas in Britain on April 3 and in the United States five days later. — AFP

# Several hurt as gang storms video set of French rapper Booba

hots were fired and several people injured overnight as gangs armed with guns and baseball bats stormed the set of a music video by controversial French rapper Booba, a police source told AFP yesterday. The 42-year-old musician, who is one of France's biggest rap stars, has been locked in a high-profile feud with fellow rapper Kaaris which exploded into violence at a Paris airport last year, landing them both in jail for a month.

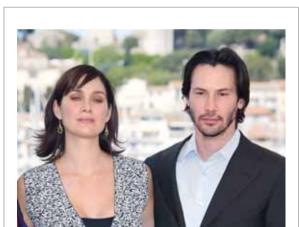
Around 15 people were involved in the overnight attack which took place around midnight (2200 GMT) in the northeastern Paris suburb of Aulnaysous-Bois, the source said, confirming a report first published by Europe 1 radio. One of the injured sustained a bullet wound to the thigh but his injuries were not thought to be lifethreatening, said the source. Booba

was not there at the time, he said. The ambush reportedly took place at a disused warehouse where the music video was being made, with the attackers pulling up to the site in cars and firing four shots towards Booba's crew as they put away equipment.

They then began attacking the rest of the crew with iron bars and baseball bats, with the video's producer sustaining serious head injuries and another technician also badly hurt, BFMTV said. It said the man who sustained a gunshot wound to the leg was Booba's 36-year-old marketing and sponsorship manager. Police found four 9mm shell casings and two cartridges at the scene and have opened an inquiry, the channel said.

#### Cage fight?

It was not immediately clear who was behind the attack but it led to speculation it was linked to the ongoing feud between the two rappers which has made headlines in France and beyond. Their August 2018 brawl at Orly airport erupted as the men and their entourages were about to fly to Barcelona for a concert, prompting officials to temporarily shut down part of the terminal, delaying flights.—AFP



US actor Keanu Reeves and Canadian-born actress Carrie-Anne Moss pose for photographers on a terrace of the Palais des festivals during the photocall for "Matrix Reloaded" directed by the Wachowski brothers during the 56th Cannes film festival on 15 May 2003. — AFP

# 'Matrix 4' announced with Keanu Reeves to return as Neo

Sci-fi franchise "The Matrix" will return for a fourth film with Keanu Reeves reprising his role as kung fu-kicking, shades-wearing hero Neo, studio Warner Bros said Tuesday. Lana Wachowski will helm the project, returning to write, direct and produce the latest installment of the hugely popular series about humans trapped in a virtual reality by machines, which has netted more than \$1.6 billion worldwide. "We could not be more excited to be re-entering 'The Matrix' with Lana," studio chairman Toby Emmerich said in a statement sent to AFP. "Lana is a true visionary-a singular and original creative filmmaker," he added.

Lana and her sister Lilly-who were formerly known as the Wachowski brothers, Andy and Larry, before switching gender-directed the original trilogy. Warner Bros did not specify if the new film would be a direct sequel, saying only that it was "set in the world of 'The Matrix'," and did not give a release date. The original films followed a band of rebels who battled intelligent machines in a future where humans are enslaved within the Matrix-a virtual reality that resembles the contemporary world. Reeves' Neo was a hero on a mission to save

The dark fantasy featured a mix of pseudo-eastern philosophy and Western mythology, spectacular fight scenes and lavish special effects. "Many of the ideas Lilly and I explored 20 years ago about our reality are even more relevant now," said Lana Wachowski. "I'm very happy to have these characters back in my life and grateful for another chance to work with my brilliant friends." Carrie-Anne Moss will also return to her role as Trinity, the studio said Tuesday.

The original film turns 20 this year, with special screenings planned in the US later this month. The third film in the series, "The Matrix Revolutions" (2003), was the first film to be released simultaneously around the world at the same hour. — AFP

# Lifestyle Features

# Cuba falls in love again with the beard - and it's not about Fidel

ubans and beards have gone hand in hand, or cheek by jowl, since the days of Fidel Castro's revolution, but after falling out of favor, facial hair is back-and this time, it's not political. Cuba's old guard, for the most part, no longer sport iconic beards, but the youngsters do. Clean-shaven President Miguel Diaz-Canel's government only features one hirsute minister, vice-



Men with beard walk along a street of Havana

president Ramiro Valdes, 87. Having a beard these days on the streets of Havana is definitely more a question of style.

"Lately there are a lot of people, especially young guys, who are letting their beards grow-it's a trend," said barber David Gonzalez, 31, as he trimmed a customer's goatee in his city center salon. In Old Havana's Rue Obispo, Franco Manso, 24. took scissors to his own beard during a lull in business at his craft shop. "I saw that it suited me, so as it's the fashion, I decided to keep it," he said.

#### Fidel's beard

Castro told US television in an interview after the revolution: "My beard means a lot of things for my country." "When we have fulfilled our promise of good government, I will shave off the beard." In the end he decided to keep it. But Castro's facial hair carried such symbolism that the CIA hatched a plan in the early 1960s to un-beard the revolutionary leader. The plot involved an attempt to put thallium sulphate into his shoes so that his beard would fall out and make him a laughing stock. Castro, however, canceled the trip during which the chemical was to be used.

Over the years, the symbolism has diminished, even if young Cubans continue to be surrounded at every turn by images of Fidel and Che Guevara and Camilo Cienfuegos-the revolution's most famous "barbudos." But according to clean-shaven journalist and writer Manuel Somoza, there were overwhelmingly practical reasons why beards took such a grip on Cuban culture in the immediate aftermath of the revolution-blades were practically nonexistent. Before 1959, Cubans used American Gillette razors, but "when the embargo began in 1962, everything was complicated," says Somoza, 74.

"Beards spread, not only because the beard had a patriotic connotation, but also out of practical need, because the blades of razors were of very poor quality and shaving with them was a nightmare!" Somoza told AFP. Shaving cream and aftershave quickly became an unattainable luxury, and men had to make do with the cheap soap and scratchy blades acquired with the Cuban ration book, or libreta.

#### Cutting edge of imperialism

Shunning what Cuba saw as the cutting edge of US imperialism represented by Gillette, Havana looked to Soviet-era Czechoslovakia to provide suitably patriotic blades under the brand name "Venceremos" ('We will Overcome'), sold in boxes bearing the revolutionary slogan "Patria o Muerte" ('Homeland or Death'). In time came Soviet-made blades Sputnik and Neva, popularly known in Cuba as "men's tears" because they painfully dragged bristle from the skin, rather than cut it. Schoolchildren used them to sharpen their

Relatives abroad often came to the rescue. "Glued into their letters home were two, three or four Gillette razors," says Somoza. "When they arrived, it was a party!" When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1990, Havana descended into a deep economic crisis that further complicated access to razors until 1993, when Cubans were allowed to use the dollar as currency and modern razors started to appear in shops.

"I think that the young people's beards of today have nothing to do with those that we had... Today the young guys are more connected to world fashion," said Somoza. For Alain Gil, a 23-year old employee at the Cuban Cinema Institute, there are some benefits to his newly hirsute appearance. "My girlfriend likes men with beards, she says it's sexier." — AFP



A man with a beard travels in a taxi in front of a poster with the image of Cuban late leader Fidel Castro in Havana.



An old man sits in a street of Havana.





A barber cuts client's beard in a barbershop of Havana. — AFP photos



A man combs his beard in a mirror in Havana.

# 'Otterly adorable'?: Demand for cute selfies puts animals at risk

ocial media users are fuelling a burgeoning appetite for acquiring wild otters and other endangered animals as pets, conservationists say, warning the trend could push species towards extinction. Popular Instagrammers posting selfies with their pet otter may simply be seeking to warm the hearts of their sometimes hundreds of thousands of followers, but animal protection groups say the trend is posing an existential threat to the silky mammal.

"The illegal trade in otters has suddenly increased exponentially," Nicole Duplaix, who co-chairs the Otter Specialist Group at the International Union for Conservation of Nature, told AFP. All Asian otter species have long been listed as vulnerable or endangered after facing decades of shrinking habitats and illegal trade in their pelts. But conservationists say the recent surge in social media hype around the creatures has sparked such a frenzied demand for baby otters in Asian countries, Japan in particular, that it could drive entire species towards extinction. Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), currently in Geneva to evaluate and fine-tune the treaty that manages trade in more than 35,000 species of plants and animals, will consider proposals to hike protection of two particularly imperilled otter species.

#### Dangerous 'cute factor'

The Asian small-clawed otter and the smooth-coated otter are already listed as threatened under CITES Appendix II, but India, Nepal, Bangladesh and the Philippines are asking that they are moved to Appendix I, which would mean a full international trade ban.

Conservationists insist the move is vital, after both species have seen their numbers plunge at least 30 percent over three decades, and with the decline believed to have accelerated significantly in the past few years.

"This is especially being fuelled by the desire to have otters as an exotic pet, and social media is really driving that," Cassandra Koenen, global head of Wildlife Not Pets, told AFP. Paul Todd of the Natural Resource Defense Council (NRDC) agreed.

"It is really remarkable to see how the latest trends in social media and social influencing have a direct correlation with the demise of species on the ground," he told AFP. Popular figures on Instagram and Facebook often rake in thousands of gushing comments about their otter pictures, such as "cuteness overload", "otterly adorable", and "want one!". Duplaix acknowledged that otters are

"very charismatic creatures," saying "it is the cute factor that is causing their demise.'

The pictures mask the suffering of the naturally social mammals taken from the wild when they are held in captivity and isolation. Koenen pointed to the numerous "funny videos" posted of pet otters turning in circles, saving that to a trained eye, it is obvious: "The reason the animal is spinning around is that it is in huge distress." Amid the growing demand for pet otters, hunters and fishermen in Indonesia and Thailand especially are increasingly killing adult otters and snatching the babies, which are caged and shipped off to become exotic pets. The main destination is Japan, where one otter pup can fetch up to \$10,000 (about 9,000 euros).

#### Otter cafes

Several "otter cafes" have also popped up in the country, with patrons urged to buy small pieces of food to feed the caged mammals and to snap a selfie with them while drinking a coffee. "It is a very unnatural environment for them," Koenen said, maintaining that they are often isolated in individual cages, given poor nutrition and little access to water. Pet otters may have it better, but they still suffer from being far from their natural environment and away from the large family groups they lived with in the wild, she said.

Koenen also warned that smiling selfies with pet otters provide a "false narrative" about what it is like to live with the wild creatures, which smell and are prone to biting. "They make very unsuitable pets," she said. Social media platforms have meanwhile made it too easy to purchase exotic pets like otters, she said, sparking impulse buys with little reflection over the implications of bringing a wild animal into one's home.

Otters are not the only species suffering from a booming and often social-media fuelled interest in exotic pets. Among the 56 proposals on the table in Geneva for increased protection listings, 22 involve species-including lizards, geckos, tortoises and spiders-which suffer because of the multi-billion-dollar exotic pet trade. Todd said there was mounting evidence that "a species can go from completely fine to utterly gone in the matter of a few years because of this drive in desire for images". "Baby otters are dying, and for what? A selfie," he said. "We have to stop this." — AFP



A promotional signboard for a pet cafe that features otters is displayed at the Harajuku district in Tokyo. — AFP photos



Promotional signboards for pet cafes featuring exotic animals, including otters Æ, are seen on display at the Harajuku district in Tokyo.

# Classifieds

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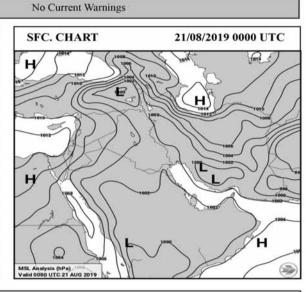


#### **Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours**

BY DAY: Very hot with light variable wind to light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 28 km/h.

