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# MPs pass oil budgets, criticize employment of expats in sector

## Lawmakers slam rainbow 'gay pride' flags in storefront displays

### Oman denies diplomatic ties agreed with Israel

MUSCAT: Oman yesterday denied it has agreed to establish diplomatic relations with Israel, a day after the Israeli intelligence chief said his country was renewing ties. Reports on the "establishment of diplomatic relations between the sultanate and Israel are baseless", the foreign ministry said on Twitter. "The sultanate is keen to create diplomatic conditions to restore communication between all international and regional parties to work on achieving peace between the Palestinian Authority and Israel,

resulting in an independent Palestinian state," it said. On Monday, the head of Israel's Mossad intelligence agency, Yossi Cohen, said his country was establishing "formal relations" with Oman. "Just recently, renewal of formal relations with Oman was declared and the establishment of a representative office of the (Israeli) foreign ministry in that country," he told a security conference in Herzliya, near Tel Aviv. Oman's statement yesterday made no mention of an Israeli representative office.—AFP

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The National Assembly yesterday approved the budgets of giant oil companies, the investment authority and several other bodies, but they criticized why oil companies appoint expatriates instead of Kuwaitis. During the session, Islamist MP Mohammad Al-Mutair called on Commerce and Industry Ministry Khaled Al-Roudhan to crack down on shops that display rainbow "gay pride" flags and colors, while MP Thamer Al-Suwai praised the ministry for removing some of these displays. The Assembly today holds its final session of the current term by approving the state budget and studying the financial status of the country.

Thirty-eight MPs voted for the 2019/2020 budget of Kuwait Petroleum Corp (KPC) and its subsidiaries against 19, projecting revenues at KD 21.4 billion, spending at KD 20 billion and a net profit of KD 1.4 billion. A

large number of lawmakers strongly criticized KPC and its companies for not employing enough Kuwaitis, and wondered why expatriates still outnumber citizens in the oil sector.

MP Riyadh Al-Adasani said KPC is planning to borrow although it has a surplus of over KD 20 billion invested, and called for using the assets rather than borrowing. MP Saadoun Hammad said KPC has KD 24 billion in assets and its budget is over KD 17 billion, "so why it is planning to borrow?" He also questioned why KPC and its companies are not employing Kuwaitis and instead giving jobs to expatriates, adding that Kuwaiti petroleum engineers are working in other ministries.

MP Khalil Abul said oil companies award contracts to private companies and these firms employ expatriates, adding that Kuwaitis are deprived from enjoying their country's resources. MP Al-Humaidi Al-Subaei accused KPC officials of obstructing

the employment of Kuwaitis in oil companies by insisting on "tough employment exams in which only your children pass". He warned that he will keep grilling the oil minister until the oil sector employs more Kuwaitis.

MP Khudair Al-Otaibi claimed that the oil sector is reluctant to employ Kuwaitis because of a general strike called by Kuwaiti employees a few years ago, which paralyzed the oil sector. MP Safa Al-Hashem charged that Kuwait Investment Authority, the country's sovereign wealth fund, opts to sell successful investments while there are other failed investments which cost Kuwait losses in excess of \$2.5 billion. She said KIA increased its investments in a particular fund even after losses. Head of the budgets committee MP Adnan Abdulsamad said that a good portion of oil companies' revenue comes from investing their surpluses, which is wrong, as this is supposed to be the work of KIA and not KPC.

### News in brief

#### Full foreign ownership of UAE firms

ABU DHABI: The United Arab Emirates said yesterday it had decided to lift a decades-old cap on foreign ownership and allow full foreign control of business ventures. "In a cabinet meeting I chaired in Abu Dhabi, we approved 100 percent foreign ownership in 122 economic activities," UAE vice president and prime minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashed Al-Maktoum said on Twitter. The decision abolishes a decades-old law that limits foreign ownership to just 49 percent. He said the decision opens the UAE economy to all nationalities so as "to make it one of the best destinations for global investments". — AFP

#### Houthi attack Abha airport

RIYADH: A Yemeni rebel attack on a civilian airport in southern Saudi Arabia wounded nine civilians yesterday, a Riyadh-led coalition said, the latest in a series of strikes on the site. "The terrorist attack on Abha airport... led to the injury of nine civilians, including eight Saudi citizens and one carrying an Indian passport," the military coalition said in a statement carried by the official Saudi Press Agency. Earlier, the Iran-aligned Houthi rebels said they "launched a wide operation targeting warplanes at Abha international airport" with drones, according to their Al-Masira television channel. — AFP

#### 14 killed in Russian sub fire

MOSCOW: Fourteen seamen have died in a fire on a deep submersible, Russia's defense ministry said yesterday, the latest in a string of disasters and accidents to hit the country's navy. "On July 1, a fire broke out during biometric measurements on a scientific research deep-sea submersible," the defense ministry said. Fourteen crew died as a result of poisoning from the fumes of the fire in Russia's territorial waters, a ministry spokeswoman confirmed to AFP. The RBC newspaper, citing a source in law enforcement agencies, said the accident took place in the submersible deployed from the AC-12 nuclear submarine known as Losharik. — AFP

#### Bangladesh rivers 'legal persons'

DHAKA: Bangladesh's high court has granted the country's rivers the rights and status of "living entities" in a bid to save them from encroachment, a lawyer said yesterday. The court on Monday published a landmark verdict on a 2016 petition filed by a Dhaka-based rights group, saying all of the country's hundreds of rivers would now be treated as legal persons, litigator Manzil Murshid said. Experts said the verdict would save rivers from illegal encroachment in the densely populated country of 165 million people and where land is precious as gold. They said many of the country's rivers are struggling to survive thanks to illegal sand dredging and large-scale industrial pollution. — AFP

## EU leaders strike deal to give top jobs to women

BRUSSELS: EU leaders yesterday struck a hard-fought summit deal to put women in two of the bloc's most important jobs for the first time. After three days of bitter wrangling, German Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen was named to replace Jean-Claude Juncker at the head of the European Commission for the next five years. Once confirmed, von der Leyen will lead a commission facing a host of challenges, ranging from climate change to disinformation, populism and Brexit. Former French finance minister Christine Lagarde, who has led the International Monetary Fund since 2011, is to take charge at the European Central Bank.

## Philippines army suspects first suicide bombing by a local

MANILA: A Filipino militant is suspected of carrying out an apparent suicide bombing last week in the southern Philippines, an army general said yesterday, a grim first for the insurgency-plagued nation. Philippine targets have been struck in the past in rare instances of suicide attacks, but this would be first believed to have been carried out by a Filipino. The bombing Friday of a military base on the southern island of Jolo killed at least five people and bore the hallmarks of a suicide attack, authorities said. Major General Cirilito Sobejana told AFP the suspected bomber's remains were identified by his mother and a sibling, but DNA testing was needed to confirm the preliminary identification. Sobejana said investigators can't entirely rule out the possibility the bomb was remotely detonated and the 23-year-old

## Mumbai wall collapse kills 21 amid rain chaos

MUMBAI: At least 21 people were killed in Mumbai yesterday when a wall collapsed as the heaviest monsoon rains in a decade brought chaos to India's financial capital and surrounding areas. Scores more were injured when the structure came down around 2:00 am in a slum, said Tanaji Kamble, a disaster management spokesman for Mumbai's local authority. The tragedy came as the teeming coastal settlement of 20 million

Summit host and European Council President Donald Tusk confirmed the appointments on Twitter, ending difficult talks that had dragged on since Sunday evening, dogged by division and infighting. The 60-year-old conservative von der Leyen's name came in the frame for the commission after an earlier proposal to name Dutch social democrat Frans Timmermans ran into insurmountable opposition. The package agreed by the 28 EU leaders also sees Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel take over from Tusk at the European Council of member states, while Spanish Foreign Minister Josep Borrell becomes foreign policy chief, replacing Federica Mogherini.

Von der Leyen, a minister for the past 14 years under German Chancellor Angela Merkel, has been an advocate for closer EU integration, calling for a "United States of Europe". Except for Michel, the package still needs the



Ursula von der Leyen



Christine Lagarde

blessing of the European Parliament, and several senior figures in Timmermans' centre-left group tweeted their disapproval at the proposed ticket. Von der Leyen would take office on Nov 1 - the day after Britain is currently due to leave the bloc.

Both candidates vying to take over as British prime minister have vowed to leave on time come what may, so the new commission's first task in office could be to mop up the fallout from a messy "no deal" Brexit.

Continued on Page 24

suspect, who allegedly has ties to jihadist group Abu Sayyaf, was merely carrying it. "The probability that it was a suicide bombing is very high, but we also have to consider those possibilities," he added.

If confirmed, the bomber would be the first known local suicide attacker in a nation where security officials had long said the tactic goes against local culture. Philippine defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said on Monday the attack was "obviously a suicide bombing", describing it as an important development in the nation's restive south.

Insurgent groups have killed tens of thousands in their decades-long fight for a separate Muslim homeland in the Catholic-majority nation. The defense chief said Friday's blast was the third suicide attack on the Philippines, following a July 2018 van bomb in southern Basilan island, and explosions during Sunday mass in January at a Catholic cathedral in Jolo. All three attacks were claimed by the Islamic State group, which takes credit for the violence carried out by local affiliates such as kidnap-for-ransom group Abu Sayyaf.

Authorities have blamed foreign attackers for the two previous blasts which killed more than 30 people.

Continued on Page 24

## Russian influence grows over OPEC with new charter

VIENNA: This week's OPEC meeting, which prolonged daily oil output cuts to support prices, illustrates the increasing influence that Russia wields over the crude-producing cartel, analysts say. OPEC, pressured by booming US shale production, abundant global crude supplies and weak oil demand growth, cemented its ties with Moscow and other non-cartel partners with a formal charter yesterday, aiming to boost its market clout. The so-called OPEC+ crude producing club, comprising 24 producers including Russia, has lengthened its pact to cut 1.2 million barrels per day by nine months to March 2020.

Continued on Page 24

residents was lashed by heavy rains for a second consecutive day, bringing the city to a virtual standstill.

Authorities declared yesterday a public holiday and advised all residents to stay indoors. Schools and colleges were closed while more than 100 flights were either cancelled or diverted from Mumbai airport. The airport's main runway was shut after a SpiceJet plane carrying 167 passengers and crew overshot it shortly before midnight Monday. "Currently secondary runway is in use, our team is trying their best to bring the main runway back in operation and this may take up to 48 hrs," the airport tweeted.

According to Skymet Weather, a private weather-tracking agency,

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MUMBAI: Rescue workers use dogs to search for survivors at the site of a wall collapse yesterday. — AFP

Local



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. —Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait Dr Mohammad Al-Hashel.



National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem (center right) meets with Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Fahad Al-Shula (center left), Undersecretary Farid Emadi (right) and Assistant Undersecretary for Technical Coordination and External Relations and Hajj Muhammad Al-Olaim.

# Amir receives Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad, Central Bank governor

## Prime Minister receives lawyers society chairman, members

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace yesterday. His Highness the Amir then received Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait Dr Mohammad Al-Hashel. Meanwhile, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace Kuwait Society of Lawyers (KSL) Chairman Lawyer Sheryan Al-Sheryan and society members, in the presence of Minister of Justice and Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Fahad Al-Afasi.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Kuwait Society of Lawyers (KSL) Chairman Lawyer Sheryan Al-Sheryan and society members.

In other news, Kuwaiti National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem received on Monday the Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Fahad Al-Shula, who presented the plan of the Hajj mission of the season 1439 AH, corresponding 2018. Undersecretary of the Ministry of Awqaf Farid Emadi and Assistant Undersecretary for Technical Coordination and External Relations and Hajj Muhammad Al-Olaim attended the meeting. —KUNA

## Mubarak Al-Abdullah Joint Staff College graduates trainees



KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and other senior officials pose for a group photo with the graduates. —Defense Ministry photos

KUWAIT: Under auspices of the First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Kuwait Armed Forces yesterday celebrated the graduation of Army, Interior Ministry, and National Guard officers from Kuwait and other sisterly and friendly countries who underwent the 23rd joint staff training course at Mubarak Al-Abdullah Joint Staff College. Deputy Army Chief of Staff Lt Gen Sheikh Abdullah Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah and other senior officials attended the ceremony.



First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and other senior officials attend the graduation ceremony.

Speaking on the occasion, Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad expressed his pride in the high training level the college has reached, noting that it matches the world's best military colleges and academies. Sheikh Nasser added that the presence of a large number of officers from sisterly and friendly countries confirms the high level of education the college provides. Sheikh Nasser distributed the certificates to the graduates at the conclusion of the ceremony, according to a statement released by the Defense Ministry's Moral Guidance and Media Department yesterday.



First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah is welcomed as he arrives to the venue.



First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah attends the ceremony.



First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and Deputy Army Chief of Staff Lt Gen Sheikh Abdullah Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah honor the graduates.

## Local

# 53 labor violations detected during inspection at ministries' complex

## Minister forms national committee to limit use of antibiotics

By Meshaal Al-Enezi and A Saleh

KUWAIT: Manpower authority teams inspected worksites at the ministries' complex parking site to make sure labor law number 6/2010 and domestic helpers' law number 68/2015 are put into practice. The inspection campaign resulted in citing 43 violations of article 18, seven violations of article 20 and three violations of article 18 (shepherders), deputy director for planning and development at the Public Authority for Manpower Mubarak Al-Azmi said.

Meanwhile, the manpower authority's deputy director for planning and development Dr Mubarak Al-Jafour said the authority completed preparing a proposal to be submitted to the Cabinet concerning exempting some businesses from a condition that sets a minimum number of national labor each business must hire. Jafour explained that the exempted businesses include those with less than 25 workers, shepherds, hunters, agricultural laborers and those working in places of worship.

### Expat experts

Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Saad Al-Kharraz said 19 expats had been appointed at the ministry as experts, in addition to 30 others at the public authority for disabled affairs (seven appointed and 23 working for monthly payments) since Jan

2017 till May 14, 2019. According to official statistics Kharraz sent to MP Safa Al-Hashem in response to an inquiry about the total number of expats appointed during the abovementioned period, the 19 appointed expats include four Egyptians, four Indians, three Syrians, three Bangladeshis, two Jordanians, a Saudi, an Iraqi and a Pakistani.

Statistics also explained that the appointed expats work as automated system creators, data and document analysts, office boys, software programmers, computer engineers, typist, technician assistant, legal researcher, senior translator and a teacher. Kharraz explained that expats appointed at the disabled authority include three Egyptians, two Indians, a Tunisian and a Jordanian, while those hired for monthly payments include 13 Egyptians, four bedoons, two Saudis, and Indian, an Ethiopian, an Afghan and a

Bangladeshi. Kharraz added expats appointed at the ministry get between KD 190 and 1,400, while those working for the authority get KD 190 to KD 1,883, adding that they had been appointed to make use of their experience.

### Antibiotic use

Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah ordered the formation of a national committee to limit the use of antibiotics, and that in response to UN and WHO resolutions concerning rationalizing



antibiotic use. The committee will be headed by the Health Ministry's assistant undersecretary for technical affairs. The committee will be responsible for implementing the national strategy to rationalize the use of antibiotics in compliance with the latest international developments and in a way that protects patients and the society from the complications and burdens caused by antibiotic-resistant microbiological infections. The committee will be also responsible for studying and assessing the current situation and use, track down any antibiotic-resistant cases, create a national database with information about prescribing and using antibiotics in various public and private health facilities, organize awareness campaigns, support the conduct of related research and surveys, take part in making reports to be submitted to WHO and other international organizations and make use of the experience of experts at those organizations.

### Solar power

Responding to a proposal made by municipal councilmember Meshaal Al-Hamdhan concerning installing solar power panels in unused areas in various cemeteries, Kuwait Municipality Director

Ahmad Al-Manfouhi stressed that cemeteries should not be used for other purposes. Manfouhi added that the Ministry of Awqaf had been consulted in this regard and that the ministry confirmed the rejection for the same reasons. In other news, Manfouhi said the traffic department project and the Salmiya modernization plan aim to improve the area's structure and organization. Manfouhi added that through Kuwait's structural plan, Kuwait Municipality studies various areas to estimate each area's needs of infrastructure, roads and transport according to its population density.

### MoE revenues

A State Audit Bureau report showed that the Ministry of Education (MoE) had rented 43 public schools to be used as private ones without tendering, which reduced the ministry's revenues and deprived the state treasury from KD 1,458,000 because of renting some of the schools for long period of up to 15 years without increasing the rent value.

The report made about the fiscal year 2018-2019 also showed that MoE failed to retrieve fines from some contractors and wasted KD 5,860 on a World Bank agreement. The report stressed that KD 434,940 in violations had been detected in lease contracts for buildings used as female teachers' hostels, through paying rent for unused apartments for over 22 months. In addition, the report showed KD 633,000 had been wasted on the electronic educational portal project that has been delayed for over six years without use, and thus the maintenance period expired before the project even got off the ground.