BY NIGHT: Hot to relatively hot with light to moderate south westerly wind changing to north westerly wind, with speed of 12 - 35 km/h.

WEATHER WARNING		
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC
KUWAIT CITY	48 °C	36 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	48 °C	27 °C
ABDALY	49 °C	29 °C
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C
JAHRA	49 °C	33 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	- °C	- °C
SALMIYAH	42 °C	36 °C
AHMADI	40 °C	34 °C
NUWAISIB	46 °C	30 °C
WAFRA	48 °C	30 °C
SALMY	47 °C	30 °C



4 DAYS FORECAST												
			Tempe	ratures								
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	MAX.	MIN.	Wind Direction	Wind Speed						
Thursday	08/22	Very hot	47 °C	26 °C	NW-VRB	08 - 32 km/h						
Friday	08/23	Hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas	45 °C	25 °C	NW-SE	12 - 32 km/h						
Saturday	08/24	Hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas	44 °C	25 °C	NE-SE	10 - 30 km/h						
Sunday	08/25	Hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas	45 °C	26 °C	NE-SE	08 - 28 km/h						

PRAYER TIMES								
Fajr	03:55							
Sunrise	05:20							
Zuhr	11:51							
Asr	15:26							
Sunset	18:23							
Isha	19:43							

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT I	CUWAIT AIRPORT
MAX. Temp.	47 °C
MIN. Temp.	27 °C
MAX. RH	32 %
MIN. RH	06 %
MAX. Wind	S 32 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

#### **CHANGE OF NAME**

I, Kiran Kandathil

Radhakrishnan holder of Indian Passport No: J7085559, issued on 30/05/2011 at Banglaore and permanent address being, No. 207, Parway Apts, Tarang near WOC road, Shivanagar, Bangalore - 560010, Karnataka, India hereby correct my given name as Kiran and surname as Kandathil Radhakrishnan, P.O.Box - 8766, Salmiya - 22058, block 10, lane 18, flat no. 1, floor no. 1, Kuwait. (C 5580) 22-8-2019

I, Mookan Kumar Kannan S/O Mookan holder of Indian Passport No. J0976988 having permanent address 173-68 A, Melapidavoor, Manamadurai, Sivagangai-Dist, Tamilnadu - 630606, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as given name: KUMAR KANNAN, surname: MOOKKAN, S/O: MOOKKAN. (C 5573)

I, JOSEPH MEPURATHU
VARUGHESE holder of Indian
Passport No: N1869225, issued
on 20-01-2016 at Kuwait and
permanent address being,
Mepurathu House, Kottathoor
P.O., Ayroor, Pathanamthitta,
Kerala hereby correct my given
name as JOSEPH MEPURATHU
and surname as VARUGHESE.
Jleeb Al Shouyouk block 4,
building no. 144 flat no. 86.
(C 5579)

I, RITA PHILIP, holder of Indian Passport No. K7924609, issued on 11-11-2012 at Kuwait and permanent address being, Mepurathu House, Kottathoor P.O., Ayroor, Pathanamthitta, Kerala hereby correct my given name as RITA and surname as PHILIP. Jleeb Al Shouyouk block 4, building no. 144 flat no. 86. (C 5579)

I, JOSEPH MEPURATHU VARUGHESE, holder of Indian Passport No. N1869225, issued on 20-01-2016 at Kuwait and permanent address being, Mepurathu House, Kottathoor P.O., Ayroor, Pathanamthitta, Kerala hereby correct my son's given name as REUBEN VARUGHESE and surname as JOSEPH in his Passport No. N9724089 issued on 19-05-2016 at Kuwait. Jleeb Al Shouyouk block 4, building no. 144 flat no.

86. **(C 5579)** 

I, JOSEPH MEPURATHU VARUGHESE, holder of Indian Passport No. N1869225, issued on 20-01-2016 at Kuwait and permanent address being, Mepurathu House, Kottathoor P.O., Ayroor, Pathanamthitta, Kerala hereby correct my son's given name as REJOY VARUGH-ESE and surname as JOSEPH in his Passport No. R8273659 issued on 27-08-2017 at Kuwait. Jleeb Al Shouyouk block 4, building no. 144 flat no. 86. (C 5579) 20-8-2019

I, Hanif (Given Name) Salman Mohammed (Surname) holder of Indian Passport No. J5396300 having permanent address: OFF Mira Bhayander Road, Shanti Park, Mira Road (East), Dist Thane-401107, India residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as: Given name: Salman Mohammed and Surname: Hanif for all purposes. (C 5667) 19-8-2019

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#### **DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION**

		ghts on Thursday 22/8/2019	_	KAC	614	Bahrain	12:30			Flights on Thursday 22/8/2019		QTR	1075	Doha	12:10
<b>Airlines</b> FEG	<b>Flt</b> 241	<b>Route</b> Alexandria	<b>Time</b> 00:05	UAE MSR	871 610	Dubai Cairo	12:45 12:45	Airlines	FIt	<b>Route</b> Goa/Chennai	<b>Time</b> 00:05	JZR IAW	611 158	Tbilisi Al Najaf	12:20 13:00
IGO	1757	Kochi	00:03	AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:10	AIC MSC	976 406	Sohag	00:05	AHY	120	Baku	13:05
THY	772	Istanbul	00:20	FBS	118	Sarajevo	13:30	MSR	615	Cairo	00:30	JZR	123	Dubai	13:10
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	KAC	774	Riyadh	13:35	FDB	072	Dubai	00:30	JZR	115	Doha	13:25
KAC	102	London	00:50	JZR	212	Jeddah	13:45	FEG	342	Sohag	01:05	KAC	661	Abu Dhabi	13:30
KAC RJA	504 642	Beirut	01:00	IRA KAC	607 672	Mashhad	13:55 14:00	IGO	1758	Kochi	01:10	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
UAE	853	Amman Dubai	01:20 01:40	UAE	877	Dubai Dubai	14:00	KAC THY	677 773	Dubai Istanbul	01:50 01:50	MSR THY	611 767	Cairo Istanbul	13:45 14:00
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	KNE	231	Riyadh	14:10	DLH	625	Frankfurt	01:50	AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:10
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:50	FDB	059	Dubai	14:20	KAC	417	Manila	02:00	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	QTR	1078	Doha	14:25	THY	765	Istanbul	02:50	FBS	119	Sarajevo	14:45
KKK	1268	Istanbul	01:55	KAC KAC	792 194	Madinah	14:40	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:50	IRA	666	Esfahan	14:55
PGT ETH	828 620	Istanbul Addis Ababa	02:00 02:15	FDB	8065	Trabzon Dubai	14:40 14:40	KKK PGT	1269	Istanbul	02:55	KNE KAC	382 673	Taif	15:00
KAC	156	Istanbul	02:35	KAC	304	Mumbai	14:45	ETH	829 621	Istanbul Addis Ababa	02:59 03:05	FDB	060	Dubai Dubai	15:00 15:05
JZR	734	Cairo	02:35	JZR	222	Riyadh	14:45	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:10	JZR	103	Bahrain	15:05
QTR	1086	Doha	02:40	KAC	562	Amman	14:50	JZR	111	Doha	03:25	UAE	878	Dubai	15:30
JZR JZR	722 254	Alexandria	02:40 02:40	KAC KAC	618 788	Doha Jeddah	14:50 14:55	JZR	409	Delhi	03:30	QTR	1079	Doha	15:30
GFA	211	Amman Bahrain	02:50	KAC	118	New York	15:00	JZR UAE	701D	Asyut	03:30	FDB JZR	8066	Dubai Dubai	15:40
PGT	860	Istanbul	02:50	KNE	529	Jeddah	15:05	JZR	854 713	Dubai Sohag	03:30 03:50	KNE	125 530	Jeddah	15:50 15:55
THY	768	Istanbul	02:55	KAC	412	Bangkok	15:10	THY	769	Istanbul	03:50	KAC	563	Amman	16:00
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:15	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:00	KAC	775	Riyadh	16:05
ETD JZR	305 262	Abu Dhabi Beirut	03:05 03:10	OMA ABY	645 127	Muscat Sharjah	15:20 15:35	OMA	644	Muscat	04:05	KAC	743	Dammam	16:05
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	ÜAE	857	Dubai	15:45	QTR MSR	1087 613	Doha	04:15 04:15	KAC ABY	615	Bahrain	16:10 16:15
KAC	418	Manila	03:20	SVA	500	Jeddah	15:50	PGT	861	Cairo Istanbul	04:13	ETD	128 304	Sharjah Abu Dhabi	16:20
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	FEG	341	Sohag	16:00	JZR	1735	Cairo	04.20	OMA	646	Muscat	16:20
JZR	406 353	Kochi	03:30	FDB JZR	051 733	Dubai Cairo	16:10	QTR	1077	Doha	05:00	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:20
OHY LMU	352 510	Istanbul Cairo	04:00 04:00	QTR	732 1072	Cairo Doha	16:10 16:15	LMU	511	Cairo	05:00	KAC	619	Doha	16:25
KAC	382	Delhi	04:05	SAW	705	Damascus	17:00	OHY	351 1752	Istanbul	05:00	SVA FEG	501 242	Jeddah Alexandria	16:50
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	JZR	116	Doha	17:05	IGO KAC	303	Chennai Mumbai	05:10 05:15	KAC	242 675	Alexandria Dubai	16:55 17:00
MSR	0516	Cairo	04:25	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15	MSR	0517	Mumbai	05:25	FDB	052	Dubai	17:10
KAC JZR	784 404	Jeddah Hyderabad	04:25 04:50	GFA JZR	215 214	Báhrain Jeddah	17:30 17:35	FDB	070	Dubai	06:00	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
THY	1414	Trabzon	05:05	JZR	124	Dubai	17:40	THY	1465	Istanbul	06:00	KAC	151	Istanbul	17:35
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	KAC	158	Istanbul	18:00	THY JZR	771 745	Istanbul	06:30 06:45	UAE KAC	858 343	Dubai Chennai	17:40 17:50
IGA	170	Bahrain	05:05	JZR	104	Bahrain	18:00	GFA	745 212	Sharm el-Sheikh Bahrain	06:45	KAC	343 381	Delhi	17:50 17:55
THY	770	Istanbul	05:20	KAC	662 1080	Abu Dhabi	18:05	RJA	643	Amman	07:00	SAW	706	Damascus	18:00
KAC KAC	344 552	Chennai Cairo	05:30 05:50	QTR JZR	612	Doha Tbilisi	18:10 18:15	JZR	251	Amman	07:10	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
KAC	548	Alexandria	05:55	KAC	506	Beirut/LCA	18:15	JZR	121	Dubai	07:15	JZR	721	Alexandria	18:15
KAC	362	Colombo	06:05	JZR	302	Istanbul	18:20	RBG BAW	550 156	Alexandria	07:30 07:40	GFA JZR	216 127	Bahrain	18:20 18:20
BAW	157	London	06:10	MSR	620	Cairo	18:30	KAC	413	London Bangkok	07:40	JZR JZR	403	Dubai Hyderabad	18:20 18:25
KAC JZR	284 402	Dhaka Mumbai	06:15	SAW IRA	703 667	Damascus	18:55 19:00	KAC	173	Munich	07:55	JZR	733	Cairo	18:35
KAC	678	Dubai	06:25 06:40	FDB	063	Esfahan Dubai	19:05	JZR	211	Jeddah	08:00	JZR	261	Beirut	19:10
KAC	106	London	06:40	RJA	640	Amman	19:05	KAC	193	Trabzon	08:10	JZR	253	Amman	19:10
RBG	559	Alexandria	06:50	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05	KAC	181	Paris/NCE	08:10	QTR MSR	1081	Doha	19:20
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:50	UAE	875	Dubai	19:05	IRA IGO	606 1756	Mashhad CNN	08:10 08:10	KAC	621 691	Cairo Muscat	19:30 19:35
QTR KAC	8511 302	Doha Mumbai	06:55 07:00	ABY KAC	123 744	Sharjah Dammam	19:20 19:25	KAC	163	MXP	08:35	FDB	064	Dubai	19:45
JZR	408	Ahmedabad	07:05	NIA	161	Cairo	19:30	KAC	505	LCA/Beirut	08:40	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
JZR	112	Doha	07:05	KAC	616	Bahrain	19:40	KAC	177	Vienna	08:45	SAW	704	Damascus	19:55
IGO	1755	CNN	07:10	KAC	776	Riyadh	19:45	KAC QTR	561 8512	Amman	08:55 08:55	IRA ABY	600 124	Tehran	20:00 20:00
IRA KAC	601	Tehran	07:10	KAC	674	Dubai	19:45	KAC	121	Doha AGP	09:00	RJA	641	Sharjah Amman	20:05
QTR	354 1084	Bengaluru Doha	07:50 08:00	KAC JZR	178 310	Vienna BJV	19:50 19:50	KAC	613	Bahrain	09:00	KAC	357	Kochi	20:05
KAC	352	Kochi	08:05	FDB	057	Dubai	19:50	KAC	117	New York	09:05	NIA	162	Cairo	20:30
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:05	KAC	174	Munich	19:55	KAC	791	Madinah	09:10	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
KAC UAE	384	Delhi Dubai	08:10	KNE	381 647	Taif	20:00	QTR KAC	1085 671	Doha Dubai	09:10 09:15	JZR UAE	401 876	Mumbai Dubai	20:30 20:35
ETD	855 301	Dubai Abu Dhabi	08:25 08:50	OMA DLH	647 624	Muscat Frankfurt	20:05 20:10	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:15	KNE	232	Riyadh	20:50
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	MEA	402	Beirut	20:15	KAC	157	Istanbul	09:20	KAC	353	Béngaluru	20:50
OMA	641	Muscat	09:00	JZR	126	Dubai	20:20	KAC	773	Riyadh	09:40	DLH	624	Dammam	20:55
GFA	209	Bahrain	09:05	RBG	213	Sohag	20:30	ABY	126 721	Sharjah	09:40	OMA	648	Muscat	21:05
QTR FDB	1070 055	Doha Dubai	09:20 09:40	KAC QTR	620 1088	Doha Doha	20:30 20:40	JZR UAE	731 856	Cairo Dubai	09:45 09:50	KAC RBG	333 214	Trivandrum Sohag	21:05 21:10
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	KLM	445	Amsterdam	21:00	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	09.55	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
IRA	675	Lar	09:55	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:10	JZR	301	Istanbul	09:55	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:25
JZR	702D	Asyut	09:55	UAE	859	Dubai	21:15	OMA	642	Muscat	10:00	KAC	545	Cairo	21:30
SVA IAW	512 157A	Riyadh Al Najaf	10:00 10:00	ALK THY	229 764	Colombo Istanbul	21:15 21:30	KAC GFA	101 210	London Bahrain	10:05 10:05	QTR IGA	1089 171	Doha Bahrain	21:50 21:50
JZR	714	Sohag	10:00	KAC	764 164	MXP	21:30	QTR	1071	Doha	10:05	KAC	203	Lahore	22:00
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	676	Dubai	21:45	KAC	617	Doha	10:40	KLM	445	Bahrain	22:10
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	GFA	219	Bahrain	21:50	IGO	1754	Ahmedabad	10:40	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:15
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	KAC	564 1082	Amman	21:55	FDB	056	Dubai Mashbad	10:40	JZR	1737	Cairo	22:20
SYR OMS	341 223	Damascus Muscat	11:00 11:00	QTR ETD	1082 309	Doha Abu Dhabi	22:05 22:15	IRA SVA	668 513	Mashhad Riyadh	10:55 10:55	ALK THY	230 1401	Colombo ADB	22:20 22:25
JZR	1736	Cairo	11:05	KAC	786	Jeddah	22:20	IAW	158A	Al Najaf	11:00	UAE	860	Dubai	22:35
JZR	122	Dubai	11:45	AIC	981	Chennai/Ahmedabad	22:25	JZR	221	Riyaɗh	11:20	KAC	383	Delhi	22:35
IAW	157	Al Najaf	12:00	RBG	555	Alexandria	22:30	GFA	214	Báhrain	11:35	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50
AHY JZR	119 410	Baku Delhi	12:05 12:10	JZR BBC	128 043	Dubai Dhaka	22:50 23:00	OMS	224	Muscat	11:40	KAC	783 551	Jeddah Cairo	22:55
JZR	252	Amman	12:10	MSC	501	Alexandria	23:00	JZR MEA	309 405	BJV Beirut	11:45 11:55	KAC ETD	551 310	Cairo Abu Dhabi	23:00 23:05
JZR	746	Sharm el-Sheikh	12:25	MSC	415	Sohag	23:15	SYR	342	Damascus	12:00	RBG	556	Alexandria	23:10
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	MSR	614	Cairo	23:30	JZR	213	Jeddah	12:05	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
THY	766	Istanbul	12:30	FDB	071	Dubai	23:35								

Thursday, August 22, 2019

# Kashmiris demand answers for 'unaccounted for' deaths

**SRINAGAR:** Rafiq Shagu's wife died shortly after Friday prayers in India's Muslim-majority Kashmir when tear gas smashed through a window in their home and filled the room. Now, with Indian authorities denying their troops have caused any civilian deaths while enforcing a lockdown of more than two weeks in the Himalayan region, he is facing what may be a futile quest to hold those responsible to account. "They (the police) are not ready to take responsibility for the death. We want answers but I don't know where to seek justice," Shagu said.

In an interview with AFP, Shagu recalled the horrific events of the August 9 afternoon when he said his wife, Fehmeeda, was teaching her two children at their home in Srinagar, the largest city in Indian-controlled Kashmir. Shagu said there had been small clashes between government forces and protesters nearby, then police started firing tear gas and pepper shells into residential houses.

The clashes occurred four days after Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government stripped Kashmir of its autonomy, with tens of thousands of extra troops deployed there ahead of the announcement to stop residents from protesting. "We couldn't see each other in the room as the smoke was so dense. There were three huge thuds when the canisters burst," Shagu said. "We somehow removed the children from the room and as she tried to run out amid the chaos, she fell. By the time we moved her out of the room she was unconscious and frothing."

He said Fehmeeda was taken to hospital on a motorcycle where doctors were unable to revive her. The medical report seen by AFP said she "had inhaled toxic gas from a tear gas shell" and that a possible cause of death was a "toxic lung injury".

Indian authorities have sought to block any news coming out of Kashmir since imposing the lockdown. Aside from deploying the extra troops, they cut off telephones, mobile phones and the Internet - though some landlines have now been restored. Authorities say there is no credible proof that anyone has died in Kashmir as a result of the lockdown, and only that eight people have been injured. But multiple hospital sources told AFP at least

100 people had been hurt, some of them by firearm injuries. Others were treated at home, fearing that they may be arrested if they visit hospitals, people who had been hit by pellets told AFP.

#### **Unaccounted deaths**

AFP also spoke with relatives of two other people they allege died due to violence from the security forces. One of the reported victims was Usiab Ahmad, 15, who drowned on Aug 5. His family said Ahmad was near his home when police used live ammunition and tear gas shells and chased protesters towards the river bank where the student drowned. "His body was taken out after five hours from the water and his funeral was attacked by police," one of Ahmad's relatives who could not be identified for security reasons told AFP. "They tried to snatch away the body because they feared more protests," he said.

Another alleged victim, Mohammad Ayub Khan was standing outside his home in downtown Srinagar on

Saturday when police fired tear gas canisters to break up a small group of stone-throwing protesters, according to multiple family members and neighbors. Two shells fell in front of the 62-year-old timber trader, immediately causing him to collapse on the road and froth from the mouth. The father of three daughters was declared dead at the hospital but police forcibly took over his body.

Just 10 family members were allowed for the funeral and burial that took place under police watch in the dead of night. "The police officer threatened us that he will throw the body into the river if we talk to media or try to make a procession," Shabir Ahmed Khan, his younger brother told AFP. "We were escorted by four police vans to the graveyard," he said.

Khan's family has visited the hospital multiple times for a death certificate but doctors told them police had instructed them not to issue it. "His death will probably not even get recorded by the government but for us he is a martyr," Khan said. "His death is another example of India's brutality." — AFP

### Sudan swears in civilian-majority...

Continued from Page 1

forming the new sovereign council and on being sworn in as its chairman, wishing him best of luck and to Sudan and its people more progress. HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables to the Sudanese leader.

The sovereign council includes two women, including a member of Sudan's Christian minority, and it will oversee the formation of a government and of a legislative body. The inauguration of the civilian-dominated ruling council, which held its first meeting in the afternoon, was widely welcomed but some Khartoum residents warned they would keep their new rulers in check. "If this council does not meet our aspirations and cannot serve our interests, we will never hesitate to have another revolution," said Ramzi Al-Taqi, a fruit peddler. "We would topple the council just like we did the former regime," he said.

The transition's key documents were signed on Saturday at a ceremony attended by a host of foreign dignitaries, signalling that Sudan could be on its way to shedding its pariah status. Sudan's new rulers are expected to push for the lifting of the suspension from the African Union that followed a deadly crackdown on a sit-in in June. The ruling council will also seek to have the country removed from the US list of state sponsors of terrorism.

Bashir is wanted by the International Criminal Court in The Hague for his role in massacres in the Darfur

region, where a rebellion broke out in 2003. He appeared in court on Monday - but only on charges of corruption for the opening of a trial in which an investigator said the deposed leader admitted to receiving millions in cash. Pictures of the 75-year-old autocrat sitting in a cage during the hearing instantly became a symbol of his Islamist military regime's downfall.

The sight of their former tormentor in the dock was overwhelmingly welcomed by the Sudanese but many warned the graft trial should not distract from the more serious indictments he faces before the ICC. "The evidence he committed genocide should come forward... Many civilians inside and outside Sudan have died because of him and he should face justice," one resident, Alhaj Adam, told AFP.

Sudan's transitional authorities would need to ratify the ICC's Rome Statute to allow for the transfer of the former military ruler to The Hague. Amidst the euphoria celebrating the promise of civilian rule, unease was palpable within the protest camp that brought about one of the most significant moments in Sudan's modern history. One reason is the omnipresence in the transition of Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, a member of the sovereign council and a paramilitary commander whose forces are blamed for the deadly repression of the protests. His Rapid Support Forces sprang out of the Janjaweed militia notorious for alleged crimes in Darfur.

Pacifying a country still plagued by deadly unrest in the regions of Darfur, Kordofan and Blue Nile will be one of the most urgent tasks of Sudan's transitional institutions. The other daunting challenge that awaits the fragile civilian-military alliance is the rescue of an economy that has all but collapsed in recent years. It was the sudden tripling of bread prices in Dec 2018 that sparked the wave of protests fatal to Bashir's regime Premier-designate Hamdok was flying in from Addis Ababa, where he served as a senior economist with the United Nations. — Agencies

Trump responded by quoting a conservative columnist as saying American Jews "don't know what they're doing". The Republican president thanked the commentator, Wayne Allyn Root, who likened Trump to the "king of Israel" and said Israelis "love him like he is the second coming of God".

Former Vice President Joe Biden, the current frontrunner to challenge Trump in Nov 2020, called the president's comments "insulting and inexcusable" and urged him to stop dividing Americans. "The Jewish people don't need to prove their loyalty to you, @realDonaldTrump - or to anyone else," said Democratic candidate Beto O'Rourke, a former US congressman from Texas who has called Trump a racist over his immigration rhetoric.