## 90% jobs today require creativity, innovation

KUWAIT: Many of today's most pressing business problems require creative thinking to solve them, and creativity is an essential ingredient for business growth. Creativity and Innovation in the MENA poll conducted by Bayt.com, the region's number one job site, shows that nine in 10 jobs nowadays require creativity and innovation.

Creative thinking is repeatedly seen as a critical skill across many industries and job roles. From an employer perspective, The Bayt.com Middle East Skills Report also showed that "creative thinking" was among the most important skills for the future of jobs, as stated by 71 percent of employers for junior roles and 77 percent of employers for senior roles.

Creativity is the human aptitude to generate ideas, solve difficult problems and exploit new opportunities - which, in turn, fuels innovation. 85 percent of poll takers described their workplace culture as creative and 91 percent said that their direct supervisor values creativity and innovation on the job.

More than ever, supporting creativity at work is an essential part of driving value for both businesses and society. MENA professionals identified four key personality traits correlating the most with creativity at work: hunger for learning and growth (73 percent), leadership and self-motivation (14 percent), risk taking and exploration (7 percent) and social activity and communication (5 percent). On a promising note, nearly two in three respondents (64 percent) agree that creativity is not an inherent skill; it can be acquired and learned. This means professionals can build up their "creative thinking" with time.

"There is a high value placed on innovation and creativity in the MENA region as demonstrated by our latest poll," said Omar Tahboub, General Manager at Bayt.com. "When creativity is enabled and encouraged at every level of an organization, employees are able to harness this to create more efficient solutions, to innovate and to collaborate. Our data shows that innovation and creativity are highly demanded and desired on both sides of the job market: job seekers and employers alike. At Bayt.com, we ensure that we provide abundant choice of talent with a database of 35.6 million CVs. Likewise, we offer various learning and career development tools for our job seekers to ensure they are maximizing their cre-



Omar Tahboub

ative thinking and other skills needed for employment."

Not only can individual behavior influence creative thinking, employers have a huge role in cultivating creativity and innovation. In fact, most MENA professionals say (74 percent) that they feel more creative outside of work and 87 percent say that repetitive routine lowers their creativity at work.

According to poll respondents, there are five important barriers to organizational creativity: lack of access to information (57 percent), resistance to change (18 percent), bureaucracy (10 percent), risk aversion (6 percent) and lack of resources like time, money, etc. (6 percent).

MENA professionals highlight five significant factors that enhance organizational creativity and innovation: leadership (55 percent), open communication (21 percent), appropriate tools and technology (11 percent), diversity (9 percent), and opportunities to lead one's own projects (3 percent).

The survey provided some important clues on how to develop a work environment that supports the efforts of innovative and creative people. 72 percent of respondents think "conducting more brainstorming and group work sessions" helps increase motivation.

One aspect of enabling people to produce their most innovative work is by understanding how the physical space they are in affects their creativity. A whopping 92 percent of survey respondents say that office design and layout impact creativity and innovation at the workplace. A well-designed space connects employees to the company's brand and helps them innovate to deliver better services.

Data for the Bayt.com Innovation and Creativity in the MENA 2018 was collected online from February 27 to April 3, 2019. Results are based on a sample of 7,580 respondents. Countries assessed include UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Palestine, Syria, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Sudan.

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## Local



KUWAIT: Vehicles drive through a sandstorm that hit Kuwait yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

# Kuwait's crude oil exports to Japan surge 22.7 percent

## Kuwaiti delegation partakes in INTOSAI's meeting in Japan

TOKYO: Kuwait's crude oil exports to Japan in May surged 22.7 percent from a year earlier to 7.72 million barrels, or 249,000 barrels per day (bpd), up for the fourth straight month, government data showed yesterday. As Japan's fourth-biggest oil provider, Kuwait supplied 8.2 percent of the East Asian nation's total crude imports, the Japanese Natural Resources and Energy Agency said in a preliminary report. Japan's overall imports of crude oil increased 2.1 percent year-on-year to 3.04 million bpd for the first expansion in three months.

Shipments from the Middle East accounted for 87.2 percent of the total, down 2.7 percentage points from the year before. The United Arab Emirates became Japan's largest oil supplier, with imports from the country jumping 66.1 percent from a year earlier to 1.03 million bpd,

followed by Saudi Arabia with 986,000 bpd, down 13.2 percent. Qatar ranked third with 252,000 bpd and Russia fifth with 141,000 bpd, respectively. Japan is the world's-third biggest oil consumer after the US and China, importing virtually all its fossil fuels.

### INTOSAI's meeting

In other news, a Kuwaiti Audit Bureau delegation took part in a committee meeting of the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTO-



**Kuwait is Japan's fourth-biggest oil provider**

SAI) to examine audit bureaus' needs. Sheikha Al-Zuwawi, a member of the delegation headed by the acting chairman Adel Al-Saraawi, said yesterday that they had taken part in the annual meeting of the Capacity Building Committee, in line with the 2016-2020 strategy to upgrade capacities of the bureau and its personnel. The bureau is seeking to benefit from expertise of pioneering bureaus, experts and advisors, she added. Moreover, the CBC meeting

aimed at specifying challenges and prospects for overhauling potentials and facilitating solutions, Sheikha Al-Zuwawi added, indicating the approach to encourage donations for INTOSAI.

The Kuwaiti delegation includes the director general of the State Audit Bureau chairman office Fawzia Al-Enezi, expert at the technical office Iman Al-Huwaidi, chief auditor Sheikha Al-Zuwawi and assistant auditor Dalal Al-Jabri.

The three-day meeting, which also involves INTOSAI-Donor Cooperation Steering Committee, is scheduled to conclude today. The CBC is INTOSAI's right arm in the field of updating professional potentials and capacities for personnel serving in the auditing sector. — KUNA



The meeting in progress.



TOKYO: Members of the Kuwaiti delegation taking part in INTOSAI's meeting in Japan. — KUNA photos

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## ASKC awards Kuwaiti ambassador with permanent membership

SEOUL: Asia Society Korea Center (ASKC) yesterday honored Kuwaiti Ambassador to the Republic of Korea Bader Al-Awadhi for supporting the foundation's activities during the past two years. Lotte Group CEO and Chairman of ASKC Board of Directors Shin Dong-bin presented a trophy and permanent membership for Awadhi at the 2019 Annual Gala Dinner hosted by ASKC.

Many were honored best ambassadors for 2019, including the ambassadors of UAE, New Zealand, Vietnam, Burundi and Mexico. The ceremony was attended by several businessmen and

intellectuals in Korea, the US, along with Asia Society Trustee Charles Rockefeller, the grandson of its Founder John Rockefeller who established it in 1956 in New York.

Awadhi said that he was glad to receive recognition and thanked the foundation and its board of directors now that he is an honorable member for life. This is the first time that the foundation granted permanent honorary membership to an accredited ambassador in Seoul, whether Arab or foreign, for his diplomatic determinations to support its activities, Awadhi underscored.

He thanked all Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry officials for enabling him to contribute to his diplomatic activities, empowering him to win this vital honorary membership. Asia Society is non-profit intellectual and cultural organization which consists of former heads of government, foreign ministers, academics, artists, lawyers and businessmen to strengthen US-Asia ties. In the past, the organization honored Kuwait's Ambassador to Belgium, EU, Luxembourg and NATO Jassem Al-Budaiwi as the best ambassador for 2015 and Awadhi as 2017's best ambassador. — KUNA



SEOUL: Kuwaiti Ambassador to the Republic of Korea is honored during the ceremony. — KUNA

Local

# Kuwait supports UN industry body's sustainable development objectives

## Kuwait calls for enhancing education quality in poor societies

VIENNA: Kuwait is a major proponent of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) as it seeks to push its sustained development plans, said an official yesterday. Industrial growth is among the focal points of sustained development goals, the Director General of Kuwait's Public Authority for Industry Abdulkarim Taqi said amid UNIDO talks. The Kuwaiti delegation to the talks were acquainted with the specialized UN body's latest endeavors, added the official, saying that Arab nations should work closely with UNIDO in efforts to bring their economic goals to fruition. "Countries all over the world need UNIDO's support to draw up their development plans," he highlighted, pointing out that failing to keep abreast of the latest industrial trends can often throw these goals off track. Kuwait is committed to its sustained development goals and the UN body's support is crucial for overall industrial growth, he added.



VIENNA: Director General of Kuwait's Public Authority for Industry Abdulkarim Taqi attends the UNIDO session. — KUNA

### Education quality

On Monday, Kuwait called for enhancing the quality of education and provide real learning opportunities in poor societies and marginalized communities around the world. Kuwait also calls to boost visual and social media campaigns in order to spread the culture of sustainable development and raise public awareness on its goals, Taqi said in a speech before participants of the 47th Session of UN Industrial Development Organization's Industrial Development Board in Vienna. He stressed the importance of intensifying training courses, workshops, lectures, and symposiums about sustainable development and its goals in several developed and developing countries. The inclusive of sustainable development concept and goals in school curriculums is essential for building intellectual generation able to develop and lead the coming stage for sustainable development, said the Kuwaiti official. Furthermore, he indicated that the trainer qualification program, organized by the

Institute of Dominant Achievement (IDA) in Kuwait last April, aimed to promote UN's sustainable development goals (SDGs).



### Kuwaiti authority participates in UNIDO session

### Sustainable development

Holding such courses, usually in partnership with Arab Planning Institute and UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), stem from Kuwait's conviction in the importance of spreading the culture of sus-

tainable development among individuals and institutions in state and private sectors, and civil society organizations, said Taqi. It also comes in line with Kuwait's approach to achieve prosperity and sustainable future through mobilizing all efforts to attain the national sustainable development goals as part of the New Kuwait Vision 2035, and directions of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to transform the country into global financial and commercial hub by 2035, he added. Meanwhile, Taqi lauded the efforts exerted by UNIDO's Director-General Li Yong in accordance with the organization's principles and goals that focus on achieving sustainable development. The three-day session is held with participation of experts from UNIDO's member-states, representatives of international organizations, civil society bodies, and media institutions. As a specialized UN body, UNIDO aims to promote and accelerate global industrial development. — KUNA

## Diplomat confirms Kuwait's support for oil market stability

VIENNA: Kuwaiti Ambassador to Austria and Permanent Representative to International Organizations in Vienna, Sadeq Marafi said yesterday that Kuwait supports all efforts aimed at stabilizing and balancing the oil markets. Ambassador Marafi, who headed Kuwait's delegation at the 15th Meeting of the Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMCM) and 176th Meeting of the OPEC Conference, stressed the importance of the outcome of the agreement reached by OPEC yesterday to extend reducing oil production for nine months until the end of March.

In a statement to the press, he said that OPEC has agreed on a draft cooperation charter with non-OPEC countries. Moreover, it was agreed to extend the mandate of OPEC Secretary General Mohammed Barkindo for another term, he said, praising his role in bringing the views closer and strengthening cooperation between OPEC and non-OPEC countries. The oil ministers of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) agreed on Monday to extend the output cut till the end of March 2020. — KUNA



VIENNA: Kuwaiti Ambassador to Austria and Permanent Representative to International Organizations in Vienna Sadeq Marafi (center) leads Kuwait's delegation to the meetings. — KUNA

## Kuwait wants action on fate of Syria's missing

GENEVA: Kuwait has called on the UN Human Rights Council to take serious action over the whereabouts of thousands of people who have gone missing in Syria since the beginning of the country's civil war. The UN Human Rights Council should contact all parties concerned for information on the fate of the missing people, Kuwait's permanent delegate to the UN Jamal Al-Ghunaim said amid talks involving a UN commission investigating facts in the war-torn nation. He lamented the 'systematic and deliberate' nature of attacks on civilians in Syria, which has left the country's infrastructure heavily destroyed, said the diplomat. "Kuwait prioritizes the matter of missing people in armed conflict given the fact that we lived through that harrowing experience," he added, citing the Gulf state's Security Council-adopted draft resolution on missing persons during armed conflicts. The Kuwaiti

envoy went on to describe the humanitarian situation in Syria as catastrophic, where some 11.7 million people are in dire need of urgent assistance. He reiterated Kuwait's support for a political solution as the only feasible way out of the eight-year conflict, urging the UN Security Council to intervene and stop further bloodshed.

### Resolution 2474

Meanwhile, Head of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic Paulo Pinheiro praised Kuwait's initiative to urge the United Nations Security Council to adopt resolution 2474. In his report on human rights' violations in Syria, Pinheiro expressed satisfaction over the success of the initiative, extending his thanks and gratitude to the State of Kuwait for the effort. He called on all parties involved in the Syrian crisis, especially the ruling regime, to take immediate steps to provide information about detained and missing families. He also stressed that it is 'unacceptable' that the fate of tens of thousands of people remains unknown. The UN Security Council had adopted resolution 2474, which was submitted by Kuwait, on missing persons in armed conflicts. — KUNA

## Iraq to hand over samples of human remains to Kuwait

BAGHDAD: Iraqi Defense Ministry said Monday it would hand over to Kuwaiti authorities samples of human remains that were recently found in southern Iraq and might belong to missing Kuwaiti citizens. The remains were found in two locations near Nuqrat Al-Salman area in southern Al-Muthanna Governorate, the ministry said in a statement. Cooperation between Iraq, Kuwait and the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) contributed to discovery of the remains, it added.

The ministry said the remains were exhumed and sent to laboratory in Baghdad to examine if they

match DNA samples of families of missing Kuwaitis. Iraq, it added, would hand over samples of all remains for further DNA tests. On June 20, a joint statement by ICRC-affiliated Tripartite Commission announced recovery of the remains, offering hope for families of missing people from 1990-91 Gulf War. Kuwait and Iraq are the other Commission members.

Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah had welcomed ICRC's endeavors which contributed to finding the remains "which we hope belong to Kuwaiti citizens." Kuwait, he added, was awaiting "important positive developments" that would achieve concrete progress on the ground in order to end over 28 years of suffering of families of the missing. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, who said Kuwait would spare no efforts to know fate of missing citizens to close this humanitarian file, commended "genuine desire" of Iraq to fulfill UN-related obligations towards Kuwait. — KUNA

### Embezzlement

Six Kuwaitis accused a real estate company of embezzling KD 709,000 from them after promising to buy property in Britain. The citizens told Salhiya police they were deceived by a company that promoted real estate in Britain and paid the money, only to discover it was a hoax. The case is at the public prosecution, which ordered detectives to investigate the case.

### Explosives in abandoned house

Explosives experts found ammunition and hand grenades in an abandoned house in Jabriya. A man who went to inspect the house found the grenades, detonators and ammunition, so he contacted the police. Explosives personnel along with weapons detectives went to the house and found nine light grenades, 20 detonators, 23 hand grenades, AK-47 magazines and 200 rounds. - Translated by Kuwait Times from Al-Rai

## Man beats up girlfriend's daughters at her request

KUWAIT: Police are looking for a man accused of beating up his girlfriend's daughters at her request to discipline them. The suspect, described as the brother of a 'well-known fashionista', remains at large after relatives of the two girls lodged complaints at a police station when they noticed bruises on their bodies.

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Joe Biden's son held at gunpoint during crack buy

'Broken dreams': Bangladeshi returning migrants struggle at home



CHENNAI: Indian fishermen sail on a boat to fish in the evening at Ennore creek on the outskirts of Chennai. —AFP

# Drought parches 'India's Detroit'

## Villagers accuse city of seizing water

CHENNAI: In the small village of Bangarampettai, 20 miles from India's manufacturing capital Chennai, about 150 people last month "captured" a water tanker, breaking its windscreen and deflating its tyres before handing it over to a nearby police station. People living on the outskirts of this southern Indian metropolis are blocking roads and laying siege to tanker lorries because they fear their water reserves are being sacrificed so city dwellers, businesses and luxury hotels don't run out.

"Private tankers have fitted more than eight bore wells in our village and are indiscriminately extracting thousands of litres of water every day," the Bangarampettai villagers wrote in a letter to a government official in the region a day after they stopped the tanker. Bad water management and a lack of rainfall mean that all four reservoirs that supply Chennai, a carmaking centre dubbed "India's Detroit", have run virtually dry this summer. That has forced some schools to shut, companies to ask employees to work from home and hotels to ration water for guests. Other Indian cities, including the capital New Delhi and technology hub Bengaluru, are also grappling with serious water shortages. But the problem is most acute in Chennai, where local tensions have been inflamed by the Tamil Nadu state government tapping wells normally used for agriculture and villagers' daily needs. In their letter, the Bangarampettai residents said they had petitioned government officials, including the district's top administrator, several times, but the tankers keep returning.