American Jews lean Democratic. Roughly 70 percent of American Jews have typically supported Democratic candidates in recent US presidential elections. J Street, a liberal lobbying group based in Washington, was among the many US Jewish organizations that expressed outrage or alarm at Trump's comments. "It is dangerous and shameful for President Trump to attack the large majority of the American Jewish community as unintelligent and 'disloyal,'" the group said on Tuesday.

The American Jewish Committee called Trump's comments "shockingly divisive". "American Jews - like all Americans - have a range of political views and policy priorities. His assessment of their knowledge or 'loyalty,' based on their party preference, is inappropriate, unwelcome, and downright dangerous," said committee Chief Executive David Harris. The Republican Jewish Committee sided with Trump, saying, "President Trump is right, it shows a great deal of disloyalty to oneself to defend a party that protects/emboldens people that hate you for your religion."

Trump is popular in Israel. He delighted many Israelis - while appalling other world powers - by recognizing Jerusalem as their capital, moving the US Embassy there, withdrawing from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal and recognizing Israeli sovereignty over the occupied Golan Heights. The office of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, which has particularly close ties with the Trump administration, declined to comment on his remarks. — Agencies

and if things are left as they are, thousands of marginal its job - rather it should prepare a strategy to set how work permits are issued, to whom and for how long.

In a related development, a recent report by the health hepatitis B and 2,203 with hepatitis C.

### Trump scraps Denmark visit...

Continued from Page 1

Marc Jacobsen, a Greenland specialist at the University of Copenhagen, said Trump was acting like "an ignorant colonial overlord". "Trump's idea of purchasing Greenland is absurd, and it is absurd that he is now cancelling his state visit to Denmark when he knows that there is no chance Greenland will become the 51st state of America," he told AFP.

Meanwhile, former US ambassador to Denmark Rufus Gifford wrote on Twitter: "He asks for an invitation from a great friend and ally. The Queen obliges invites him for a state visit. He declares the visit contingent on the great friend selling part of its territory to him This. Is. Not. Normal." Nonetheless, conservative newspaper Jyllands-Posten wrote that Trump's actions ultimately benefitted Denmark, highlighting Greenland's geopolitical value. "Mette Frederiksen has been given the opportunity to emphasise that Greenland's big affairs are in fact decided

### Saudi eases travel curbs on women...

**Continued from Page 1** 

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, including a landmark decree last year that overturned the world's only ban on women drivers.

In other changes unveiled earlier this month, Saudi women were also granted the right to officially register

# Iran warns if oil exports cut...

Continued from Page 1

In a speech at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Zarif appeared to echo Rouhani's tone. "Mutual unpredictability will lead to chaos. President Trump cannot expect to be unpredictable and expect others to be predictable. Unpredictability will lead to mutual unpredictability and unpredictability is chaotic," Zarif said.

Global commodity trading has been rocked in recent months after a series of attacks on international merchant vessels, which the United States has blamed on Iran, and an Iranian seizure of a British oil tanker. Tehran has denied accusations that it was behind attacks on six tankers in May and June. Washington, which has by far the strongest Western naval contingent in the Gulf, has been calling for its allies to join it in an operation to guard shipping in the Strait of Hormuz, a vital gateway for the world's oil industry.

So far, Britain, Bahrain and Australia have joined the US-led security mission to protect merchant vessels travelling through key Middle East waterways. "This destabilizing behavior is a threat to Australia's interests in the region," Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison told a news conference in Canberra yesterday. "Our contribution will be limited in scope and it will be time-bound." Morrison said Australia would send a P-8A Poseidon surveillance plane to the Middle East for one month before the end of 2019, while an Australian frigate would be deployed for six months from January. Australia is a staunch ally of the United States, which in recent months has urged partners to do more for global security.

Reiterating Iran's chilly response to the security mission, Iranian Rear Admiral Ali Fadavi, a deputy commander of the elite Revolutionary Guards, said no one can secure the Gulf other than Iran and countries of the region, according to the semi-official Fars news agency. "Securing the Persian Gulf is the responsibility of Iran and the countries of the region," Fadavi said. "Other than us, no one can secure the Persian Gulf.'

Erik Hanell, owner of the British-flagged tanker detained by Iran while entering the Gulf, met Zarif in Stockholm on Aug 20 to make the case for the ship and its crew to be freed. The Stena Impero was diverted to an Iranian port on July 19, two weeks after Britain detained an Iranian tanker off the territory of Gibraltar. That ship was released this week. "A constructive dialogue was had and we shared information around the case," Hanell, chief executive of Stena Bulk, said in a statement yesterday. "It was important for us to emphasize the importance of the release of the 23 crew...Also for the release of the Swedish-owned vessel Stena Impero."

Meanwhile, the Iranian tanker that has sparked a

in Copenhagen... strengthening Denmark's position in this great strategic game at stake over the Arctic," it said.

Frederiksen herself said the US "remains one of Denmark's closest allies". "The developments in the Arctic region call for further cooperation between the US and Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Denmark," she said Wednesday, adding: "Our invitation for stronger cooperation on Arctic affairs still stands." Denmark's rejection of Trump's proposal "does not change the character of our good relations," she insisted.

The Wall Street Journal first reported that Trump had expressed interest in the self-governing part of Denmark, asking advisors if it would be possible for the US to acquire the territory. The president, a former real estate magnate, has been curious about the area's natural resources and geopolitical relevance, the paper said. Asked on Sunday if he would consider trading a US territory for Greenland, Trump replied that "a lot of things could be done". "Essentially, it's a large real estate deal."

Denmark colonized the two-million square-kilometre island in the 18th century. It is home to around 57,000 people, most of them from the indigenous Inuit community. Greenland's foreign affairs ministry said Friday that the island was ready to talk business - but was not for sale. — AFP

childbirth, marriage or divorce and to be recognized as a guardian to children who are minors - same as men. The reforms were widely celebrated in the kingdom, but they also drew backlash from archconservatives, many of whom shared old video sermons on social media by Saudi clerics advocating guardianship laws. Some also denounced the change as "unIslamic" in a society that traditionally sees men as protectors of women. The reform comes as the OPEC petroleum producer reels from low oil prices and seeks to boost employment opportunities for women - currently facing chronic joblessness. — AFP

diplomatic row pitting Tehran against Washington and London is too big to dock in Greece, the country's junior foreign minister said yesterday. "This is a very large crude carrier, it is over 130,000 tons... It cannot access any Greek dock," junior foreign minister Miltiadis Varvitsiotis told Ant1 TV. Varvitsiotis said the Greek government had "faced pressure" from US authorities over the vessel but insisted that Athens "has sent a clear message that we would not wish to facilitate the transport of this oil to Syria under any circumstances.'

The British Royal Marines seized the ship on July 4 off British territory Gibraltar on suspicion it was transporting oil to Syria in breach of European Union sanctions, triggering a sharp deterioration in relations between Tehran and London. Iran has repeatedly denied any violations. The incident has come at a difficult time for Greece's new conservative government which was elected just over a month ago.

Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis' office vesterday said the PM is expected to visit Washington "soon", and US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is expected to visit Greece in the autumn, Varvitsiotis said. Greece must also tread carefully as its influential shipping sector does major business in the Arabian Gulf. Varvitsiotis said Athens was not in contact with Tehran over the tanker, which was originally called Grace 1 but has been renamed the Adrian Darya, and had received no request from Iran.

The website Marine Traffic, which earlier this week gave the ship's reported destination as the Greek port of Kalamata, had placed the supertanker carrying 2.1 million barrels of oil some 100 km northwest of the Algerian port of Oran. The maritime tracker says the tanker is expected to arrive in Kalamata on Monday, but Varvitsiotis suggested it may not dock in Greek waters at all. "It has named Kalamata as its port of destination but this doesn't mean anything," adding: "It could drop anchor somewhere" else. "It could unload the oil at any non-EU refinery. It could head south" to North Africa, he added.

Separately, an Iranian oil tanker has broken down in the Red Sea near Saudi Arabia but its crew are safe and carrying out repairs, the oil ministry's website said yesterday. The HELM suffered a "technical fault" about 120 km north of the Saudi port of Yanbu on Tuesday, the ministry's website said, citing the National Iranian Tanker Company. "The crew of the tanker are busy fixing the defect and the vessel is in a stable situation from a safety standpoint," the NITC's technical director Akbar Jabalameli was quoted as saying. The crew of the tanker was safe and "in full readiness to solve the problem", he added.

TankerTrackers.com, which monitors ship movements, said the HELM was carrying 1.3 million barrels of crude oil and heading towards the Suez Canal from the Iranian island of Kharg. The vessel appears on the US Treasury's website in a list of entities subject to American sanctions. It is the second such Iranian breakdown in recent months after the tanker Happiness 1 was forced to seek repairs in the Saudi port of Jeddah port that reportedly cost the Islamic republic \$10 million. — Agencies

# Trump accuses Jewish voters of...

Continued from Page 1

whom support a boycott of the Jewish state for its treatment of the Palestinians.

"Five years ago, the concept of even talking about this - even three years ago - of cutting off aid to Israel because of two people that hate Israel and hate Jewish people - I can't believe we're even having this conversation. Where has the Democratic party gone?" Trump told reporters in the Oval Office. "I think any Jewish people that vote for a Democrat, I think it shows either a total lack of knowledge or great disloyalty." Israel last week barred Omar and Tlaib from entry on the grounds that they support the boycott against the country, and

after Trump urged the Jewish state to block the two. Trump's comments prompted condemnation from Jewish groups, which charged the president with anti-Semitism by questioning the loyalty of Jewish citizens, part of a longstanding trope accusing Jewish people of dual allegiance. "It's unclear who @POTUS is claiming Jews would be 'disloyal' to, but charges of disloyalty have long been used to attack Jews," tweeted Jonathan Greenblatt, the CEO of the Anti-Defamation League. "It's long overdue to stop using Jews as a political football."

Executive Director for the Jewish Democratic Council of America Halie Soifer echoed the sentiment, saying the president "has no right to tell Jewish Americans he knows what is best for us or to demand our loyalty". "Trump needs a reality check - we live in a democracy and Jewish support for the @GOP has been halved in the past four years," she tweeted. Presidential hopeful Bernie Sanders also took to Twitter to denounce the president's words. "I am a proud Jewish person and I have no concerns about voting Democratic," the Vermont senator wrote, adding he intends to vote for a Jewish man - himself - in the 2020 presidential election.

# MPs urge quick approval of...

Continued from Page 1

Sources said Aqeel is serious about fulfilling her promises to the National Assembly to implement steps to deal with the excessive increase in expats in Kuwait, which exceeds the market's needs, besides the overwhelming number of marginal laborers that forms a security risk and burden on services.

The sources said Aqeel is careful about mega projects in Kuwait, particularly the Silk City and the northern economic zone, which require a large number of expat labor, workers will enter the country, making the problem worse and its solution more difficult. She said the manpower authority is currently issuing work permits, which is not

ministry revealed that 2,214,865 expat workers were examined in the five years from 2012 to 2016. The report said 12,422 expats were not granted residency permits and deported due to infectious diseases in this period, including 373 expats infected with malaria, 497 with filaria and 4,081 with tuberculosis. The report said among those deported were 1,158 infected with AIDS, 4,177 with

# Top seeds Paire, Shapovalov reach Winston-Salem third round

### Canada's Shapovalov faces Serbian Miomir Kecmanovic

**WASHINGTON:** Top-seeded Benoit Paire reached the third round of the ATP Winston-Salem Open bids to return to peak form in the wake of career-threatening hip surgery. Tuesday, beating Prajnesh Gunneswaran 6-3, 7-5. France's Paire, ranked 30th in the world, avenged a loss to India's Gunneswaran at Indian Wells in March.

Paire broke Gunneswaran in the penultimate game, then capped the contest with his 14th ace on match point to book a round of 16 meeting with fellow Frenchman Ugo Humbert, who defeated American Bjorn Fratangelo 3-6, 6-3, 6-2.

After enjoying a first-round bye, Paire was glad to get to work in the heat and humidity of North Carolina as part of his build-up to the US Open, which starts on Monday at Flushing Meadows in New York.

"Honestly, I like to play before the Slam," he said. "I did the same in Lyon the week before Roland Garros and I won the tournament and after I made the last 16 at Roland Garros so it was good preparation. "I'll try to do the same - I'll try to win a lot of

matches here. I think it's important for me to play before the US Open." Second-seeded Canadian Denis Shapovalov also advanced, beating American Tennys Sandgren 6-2, 6-4.

Sandgren, ranked 73rd in the world, was coming off a first-round victory over three-time Grand Slam champion Andy Murray, who was playing just his second singles match since the Australian Open as he

Sandgren battled back from 0-3 down in the second set — going up a service break before Shapavolov came through with a break in the final game to seal the victory. "It was definitely a great win," said Shapovalov, who hadn't made it past the second round of an ATP event since Lyon in May and, like Paire, said he hoped a strong performance in Winston-Salem would be a springboard into the US Open.

"I've been struggling a little bit during the clay and grass court season and the hardcourt swing," he said. I thought it would be perfect to come play Winston-Salem, get a couple more matches under my belt and get ready for the Open.

"So far, so good," said Shapovalov, who next faces Serbian Miomir Kecmanovic, a 7-6 (7/5), 6-3 winner over Australian Alexei Popyrin. South Korean Lee Duck-hee's ground-breaking tournament came to an end with a 4-6, 6-0, 6-3 loss to third-seeded Hubert Hurkacz of Poland.

Lee had become the first deaf player to win an ATP match with his first-round win over Henri Laaksonen. "I'm a little bit disappointed right now," Lee admitted. "I had many chances that I didn't utilise, but it was a great experience overall." — AFP



# Paralympic chief hails Tokyo 2020 preparations

**TOKYO:** The Paralympics chief has said the 2020 Games are "on track," but raised alarm bells over a dearth of accessible hotel rooms in Tokyo with only one year to go. "I couldn't be happier with the preparations so far. With one year to go, we're totally on schedule, on track," Andrew Parsons told AFP in an interview to mark 12 months until the start of the games on August 25, 2020.

However, he admitted that his "biggest concern" was still the poor selection of hotel rooms equipped for the thousands of disabled supporters, journalists and coaches poised to descend on Tokyo for the 13day competition.

Athletes and some support staff will be housed in the Olympic village where there will be enough wheelchair-friendly rooms. But outside the village, currently only half of the fully accessible rooms needed for the Games are available and Paralympic officials do not want hotels to be too widely dispersed around the vast Japanese capital for fear of creating a knock-on transport headache.

Japanese legislation previously required hotels with 50 or more rooms to have just one wheelchair-friendly option and although this has recently been slightly improved to ensure one percent of rooms are accessible, the change will not come into effect until after the Games.

Parsons said the lack of accessible hotel rooms highlighted a social stigma sometimes faced by disabled people in Japan. "Most probably it is perceived in Japan that people with disabilities don't travel for leisure, for business, so why have accessible hotel rooms?" said the 42-

The change in legislation will be a positive legacy from the Games and Parsons hoped the competition would also promote a change in attitude. "What the Games will hopefully show is that persons with disabilities can travel, they can do anything that anyone else can if you offer them the conditions," he said.

He cautioned that the hotel problem "may affect the Games and it may affect the Games experience of some of our clients" but said



PYEONGCHANG: File photo taken on March 15, 2018 shows Andrew Parsons, president of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) speaking during an interview with AFP at the Main Press Centre of the Pyeongchang 2018 Winter Paralympic Games in Pyeongchang. —AFP

organisers and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government were working

They understand they have an issue. They understand this is a problem for us, for the Games, so we are working on it together."

Parsons said he hoped the later start date for the Paralympics would reduce some of the problems feared from heat and humidity during the Olympics but noted that there were specific issues faced

For example, many quadriplegic athletes are unable to sweat, meaning they need to take additional measures to cool their body, he said. Like the Olympics, organisers have brought forward the start time for the marathon to beat the blistering sun but this also brings its own challenges for Paralympians.

"Wheelchair users need more time to prepare, so it probably means they will have to wake up at 2am but the wellbeing of athletes is the number-one priority for us," stressed the IPC boss. — AFP

### India expect 'positive' verdict on Davis Cup tie against Pakistan

MUMBAI: The All India Tennis Earlier this month, Pakistan expelled Association (AITA) is hopeful its security concerns for next month's tie against hosts Pakistan will be addressed after the game's global governing body referred the matter to its Davis Cup committee.

The AITA said last week they had written to International Tennis Federation (ITF) asking them to shift the tie to a neutral venue or to postpone it for a couple of months until tensions simmer down between the bitter neighbours.

The national body was scheduled to discuss its concerns on Monday with security advisers from the ITF over the Sept 14-15 tie scheduled in Islamabad between arch-rivals India and Pakistan

The call was, however, cancelled and instead the ITF said the Davis Cup committee, comprising eight members and chaired by Egypt's Ismal El Shafei, will deliberate on the matter today.

AITA General Secretary Hironmoy Chatterjee said a "positive" decision was expected by today.

"The committee members are from different parts of the world so they will set up an appropriate time today that suits everyone. Then they will inform us of their decision," Chatterjee told Reuters vesterday.

"It's a positive, yes. If there was no merit why will the committee discuss. We have given them more than enough."

India's ambassador and suspended bilateral trade and all public transport links with its neighbour after New Delhi removed "special status" from its portion of the contested region of Kashmir.

The nuclear-armed neighbours have fought two wars over Kashmir since gaining independence from colonial power Great Britain in 1947. They came close to a third in February after a deadly attack on Indian police by a Pakistanbased militant group resulted in air strikes by both countries.

The AITA has named a six-member squad under captain Mahesh Bhupathi for the Sept. 14-15 tie but India's players sought safety guarantees from the ITF before travelling to Islamabad.

The ITF shared security arrangements for the Indian team in Islamabad with the AITA and said they were satisfied with the safety plan. An Indian tennis team last went to Pakistan in 1964 for a Davis Cup tie, defeating the hosts 4-0, while Pakistan lost 3-2 on their last visit to India in 2006.

Pakistan was forced to host Davis Cup ties at neutral venues for more than a decade as teams refused to travel to the country because of security concerns. They played their first home tie after a gap of 12 years against Iran in 2017, while Hong Kong was relegated and fined by the ITF after they refused to travel to Pakistan the same year. — Reuters

# Tanak seeks German rally treble as Ogier and Neuville lurk

TRIER: Ott Tanak seeks a German rally hat trick this weekend as the Toyota driver tries to press home his advantage atop the World Rally Championship rankings and keep Citroen's Sebastien Ogier and Hyundai's Thierry Neuville at bay.

With just five races to go this season, Frenchman Ogier is filling the Estonian's wing mirror, just 22 points adrift. Belgian Neuville is just three points further back as the three jostle for glory.

Britain's Elfyn Evans is a distant 102 points further behind in his M-Sport Ford. In the constructors' stakes, Hyundai are just holding off Toyota by 262 points to 238. After winning in Finland a fortnight ago, Ott and co-driver Martin Jarveoja head to Trier, seeking a third straight victory in the bucolic surroundings of the Mosel valley.

The 31-year-old is not short on confidence as he looks for his fifth race win of the campaign. "Germany is obviously a rally that I like a lot. Martin and I have won there two years in a row and our target this year is definitely to make it three," he said.

But he is not taking victory for granted. "It's certainly not an easy rally. I think last year was one of the most difficult wins in my career, as the competition was very strong and I had to push really hard from the beginning."

Neuville is racing almost in his back yard as he hails from Sankt-Vith, one of nine German-speaking Belgian communes barely an hour's speedy drive away from the course. "Germany is a very challenging event due to the fact that you have three different days with very different characteristics," said Neuville, who won here in 2014 despite



rolling six times in the shakedown.

Six-time world champion Ogier — bidding for a seventh straight overall title — took the honours at Trier in 2011, 2015 and 2016. Having a German wife means he has all the more reason to feel at home in Trier, which was a provincial capital in the Roman Empire and later the birthplace of Karl Marx

The Frenchman, who recently confirmed he plans to retire after next season, placed just fifth in Finland but says he is ready to show his mettle in Germany to supercharge his own title hopes.

"My aim coming into this round in Germany, a rally where I have always performed very well, is to secure a good result and shift the momentum a little bit in the

Much of the race is along windy vineyard service roads. But Saturday morning's stages are along paved country lanes and, in the afternoon, the drivers must cope with more than 100km of Panzerplatte, the tank training tracks near the US military base at

"Grape growers must despair," said the WRC web site. "Rows of vines regularly fall victim to over-ambitious drivers, but it makes for spectacular viewing." For four-time champion, now Toyota team principal Tommi Makinen, Germany is "a rally where there's a lot that can catch a driver out, whether it's in the vineyards or the Baumholder roads, so you need to have confidence in your car and be very focused to avoid mistakes.

#### World Championship leading standings:

1. Ott Tanak (EST/Toyota): 180 points, 2. Sebastien Ogier (FRA/CitroÎn) 158, 3. Thierry Neuville (BEL/Hyundai) 155, 4. Elfyn Evans (GBR/M-Sport Ford) 78, 5. Andreas Mikkelsen (NOR/Citroen) 71, 6. Teemu Suninen (FIN/M-Sport Ford) 66, 7. Kris Meeke (GBR/Toyota) 60, 8. Esapekka Lappi (FIN/Citroen) 58, 9. Jari-Matti Latvala (FIN/Toyota) 56, 10. Dani Sordo (ESP/Hyundai) 52. — AFP

# Gosden and **Dettori: Pulling** the strings in 'Sport of Kings'

LONDON: John Gosden and Frankie Dettori are probably the best trainerjockey combination since Vincent O'Brien and Lester Piggott ruled the "Sport of Kings" 40 years ago and in Enable and Stradivarius provide the two star attractions at the prestigious York Ebor meeting this week.

Gosden supplied Dettori with his 14th Group One winner of the season as he rode Coronet to victory on Sunday. leaving him just two shy of his personal record achieved back in 2001.

The exuberant 48-year-old Italian will renew his partnership with Gosden's two superstars, the remarkable mare Enable in the Yorkshire Oaks on Thursday and then the stayer Stradivarius in the Group Two Lonsdale Cup on Friday.

The latter could scoop a one-millionpound (\$1.2 million) bonus for the second year running in landing the treble of Ascot Gold Cup, Goodwood Cup and the Lonsdale.

Gosden said with Enable only having three rivals "anything can happen". opening up the possibility of her being beaten for only the second time in 14 starts in what is expected to be her last ever appearance on a British racetrack.

But Gosden, 68, says it is simply a final stepping stone to Enable's real target this season, a record third win in Europe's most prestigious race, the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, on October 6.

Gosden — who handed Dettori a lifeline when his career was in the doldrums after he received a six-month ban for testing positive for cocaine at the end of 2012 — says Enable's qualities resemble those of other sports champions.

"Obviously she has great presence and is very proud," he told AFP. "She also has great physical ability as well as huge mental ability. "You get to notice if the horses have mental strength when you are building them up in training, they show a positive and competitive attitude.

"Rather like tennis players their mental strength distinguishes the great players from the good ones. "No person or animal's body is fine-tuned unless the mind is in harmony with it.