"We don't have water in one of the two water tanks in the village now because the private tankers have been extracting water day and night," said S Arul, a local sign-board painter. Groundwater levels in Chennai's neighbouring districts, Thiruvallur and Kancheepuram, fell at a faster rate in May than the state average in districts excluding Chennai, data from the state's public works department showed. Data for Chennai district has not been made public. The Kancheepuram district to the southeast of the city, which includes the factories of many foreign automakers, saw groundwater levels deplete more than 6 ft (1.88 metres), or three times the state average, to about 20 ft during the year ended May 2019, the data showed. There is no sign yet that the factories are having to reduce production because of the shortage.



### Angry villagers block roads, chase tankers in protest

dry. When Reuters visited, a fishing boat could be seen grounded and abandoned while children played cricket in the middle of the dry lakebed.

In Poochi Athipedu, another village on the city's outskirts, a local landowner S Ramesh allowed private tankers to sink bore wells and extract water, leading to protests by the local community. Ramesh said he was paid up to 500 rupees (\$7.20) to fill a 12,000-litre water tanker, but stopped selling water after the protests. Officials, though, say there is no reason to be worried.

"Water is being extracted only from regions within the district where there is sufficient water," said Mageswari Ravikumar, Thiruvallur's top administrative official, adding that the district administration had stopped some water tankers that were extracting water illegally. Two state government officials said residents in at least three other villages in the district - where much of the population relies on cultivating rice and sugar cane - blocked roads in protest over worries about falling groundwater levels.

And N Nijalingam, president of the South Chennai Private Water Tankers Association, confirmed some

tankers have been chased away, while others have had confrontations with angry crowds on the city's outskirts. More than 5,000 water tankers have been travelling within a 35-mile (55-km) radius of the city to pick up water for Chennai, he said.

### Haphazard development

Like many Indian cities, Chennai's growth over the past 20 years has been rapid and haphazard. Its population will have likely more than doubled to 10.7 million by 2020, from 4.6 million in 2011, according to the United Nations. The Chennai municipality provides more than half of the city's water through piped supplies and tankers hired by the authorities, with the rest handled by private firms, according to Sekhar Raghavan, director of the Chennai-based Rain Centre. Across the city's poorer suburbs, there are many signs of the shortage.

In Shanmugapuram, a suburb in the Thiruvallur district located right beside one of Chennai's biggest water sources, women of all ages holding blue and green plastic pots shouted slogans demanding water last week outside a government office. At a water distribution point in North Chennai, people crowded around taps, with some arriving on the three-wheeler auto-rickshaws loaded with as many pots and buckets as they could carry. The state government last decade made it mandatory to install rain water harvesting structures in new buildings, but locals say it hasn't been properly adopted. —Reuters

## Carrie Lam: Hong Kong's divisive and pro-Beijing leader

HONG KONG: Carrie Lam vowed to heal divisions when she became Hong Kong's leader, but her tenure has thrust the financial hub into unprecedented turmoil, sparking huge protests that saw parliament ransacked and leaving the city more divided than ever. The 62-year-old devout Catholic took over in March 2017, but was not popularly elected. Hong Kong's leaders are instead chosen by a 1,200 strong committee stacked with Beijing loyalists, and Lam secured 777 votes - becoming the first woman elevated to the city's top job.

In her acceptance speech she vowed to be more responsive to the city's youngsters, who have been at the forefront of a campaign for greater democratic freedoms and measures to combat rising inequality. "Hong Kong, our home, is suffering from quite a serious divisiveness and has accumulated a lot of frustrations," she said in her acceptance speech. "My priority will be to heal the divide." Two years on, Hong Kong is more polarised than at any time in its recent history following three weeks of massive anti-government rallies.

Then on Monday night - the 22nd anniversary of Hong Kong's handover to China - thousands of mostly young protesters rampaged through parliament, scrawling graffiti on its walls, defacing portraits of pro-Beijing lawmakers, and tear-

ing up the city's constitution. When Lam emerged in the early hours of Tuesday morning - once police had taken back control of the building - she sent a stern message to the radicals, condemning "the extreme use of violence" and urging respect for the rule of law.

Critics say the blame for the unrest lies with Lam, who has refused to make any major concessions to the huge protests. "I think the chief executive and her governing team should ask themselves: what has led to this degree of violence?" Anson Chan, Hong Kong's chief secretary during the handover, said yesterday.

"It is a combination of several years of injustice... (and) a government that listens only to the pro-Beijing party and ignores the rest of Hong Kong people," she told reporters. The immediate spark for the current protests was a push by Lam to fast track a bill allowing extraditions to mainland China - a proposal she has since postponed, but not permanently abandoned. But the rallies also reflected years of anger over how the city is run by its pro-Beijing administrators.

When she took office, Lam was already loathed by the city's pro-democracy camp because she had been deputy to her deeply unpopular predecessor, CY Leung, during the failed 2014 Umbrella Movement protests calling for universal suffrage. Born into a low-income family, Lam excelled both at her Catholic school and university. She began her career in the colonial civil service and rose through the ranks in the post-handover period, earning herself a reputation for being a fighter and committed Beijing loyalist.



HONG KONG: Hong Kong's Chief Executive Carrie Lam speaks to the media at the police headquarters in Hong Kong yesterday. —AFP

### Cruel nicknames

During the 2014 pro-democracy protests she was often the face of the government, debating student leaders and insisting their demands to directly elect the city's leader would not be met. When she won the top job three years later, she said she hoped to leave behind the political rancour of that period. The rhetoric of Hong Kong's political scene is often unforgiving, and Lam has long faced unflattering - and often misogynistic - insults. One of her nicknames - a pun on her family name - was "laima" or wet nurse, a jibe over what her opponents said was a fawning loyalty towards her former boss Leung. After her appointment, detractors dubbed her "777" - both a reference to the number of votes she secured but also a cruel pun given the word for seven in Cantonese sounds very close to a slang term for male genitalia. —AFP

## 'Hong Kong is not China': Protests pose a major test for Xi

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping faces a major test in Hong Kong after protesters stormed the semi-autonomous city's legislature and graffitied a defiant message on its walls: "Hong Kong is not China". Beijing has tread carefully since massive protests erupted last month over a bill that would allow extraditions to the mainland, voicing support for the Hong Kong government without directly intervening and blaming "foreign forces" for the unrest. But protesters may have pushed Beijing's patience to the limit on Monday as they ransacked Hong Kong's legislature, hung the colonial-era flag in the chamber and spray-painted anti-Beijing messages. "It is a blatant challenge to the 'one country, two systems' bottom line. We express our vehement condemnation against this," the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, China's cabinet, said in a statement.

The protests came on the anniversary of the 1997 handover from colonial power Britain to China, which gave Hong Kong its own system of rule until 2047 - including rights such as freedom of speech and an independent judiciary that are not enjoyed in mainland China. The demonstrations follow years of rising concern that the Communist-led mainland is chipping away at the city's special status.

"This is a direct challenge to Xi Jinping, the Hong Kong government and the central government," Hua Po, a Beijing-based political observer said. Xi, however, may have limited options as a direct and harsh intervention would risk spooking foreign investors in the global financial hub, according to analysts. "Beijing needs to keep Hong Kong as an attractive place for foreign companies, for multi-nationals, as a financial centre. So they can't push too hard," said Jean-Pierre Cabestan, a China expert at Hong Kong Baptist University.

### State media coverage

For now, Beijing's initial reaction was to call for an investigation by Hong Kong authorities into the "criminal responsibility of violent offenders" and the restoration of social order "as soon as possible". China's leaders have a deep fear of any sort of public challenge to their authority, and state media have avoided showing images of the protests in recent weeks as censors have controlled online discussion of the events. But yesterday state television showed Hong Kong chief executive Carrie Lam's press conference, in which she condemned the use of "violence" by protesters.

Footage of protesters defacing the legislature was shown on the accounts of some media on China's Twitter-like Weibo platform, which is tightly controlled by censors. "Communist Party censors cannot risk mainland Chinese becoming attracted to the Hong Kong alternative or the communist regime will be imperilled," said Don Tse, lead researcher at SinoInsider, a China political risk consultancy. —AFP

## International

# Threatened, beaten, shot: Turkey's journalists, media in the crosshairs

## Many blame the worsening atmosphere on politicians

**ANKARA:** After being assaulted 28 times during his career - punched, kicked and beaten with bats - Turkish journalist Hakan Denizli thought he had seen it all. But for the 29th attack, they came with a gun, and they did so while he was taking his four-year-old grandchild to daycare. Denizli, who edits the Egemen daily newspaper in the southern city of Adana, is matter-of-fact about it: "I got into the car and the window was open. They came, shot me in the leg and ran away." That incident in May came amid a spate of assaults that has seen six journalists targeted in as many weeks.

Many blame the worsening atmosphere on politicians, who regularly lash out at individual journalists. "If you don't know your place, the people will hit you in the back of your neck," President Recep Tayyip Erdogan snapped after a TV presenter on Turkey's Fox news channel asked whether people would protest rising prices in December. Reporters Without Borders (RSF) says Turkey is the biggest jailer of journalists in the world, and ranks it 157th out of 180 countries in the world for press freedom.

There are 142 journalists currently behind bars in Turkey, according to the P24 press freedom website. Most are detained under a two-year state of emergency imposed after the 2016 failed coup. The government says nobody was arrested for work as a journalist, but RSF says violence against the media often goes without punishment or even criticism. A request for a parliamentary investigation into the recent attacks was rejected by the ruling AKP party and its alliance partner.

### 'Not cowed'

One outspoken critic of Erdogan's government, Yavuz Selim Demirag of the Yenicag daily, blames the attack on him on a full-page advert put out by the right-wing Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), the ruling party's coalition partner. He was among dozens of journalists listed in the advert, which was published in several high-circulation newspapers after last year's general election, with the banner, "Slander, allegations, complaints". At least two of them have been attacked. Demirag, 61, was beaten by a gang with bats outside his home on May 10, breaking parts of his rib cage. "When I sneeze, cough, get up, it hurts," he said. Prosecutors say they are investigating, but six suspects were quickly released after their arrest.

"Being a journalist in Turkey is hard, attacking journalists is heroic," Demirag said. Opposition journalists face not just violence but relentless pressure from the judiciary. Barely a month after the assault, Demirag was briefly imprisoned for an old conviction of "insulting the president" over a speech in which he questioned the right to immunity of certain officials, and he remains on probation. Denizli says he has "maybe 24 or 25" legal cases against him. "I am not cowed by these cases."

### 'Hypocritical'

Journalists of all stripes are at risk, but the responses often reflect the fierce partisanship of Turkish politics. The government has been silent on Demirag's assault, for instance, but Erdogan's office immediately denounced the attack on Islamist journalist Murat Alan, who was beaten up in Istanbul on June 14. Alan had reportedly referred to Turkish generals as "donkeys", angering the country's ultra-nationalists. Idris Ozyol, a journalist from Antalya on the south coast, did at least receive a call of consolation from Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu after being attacked recently.

But he said Cavusoglu blamed the government's own coalition partner, the MHP - which only annoyed him further. "One arm of the government attacks, the other arm sends messages saying 'We are so sad' -



**BEIJING:** Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (center) sits during a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing yesterday. —AFP

like a game of good-cop, bad-cop," he told AFP. RSF's Erol Onderoglu said the situation was "deeply hypocritical" given Turkey's criticism of Saudi Arabia following the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in their Istanbul consulate last year.

Onderoglu, who himself faces charges of "terrorist propaganda" for supporting a pro-Kurdish newspa-

per, said: "We need a prominent political figure to intervene against this hostile climate... (but) it is really difficult to expect anything." Recovering from the gunshot wound to his leg, Denizli suspects his articles on corruption are to blame for the endless attacks, but he remains undeterred. "I just try to do my job as best as I can," he said. —AFP

## Migrant issue looms large on weary Samos in Greek elections

**SAMOS:** When night falls on the Aegean island of Samos, scores of migrants leave the filthy camp above the island capital of Vathi for some fresh harbour air. Many locals are not happy to see them. And after years of cohabitation, the migrant issue looms large over national elections on Sunday. "Samos used to be very calm and very clean, and now there's garbage and the stench of urine everywhere," says Anna Loukazaki, a painter who runs her own boutique at Vathi. The island is "very weary" of the migrants, she adds.

Less than two kilometres from the coast of Turkey, Samos is among a handful of Greek islands thrust to the forefront of the migration crisis in 2015, when more than 800,000 migrants and refugees mainly from war-torn Syria made the perilous Aegean crossing from Turkey. Cramped inside barely-floating dinghies and boats, hundreds died in the attempt. An EU deal with Ankara in 2016 drastically reduced the flow to the islands of Samos, Lesbos, Chios, Kos and Leros.

But a few dozen still arrive daily by boat-risking their lives in the process—and it is enough to overwhelm capacity: the Samos camp, built for 650, houses over 3,000 people. "Generally, people here are not hostile to the migrants, they are hostile to the govern-

ment who they feel is responsible for the situation," says Ioannis Kaltakis, a local lawyer. But Kaltakis insists that the government "will pay for its failure to guard the borders" in national elections coming on July 7 where the migrant issue will be the "main criterion" for Samos voters.

Georgios Stantzos was in June elected mayor for a constituency that accounts for about half of Samos. He says islanders are "very disappointed" with the government in Athens and also the European Union. "It's as if the EU decided to make Samos a warehouse of human souls," he told AFP. "But mainly, there is great disappointment with the Greek government that has failed to manage the situation," he adds. In European parliament elections in May, the Samos vote was consistent with the rest of Greece.

The conservative New Democracy party topped the ballot, ahead of the leftist Syriza party of Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras. Nationalist parties, including neo-Nazi Golden Dawn, picked up about 3,000 votes. The Greek migration ministry has struggled for months to alleviate pressure on Samos, pledging in 2018 to shut down the camp altogether this year. The relocation of more than 5,000 refugees to the mainland in 2018 also made little difference as more arrived to take their place, the ministry says.

### 'People here have had enough'

Yiorgis Margetis, a pensioner who worked in Belgium, says migrants are making a negative impact on local life. "In the evenings, 200 migrant kids swarm the playground, you'd never dare to leave your own children there," he says, adding that he no longer feels safe to walk the harbour



**SAMOS, Greece:** Migrant youth sit by a local fisherman at the city of Vathi on the island of Samos. With nearly 9,000 arrivals since the beginning of this year, the situation on the islands is explosive—especially on Lesbos and Samos—and the ministry of migration is desperate to remove as many people from the camps as possible. —AFP

at night as he once did.

"People here have had enough," says Margetis. "The city is dead, shops are closing, and the situation with the migrants is going from bad to worse." But there is some understanding of the plight of the migrants, who are stuck in deplorable conditions while waiting for their asylum applications to be processed. "They are trapped here, and they are treated like animals," says Ilias Palaigeorgiou, who runs a harbour tourist shop with his brother. He notes that certain restaurants refuse to serve them, and that some island beaches are closed to them.

For his elder brother Yiorgos, the city is too close to the camp and acts as a magnet. "Maybe if the camp is moved outside town, they will stop coming," he says. The UN refugee agency has described camp conditions as "dire" with limited access to health services, exposing women, children, and men to serious risk. Another local pensioner, 80-year-old Yiorgos Sfropoulos, says authorities will eventually bow to the "harsh reality" of building a new camp. "There are thousands of them at Vathi. What are they going to do, throw them into the sea?" he wonders. —AFP

## Israel hit by protests over police killing

**JERUSALEM:** Israel has faced protests over an off-duty police officer's killing of a young man of Ethiopian origin and braced for more as the incident drew fresh accusations of racism. Crowds of Ethiopian-Israelis battled police and blocked highways late Monday and through the night in various parts of the country after the shooting on Sunday evening. Further protests were expected later Tuesday, when Solomon Tekla, said to be 18 or 19, was set to be buried. Tekla was shot in Kiryat Haim, a town near the northern port city of Haifa.

His death sparked outrage among members of the community, who say their young people live in constant fear of police harassment because they are black. Police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld told AFP that after a night of violent protest focused on a police station in Kiryat Haim, demonstrators were still gathered yesterday morning. "Yesterday evening there were disturbances in Kiryat Haim. Three police officers were injured," he said. "There were about 1,000 people in the area of the police station."

A police statement said the protesters tried to storm the police building, hurling stones and bottles and launching fire-

works. TV footage showed burning tyres in the middle of a traffic intersection. Police also reported protesters blocking major roads and intersections in the north and south of the country. No arrests were made, Rosenfeld said, and media said police deliberately kept a low profile to avoid stoking emotions further. "Police are speaking to leaders of the Ethiopian community to calm the situation down," Rosenfeld said.

### 'It's murder'

Israel's Ethiopian Jewish community numbers around 140,000 people, including more than 50,000 born in the Jewish state. Most of them are descendants of communities cut off from the Jewish world for centuries, and were belatedly recognised as Jews by Israeli religious authorities. Israel took in tens of thousands of them in the 1980s and 1990s. The community has consistently alleged institutionalised racism in recent years.

Thousands took to the streets of Tel Aviv in January after a young community member was shot dead by a police officer when he allegedly rushed at him while holding a knife. In Sunday's shooting, police initially said the officer saw a fight between "a number of youths" nearby and tried to break it up. After the officer identified himself, the youths began throwing stones at him and he opened fire at Tekla after "feeling that his life was in danger", a police statement said. But the other young men and a passerby said the policeman was not attacked, Israeli media reported. —AFP

## 18 dead, 4 missing in attack on Niger army

**NIAMEY:** Eighteen soldiers were killed when "terrorists" struck an army camp in western Niger, the government said yesterday, adding the US and France had provided air support to help repel the assault. The attack took place on Monday afternoon at a camp at Inates on the border with Mali, the defence ministry said in a statement. Four soldiers were listed as missing. Niger, one of the world's poorest countries, lies in the heart of the fragile Sahel region, which is battling an Islamist insurgency.

"The attack began with the detonation of two suicide vehicles at the entrance to the camp, followed by gunfire from terrorists who arrived on motorbike," the statement said. "The counter-attack, with air support from our partners (French and American), enabled the enemy to be routed beyond our borders," it said. "Sweeping-up operations are continuing." Several "terrorists" were killed, a truck was destroyed by air strikes and two suicide vehicles were destroyed, it said.

On Monday, a military source, speaking on condition of anonymity,

told AFP there had been a twin "car-bomb attack" at the camp and suggested the toll would be high. The base, located in a volatile region, trains Nigerien soldiers to serve in a UN peacekeeping mission in Mali. Insurgent groups are active in western and northern Mali, spilling over from a long-running jihadist campaign in Mali, while Nigeria's Boko Haram is present in the country's southeast.

Last month, the defence ministry said 18 members of the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) were killed in a joint operation by US, French and Niger troops in the southwestern border region of Tongo Tongo. In October 2017, the ISGS claimed responsibility for a raid which killed four US soldiers and five Nigerien troops in the same region, a mere 20 kilometres from the Malian border. The United States has a big base for drones in the northern city of Agadez and Niger recently gave the Americans permission to arm their drones.

The French also have a military base near the airport at the capital Niamey and another at Madama in the north. Niger is part of the so-called G5 Sahel group of five nations set up to manage a coordinated response to the jihadist insurgency in the impoverished region. Niamey hosts a major meeting of the African Union from July 4-8, culminating in a summit expected to gather about 50 heads of state or government. —AFP

## Lanka police chief arrested over Easter attacks failures

**COLOMBO:** Sri Lankan police arrested their top commander and a former defense chief yesterday over alleged failures to prevent the Easter Sunday bombings that killed 258 people, spokesman Ruwan Gunasekera said. The arrests came a day after the chief state prosecutor said the alleged negligence of the two senior officials amounted to "grave crimes against humanity", and they should also face murder charges. Pujith Jayasundara is the most senior police official to be arrested in the 152-year history of the force, which was established by British colonial rulers in 1867.

Both Jayasundara and former defense secretary Hemasiri Fernando were undergoing treatment at two separate hospitals when they were taken into custody by plain-clothed officers of the Criminal Investigations Department, Gunasekera said. They will remain in hospital, but detectives will formally report their arrest to a magistrate to decide what further action should be taken.

Attorney General Dappula de Livera, the chief state prosecutor, said Monday that the two men failed to act on advance warnings of the deadly Easter Sunday attacks, which were blamed on a local jihadi group. They should be brought before a magistrate for their "criminal negligence" de Livera said in a letter to the acting police chief Chandana Wickramaratne. "Their negligence amounts to what is known under international law to be grave crimes against humanity," he wrote. Another nine senior police officers have been named by the attorney-general as suspects who should be prosecuted for their role in the security lapses.

Indian intelligence officials said they shared information about the targets of the Easter Sunday attacks - gleaned from a militant in Indian custody - but Sri Lankan authorities failed to take the threats seriously. The first Indian warning was given on April 4, more than two-and-a-half weeks before the April 21 bombings, which were later claimed by the Islamic State Group. Local Muslim groups also alerted both police and intelligence units to a potential threat posed by radical cleric Zahran Hashim, who led the suicide bombings. —AFP

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## International

# Europeans keen to avoid sending Iran nuclear case to UN - for now

## Macron warns Tehran against further breaches; China regrets Iran initiative

PARIS: France urged Iran yesterday to reverse its first major breach of a nuclear pact with world powers as European states signalled they would not seek to reimpose UN sanctions - for now. The UN nuclear watchdog confirmed on Monday Iran had amassed more low-enriched uranium than permitted under the 2015 deal, a move that prompted US President Donald Trump to say Iran was "playing with fire".

Exceeding the limit could culminate in the return of all international sanctions on Tehran but one European diplomat, asked if Europe would trigger the dispute resolution mechanism enshrined in the accord, said: "Not for now. We want to defuse the crisis." A second diplomat said Britain, France and Germany would focus on bringing Iran back into compliance and that they wanted to gain more time for dialogue.

"In the immediate term, Iran must return to its obligations. There is room for dialogue," a French diplomatic source added. Tensions with Iran have escalated since Trump pulled the United States out of the pact last year and moved to bar all international sales of Iranian oil. Washington also blames Iran for bomb attacks on ships in the Gulf, something Tehran denies. European signatories to the nuclear accord have sought to pull back the longstanding foes from direct confrontation, fearing a mistake could lead to war accidentally.

At the same time they are under US pressure to reimpose their own sanctions to force Iran to comply with an agreement Washington abandoned against Europe's advice. Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif denies Iran is in violation of the accord, saying Iran is exercising its right to respond following the US pullout. China, like France a signatory to the deal, said it regretted Iran's move but urged all parties to exercise restraint and said the US policy of increasing pressure on Iran was the "root cause of the current tensions".

### Iranian demands

The nuclear deal lifted most international sanctions against Iran in return for curbs on its nuclear work. It aimed to extend the time Tehran would need to produce a nuclear bomb, if it chose to, from roughly 2-3 months to a year. Iran's main demand - in talks with the European parties to the deal and as a precondition to any talks with the United States - is to be allowed to sell its oil at the levels before Washington pulled out of the deal and restored sanctions. Iranian crude exports were around 300,000 barrels per day (bpd) or less in late June, industry sources said, a fraction of the more than 2.5 million bpd Iran shipped in April 2018, the month before Trump withdrew from the nuclear deal.

Iran says it will breach the deal's nuclear curbs one by one until it is able to sell that amount of oil, saying this is



FUJAIRAH: Fishermen are pictured in front of ships docked in the port of Fujairah yesterday in the east of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), as recent tensions spiraling between Iran and the United States have affected movement in the Gulf near the strategic Strait of Hormuz. —AFP

the least it should be able to expect from an accord that offered economic gains in exchange for nuclear restrictions. In a statement, French President Emmanuel Macron urged Iran to fully abide by all terms of the accord and "reverse without delay this excess, as well as to avoid all extra measures that would put into question its nuclear commitments." Iran's semi-official Fars news agency

reported that the Islamic Republic's enriched uranium stockpile had passed the 300kg (661 lb) limit allowed under the deal. "We have NOT violated the #JCPOA," Zarif wrote on Twitter, referring to the deal by the abbreviation of its formal title, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. He referred to a paragraph of the accord dealing with the dispute resolution mechanism. — Reuters



### Trump says Iran playing with fire

#### News in brief

##### Fuel truck fire kills 50

ABUJA: At least 50 people were killed in Nigeria when fuel from a crashed truck that they were siphoning up caught fire, a spokesman for the governor in central Benue state said yesterday. "A tanker loaded with fuel fell yesterday (Monday) and people were scooping its products when it caught fire, killing over 50 persons," the spokesman said. Others were badly injured and taken to hospital. Such incidents are relatively common in Nigeria, though rarely is the death toll so high. While fuel is cheap, many live in extreme poverty. Last October, 60 people were killed when a spill at an oil pipeline in the southeast caught fire. — Reuters

##### Turkey targets suspects

ANKARA: Turkish police launched nationwide raids yesterday to detain 152 individuals accused of ties to the group blamed for a 2016 coup attempt, state media reported. Prosecutors from Ankara, Istanbul, Konya and Izmir issued dozens of arrest warrants for suspects including soldiers - some still on active duty and some already sacked - according to the Anadolu news agency. Sixty-three suspects had so far been arrested, the agency said. Since the attempted overthrow of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, tens of thousands have been detained on suspicion of ties to US-based Muslim preacher Fethullah Gulen, who is accused of ordering the failed coup. He strongly denies the accusation. More than 140,000 public sector employees have also been sacked or suspended over suspected links to Gulen. — AFP

##### US imprisons Rwandan

NEW YORK: A US federal judge in Boston sentenced a Rwandan man to more than eight years prison on Monday for lying about his involvement in the East African country's 1994 genocide. Jean Leonard Teganya, 47, was convicted in April of two counts of immigration fraud and three counts of perjury, a statement from the US Department of Justice said. Teganya "was convicted and sentenced for the most serious form of immigration fraud: lying about his status as a war criminal to win asylum in the United States," said US Attorney Andrew Lelling. Based on the evidence presented at the trial, Teganya "committed horrendous crimes during the Rwandan genocide and then sought to deceive US immigration authorities about his past," Lelling said. The Rwandan genocide began in April 1994, and for around 100 days some 800,000 ethnic Tutsis were murdered. — AFP

##### Shipping waste to Europe, US

JAKARTA: Dozens of shipping containers full of waste will be returned to France and other developed countries, Indonesia said yesterday, as Southeast Asian nations increasingly reject serving as dumping grounds for international trash. The 49 containers were loaded with a combination of garbage, plastic waste and hazardous materials in violation of import rules, according to customs officials on Batam island. "We are coordinating the with the importer to immediately process their return," customs office spokesman Sumarna, who goes by one name said. The waste came from the United States, Australia, France, Germany and Hong Kong, he added. Last month, Jakarta returned five containers of waste to the United States, joining a chorus of Southeast Asian nations that are increasingly unhappy about being used as dumping grounds for trash from Western countries. — AFP

## Joe Biden's son held at gunpoint during crack buy

WASHINGTON: Hunter Biden, the son of former US vice president Joe Biden, admitted to being held at gunpoint while trying to buy crack cocaine, according to an article published Monday in The New Yorker. Joe Biden, the current frontrunner for the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination, has repeatedly faced family tragedy during his decades in public office. After approaching a homeless man in downtown Los Angeles in 2016, "Hunter said that the man took him to a nearby homeless encampment, where, in a narrow passageway between tents, someone put a gun to his head before realizing that he was a buyer," the article says.

The New Yorker piece cites interviews with Hunter Biden - who said that he "needed a way to forget" — and people who knew and interacted with him. "He returned to buy more crack a few times that week," the article continues in a section detailing a period of drug use and tumult in Biden's life. Hunter Biden was only occasionally in the public eye during his father's time as vice president under Barack Obama from 2009 to 2017.

Joe Biden, 76, leads in polling among the two-dozen candidates running for the Democratic nomination to face Republican President Donald Trump in the 2020 election. Shortly after first winning election to the Senate in 1972, Biden lost his wife and baby daughter in a car crash that also left Hunter and his brother Beau Biden badly injured. Beau became a rising star in the Democratic party but succumbed to cancer in 2015, an event that derailed Biden's expected bid for the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination. — AFP

## European Parliament opens in shadow of unsolved Brexit

STRASBOURG: The European Parliament opened a new session yesterday with newly elected British MEPs still in their ranks and three Catalan separatists blocked by Madrid from taking their seats. The 751-seat parliament - based in Strasbourg, France - is more fragmented than ever after a vote in May that saw solid gains by the liberals and Greens as well as the far right and eurosceptics in the 751-seat chamber.

With Brexit delayed until as late as October 31, the deep political divisions in Britain were on full display in the eastern French city as 73 British MEPs arrived at parliament. Brexit firebrand Nigel Farage, a veteran of the EU chamber since 1999, led the charge as his MEPs turned their backs when asked to stand for the EU anthem - Beethoven's Ode to Joy - at the start of the session.

Farage also warned of a "turquoise takeover" in the UK if the ruling Conservatives failed to deliver a divorce. With 29 elected representatives, his Brexit Party - whose official colour is turquoise - is the national party with the largest delegation, just ahead of the Northern League of Italian Interior Minister Matteo Salvini with 28 seats. Opposite Farage were the anti-Brexit Liberal Democrats, who also performed

well in the EU elections. They arrived in Strasbourg with bright yellow t-shirts emblazoned with "Bollocks to Brexit" and "Stop Brexit".

In theory, the new parliament should have only 705 seats if Brexit were taken into account. When Brexit happens, 27 of the British seats are to be redistributed to other countries and another 46 set aside for future EU enlargements. The opening session was also marked by a protest by Catalan separatists outside the parliament in support of three of their own who are blocked by Madrid from taking office.

### Catalan demonstration

The crisis in Spain drew at least 10,000 demonstrators who waved the Catalan flag in front of the European Parliament. Those refused seats include Carles Puigdemont, the former head of the Catalan regional government who lives in Belgium to escape a Spanish arrest warrant after leading an attempted secession in 2017. The others are his running mate Toni Comin, and the pro-independence activist Oriol Junqueras, who is in pre-trial detention in Spain.

Their seats will remain empty in a situation that "depends on the Spanish authorities, not the European Parliament," a parliament spokeswoman said. The main

## German court fines Facebook over hate speech combat failings

BERLIN: A German court yesterday fined Facebook two million euros for not being transparent enough over the action it is taking to curb online hate speech. Under a new regulation that came in force on January 1, 2018, companies like Twitter and Facebook have 24 hours to remove posts that openly violate German law after they

are flagged by users. Offensive content that is more difficult to categorise must be deleted within seven days after it is reported and reviewed. Social media companies that fail to comply face up to 50 million euros (\$60 million) in fines.

Further, online giants are required to publish every six months a report on how they have gone about combating hate speech. In a decision that can still be appealed by Facebook, the BfJ court levied a fine equivalent to \$2.26 million as it found that the company failed to provide a complete picture about complaints made by users in its report covering January to June 2018. "The report lists only a fraction of the complaints by users on illegal content," the court said in a statement.

It noted that Facebook offers its regular flagging mechanism as well as another channel, which the court

described as "too hidden", to report offensive content under the specific German law. While those reported under the latter are reflected in the published report, content reported under the wider flagging system is not. "The BfJ assumes that the number of complaints received via the widely known flagging channel is considerable and that what is presented in the published report is therefore incomplete."

The US online giant said in its report that between January 1, 2018 and June 30, 2018, 1,704 items were reported by 886 users. Some 362 items reported by 218 people ended up being deleted or blocked, according to the report. Meanwhile, Google-owned YouTube received reports on almost 215,000 pieces of content in the same time span, while Twitter users flagged 265,000. Of those, YouTube deleted 58,000 and Twitter 29,000. — AFP



US Vice President Joe Biden waves as he walks out of Air Force Two with his granddaughter, Finnegan Biden (center) and son Hunter Biden (right) upon their arrival in Beijing. Hunter Biden, the son of former US vice president Joe Biden, admitted to being held at gunpoint while trying to buy crack cocaine. — AFP



BELFAST: Conservative MP and leadership contender Boris Johnson (L) gestures as his microphone is adjusted during a television interview ahead of a Conservative Party hustings event in Belfast, Northern Ireland yesterday. — AFP

task of this first session will be to elect a new parliament president - or speaker - one of the European top jobs. The choice of the successor to Italy's Antonio Tajani had been due to take place yesterday, but was postponed until Wednesday to allow time for the 28 EU leaders meeting in Brussels to agree on a full slate of European posts.

Despite eurosceptic gains, the pro-European bloc will keep a comfortable

majority, with more than two thirds of the votes after adding up those of the conservative EPP (182 MEPs), Social Democrats (154), Renew Europe centrists (108) and Greens (75). As ever, the biggest establishment party force will be the CDU/CSU, the alliance between the formation of German Chancellor Angela Merkel and her Bavarian sister party, which will also have 29 deputies between them. — AFP



International

# China condemns violent HK protests as 'undisguised challenge' to its rule

## Anger over extradition bill spills over into handover ceremony

BEIJING: China yesterday condemned violent protests in Hong Kong (HK) as an "undisguised challenge" to the formula under which the city is ruled, hours after police fired tear gas to disperse hundreds of protesters who stormed and trashed the legislature. A representative of China's Hong Kong affairs office denounced the demonstrators, who are furious about proposed legislation allowing extraditions to China, and said Beijing supports holding criminals responsible, state media said.

The former British colony of Hong Kong returned to China in 1997 under a "one country, two systems" formula that allows freedoms not enjoyed in mainland China, including freedom to protest and an independent judiciary. Monday was the 22nd anniversary of the handover. Beijing denies interfering, but for many Hong Kong residents, the extradition bill is the latest step in a relentless march towards mainland control.