"Football coaches would say the same thing that a player will not perform unless their mind is in the right place."

Gosden, whose stable star has won just over £9 million (\$10.9 million), says Enable is "special and great to be around." The urbane Englishman says he is most happy for is the owner and breeder of Enable, Saudi Prince Khalid

"We are trying to do something that has never been done before (win the Arc)," said Gosden. "The Prince has been a great supporter of French racing, indeed of racing all over the world, and would deserve to be part of history.

"He was extraordinarily loyal to Henry (Cecil) when his life was drifting off the rails a little bit. "He (Abdullah) could have walked away but he stayed loyal and was rewarded with that fairytale of Frankel," the legendary horse that won 14 of his 14 races giving his popular trainer Cecil a grand farewell before he died of cancer in June 2013. — AFP

Thursday, August 22, 2019 Sports

# Getting batting order right key for England in Smith absence

# 'England's Roy's best position in Test cricket is in the middle order'

**LEEDS:** The absence through injury of leading third test in West Yorkshire, but it does appear they are Australia batsman Steve Smith gives England a golden chance to level the Ashes series in the third Test at Headingley, but the hosts must resolve their own batting problems first.

Smith, who averages 126 in the series which Australia lead 1-0, was struck by a bouncer from fast bowler Jofra Archer in the first innings of the second test at Lord's and was replaced by "concussion sub" Marnus Labuschagne for the second innings.

Initially, Smith passed a concussion test and was allowed to return to the field and complete his innings, but his condition worsened and Cricket Australia (CA) confirmed he is not fit to play in the third test, which

The absence of a man who has proven almost immovable so far this series will give England a boost, given Matthew Wade is the only other Australian batsman with a century and only two others have

However, England have their own issues to address. Questions remain over their top order, with Jason Roy, a specialist opening batsman in one-day cricket, continuing to struggle. "Opening the batting in a Test in England should be a specialist position yet someone like Jason Roy will probably only come off once in about 20 innings playing the way he does at the top of the order," former England captain Nasser Hussain wrote in the Daily Mail newspaper.

"He is obviously a special talent in white-ball cricket but at this level against the moving ball I maintain Roy's best position in Test cricket is in the middle order." England have named the same 12-man squad for the

considering moving Roy down the order.

"We think we've got the best seven batters available to us," England coach Trevor Bayliss said. "Whether we can change it round and make that (order) any better, I'm not sure, but we'll certainly have a discussion about it.

"Personally, I think he (Roy) probably is suited to the middle order." Roy produced his most convincing innings of his fledgling international test career when scoring 72 batting at number three against Ireland, as opposed to 45 runs from five innings when opening.

#### **CHANGING ORDER**

Moving Roy will likely see Joe Denly open, with the pressure mounting on the 33-year-old given his highest score of the series is 30 so far. Captain Joe Root is another who has not reached his usual high level, averaging less than 25. Moving him further down the order to number four, his usual position, is also a possibility.

"We are going to lose arguably our best batter," Australia coach Justin Langer said. "It is not unlike England losing James Anderson, he's arguably their best bowler. You take your best players out it always has an

With England able to replace Anderson with the ferocious Archer in the last test, both teams remained evenly matched, with England almost able to sneak victory on the final day.

Taking Smith's runs out of the equation should, in theory, give England the edge, but there is hope for Australia in Smith's likely replacement Labuschagne, who scored a gritty 59 as Australia saw out the draw at Lord's.—Reuters



Stadium in Leeds, northern England, yesterday on the eve of the start of the third Ashes cricket Test match between England and Australia. —AFP

# India look to dominate Indies in first Test

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA: India look set to extend their decade-long dominance over West Indies when the first match of a two-Test series starts at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium here today. Having swept the T20 series 3-0 and taken the ODI contest 2-0, Virat Kohli's India are bursting with confidence going into their first Test match since the historic series triumph in Australia at the start of the year. In contrast, the West Indies have gone off the boil since dominating England in the home series in the Caribbean six months ago and then going toeto-toe with the same opponents in the subsequent

A whitewash in the tour-ending T20 skirmish, followed by the removal of controversial head coach Richard Pybus and a disappointing World Cup campaign has left Jason Holder's men with much lost ground to reclaim.

And on the evidence of the limited-over leg of India's visit, and especially Kohli's irresistible form with the bat, it will be asking a lot of the West Indies to get the better of the tourists and claim a first Test match victory over India for more than 17 years.

However, if the home team can recapture the Holder-inspired dominance of England achieved earlier this year, there is hope that they will be able to match up to an Indian team well prepared for the longer version of the game.

For India Chesteshwar Pujara, who reeled off three centuries in the four Tests in Australia, has already picked up from where he left off Down Under in notching up three figures in the lone warm-up fixture against a regional representative team last weekend.

It remains to be seen whether selectors will include Rohit Sharma — a fixture at the top of the order in limited-over matches — in the middleorder and whether the exciting young talent of Rishabh Pant will keep experienced wicketkeeper-

batsman Wriddhiman Saha in the dressing room. Spinner Ravi Ashwin, 'Man of the Series' when India dominated the home side in the Caribbean three years ago, could find himself on the sidelines with Ravindra Jadeja and Kuldeep Yadav seen as the prime contenders for the specialist spinner's role. A change of policy in preparation has seen the pitch in Antigua, and indeed all Test match venues in the Caribbean, being more fast bowler-friendly

since the start of last year. That could favour the visitors who have a trio in Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami and Ishant Sharma very capable of exploiting helpful conditions. Not that the West Indies will be daunted by that prospect, for in Kemar Roach, Shannon Gabriel, Holder and all-rounder Keemo Paul, they have the firepower to challenge India's vaunted batting line-

up, as the English found to their cost in February. However, the outcome of the first Test could ultimately hinge on batting, and whether the West Indies can defy a determined, world-class bowling attack to post competitive totals.

#### Teams (probable):

West Indies — Jason Holder (captain), Kraigg Brathwaite, John Campbell, Darren Bravo, Shai Hope, Shimron Hetmyer, Roston Chase, Shane Dowrich (wicketkeeper), Keemo Paul, Kemar Roach, Shannon Gabriel

India — Virat Kohli (captain), K. L. Rahul, Mayank Agarwal, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane, Hanuma Vihari, Rishabh Pant (wicketkeeper), Ravindra Jadeja, Mohammed Shami, Jasprit Bumrah, Ishant Sharma. —AFP

# **England to play** Windies, Pakistan as part of Test Championship

LONDON: England will host the West Indies and Pakistan in a total of six test matches from June-August 2020 as part of the inaugural ICC World Test Championship, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said vesterday.

The competition involves the nine top-ranked test nations competing in a league between July 2019 and April 2021, with the top two sides progressing to the final which will be held in England in June 2021.

"The ICC World Test Championship will add significance and context to the test series against West Indies

and Pakistan," ECB chief executive officer Tom Harrison said in a statement. "Where every Test matters, there will be lots of points to play for as England continue their efforts to reach the World Test Championship

England begin their 2020 programme with three Tests against the West Indies, with the first match starting at The Oval on June 4, followed by matches at Edgbaston and Lord's.

They then face Australia in three Twenty20 internationals starting July 3 with both teams looking ahead to the T20 World Cup Down Under. The 50-overs world champions then play Australia in three One-Day inter-

A three-test series with Pakistan starting July 30 at Lord's will be followed by three T20s against the same opponents and three ODIs against Ireland.

England schedule 2020:

West Indies: First test: June 4-8, The Oval Second test: June 12-16, Edgbaston

semi-final defeat to New Zealand in

dented the sport's popularity. Digital payments company Paytm, owned by One 97 Communications, will pay 3.27 billion rupees (\$45.78 million) for the 2019-23 period to the BCCI, which is the richest national cricket board in the world.

The winning bid was 38 million rupees (about \$532,000) for every

Third test: June 25-29, Lord's

#### Australia:

First T20: July 3, Chester-le-Street Second T20: July 5, Old Trafford Third T20: July 7, Headingley. First ODI: July 11, Lord's Second ODI: July 14, Rose Bowl Third ODI: July 16, Bristol

First test: July 30-August 3, Lord's Second test: August 7-11, Old Trafford Third test: August 20-24, Trent Bridge First T20: August 29, Headingley Second T20: August 31, Sophia Gardens Third T20: September 2, Rose Bowl

#### Ireland:

First ODI: September 10, Trent Bridge Second ODI: September 12, Edgbaston Third ODI: September 15, The Oval. —Reuters

match compared to 24 million rupees that Paytm paid in 2015 to win the the recent 50-over World Cup has not rights then. "We are excited to continue our long-term association with BCCI and the Indian Cricket Team," Paytm Chief Executive Vijay Shekhar

Sharma said in a statement. "Our commitment to Indian Cricket gets stronger with every season. India loves cricket and we at Paytm are the biggest fans of it." —Reuters

### Indian board grows richer with new Paytm deal

(BCCI) said yesterday it will earn 58% more per match for the next four years as Paytm retained the title sponsorship rights for international and domestic matches, underlining the game's undiminished popularity in the

Cricketers are the highest profile athletes and enjoy rockstar status in the world's second most populous MUMBAI: India's cricket board country and Paytm's bid showed the

# N Zealand look to exploit S Lanka's Oval weakness

COLOMBO: New Zealand will be hoping to add to Sri Lanka's poor record at their own Oval ground and level the series in the second and final Test starting today. Unlike the spinner's paradise at Galle and the batting haven that is the SSC, the Oval — the only ground in Asia where Don Bradman played — favours seam bowlers.

Sri Lanka have been often exposed here by quality seam bowlers and one up in the two-match series, they will have New Zealand's Trent Boult and Tim Southee and possibly Neil Wagner — to contend with.

In the last 10 years, Sri Lanka have played seven games at The Oval and lost five, including once to New Zealand. In that game seven years ago, Southee claimed eight wickets while Boult finished with seven.

"We have some fond memories from last time, and we managed to win that," New Zealand wicketkeeper B.J. Watling said at a pre-match media briefing yesterday. "The boys like to talk about their wickets and there's a few stunning catches from memory as well. Having good memories is always good, but it is a new game, a new day, and we need to be switched on," Watling added.

Left-arm quick Wagner claimed nine wickets in New Zealand's last Test match and was unlucky to miss out in Galle as conditions heavily favoured spin. He is expected to make a return possibly at the expense of Mitchell

The opening Test was a lot closer than the six-wicket margin suggests and the New Zealanders know that fielding lapses cost them dearly after setting Sri Lanka a daunting task of 268 runs. "No one's trying to drop a catch or miss anything. I still look back on those chances and they are pretty tough ones. Sometimes they stick and sometimes they don't," Watling said. "We have to give a lot of credit to Sri Lanka's batsmen — especially that opening partnership. "Hopefully in this Test we can look to make some more inroads through that top order and hopefully put that middle order under more pressure.

Sri Lanka, meanwhile, will leave out off-spinner Akila Dananjaya, whose action was reported to be suspect for a second time by match officials after the Galle Test. Dananjaya, who claimed a five-wicket haul in the opening game, was forced to remodel his action after it was first



COLOMBO: Sri Lankan cricket Captain Dimuth Karunaratne bats during a practice session at the P. Sara Oval cricket stadium in Colombo yesterday. —AFP

reported in November last year.

Technically he is allowed to play the second Test, but he is likely to travel to India instead to test his action. Dilruwan Perera has been drafted into the squad and is expected to play. Sri Lanka will move up to the number five of the official ICC rankings if they win the second Test and the series. More importantly, it will give them a strong start in the World Test Championship.

Wicketkeeper Niroshan Dickwella was confident his team will put on a good show. "We want to win against world's number two ranked team. It's going to be a different game here and fast bowlers will come into play a lot," he said. "It's a big challenge. Having won one game, we have a big responsibility to win the series. We need to keep making good decisions at crunch moments," Dickwella told journalists.