"Seriously violating the law, the act tramples the rule of law in Hong Kong, undermines social order and the fundamental interests of Hong Kong, and is an undisguised challenge to the bottom line of 'one country, two systems', Xinhua news agency quoted a Hong Kong affairs office spokesman as saying. "We strongly condemn this act." Debris including umbrellas, hard hats and water bottles was among the few signs left of the mayhem that had engulfed parts of the city on Monday and overnight after protesters stormed and ransacked the Legislative Council, or mini-parliament.

Police cleared roads near the heart of the financial centre, paving the way for business to return to normal. However, government offices, where protesters smashed

computers and spray-painted "anti-extradition" and slurs against the police and government on chamber walls, were closed. The government's executive council meeting was due to be held in Government House, officials said, while the legislature would remain closed for the next two weeks.

Millions of people have taken to the streets in the past few weeks to protest against the now-suspended extradition bill that would allow people to be sent to mainland China to face trial in courts controlled by the Communist Party. Lawyers and rights groups say China's justice system is marked by torture, forced confessions and arbitrary detention. China has been angered by Western criticism of the bill.

### Legislature ransacked, defaced



The bill triggered a backlash against Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam, taking in the business, diplomatic and legal communities that fear corrosion of the legal autonomy of Hong Kong and the difficulty of guaranteeing a fair trial in China. She has suspended the bill and said it would lapse next year, but protesters want it scrapped altogether and have pressed her to step down.

Lam, Hong Kong's self-styled Iron Lady, has created a fresh crisis for Chinese President Xi Jinping, who is already grappling with a trade war with Washington, a faltering economy and tension in the South China Sea. Regina Ip, chairwoman of Hong Kong's pro-China New People's Party, said the protests had brought shame on Hong Kong.

"In the long term, (this) will impact Hong Kong's business environment. I believe various negative consequences of damages in our economy and prosperity will soon emerge," Starry Lee, chairwoman of the



HONG KONG: Police stand outside the Legislative Council building in Hong Kong, a day after protesters broke into the building. —AFP

Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong, also condemned the violence. "This is an insult to LegCo (Legislative Council), an insult to Hong Kong rule of law," she said. Chinese censors have worked hard to erase or block news of the Hong Kong protests, wary that any large public rallies could inspire protests on the mainland.

Screens went black on the BBC and CNN when they showed related reports in mainland China, as has hap-

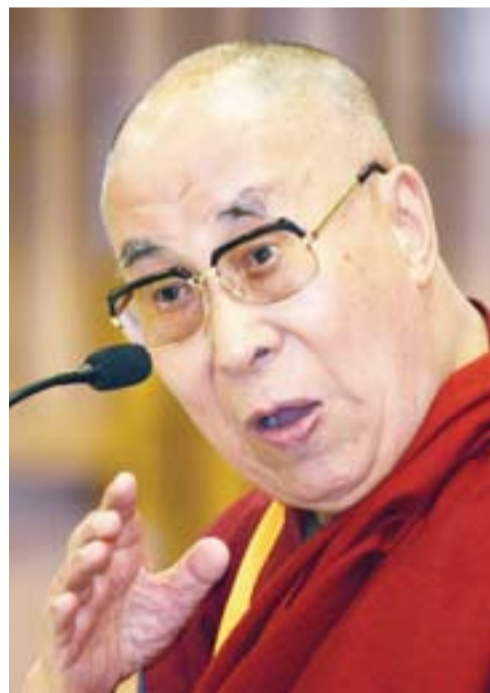
pened during previous Hong Kong protests. Foreign news channels are only available in luxury hotels and a handful of high-end apartment complexes in China. State news agency Xinhua wrote an upbeat Chinese-language report about a government-arranged concert in Hong Kong to celebrate the handover anniversary, complete with descriptions of the audience singing the national anthem and how the performers showed their "ardent love of the motherland". — Reuters

## Dalai Lama 'deeply sorry' for comments on women

NEW DELHI: The Dalai Lama is "deeply sorry" about comments he made about women in a recent BBC interview, his office said in a statement yesterday. The Tibetan spiritual leader made no apology however for saying that US President Donald Trump had a "lack of moral principle" and "complicated" emotions. "(In) responding to a question about whether his own reincarnation could be a woman, and suggesting that if she were she should be attractive, His Holiness genuinely meant no offence," the statement said. "He is deeply sorry that people have been hurt by what he said and offers his sincere apologies."

The comments, which attracted criticism around the world, were made in an interview with the British broadcaster aired last week from the Nobel peace prize winner's exile in Dharamsala in northern India. "If female Dalai Lama comes, then she should be more attractive," he had said. "If female Dalai Lama, oh, oh... that people, I think prefer, not see her, that face." "His Holiness, a monk now in his mid-eighties, has a keen sense of the contradictions between the materialistic, globalized world he encounters on his travels and the complex, more esoteric ideas about reincarnation that are at the heart of Tibetan Buddhist tradition," the new statement said.

"However, it sometimes happens that off



Exiled Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama

the cuff remarks, which might be amusing in one cultural context, lose their humour in translation when brought into another. He regrets any offence that may have been given. "For all his long life, His Holiness has opposed the objectification of women, has supported women and their rights and celebrated the growing international consensus in support of gender equality and respect for women," it added.

It said that the original context of his referring to the physical appearance of a female successor was a conversation with the then

Paris editor of Vogue magazine. "She asked if a future Dalai Lama could be a woman. His Holiness replied, 'Certainly, if that would be more helpful,' adding, as a joke, that she should be attractive. He was at least partially responding to the unfamiliar ambience of working with a team whose prime focus was the world of high fashion," the statement said.

### Trump's emotions

On Trump, the Dalai Lama, 83, had said: "One day he says something, another day he says something... But I think (there is a) lack of moral principle." "When he became president he expressed 'America First'. That is wrong. America they should take the global responsibility," he said, adding that Trump's emotions are "also a little bit... too complicated".

The statement from his office made no reference to these comments. In the BBC interview he had also reiterated his views on immigration into Europe, saying that the continent should educate and train immigrants with a view to them returning home. "But whole Europe eventually become Muslim country? Impossible. Or African country. Also impossible... Keep Europe for Europeans," he had said.

The new communique said that these comments "may have been misinterpreted", saying that he "appreciates that many of those who leave their countries may not wish or be able to return". "His Holiness regularly cautions against allowing the divisive idea of 'us' and 'them' to flourish. "He suggests that a solution to many of the problems we face in the world today is to remind ourselves that as human beings we are all brothers and sisters belonging to one human family, and that together we can take action to address the global challenges that confront us." — AFP

## Zardari interview taken off air amid censorship fears

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's largest private broadcaster abruptly took an interview with former president Asif Ali Zardari off air shortly after it began, deepening fears of increasing censorship in a country already among the most dangerous in the world for media. Geo News did not give a reason for why it cut the interview - mere minutes after it started - with Zardari, who is also the widower of assassinated former prime minister Benazir Bhutto. There have been accusations in recent years of the country's powerful military putting pressure on the media to stop coverage critical of its policies - allegations it denies.

Zardari and his Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) have a tense relationship with the military, and he is currently facing corruption charges as part of a wider crackdown. Hamid Mir, the interviewer, complained on Twitter about increasing censorship in Pakistan after the show was taken off the air yesterday night. "Those who stopped it (the interview) have no courage to accept publicly that they stopped it," he tweeted. He apologised to viewers, adding: "it's easy to understand

who stopped it? We are not living in a free country."

Mir made international headlines in 2014 after surviving multiple gunshot wounds in an attack he blamed on the shadowy Inter Services Intelligence agency (ISI), Pakistan's top spy organisation. Criticism of the country's powerful security establishment has long been seen as a red line for the media, with journalists and bloggers complaining of intimidation tactics including kidnappings, beatings, and even killings if they cross that line.

Last year, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) said in a report that the military has "quietly, but effectively, set restrictions on reporting". Geo News has faced pressure from authorities in the past. Last year, it was temporarily taken off the air in the run-up to the general election won by Imran Khan. Some of Pakistan's biggest and most powerful media outlets have claimed they were pressured to tilt their coverage towards Khan during the campaign, an accusation the military denied. — AFP

## Curbs on highway for Hindu pilgrimage anger Kashmiris

SRINAGAR: Curbs on civilian traffic along a highway linking disputed Kashmir to the rest of India, imposed for a Hindu pilgrimage, have angered residents of the Muslim-majority region. The six-week Amarnath Yatra began on Monday and will see hundreds of thousands of Hindu pilgrims trek to a holy cave high in the insurgency-hit region at the heart of decades of animosity between India and Pakistan.

No civilian vehicles other than those transporting Hindu pilgrims will be allowed to move along a 100 km (62 miles) stretch of highway that links the mountainous Kashmir valley and India's plains, said an order issued by traffic police chief Alok Kumar and seen by Reuters.

Police will allow local civilian traffic during a three-and-a-half hour window in the evening, the order said. Bashir

Ahmad said it took nearly 20 hours to travel between the main cities of Srinagar to Jammu where his son had a medical checkup. The journey usually takes six hours, he said. "It is ridiculous," he told Reuters. "How can they stop people from travelling on the highway?"

Prime Minister Narendra Modi made Kashmir a major theme during the general election that returned his Hindu-Nationalist government to power for a second term in May. Home affairs minister Amit Shah recently visited the region to inspect security measures for the Amarnath Yatra, which has been a target of militant attacks in the past decade. Authorities imposed similar curbs after February attacks by a Pakistan-based militant group killed 40 Indian paramilitary personnel, taking India and Pakistan to the brink of war. — Reuters

## 'Broken dreams': Returning migrants struggle at home

DHAKA: Like many poor Bangladeshis, Komol Shohlagar thought moving overseas for work would change his life. It did - but not in the way he hoped. Shohlagar, 33, travelled to Libya with people smugglers in the hope of reaching Europe, but when he got there, the smugglers held him captive to extort money from his family. He was only freed after they paid \$14,000 to get him back - money they had to borrow from loan sharks. When he finally returned to Bangladesh last year, he was jobless and saddled with huge debts - a situation that left him feeling suicidal.

"I was really depressed. My family had borrowed a lot of money to save me," Shohlagar told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "The lenders came home every other day and threatened us. There were times when I thought about taking a rope and hanging myself." Charities in Bangladesh say thousands of returning migrants face such struggles and little official help is available.

Many are victims of trafficking, but have little redress for the crimes they have suffered in Bangladesh. The country depends heavily on foreign remittances and has an official policy of encouraging citizens to look for jobs abroad. According to official data, at least 1 million Bangladeshis secured jobs overseas in



DHAKA: A Bangladeshi street vendor sells vegetables under heavy rain in Dhaka. The monsoon rains sweep across the subcontinent from June to September. —AFP

2017 - the highest number ever recorded. But the system depends largely on unlicensed brokers working in rural areas and opens the door to trafficking and cheating.

Last month, 64 Bangladeshi migrants hoping to get to Europe had to be rescued from a boat off Tunisia. In May, 37 drowned in the same region when their boat capsized. "The state does not have a proper system to support the returnees," said Shariful Hasan, who heads the migration department of Bangladeshi aid group BRAC. "All our policies are focused on sending people abroad. We don't even have a system that can count

the total number of returnees every year."

Abu Bakar Siddique, the civil servant who leads the Home Ministry's anti-trafficking work, acknowledged the government needed to develop a system of support for the returnees. "For now, what we do is, we ensure that the victims reach their families," he said. "With the kind of capacity that we have, this is what's possible. "We do work with girls who were trafficked to India. We also have shelters for victims. But as far as counselling is concerned, it's not something that we have not managed to do effectively. We have to develop our system." — Reuters



SRINAGAR: A Kashmiri fisherman and a fisherwoman look on as they drink tea on their boat in the Dal lake in Srinagar. — AFP

## Analysis

Kuwait Times  
Established 1961  
The First Daily in The Arabian GulfTHE LEADING INDEPENDENT  
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YOUSUF S. AL-ALYANEditor-in-Chief  
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ACCOUNTS : 24833199 Extn. 125  
COMMERCIAL : 24835618P.O.Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait.  
Email: info@kuwaittimes.com  
Website: www.kuwaittimes.netVenezuelans lose  
patience with  
Guaido as  
Maduro hangs on

Four days before Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaido launched a military uprising in a bid to oust President Nicolas Maduro, he told supporters at a rally outside the capital, Caracas: "In the next few days, we'll decide our destiny." The 35-year-old, who had risen to national prominence three months before, finished his speech with his usual rallying cry to Venezuelans desperate for the end of 20 years of Socialist rule: "We're on track!"

Yet after the April 30 insurrection swiftly unraveled, with troops remaining in their barracks and key government officials refusing to change sides, many Venezuelans aren't so sure. Interviews with more than two dozen people across Venezuela - as well as fresh polling data - suggest that many people have grown frustrated by the slow pace of change amid the hardships of daily life. Several said they were losing hope that Guaido could dislodge Maduro. "We're on track but it's the wrong track," said Rafael Narvaez, a taxi driver in the western coastal city of Punto Fijo.

Narvaez said he had been full of hope on April 30 when he saw Guaido appear with military officers in a video posted on Twitter saying it was time to rise up against Maduro. "I thought that finally the moment had come to recover our country," Narvaez, 43, said. "Now I'm disappointed." Analysts said the most likely outcome now is for the status quo to continue as Maduro gains confidence that his crackdown on the opposition will go relatively unpunished and Guaido seeks a new strategy to keep a weary public energized.

When Guaido, the speaker of the National Assembly, proclaimed a rival presidency in January in a bold challenge to Maduro, he injected new hope into Venezuela's fragmented opposition. With most Western nations saying Maduro's reelection last year was rigged, Guaido cited the constitution to announce an interim presidency until fresh elections could be held. Washington backed him and imposed tough new sanctions on Venezuela's oil industry, with the aim of forcing Maduro and his allies from power.

Maduro, who took office in 2013 following the death of his political mentor, Hugo Chavez, has overseen an economic collapse that has left swaths of the once-wealthy country without reliable access to power, water, food and medicines. More than 4 million Venezuelans have emigrated and the Organization of American States warned this week that figure could double by the end of next year.

Guaido has gained control of some Venezuelan assets in the United States, appointed diplomats overseas and unveiled an economic plan to rebuild Venezuela. But his promises of amnesty have failed to sway the armed forces, which remain loyal to Maduro. The opposition's momentum has slowed since the April 30 uprising. Attendance at Guaido's public rallies has dropped and the opposition has held no major protests since then. A march called for Friday will be a litmus test for Guaido's support.

Maduro, who retains the loyalty of key allies Russia and China, has branded Guaido a US puppet. With a swift removal of Maduro not in sight, the opposition says it is knocking down for a more protracted campaign and seeking to build a grassroots organization to press for elections without Maduro. Yon Goicoechea, a member of Guaido's policy team, acknowledged there was "fatigue" among Venezuelans. "We have to fight against demoralization and despair," he said. "We Venezuelans have to keep consistent in our support for Guaido and be patient."

## Eroding support

To maintain momentum, Goicoechea said Guaido had traveled to 11 of Venezuela's 23 states and would travel to at least five more this month to motivate his supporters. Goicoechea said Guaido was focused on expanding a network of Help and Freedom Committees, a program the opposition began in April to organize efforts at a local level - something the ruling Socialist Party has done successfully.

However, attendees say so far the committees have got little traction. Rafael Mora, a 27-year-old doctor and Guaido supporter in the northwestern city of Barquisimeto, said too many Venezuelans wanted immediate change without being willing to work for it. "We can't leave all the responsibility just in the hands of a leader, a messiah," said Mora, who met Guaido when he visited in late May. Support for Guaido remains high but it has dipped slightly from 61.2 percent in February to 56.7 percent in May, according to a June 10 report from Venezuelan pollster Datanalisis. Just 10.1 percent of Venezuelans approved of Maduro in May, the lowest level for a president since 1999, according to the survey.

Meanwhile, a survey from pollster DatinCorp showed the proportion of Venezuelans who recognized Guaido as the legitimate president had fallen from 49 percent in February to 36 percent in June. Raul Gallegos, associate director with consultancy Control Risks, said their base case scenario was for Maduro to still be in power by the end of the year and for the opposition to lose steam. It did not appear that Guaido had a "Plan B" to dislodge Maduro, Gallegos said. "We can expect Guaido's popularity to continue to erode the longer he is not exercising power," he said. —Reuters

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Fighters loyal to the Libyan Government of National Accord (GNA) forces check the ruins of a building near the Yarmouk military compound south of the Libyan capital Tripoli following air strikes. (i AFP)

## In battle for Libya oil, water becomes a casualty

While Libya's oil lies at the heart of three months of fighting over Tripoli and years of power struggles before that, water is becoming a far bigger concern for its people. Interruptions to water supplies are common after eight years of near-anarchy since Muammar Gaddafi was ousted, but a wider crisis is now coming to a head in a country made up mainly of arid desert and split between competing administrations.

In western Libya, finding clean water has become difficult because both the power grid and water control system have been damaged in an offensive by forces loyal to eastern-based Khalifa Haftar on Tripoli, where the UN-backed government is based. "Drinkable water is a daily issue for my family," said Usama Mohamed Dokali, a cashier in a cafe in Tripoli, who buys bottled water when he can and gets it from a charity when his money runs out. Other people fill bottles from wells and hope for the best.

Looting and neglect have made the situation fragile and armed groups have exploited the unrest. In May, gunmen pressing officials to release a detained relative forced water workers to turn off supplies to all of Tripoli for two days. The United Nations has warned all sides that water should not become a weapon of war, but the water system is already badly damaged in western Libya where the capital is located, according to unpublished reports by the water authority and the United Nations Children's Agency.

Even local bottled water in a country which sits on Africa's biggest proven oil reserves has become contaminated. If the damage does not get fixed, there could be a "sudden, unexpected, uncontrollable and unprepared for" shutdown of the main water pipeline system, the water authority said in a March presentation to international organizations seen by Reuters.

## In cities, 'fairer' type of home sharing emerges

The residents of Eixample, an elegant, tree-lined district in central Barcelona, are getting used to a new sound: The rattle of suitcases being dragged along paving stones. Until a few years ago, this neighborhood - named after the Catalan word for 'extension' because it was built in the 19th century as the Spanish city outgrew its medieval borders - was not a popular part of the city for tourists to stay in. Today, about one third of the properties surrounding University Square, on the border of the district, are rented out on the home-sharing platform Airbnb Inc, according to Datalippo, a Spanish aggregator of rental data.

Each year, about 30 million tourists visit Barcelona, a city with a population of 1.6 million, according to official statistics. Eixample's residents, like those in many other parts of Barcelona, are not happy. They say tourism is leading to overcrowding, destroying the city's character and pushing rents so high that many locals can no longer afford to live there. Carmen Rios, who works in healthcare technology, has lived in Barcelona for nearly 20 years and moved out of the city centre a few years ago to get away from the crowds of tourists. "I don't enjoy the city centre anymore and wouldn't live there ever again ... (the authorities) have not made it pleasant for Barcelona's residents," she lamented.

## One in, one out: A tale of two Brexit MEPs

When the other new members of the European Parliament took their seats in Strasbourg yesterday, Barry Andrews was sitting at home, unable to attend because of Brexit. Basking in the sun in Dublin, the 52-year-old Irish politician is on an unwanted holiday as he waits for the seat he should be representing to become available. He is one of 27 "deep freeze" MEPs elected to seats due to be reallocated from Britain's share when it leaves the European Union, but stuck in limbo as it dithers over its exit terms.

"My current position is frustrating. I won't deny it," said Andrews, a former think tank chief and veteran of the Irish parliament who represents the centre-right Fianna Fail party which props up Leo Varadkar's Fine Gael minority government in Dublin. "It leaves you in a difficult position. I'm not sure how sustainable it really is in the long run." Across the Irish Sea, by contrast, the 29 MEPs from Britain's Brexit party are taking up their seats in the hope they will only serve a few months.

The country's latest EU departure date is set for Oct 31 - a date they want to make sure its incoming new Conservative government will stick to no matter what. "I'd like to be out of a job on October 31 because I think it reflects the success of Brexit," said

"The consequences will be catastrophic as there is no viable alternative water supply system," it said.

That warning of a possible systematic failure, echoed in a draft UNICEF report the same month, is the most dramatic sign of a collapse of state services in what was once one of North Africa's richest countries. It would have far-reaching consequences in a country where lawlessness is being exploited again by Islamist militants, armed groups and people promising to smuggle African migrants and refugees to Europe. "An estimated 4 million people would be deprived of access to safe water," UNICEF Libya spokesman Mostafa Omar said by email, listing cholera, hepatitis A and diarrhoea, a major childhood killer, as the likely result.

## 'Great man made river'

Poor public services were one of the drivers of the uprising against Gaddafi, but a 4,000 km pipeline system known as the Great Man Made River (MMPR) was a world-leading civil engineering project when it was built in the 1980s. Some 80 percent of the population of six million live along or near the northern Mediterranean coast and depend on fresh water pumped via its pipelines from vast aquifers further south, where Libya's abundant oil reserves also lie.

Ground water in coastal areas is salty and contaminated by sewage and around 80 percent of desalination plants have broken down, water authority officials and diplomats say. The pipes supply Libya with more than 70 percent of its fresh water and remain crucial because desalination plants are complicated to fix and vulnerable to attack, officials at the United Nations' children's agency say. People dismantle well heads to sell the copper and tribesmen living in the neglected south close or destroy pipes to press their demands with offi-

cial in the capital.

As a result, 101 of 479 wells on the western pipeline system have been dismantled, Abdullah El-Sunni, head of the Tripoli-based water authority said in an interview with Reuters. Asked if there could be a water crisis, he said power cuts were already threatening supplies. Since the central monitoring room of the pipeline system for western Libya was hit around early May, engineers have been unable to gauge water pressure and flows. A Tunisian maintenance firm working on the system left because of the fighting. "The water flow to Western Libya has dropped from the normal flow of 1.2 million cubic metres per day to about 800,000 cubic metres per day now, due to sabotage and lack of funding and maintenance," Sunni said. Across Libya, demand has risen to 7 billion cubic metres annually, up from 5.5 billion in 2011, as farmers and others have drilled wells or tapped reservoirs, Sunni said. By 2025, Libya will need 8 billion. —Reuters

The draft UNICEF report, which has yet to be finalized, listed kidnapping of water workers and looting of equipment among many problems. "If not addressed properly and immediately, these threats and damages could lead to the complete failure of the MMPR," it said. Sunni said water quality had been affected by a lack of treatment, due to a shortage of funds for chemicals and equipment, and some officials agree with residents who say water in the taps is not fit to drink.

"All water is contaminated," said Badr al-Din Al-Najjar, head of the National Centre for Disease Control, listing problems such as harmful bacteria or a high-salt content. "There is no drinking water, especially from the state." The problem has been building since Gaddafi's overthrow, when officials stopped investing in facilities that had been looted, damaged or allowed to deteriorate in the chaos. —Reuters

Now a new sustainable home-sharing platform wants to make tourism an asset to neighborhoods where residents feel they are being squeezed out to make space for visitors. Airbnb, which is due to launch this summer in five European cities, promises to give 50 percent of its revenues to support local community projects and help "counter the negative effects of tourism", according to its website. When guests reserve accommodation through the home-sharing platform, they can choose which of the projects registered with the site they want to support, said Jonathan Reyes, Airbnb's co-founder for Barcelona and Valencia.

Those projects could be anything from social housing for residents to community gardens, he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation by phone. The company will also apply a "One Host, One Home" rule, limiting each host to one listing in an effort to restrict the number of holiday rentals in each city, so that locals have more chance to find affordable homes to live in. "We really want to give the sovereignty of tourism back to local communities," Reyes said. He explained his company's philosophy is that tourism in itself is not bad, but it needs to be better managed. "We cannot just try to stop or to destroy this tourism model," he stressed. "To change things, we need to build a real alternative."

Spain's second-largest city is one of more than 100 places around the world identified as being in a state of overtourism by a report for the European Parliament published last year. The problem is especially stark in cities like Copenhagen and Lucerne, where many visitors are concentrated in a relatively small geographic area, the report said. "As residents make use of the same area, this creates the potential for overcrowding, congestion, tensions, and other issues associated with overtourism," it said.

Macia Blazquez, a geography professor at the University of the Balearic Islands, said certain cities simply were not designed for receiving large numbers of visitors. "Barcelona is a city that wasn't created for tourism, unlike tourist towns that have just one purpose," Blazquez said, pointing to the English seaside resort of Blackpool as an example. "In multi-functional cities where people actually live, there are more conflicts," he said.

They go from being cities visited by tourists to "touristy cities", he said, which puts pressure on house prices and causes rents to rise for residents. Average rental prices in Barcelona have risen by 30 percent in the last five years, according to City Hall statistics. In Spain, low-income immigrants from Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and North Africa are particularly affected, with many only able to afford the rent by co-habiting with several other people in small apartments, Blazquez added.

## Strengthening communities

Since it was founded as a cooperative in 2016, Airbnb has grown to include nine co-members from different European cities - such as Barcelona, Madrid, Amsterdam, Bologna, and Venice - who felt frustrated by tourist overcrowding. A spokeswoman for Barcelona City Hall said the local government "welcomed" the emergence of the company and its focus on community development. "It is desirable for all platforms to have this predisposition and sense of responsibility," she said in emailed comments.

Airbnb, which also limits the number of homes each host can list in certain cities, said it, too, puts community first. The company is "built on the principles of making communities stronger, empowering citizens and spreading tourism benefits beyond hotels and tourist hotspots to local families and businesses," Airbnb spokesman Simon Letouze told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Airbnb may struggle to compete with the bigger, more established company backed by private capital with strong lobbying power, said Agustín Cocola-Gant, a research fellow in urban studies at the University of Lisbon. "Some people are really aware of the importance of ethical consumption, but in general what consumers want is a cheap product - and Airbnb provides cheap accommodation," he said.

## Help or harm?

Those concerns have not put off the more than 3,200 people who have already pre-registered as hosts on the site, including in cities where Airbnb has not launched yet, according to co-founder Reyes. "In some countries we are overwhelmed because we have received so many emails from people wanting to be involved," he said. But Blazquez, the geography professor, warned that Airbnb could end up aggravating the problem it wants to solve, by giving tourists yet another reason to visit the world's already overcrowded cities. —Reuters

"There's always a new tourism 'segment' here in the Balearic Islands, for instance, we have mass tourism, beach tourism ... day trippers, gastronomic tourism, responsible tourism," he said. "More and more things are being introduced." —Reuters

Lucy Harris, a newly elected Brexit party MEP. Of her "deep freeze" colleagues, she said: "I empathize with them, obviously - they should have been out."

## Torn loyalties

After the 2016 referendum vote to leave the EU, Britain sketched a divorce plan that would see it sever ties with the bloc on March 29, 2019. But paralyzed by divisions over how to proceed, parliament has been unable to pass a withdrawal deal that would cushion the divorce. Brexit has twice been delayed, forcing Britain to take part in May's European Parliament elections. Ironically, while Andrews is unsettled by the current situation - and out of pocket - he would prefer not to take up his seat if that meant Brexit never happened. Ireland is Britain's closest trading partner and the two countries share a land border, making it the most exposed of EU nations to any Brexit turmoil. It is forecast to have 55,000 fewer citizens in work if Britain leaves the EU with no deal at all. "My situation is kind of awkward in that perhaps I'm the only person in Ireland that will benefit from Brexit," Andrews told AFP.

## The Brexit party

Voter anger in Britain over the political deadlock surrounding Brexit fuelled a big win for the Brexit party in the European elections. The single issue party led by eurosceptic leader Nigel Farage took 32 percent of the vote. For Harris, that means taking her seat to argue for her own unemployment - a situation she admitted was "a bit ironic". On their first visits to the European parliament, Brexit party members lit up social media, posting evidence of the supposed excesses of the EU - iPads, chauffeured cars and extrava-



Barry Andrews

Lucy Harris

gant expenses. But speaking in London, Harris remains supportive of Andrews' desire to join what another Brexit party MEP called "the corrupt gravy train". "Obviously he's very much dedicated to the EU, and he should be able to express that," she said. Laughing, she added: "Anyone who believes that they should have their seat, back the Brexit party and let's get out of the EU!"

But for Andrews, the British saboteurs are a sign of a deeper and perhaps more worrying movement. "In the growth of populist parties and anti-EU sentiment is linked to a public dissatisfaction. So we shouldn't just look at the antics of the Brexit party," he explained. "There is a fundamental disconnect between the voters and what the European Union is achieving." —AFP

## Business

WEDNESDAY, JULY 3, 2019

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# ABK Group CEO Michel Accad receives Euromoney Award

## Honor for outstanding contribution to the banking industry in Mideast

**KUWAIT:** Michel Accad, Group Chief Executive Officer of Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait, received an award for his 'Outstanding Contribution to the Financial Services Industry in the Middle East' at the Euromoney Awards for Excellence 2019, held at the Grosvenor House Hotel in Dubai on the 26th June 2019.

Michel Accad joined ABK as Chief Executive Officer in 2014, taking up the latest in a string of career challenges in the global financial services sector, including 27 years at Citibank, 2 years at Arab Bank, and 5 years at Gulf Bank of Kuwait, where he oversaw the turnaround of the bank after the 2008 derivative and credit crisis.

In presenting Michel Accad with the award, Euromoney Editor, Clive Horwood said: "I'm personally very happy that such a great friend of Euromoney is here to receive this award tonight. He has a banking career spanning almost four decades, and has demonstrated his ability to solve problems calmly, even in the most intense situations, in extremely volatile countries. He swiftly rose within the ranks in his career and has faced seemingly insurmountable challenges from the very early stages. He has met

every role with resounding success. Michel is a worthy recipient of this award tonight."

In accepting the award Accad said: "I am honored and humbled to receive this award, and I wish to thank Euromoney for this recognition. I have been privileged to work closely with some very supportive Chairmen in my career, in Jordan and Kuwait, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them, as they have been extremely understanding, and have supported and empowered me in all the decisions I have made. I also thank my colleagues present, some of whom have worked with me in more than one location and more than one bank, and some who are very precious to me but could not join us tonight. To my team, I thank you for all your hard work, which has enabled me to get this special award tonight."

In 2018 ABK passed the KD 100 million Net Operating Income mark for the first time in the history of the bank and was also listed as one of the 10 Safest Banks in the Middle East by Global Finance. The Banker recently listed ABK as the second highest 'mover' in the Middle East rankings and 1st in Capital Adequacy Ratio in Kuwait.



Michel Accad receiving the Euromoney Award

## Iran traders ride bull market despite US sanctions

**TEHRAN:** Iran's stock market is thriving, despite US sanctions which have battered its economy and an uncertain future as geopolitical tensions soar in the Gulf. Tehran Stock Exchange was buzzing Monday after the latest spike in a 12-month bull market, which veteran trader Mohsen said was mostly caused by the crash of Iran's currency, the rial.

"Share values are not growing because of profitability but because of the companies' asset values," which have spiked on a drastically weaker currency, he said. The energetic 58-year-old said he had "seen it all" in three decades of trading at the exchange in central Tehran. Its main index, the TEDPIX, has steadily risen over the past 12 months, accelerating in the most recent quarter to a historic high of 248,577 last week—more than twice its level of a year ago. Iran's currency crisis has made imports far more expensive, at the same time as US-imposed banking

sanctions made it harder to move goods into the country or receive payment for exports. Yet investors seemed unconcerned about tensions with Washington, which have escalated since US President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew from a landmark nuclear deal last year and reinstated biting sanctions against Tehran. Share prices have continued their run even since Iran shot down a US spy drone in mid-June, nearly triggering a retaliatory US strike—the latest in a series of incidents that have raised fears of a regional conflict.

"Maybe only a war breaking out could stop the market. Otherwise political tensions won't impact it," said investor Mohammad Kazerani after visiting a bank counter at the exchange to withdraw more cash to invest. "The market has been good for about three months, very good," the upbeat 48-year old said.

The Iranian economy is struggling in part because of the crippling US sanctions targeting Iran's oil sales, banking transactions and major industries like steel and petrochemicals. That has caused runaway inflation, officially topping 52 percent, and the rial has nosedived against major foreign currencies over the past year.

But some of these woes may be the very factors fuelling the rise in Tehran stock prices. "Sanctions and political tensions have

actually been good for some companies that sell their products in Iran," Mohsen said.

### Silver lining

According to economists, the root causes of the rial's slump pre-date the Trump administration's withdrawal from the nuclear deal. But the subsequent reimposition of US sanctions has caused the currency to lose half of its value against the dollar since May last year. Yet Kazerani said a weaker rial has been a silver lining for some companies, as the soaring prices of imports have pushed buyers towards local producers.

Some Iranian companies, long sidelined in favor of foreign competitors, are now seeing so much demand that "buyers have to queue up" to place orders, he said. Among those gaining the most are firms specifically targeted by US sanctions, including the Mobarakeh Steel Company and the Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company, a big enterprise linked to the Revolutionary Guards. At the Tehran exchange, investors sat in a glass hall overlooking the operators' room, where traders faced a large monochrome ticker and huddled over small terminals, tracking their shares. Mohsen, busy advising someone to buy shares in a shipbuilding company despite US sanctions, said the good times will not last long. "This situation will only last a year or two, and it won't repeat itself," he said. — AFP

## China pledges to scrap financial sector ownership limits in 2020

**DALIAN, China:** China will end ownership limits for foreign investors in its financial sector in 2020, a year earlier than scheduled, to show the world it will keep opening up its markets, Premier Li Keqiang said yesterday.