#### New Zealand (From)

Kane Williamson (Captain), Jeet Raval, Ross Taylor, Colin de Grandhomme, Todd Astle, William Somerville, Mitchell Santner, Tom Blundell, Tom Latham, Henry Nicholls, B.J. Watling, Trent Boult, Tim Southee, Ajaz Patel and Neil Wagner.

#### Sri Lanka (From)

Dimuth Karunaratne (Captain), Dinesh Chandimal, Lahiru Thirimanne, Oshada Fernando, Angelo Mathews, Dhananjaya de Silva, Kusal Mendis, Kusal Perera, Niroshan Dickwella, Dilruwan Perera, Lasith Embuldeniya, Lakshan Sandakan, Suranga Lakmal, Lahiru Kumara and Vishwa Fernando.

Umpire: Michael Gough and Bruce Oxenford (Australia). Third Umpire: Richard Illingworth (England). Match Referee: Andy Pycroft (Zimbabwe). —AFP

# Ajax finish with 10 men and a goalless draw in Cyprus

### Game was goalless but packed with incident

moved closer to the Champions League group stage with a 0-0 draw away to APOEL in Nicosia in a playoff round first-leg match.

The game was goalless but packed with incident.

Ajax, a four-time winner of the competition and a semifinalist last season, dominated possession and created a string of promising situations.

But the lively home attack, with 22-year-old Jordanian Musa Suleiman showing some eyecatching form, created the most dangerous

Ajax conceded a string of free kicks in the second half and Noussair Mazraoui paid the price when a flailing tackle on Uros Matic earned him a second yellow card with 10 minutes to play.

Veteran striker Klass Jan Huntelaar, who came on with 12 minutes left, had a clear opportunity to win the game in added time, but the 36-year-old's tame chip was cleared.

"We gave the ball away too easily and we must improve next week," said Ajax attacker Dusan Tadic. "I expect the same compact defensive zone from APOEL in the second game. But we need to play much better."

While Ajax were disappointed with an away draw, Nicholas Ioannou, APOEL captain, was happy with his team's chances.

"We played really well," he said. "We defended very well and had some good chances at the other

PARIS: Ajax finished with 10 men on Tuesday but end to score. We were quite unlucky not to. We still believe we can go through."

There was only goal from open play in the night's three matches, but it was a pretty strike to give Slavia Prague a 1-0 victory in Cluj.

Nicolae Stanciu played a 28th-minute corner to Lukas Masopust, lurking outside the penalty area. The midfielder flighted the ball into the far corner of the net with the gentlest of long-range volleys.

"We practiced those corner kicks two days ago and I couldn't hit the ball well," said Masopust adding that team captain Tomas Soucek "told me today to try it with the side-foot and it worked."

Cluj coach Dan Petrescu was less impressed. "Was it a pass or a shot?" he asked. "It was like table tennis.'

Cluj won a penalty in the 79th minute, but Ondrej Kolar saved French striker Billel Omrani

left-foot spot kick. "I knew that the penalty-taking player always waits until the very last moment before kicking the ball, so I waited, did not lose my nerve and saved it," said Kolar. "It was my first saved

penalty for Slavia." In Austria, Linz ASK fell behind to Club Brugge in the eighth minute and despite a late siege of the visitors' goal, lost 1-0.

Centre back Gernot Trauner was caught in possession by Lois Openda and clumsily ran into the striker. Hans Vanaken slammed home the penalty kick. —AFP



NICOSIA: APOEL's midfielder Musa Suliman is marked by Ajax's defender Nicolas Tagliafico (R) during the UEFA Champions League playoff football match between Cyprus' APOEL Nicosia and Netherland's Ajax Amsterdam at the GSP stadium in Nicosia. — AFP

# I won't be a one-man show, says designated DFB chief Keller

**BERLIN:** The designated president of UEFA and global soccer body FIFA, the German football association (DFB), Fritz Keller, said yesterday he will not take over international positions or run the DFB as a one-man show, after getting the backing of professional and amateur associations.

Keller, who has been chairman of Bundesliga side Freiburg since 2010. was the only name put forward by a DFB commission in charge of finding a new head of the seven million-member association earlier this month.

He will still need to be elected on Sept. 27. "In the future it will not be a one-man show. There will be tasks on different shoulders who will each be responsible. There is no other way," he told a news conference. "We have to work together."

His predecessor Reinhard Grindel stepped down in April after coming under pressure over income he received from a DFB subsidiary and a watch he had been given by Ukrainian businessman and soccer administrator Grigory Surkis.

Grindel, who sat on the executive boards of the European association was the third consecutive DFB president to be embroiled in a scandal.

predecessors Wolfgang Niersbach and Theo Zwanziger were indicted in Switzerland earlier this month over a payment related to the hosting of the 2006 World Cup.

The DFB is now hoping Keller, who became a Freiburg vice president back in 1991, can again steady the ship. "This task was not part of my lifeplan," Keller said. "I am and was happy with what I did in Freiburg with my colleagues and my family business. But football is

"I see my work on a national level. I do not want to be in bodies such as FIFA and UEFA. This is a 24-7 job, a full-time job." Keller said DFB Vice President Rainer Koch would take over the international roles.

"I do not want to miss being able to go to watch a local game or go eat a sausage or go watch a top match," he added. Keller got the unanimous backing from all first and second division clubs. He also got 37 of 38 votes from local and regional associations, with



FREIBURG: File photo shows SC Freiburg's president Fritz Keller answers journalists questions before the German first division Bundesliga football match SC Freiburg v Mainz 05 on August 17, 2019 in Freiburg, southern Germany. — AFP

one association chief absent.

Small-budget club Freiburg have approach to the game, playing an exciting brand of football while also producing scores of talented players who have

moved on to join bigger clubs.

Keller, an entrepreneur in the field been known for their no-nonsense of wine and gastronomy, has been a member of the German football league (DFL) supervisory board since 2016. — Reuters

# Rummenigge suggests Sanches and Boateng could leave Bayern

BERLIN: Bayern Munich CEO Karl-Heinz Rummenigge has suggested that Renato Sanches and Jerome Boateng may be heading for the exit door at Bayern Munich, telling Sky Germany that both players will find it difficult to break into the first team

Portuguese midfielder Sanches and German defender Boateng have both pushed for a move away from Bayern in recent months. Both have dropped down the pecking order in their posi-

Sanches, 22, was fined 10,000 Euros (\$11,100) by the club after he publicly complained of a lack of game time and stated his desire to leave following a cameo appearance in Bayern's 2-2 draw with Hertha Berlin

"Renato is a player who wants to play, and I can understand that. We need to find a solution that also suits the coach and the club," Rummenigge told Sky. The Bayern CEO expressed sympathy for Sanches, who has made just 17 starts for Bayern since arriving three years ago with a winner's medal and Young Player of the Tournament award from Euro 2016.

"He came to us as a golden boy and newly crowned European Champion three years ago. Now he has lost his place in the national team, and he needs to play if he wants to get it back," said Rummenigge.

Yet the CEO admitted that it would it would "not be easy" for Sanches to compete with new signing Philippe Coutinho. He added that the same was true of veteran defender Jerome Boateng, following the arrival of



**Karl-Heinz Rummenigge** 

Lucas Hernandez and Benjamin Pavard.

"(Boateng) will not find it easy to get regular game time," said Rummenigge. "If he wants to leave the club, he needs to tell us." Boateng, 30, appeared certain to leave Bayern at the end of last season after club president Uli Hoeness advised him to "find a new club".

Yet his departure was thrown into doubt after Mats Hummels returned to Borussia Dortmund. Coach Niko Kovac insisted last week that the 2014 World Cup winner remained part of his plans. — AFP

# How humble HK Sevens shaped world rugby

HONG KONG: As Japan gears up to host Asia's first Rugby World Cup, they might give a nod of thanks in the direction of continental neighbours Hong Kong for helping to make it all possible.

The Hong Kong Sevens has grown from an end-of-season bash to a globally acclaimed festival of rugby, inspiring the World Cup Sevens and World Sevens Series — and tens of thousands of fans, who don outrageous fancy dress and party till they drop in the stands.

Its 43-year history has been liberally sprinkled with legends such as Jonah Lomu, David Campese, Waisale Serevi and Zinzan Brooke.

The city holds the accolade of being the only two-time hosts of the Sevens World Cup (1997 and 2005), reward for Hong Kong's pivotal role in developing the oval-ball game across the world's most populous continent. The growth of sevens resulted in rugby's return to the Olympics in 2016 after a 92-year absence.

None of that was in the wildest dreams of a group of club enthusiasts when they devised the event, according to former Hong Kong Rugby Football Union president Brian Stevenson, who has been involved from the start and was treasurer for the inaugural staging in 1976.

"There had never been a thought about a kind of international sevens. I thought it was a very innovative idea," says Stevenson, HKRFU president from 2001 to 2016, at the Hong Kong Jockey Club in Happy Valley, within kicking distance of where it all began.

Stevenson describes how a capacity 3,000 crowd packed Hong Kong Football Club to see New Zealand's Cantabrians win against sides from Indonesia, South Korea, Australia, Tonga, Japan, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Fiji. "Nobody would have expected it to take off as it has. We've been most fortunate," says the Scot.

"I always felt it was the nature of Hong Kong and its location. This is probably the most international city in Asia. And when the fans came in, this was all pretty good."You think of the timing, 1976. Hong Kong was developing as a financial centre. Cathay Pacific was beginning to expand its wings. So there's a lot of things together that really made it."

The seed for the Hong Kong Sevens was sown when A.D.C. "Tokkie" Smith, then chairman of the Hong Kong RFU, attended the Scottish Rugby Union centenary sevens at Murrayfield in 1973.

By 1975 he had plans for an international 15-a-side tournament, but they were met with resistance from the governing body of the then strictly amateur sport. "They were not helpful at all," says Stevenson. "So the way around it was an invitational sevens. I don't think any of us expected it to take off. Well, it was absolutely enormous." The success attracted the world's best players and eventually national teams, or at least some of them. — AFP

# Ancelotti's Napoli hope of toppling **Juventus**

MILAN: As the sole survivor of a coaching shuffle among the leading challengers, Carlo Ancelotti could have the best chance to end Napoli's 30-year wait for

Yet Antonio Conte's arrival at Inter Milan has also raised expectations of an end to Juventus's long domination in the season that kicks off on Saturday. Serie A runners-up Napoli have not held the Scudetto aloft since Argentine legend Diego Maradona inspired them to their only titles in 1987 and 1990.

Ancelotti's campaign begins in Fiorentina on Saturday, after Juventus, now coached by Maurizio Sarri, open their quest for a ninth consecutive title in Parma. Chinese-owned Inter Milan have also changed coaches with former Juventus and Chelsea boss Conte back home in Italy. Marco Giampaolo takes over at AC Milan and Paulo Fonseca at Roma.

Sarri came close two years ago when he guided Napoli to runners-up spot, just four points behind Juventus, before moving to Chelsea. At 60, Sarri returns to Italy to coach Juventus as the champions look for a new direction despite five trophy-laden seasons under Massimiliano Allegri.

The decision by Napoli-native Sarri to move north has hurt in his home town. "For us Neapolitans, that was a betrayal," said captain Lorenzo Insigne. "Now we have to try to beat him at all costs." Ancelotti embarks on the second year of his three-year contract, and wants silverware this campaign.

The 60-year-old has won titles in Europe's five biggest leagues. His Serie A title came with AC Milan back in 2004. He arrived in Naples boasting three Champions League trophies from his spells with Milan and Real Madrid, and a Premier League title from his two-year tenure at Chelsea.