China will also further open its manufacturing sector, including the auto industry, while reducing its negative investment list that restricts foreign investment in some areas, Li told the World Economic Forum in the northeastern Chinese port city of Dalian. Beijing's signal that it is quickening the pace of opening up came after the presidents of China and the United States agreed over the weekend to restart trade talks in another attempt to strike a deal and end a bruising tariff war.

But analysts doubt the ceasefire will lead to a sustained easing of tensions, and warn lingering uncertainty could dampen corporate spending and global growth. "We will achieve the goal of abolishing ownership limits in securities, futures, life insurance for foreign investors by 2020, a year earlier than the original schedule of 2021," Li said.

Foreign investment banks such as Morgan Stanley are looking to join HSBC Holdings PLC, JPMorgan Chase & Co, Nomura Holdings Inc and UBS Group AG in owning controlling stakes in onshore securities joint ventures in China under liberalized rules announced in 2017.

"JPMorgan welcomes any decision made by the Chinese government that looks to liberalize its financial sector further," said JPMorgan China CEO Mark Leung. Citigroup, which is in the process of setting up a majority-owned securities joint venture in China, also applauded the news.

"Citi welcomes any move that leads to the further opening up of the Chinese financial system," said a Hong Kong-based spokesman. The United States and other countries in the West have long complained that Beijing is blocking foreign access to its fast-growing financial markets and not allowing a level playing field when multinational companies are allowed in.

But in recent months, China has allowed many foreign financial firms to either set up new businesses onshore or expand their presence through majority ownership in domestic joint ventures across mutual funds, insurance and brokerage businesses. Sources with direct knowledge of the mat-

ter previously told Reuters that Morgan Stanley is likely to get regulatory approval for owning a majority stake in the second half of this year.

Li also said the government will reduce restrictions next year on market access for foreign investors in the value-added telecoms services and transport sectors. On Sunday, China cut the number of sectors subject to foreign investment restrictions, a widely expected move, to 40 from 48 in the previous version, published in June last year.

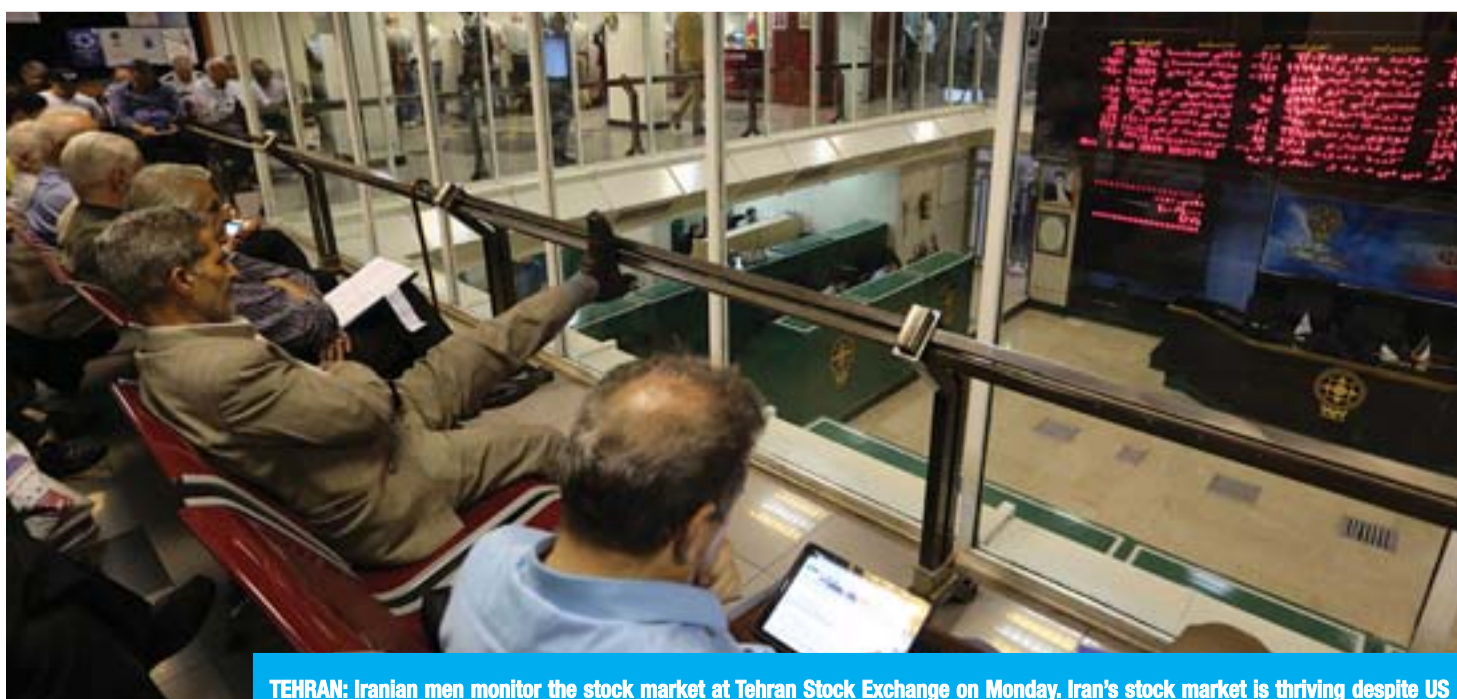
### Global risks

On Saturday, leaders of the Group of 20 major economies warned of growing risks to the global economy but stopped short of denouncing protectionism, calling instead for a free and fair trade environment after talks some members described as difficult. Echoing the sentiment, Li said protectionism is rising, but did not make references to specific economies. "In the face of pressure from a slowing global economy, I believe people are all in the same boat. We should promote the spirit of partnership, carry out equal consultations, seek common ground while respecting differences and manage and control disputes," Li said.

The US-China trade war has hit business confidence worldwide, disrupted supply chains and shaken financial markets, adding to worries about a global economic slowdown. Fallout from the dispute is spreading. Business surveys this week showed factory activity shrank in China and much of the rest of Asia in June, as well as in Europe, while manufacturing growth cooled in the United States, keeping pressure on policymakers to shore up growth.

Rising worries over global growth have compelled some central banks, such as those in Australia, New Zealand, India and Russia to cut interest rates. "Currently, global economic risks are rising somewhat, international investment and trade growth is slowing, protectionism is rising and unstable and uncertain factors are increasing," Li said. "We should actively cope with this. Some countries have taken measures including cutting interest rates, or sent clear signals on quantitative easing."

But China will not resort to competitive currency devaluation, Li said, and will keep the yuan exchange rate basically stable at a reasonable and balanced level.— Reuters



TEHRAN: Iranian men monitor the stock market at Tehran Stock Exchange on Monday. Iran's stock market is thriving despite US sanctions which have battered its economy.— AFP

## Business

NBK Report on Macroeconomic Outlook 2019-2021

# Saudi non-oil outlook improves, driven by solid public spending

## Kingdom unveils record \$290 billion budget

**KUWAIT:** The Saudi Arabia's economy is well into its second year of recovery since contracting in 2017. With oil prices last year at least 31 percent higher than they were in 2017, the government has unveiled another record budget (\$290 billion) in support of consumption, jobs, the private sector (e.g. the private sector stimulus program) and economic diversification (e.g. National Industrial Development Program, NIDLP).

Non-oil activity has improved, and is expected to accelerate from 2.0 percent in 2018 to 3.2 percent by 2021. Recent (April) high frequency metrics, such as point of sales (POS) transactions (+24 percent y/y), cement sales (+5.2 percent ytd), private sector import letters of credit (+7.5 percent y/y Jan-Apr cumulative) and private credit growth (+2.1 percent y/y) all show gains. Also, PMI activity in May hit a 17-month high (57.3) on rising new orders.

Headline growth, in contrast, will lag non-oil growth at 1.0 percent in 2019 and 2.4 percent over 2020-21 due to Saudi Arabia's OPEC+ oil production cut obligations, under which the kingdom has so far over-complied by 293 percent (9.69 mb/d in May). While oil output will likely rise to nearer quota levels (10.3 mb/d), we don't believe that, given current and projected oil market dynamics to 2021, there is scope for further gains without pushing oil prices below the \$70-80/bbl range that the authorities are thought to be comfortable with. OPEC on 1 July agreed to extend its oil production cut agreement to March 2020.

### Consumer prices beset by deflation

Inflation has been negative since the start of 2019, weighed down by falling real estate prices and housing rents as well as by base effects related to the 2018 subsidy cuts and VAT rollout. Further energy/utility price hikes and another mooted sugary drinks tax will push inflation to 0.8 percent in 2020 from -1.5 percent in 2019.

### Public finances more secure but debt levels rising

Public finances are on a more sustainable footing, despite continued sensitivity to oil prices (oil revenues account for 65 percent of total revenues). Spending has been rationalized, subsidies pared back and non-oil revenues boosted through excise taxes, expat levies and the VAT. The fiscal deficit narrowed to 6 percent of GDP in 2018, and, while expected to widen in 2019 on likely lower-than-budgeted oil revenues, should shrink further to 4.9 percent of GDP by 2021 as non-oil revenues increase (from 10.1 percent to 12.5 percent of GDP). Public debt will continue to rise, from 19.3 percent of GDP in 2018 to a peak of at 27 percent of GDP in 2021, as the authorities tap the debt markets to finance the deficit (and draw down their deposits at SAMA). \$13.5bn worth of debt has already been issued in 2019, including an oversubscribed \$7.5bn international bond sale.

Current account surplus rises, capital outflows increase

The current account is in better shape, with higher oil prices helping the surplus extend from 1.5 percent of GDP in 2017 to 9.3 percent of GDP in 2018. An average of 8 percent of GDP is expected to 2021, which will bolster the official foreign reserves. These stood at \$505 billion in April (35 percent in US treasuries), equivalent to 28.8 months of imports. At the same time, resident capital outflows, mainly overseas investment by the Public Investment Fund (PIF), have increased. The PIF aims to increase its assets under management from around \$300 billion to \$400 billion by 2020. Inflows have been dominated by portfolio investment following the Saudi bourse's inclusion in the MSCI and FTSE EM indices. FDI doubled to \$3.2 billion in 2018 and should increase further by 2022 as CMA reforms proceed and if the Saudi Aramco IPO takes place.

### External and labor market risks weigh on outlook

External risks to the Saudi outlook emanate from a possible deterioration in the global economy and the regional geopolitical environment as well as any shock to oil prices. With an estimated average fiscal break-even oil price to 2021 (\$83.7/bbl) above our oil price forecast, the authorities will need fiscal restraint and/or higher non-oil revenues in order to meet their 2022 balanced budget target and keep public debt at a sustainable level in the medium term. But expat levies have raised costs for businesses and impacted consumption as expatriates leave the kingdom (net 1.2mn employment reduction since 4Q16) amid accelerated Saudization. Moreover, the authorities will need to step up the rate of private sector job creation (diversification) as Saudi private sector employment growth remains sub-optimal. The Saudi unemployment and female labor force participation rates, at 12.5 percent and 20.5 percent, respectively, in 1Q19, are slowly improving.

indicates expansion. New orders, deliveries, inventories and imports were all essentially flat, and customer inventories and order backlogs both shrank. Timothy Fiore, chair of ISM's manufacturing survey, told reporters the steady decline and weakening demand are "a little disturbing."

"We're coming down quicker than the last four expansion declines," he said. "Usually we go down and come back up, go down and come back up. Not this time." As the US economy marks the 10 year anniversary of the recovery from the global financial crisis, the expansion is showing signs of strain, especially given Trump's aggressive and unpredictable trade policies and slowing in other major economies.

### 'Disturbing' report

While Trump early last month withdrew the threat to impose tariffs on Mexican imports, the survey showed manufacturers were not convinced the matter was entirely settled. Survey respondents in electronics, chemical products, fossil fuels, metal goods and machinery all complained of tariffs. "China tariffs and pending Mexico tariffs are wreaking havoc with supply chains and costs. The situation is crazy, driving a huge amount of work [and] costs, as well as potential supply disruptions," said a respondent in the computers and electronics sector. At a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Trump over the weekend agreed not to proceed with tariffs on \$300 billion in Chinese imports while leaving the current \$250 billion in place as trade talks continue. —AFP

## Illegal miners at Glencore in Congo defy eviction

**GOMA, Democratic Republic of Congo:** Illegal miners at a copper and cobalt mine run by Glencore in southeastern Congo defied a deadline yesterday to vacate the site, a union official said, raising fears of a potentially violent standoff. A landslide last Thursday at the Kamoto Copper Company (KCC) concession, majority-owned by a subsidiary of Glencore, killed 43 people and led Democratic Republic of Congo's government to promise to remove the miners.

The army's inspector general, General John Numbi, told Reuters on Monday that reconnaissance teams were on the ground and an operation to clear the estimated 2,000 miners in the world began. Reached by telephone, Joseph Yav, chief of staff to the provincial governor, said police had begun a process of voluntary

closures of illegal trading houses around the mine and would call on the army if necessary. But Delphin Monga, provincial secretary of the UCDT union, which represents KCC employees, said miners inside the concession continued to work undisturbed, adding that some had thrown rocks at company vehicles. "The miners have come back in even larger numbers than usual," he said. A spokesman for Glencore, which is based in Switzerland but also has offices and is listed in London, declined to comment.

### Clashes

Some clashes broke out on Monday between miners and police encouraging them to leave, with at least two officers' weapons seized at one point, Yav and Monga said. One miner and one police officer were reported injured, Monga said. Local and international activists have warned evicting the miners by force could lead to violence and rights abuses.

They say expulsion does nothing to address underlying factors, such as poverty and unemployment, that push people to brave dangerous conditions in mines. "These artisanal miners merely try to eke out a living and sending in the army against

that would be completely irresponsible," Sarah Jackson, a regional official for Amnesty International, said in a statement.

Army officials could not be reached for comment yesterday. Last week's accident, which briefly sent Glencore's shares tumbling 7 percent underscored the risks to foreign investors from illegal mining activity on their properties.

Tens of thousands of informal miners operate in and around large industrial mines in Congo. Often equipped with little more than shovels, buckets and straw sacks, they burrow dozens of meters below ground in search of ore. Accidents are common. Numbi said the army evicted thousands of miners from China Molybdenum's nearby Tenke Fungurume mine last week without firing a shot.