The veteran coach insists he has learned from his "transitional" first season. "We drew back the arrow, now we are ready to fire," he warned. Ancelotti has bolstered in all areas with the arrival of defender Kostas Manolas, midfielder Elif Elmas and winger Hirving Lozano.

#### **NEW-LOOK INTER**

Inter are being remodelled by former Italy boss Conte, who won three Serie A titles in a row with Juventus from 2012 to 2014, and the Premier League with Chelsea in 2017. Belgian forward Romelu Lukaku joins from Manchester United with young midfielders Stefano Sensi and Nicolo Barella arriving in the San Siro.

Uncertainly remains however over the future of Argentine forward Mauro Icardi amid reported interest from Napoli. Inter last won the title in 2010 under Jose Mourinho, and open at home against newly-promoted Lecce on Saturday.

But even amid uncertainty over how Sarri, who could miss the Parma opener with pneumonia, will adapt to life at Juventus, the Cristiano Ronaldo-powered champions remain favourites.

Juventus have spent big with newly-signed Dutch defender Matthijs De Ligt and Turkey's Merih Demiral. The midfield has been strengthened with PSG's Adrien Rabiot and former Arsenal star Aaron Ramsey.

Giampaolo takes over at AC Milan who missed out on Champions League qualification. The only non-Italian involved in this game of musical coaching benches, is Fonseca, working for the first time in Italy at Roma, who finished sixth last season.

Gian Piero Gasperini remains at Atalanta after leading the unheralded northeners to a Champions League berth with a third-place finish just ahead of Inter on goal difference. The side from Bergamo open against SPAL. — AFP

# Sport Times

THURSDAY, AUGUST 22, 2019

Paralympic chief hails **Tokyo 2020 preparations** 



N Zealand look to exploit S Lanka's Oval weakness



I won't be a one-man show, says designated DFB chief Keller





# Cardinals stay hot, drop Brewers

# Kershaw beats Jays, passes Koufax on Dodgers' win list

the St. Louis Cardinals to a 9-4 victory over the visiting Milwaukee Brewers on Tuesday night. Fowler's basesclearing double in the sixth inning — a well-placed popup into shallow left field with the bases loaded and two outs — capped a four-run rally that erased a 2-1 deficit. The Cardinals won for the ninth time in 11 games to remain atop the National League Central by a half-game over the Chicago Cubs. They moved four games up on the third-place Brewers, who lost for the sixth time in eight games. Tyler Webb (1-1), the fourth of six Cardinals pitchers, earned the victory. Jeremy Jeffress (3-4), the second of six Milwaukee pitchers, took the loss.

#### METS 9, INDIANS 2

Michael Conforto hit a tiebreaking two-run homer in the sixth inning, rookie Pete Alonso added a two-run double in the seventh, and New York began a pivotal nine-game homestand with a victory over Cleveland. After winning 18 of 23 games while playing several losing teams, the Mets (65-60) began a stretch of 18 straight games against other playoff contenders by improving to 11-1 in their last 12 home games. They matched a season best by going five games over .500. Conforto snapped a 2-2 tie when he clobbered a twoout slider from Shane Bieber (12-6) and hit the ball into the Mets' bullpen beyond the right-center-field fence. New York's Steven Matz (8-7) allowed two runs (one earned) and five hits in 6 1/3 innings. He struck out sev-

#### **DODGERS 16, BLUE JAYS 3**

A.J. Pollock and Will Smith hit home runs to jumpstart the offense, and Clayton Kershaw moved past Sandy Koufax on the Dodgers' all-time win list as Los Angeles earned an interleague victory over visiting Toronto. Max Muncy, Chris Taylor and Joc Pederson also hit home runs for the Dodgers, who have gone deep 30 times in their last eight games. Los Angeles improved to a major-league-best 49-16 at home this season. Kershaw (13-2) went six innings, giving up three runs on six hits with three walks and six strikeouts. It was his 166th career victory, moving him out of a tie with Koufax and into sole possession of fifth on the team's all-time list.

#### TWINS 14, WHITE SOX 4

Nelson Cruz homered and doubled three times, Max Kepler had a home run, a double and three RBIs, and Jorge Polanco also homered to lead Minnesota past Chicago in Minneapolis. Cruz finished 4-for-5 with three RBIs and three runs. C.J. Cron had a threerun double, and Eddie Rosario had two hits and two RBIs for Minnesota, which increased its American League Central lead to three games over the

ST LOUIS: Dexter Fowler drove in four runs to power Cleveland Indians. Michael Pineda (9-5) allowed four runs on six hits over seven innings. He didn't walk a batter and struck out four while improving to 3-0 against Chicago this season.

#### **ATHLETICS 6, YANKEES 2**

Matt Olson and Mark Canha hit first-inning home runs off Domingo German, and Homer Bailey pitched effectively into the sixth, helping Oakland open a threegame series against visiting New York with a victory. In their first meeting since the 2018 American League wild-card game, which New York won 7-2, the A's sent the Yankees to their second straight defeat while winning for the fifth time in six games. After Gary Sanchez homered off Bailey (11-8), a solo shot with two outs in the top of the first, the A's came right back. Robbie Grossman's walk set up Olson's two-run homer before Canha followed with a long ball for a 3-1 lead.

#### PHILLIES 3, RED SOX 2

Aaron Nola pitched seven strong innings to make a three-run first stand up as visiting Philadelphia edged Boston in the opener of a two-game series. Nola (12-3) stranded the tying run in scoring position with no outs in both the fifth and sixth innings, allowing two runs on four hits and a walk with seven strikeouts. The victory snapped a two-game skid for Philadelphia. Jackie Bradley Jr. hit a two-run home run for the Red Sox, whose five-game winning streak ended.

#### PIRATES 4, NATIONALS 1

Starling Marte hit a three-run homer in a four-run eighth inning as host Pittsburgh halted a three-game losing streak with a win over Washington. The Pirates had scored just one run during the skid. Washington starter Stephen Strasburg missed a chance at setting a career high with his 16th win of the season. He pitched seven scoreless innings, scattering four hits with six strikeouts and one walk. Wander Suero (3-7) was charged with three of the eighth-inning runs. Felipe Vazquez (3-1) got the final four outs for the win.

#### **BRAVES 5, MARLINS 1**

Freddie Freeman continued to feast on visiting Miami, hitting two solo home runs and driving in four in Atlanta's win. Freeman ended a O-for-12 streak by going 3-for-4 and producing his second multi-homer game in five days. He hit his first homer in the fourth inning, added another homer in the fifth and chased home a pair of runs in the seventh with a single. The 29-year-old All-Star has 33 homers and a leagueleading 102 RBIs, the second time he's surpassed 100 in his career. In 17 games against Miami this season, Freeman is batting .354 (23-for-65) with five homers

#### **MARINERS 7, RAYS 4**

Tom Murphy hit a tiebreaking, two-run homer in the sixth inning as Seattle defeated Tampa Bay in St. Petersburg, Fla. Kyle Seager also homered for the Mariners, who have won four games in a row and six of eight on their nine-game trip. Mariners left-hander Tommy Milone (3-7), who entered after Matt Wisler pitched a scoreless first, earned his second straight victory despite allowing four runs on six hits in five innings. He walked one and struck out four. Sam Tuivailala, Anthony Bass and Matt Magill combined for three scoreless innings of one-hit relief for Seattle. Magill pitched the ninth for his second save.

#### **ASTROS 6, TIGERS 3**

George Springer and Jose Altuve smacked backto-back home runs in the first inning, and Martin Maldonado went deep in the fifth as Houston slugged its way to victory over visiting Detroit. The Astros recorded their eighth consecutive win over the Tigers despite Aaron Sanchez departing with the bases loaded and one out in the third inning. Brad Peacock (7-6), making his first appearance since June 27, entered and stranded two of the three runners. Peacock, who came off the injured list Sunday after recovering from a shoulder ailment, wound up pitching 1 2/3 scoreless innings.

#### **CUBS 5, GIANTS 3**

Anthony Rizzo went 3-for-3 with two home runs, Nicholas Castellanos finished 3-for-5 with a homer, and host Chicago beat San Francisco. Jonathan Lucroy and Tony Kemp also drove in runs for Chicago, which won its third game in a row. The Cubs posted their 42nd win in 61 home games this season. Cubs left-hander Cole Hamels (7-4) limited the Giants to three runs on five hits in six innings. He walked two and struck out five. Austin Slater and Kevin Pillar homered in a losing effort for San Francisco.

#### DIAMONDBACKS 8, ROCKIES 7

Nick Ahmed homered, and Eduardo Escobar reached 100 RBIs for the season as Arizona held on to beat Colorado in Phoenix. Ahmed's solo shot — his sixth homer in his past 10 games — started the scoring in the third inning, but the game turned in the sixth with one out. The D-backs scored five runs after Colorado starter Kyle Freeland (3-11) left in the middle of an Ahmed plate appearance as he showed discomfort while the game was tied 3-3. Ahmed completed a walk against reliever Bryan Shaw, who then walked Carson Kelly to load the bases with one out. Pinch hitter Jake Lamb knocked in two runs with a grounder to center for a 5-3 lead. Ketel Marte followed with an RBI fielder's choice, and Escobar pulled a ball into the right field

corner for a two-run triple to make it 8-3.

#### **REDS 3, PADRES 2**

Freddy Galvis continued his strong early run with Cincinnati by belting a tiebreaking two-run homer in the sixth inning, and Sonny Gray struck out 10 to win his fourth straight decision as the Reds beat visiting San Diego. Galvis, claimed off waivers on Aug. 12, is 12for-29 (.414) with three homers and six RBIs in eight games for Cincinnati. His opposite-field shot to left snapped a 1-1 tied and helped the Reds avoid a third consecutive loss. Gray (9-6) saw his scoreless-inning streak end at 23 when Josh Naylor hit a game-tying solo homer with two outs in the sixth. However, that was all Gray allowed while fanning 10 in six innings.

#### **ANGELS 5, RANGERS 1 (GAME 1)**

Mike Trout set a career high with his 42nd home run, and Los Angeles won the first game of a doubleheader in Arlington, Texas. Los Angeles' Andrew Heaney struck out a career-high 14 and didn't walk a batter while winning consecutive starts for the first time since winning five straight in 2015. Heaney (3-3) allowed one run and four hits in eight innings. Trout also tripled, Luis Rengifo added a two-run homer, and Brian Goodwin contributed two hits and two runs for the Angels. Willie Calhoun had two hits, including a solo homer, for the Rangers.

#### RANGERS 3, ANGELS 2 (GAME 2, 11 INNINGS)

Nick Solak's 11th-inning grounder got under the glove of Los Angeles first baseman Albert Pujols, scoring Delino DeShields and giving Texas a win in the second game of the doubleheader. The Rangers posted their second 11-inning, walk-off victory over the Angels in the past two nights, sandwiching Los Angeles' win Tuesday afternoon in the opener of the doubleheader. In the 11th inning of the nightcap, DeShields singled to right with one out off Ty Buttrey (6-6), stole second and came home on the two-out error by Pujols.

#### **ORIOLES 4, ROYALS 1**

Hanser Alberto belted a three-run homer with two outs in the eighth inning as host Baltimore snapped an eight-game losing streak with a victory over Kansas City. The Orioles posted just their second win in 15 games overall and snapped a four-game losing skid to the Royals. Rio Ruiz had an RBI single in the seventh inning for the Orioles. Meibrys Viloria's sacrifice fly plated Alex Gordon in the second inning for the Royals, who were thwarted in their bid for a season-high fourth straight road win. Jacob Barnes (1-2) issued walks to Trey Mancini and Jace Peterson in the eighth inning of a tie game before Alberto deposited 1-1 cutter over the wall in center field. —Reuters