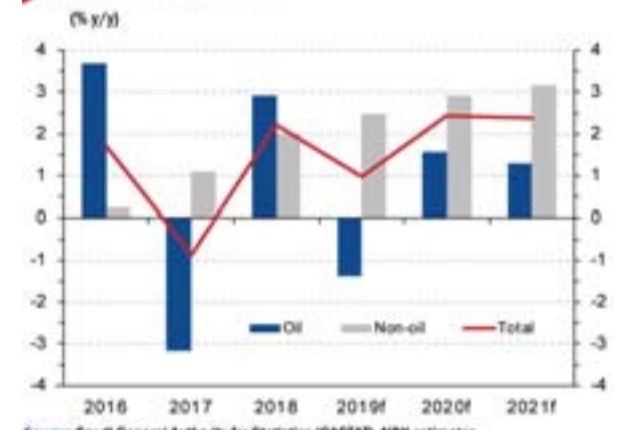
It was unclear, however, if the miners had abandoned that site or only retreated to surrounding areas until the operation was over. Local activists said the area offered to the miners to exploit on another side of Tenke Fungurume has only low-grade ore and is unlikely to satisfy them. Despite boasting rich reserves of copper, cobalt, gold, diamonds and tin, Congo is one of the world's least developed countries, afflicted by corruption, conflict and misgovernment. —Reuters

Table 1: Key economic indicators

	2017	2018	2019F	2020F	2021F	
Nominal GDP	\$ bn	687	775	756	780	808
Real GDP	% y/y	-0.9	2.2	1.0	2.4	2.4
- Oil	% y/y	-3.2	2.9	-1.4	1.6	1.3
- Non-oil	% y/y	1.1	2.0	2.5	2.9	3.2
Inflation	% y/y	-0.8	2.5	-1.5	0.8	1.3
Fiscal balance	% of GDP	-8.2	-6.0	-6.8	-6.0	-4.9
Public debt	% of GDP	17.2	19.3	23.9	26.1	27.1
Current account bal.	% of GDP	1.5	9.3	7.8	8.0	8.0

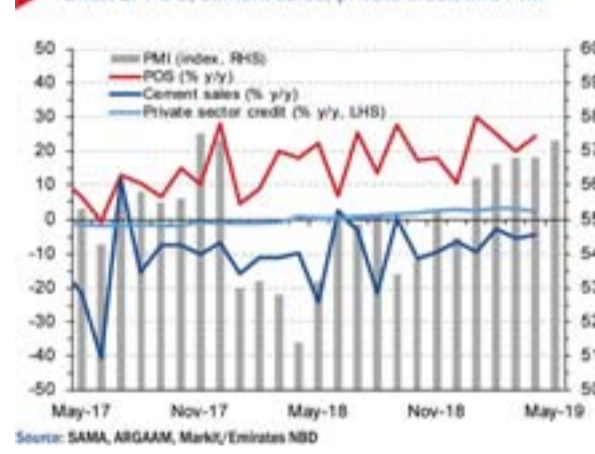
Source: Official sources, NBK estimates

Chart 1: Real GDP (% y/y)



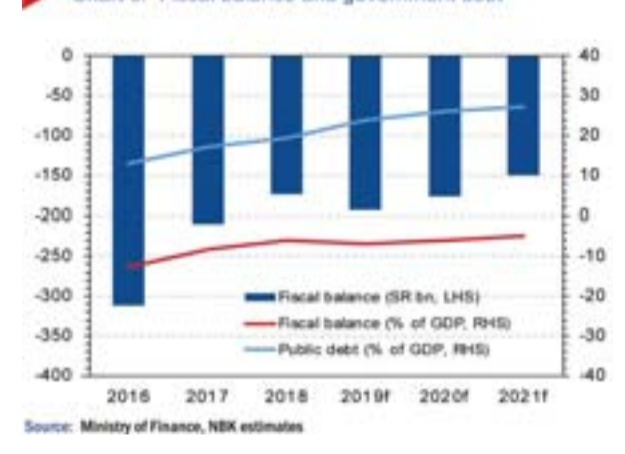
Source: Saudi General Authority for Statistics (GASTAT), NBK estimates

Chart 2: POS, cement sales, private credit and PMI



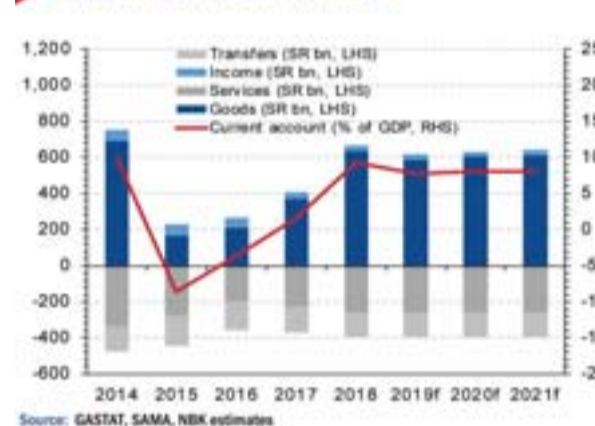
Source: SAMA, ARGAAM, Marki/Emirates NBD

Chart 3: Fiscal balance and government debt



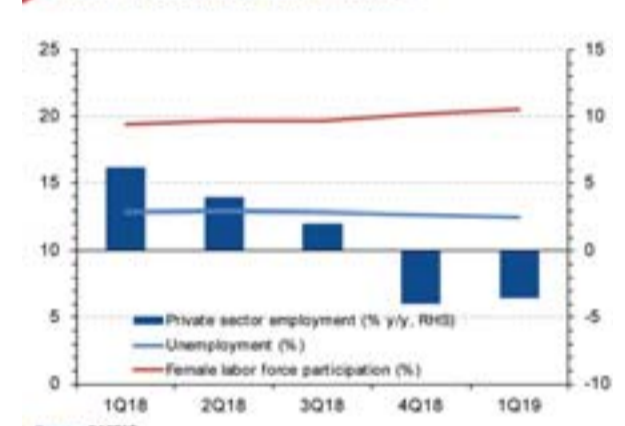
Source: Ministry of Finance, NBK estimates

Chart 4: Current account balance



Source: GASTAT, SAMA, NBK estimates

Chart 5: Saudi labor force indicators



Source: GASTAT

## US manufacturing hits 32-month low amid low demand

**WASHINGTON:** US manufacturing activity last month fell to its lowest level in nearly three years—well below the pace when President Donald Trump took office—another warning sign for the world's largest economy as it marks the longest expansion on record. The manufacturing slowdown was driven by weakening demand for US-made goods, with factories reluctant to produce stock they may not be able to sell, according to the Institute for Supply Management's monthly survey. The report coincides with precipitous drops in regional manufacturing surveys that took a hit from President Donald Trump's threats to impose tariffs on Mexican imports and the drought in new orders suffered by crisis-hit Boeing.

ISM's nationwide manufacturing index fell to its lowest level since October 2016, falling 0.4 percentage point to 51.7 percent. While that more or less matched analyst expectations and continued to indicate modest growth, it was a far cry from the blistering pace of 2018 and from the 56 percent level when Trump took office. Any reading above 50 percent

## EXCHANGE RATES

### Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.

#### EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	304.350
Euro	346.500
Sterling Pound	386.370
Canadian dollar	232.770
Turkish lira	54.190
Swiss Franc	309.770
US Dollar Buying	297.000

#### ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.808
Indian Rupees	4.410
Pakistani Rupees	1.947
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.722
Nepali Rupees	2.752
Singapore Dollar	225.280
Hongkong Dollar	39.019
Bangladesh Taka	3.588
Philippine Peso	5.967
Thai Baht	9.915
Malaysian ringgit	77.839

#### GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	81.214
Qatari Riyal	83.647
Omani Riyal	791.033
Bahraini Dinar	808.690
UAE Dirham	82.918

#### ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	21.750
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	18.240

Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.222
Tunisian Dinar	109.090
Jordanian Dinar	430.020
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	0.203
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.551

### Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	303.640
Canadian Dollar	231.025
Sterling Pound	386.455
Euro	346.375
Swiss Franc	298.070
Bahrain Dinar	807.490
UAE Dirhams	83.070
Qatari Riyals	84.310
Saudi Riyals	81.865
Jordanian Dinar	429.550
Egyptian Pound	18.210
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.719
Indian Rupees	4.379
Pakistani Rupees	1.933
Bangladesh Taka	3.596
Philippine Peso	5.904
Cyprus pound	18.065
Japanese Yen	3.825
Syrian Pound	1.590
Nepalese Rupees	2.739
Malaysian Ringgit	74.225
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	44.515
Thai Bhat	10.825

### Turkish Lira

52.785

Singapore dollars

222.971

### BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
British Pound	0.377253	0.391153
Czech Koruna	0.005473	0.014773
Danish Krone	0.041928	0.046928
Euro	0.335851	0.349551
Georgian Lari	0.106544	0.106544
Hungarian 0.000971	0.001161	
Norwegian Krone	0.031397	0.036597
Romanian Leu	0.055599	0.072449
Russian ruble	0.004818	0.004818
Slovakia	0.009097	0.019097
Swedish Krona	0.028486	0.033486
Swiss Franc	0.301743	0.312743
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.204069	0.216069
New Zealand Dollar	0.196717	0.206217
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.226362	0.235352
US Dollars	0.300250	0.305550
US Dollars Mint	0.300750	0.305550
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003007	0.003808
Chinese Yuan	0.042893	0.046393

Hong Kong Dollar	0.036918	0.039668
Indian Rupee	0.003803	0.004575
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.002723	0.002903
Korean Won	0.000250	0.000266
Malaysian Ringgit	0.070242	0.076242
Nepalese Rupee	0.002677	0.003017
Pakistan Rupee	0.001370	0.002140
Philippine Peso	0.005827	0.006127
Singapore Dollar	0.218922	0.228922
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001352	0.001932
Taiwan	0.009695	0.009875
Thai Baht	0.009590	0.010140
Vietnamese Dong	0.00013	0.00013

#### Arab

Bahraini Dinar	0.792724	0.809224
Egyptian Pound	0.018633	0.021993
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000210	0.000270
Jordanian Dinar	0.424361	0.433361
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000161	0.000251
Moroccan Dirhams	0.021368	0.045366
Omani Riyal	0.784201	0.789881
Qatar Riyal	0.079330	0.084270
Saudi Riyal	0.080073	0.081373
Syrian Pound	0.001290	0.001510
Tunisian Dinar	0.102677	0.106777
Turkish Lira	0.047418	0.057263
UAE Dirhams	0.081438	0.083138
Yemeni Riyal	0.000989	0.001069

Business

# British finance minister warns of £90bn no-deal Brexit 'hit'

## Brexit impasse wallops UK construction industry: Survey

LONDON: British Finance Minister Philip Hammond warned yesterday that a disorderly UK departure from the European Union could result in a £90 billion (\$114 billion, 100 billion euros) "hit" to the treasury. "The government's analysis suggests that in a disruptive no-deal exit, there would be a hit to the exchequer of about £90 billion pounds," he told a committee of MPs.

"That will also have to be factored in to future spending and tax decisions." Hammond also pushed back against proposed tax cuts and spending increases by the two candidates-ex-London mayor Boris Johnson and foreign minister Jeremy Hunt-ying to become the next prime minister.

He said tens of billions of pounds put aside to deal with a no-deal Brexit should not be earmarked for other purposes, after the pair outlined their plans to reduce taxes and raise public spending.

Hammond's comments also follow both contenders to replace outgoing premier Theresa May repeatedly warning they would be willing to take Britain out of the EU without an agreement at the latest delayed deadline of October 31. "We've built up around £26-27 billion pounds of fiscal headroom, and the purpose of having that headroom is precisely to protect the UK economy from the immediate effects of a possible no-deal exit," he added.

"I have no doubt whatsoever that in a no-deal exit we would need all of that money and more to respond to the immediate impacts of the disruption." That would

mean that there is no money available for... either tax cuts or spending increases." Hammond, who is almost certain to leave his post after a new Conservative leader and prime minister is selected by party members this month, hinted he may work to block a no-deal Brexit in parliament.

"It would be wrong for a British government to seek to pursue no deal as a policy," he said.

"I believe that it will be for the House of Commons, of which I will continue proudly to be a member, to ensure that that doesn't happen."

### Construction

Britain's Brexit crisis tipped the country's construction industry into its sharpest fall in a decade in June, a survey showed yesterday, in a stark sign of how quickly the world's fifth-biggest economy is slowing. The IHS Markit/CIPS construction Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) plunged to 43.1, the lowest reading since April 2009 when the country was gripped by the global financial crisis and way below any forecast in a Reuters poll of economists.

The yield on 10-year British government bonds sank to its lowest level in nearly three years as investors, already anxious about the prospect of a no-deal Brexit under the country's next prime minister, took fright at the scale of the fall.

Construction accounts for only 6 percent of Britain's economy and economists say the PMI surveys can overstate the degree

of turning points in gross domestic product. But there have been other signs that overall activity has stalled, and possibly even contracted, in the second quarter.

On Monday, a PMI for Britain's manufacturing sector—which represents 10 percent of the economy—also showed a fall in activity in June as the global economic slowdown hit demand for exports, adding to the drag from Brexit worries. Bank of England data meanwhile revealed the slowest growth in five years in borrowing by consumers, whose spending has helped cushion the economy from Brexit.

Samuel Tombs, an economist with consultancy Pantheon Macroeconomics, said the construction survey was "a worrying sign that the damage wrought by Brexit uncertainty is building".

The hit was felt across the breadth of the sector: homebuilding shrank for the first time in 17 months, commercial work fell for the sixth consecutive month and civil engineering contracted by the most since October 2009. Shares in UK housebuilders Persimmon, Taylor Wimpey and Barratt Developments all fell while the broader UK stock market was up. Tim Moore, associate director at IHS Markit, said it was "almost impossible to sugarcoat" the survey.

"In particular, new orders dropped to the largest extent for just over 10 years, while demand for construction products and materials fell at the sharpest pace since the start of 2010," he said.

There was one potential silver lining: job



British Finance Minister Philip Hammond

cuts were marginal and some firms said they had retained staff in anticipation of a recovery in sales. Tombs at Pantheon Macroeconomics said the sector could experience a quick recovery around the turn of the year, if the Brexit deadline of Oct. 31 is delayed again. In campaigning for the leadership of the ruling Conservative Party, both candidates to replace Theresa May as prime minister have said they are prepared to take the country out of the

European Union without a transition deal if necessary.

The second-quarter slowdown in the economy contrasts with a strong start to 2019, when companies rushed to get ready for the original March 29 Brexit deadline.

A PMI for Britain's dominant services sector, which is due to be published today, is expected to show only marginal growth in June, according to economists polled. — Agencies

## Stocks cautious as investors focus on weak economic data

LONDON: Investors were sticking to the sidelines yesterday as positive sentiment over a resumption of US-China trade talks was offset by weaker global economic data, traders said.

In Europe, both the French blue-chip CAC 40 index and Frankfurt's DAX 30 tumbled, even if London's FTSE index outperformed the pack and added half a percentage point. On the other side of the Atlantic, Wall Street opened almost unchanged, but subsequently fell into negative territory amid lingering trade uncertainty. "Sentiment appears a bit cautious following the release of disappointing global data and after the US threatened new tariffs on the EU," said Forex.com analyst Fawad Razaqzada. "But with G20 and OPEC meetings behind us, the focus is turning back to economic data for market participants."

Financial markets had taken cheer on Monday after US President Donald Trump and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping agreed to kick-start trade negotiations, but key questions remained unresolved, including on tech trade and intellectual property. Trump's notorious unpredictability also made investors more reluctant to place their bets, analysts said.

"The US and China are going to enter a new phase of negotiations," said Tangi Le Liboux, a strategist at the Aurel BGC brokerage in Paris. "We will have to see over com-



TOKYO: Pedestrians walk past an electronic stock indicator showing the Tokyo stock's closing rate in Tokyo yesterday. —AFP

ing weeks whether there is real progress in these talks. Don't forget that Donald Trump can put a question mark over everything with just a single Tweet." Among the weaker macroeconomic data, US manufacturing hit a 32-month low amid weakening demand, Germany's key machine-tool sector sharply downgraded its forecast for this year in the face of Brexit and the US-China trade conflict, and British construction activity contracted at its fastest rate in a decade.

Observers suggested such weak data could put further pressure on central banks to provide support to economies with fresh stimulus. Australia's central bank yesterday lowered the cost of borrowing for the second-straight month, bringing interest rates to a new historic low. In the US, the Federal Reserve is widely tipped to cut interest rates at its next policy meeting this month. The

release of a US jobs report Friday will be closely followed as a weak reading could boost the case for a big reduction.

In the eurozone, however, policymakers at the European Central Bank don't see a need to rush into a rate cut, Bloomberg reported. "Stocks may see the next catalysts stem from deteriorating economic data that will support the arguments for the Fed to deliver a stronger commitment to easing and for the other major central banks to step up their efforts," said OANDA market analyst Edward Moya.

On the oil markets, prices retreated slightly, after OPEC agreed Monday to extend by nine months daily oil output cuts aimed at supporting prices and soaking up excess supplies, following last weekend's G20 pact between cartel kingpin Saudi Arabia and non-member Russia. — AFP

## US proposes \$4bn in tariffs on a range of EU goods

WASHINGTON: The United States on Monday proposed \$4 billion in tariffs on a range of European Union products including parmesan cheese and Scotch and Irish whiskey—over subsidies for commercial aircraft. The list also includes sausages, hams, pasta, olives and many other cheeses including reggiano, provolone, edam and gouda.

"Today, the Office of the US Trade Representative is issuing for public comment a supplemental list of products that could potentially be subject to additional duties," it said in a statement.

The potential tariffs are due to "EU

subsidies on large civil aircraft," the statement said. "This supplemental list adds 89 tariff subheadings with an approximate trade value of \$4 billion to the initial list published on April 12, which included tariff subheadings with an approximate trade value of \$21 billion," it added.

For more than 14 years, Washington and Brussels have accused each other of unfairly subsidizing aviation giants Boeing and Airbus, respectively, in a tit-for-tat dispute that long predates US President Donald Trump's time in office. The Boeing-Airbus spat is the longest and most complicated dispute dealt with by the World Trade Organization, which aims to create a level playing field in global trade.

Trump has made taking aim at what he views as unfair trade practices that disadvantage the US a key goal of his presidency, and tariffs are his favored tool for doing so. The latest chapter in the US-EU trade spat comes amid a trade war between Washington and Beijing that has seen the two sides impose tariffs on hundreds of billions of dollars in two-way trade. — AFP

## Cyprus takes legal action against firms in Turkey

NICOSIA: Cyprus has launched legal proceedings against three firms that it accuses of supporting illegal Turkish oil and gas exploration in its waters, a foreign ministry official said yesterday.

"We have already initiated legal proceedings against companies cooperating with the TPAO," an official at Cyprus's foreign ministry said, referring to Turkey's national energy firm. The official said three companies and their executives were the subject of the legal action, without specifying the names or domiciles of the firms, or the jurisdiction where the complaint was filed.

The discovery of huge gas reserves in

the eastern Mediterranean has fuelled a race to tap underwater resources and stoked long-standing tensions between EU member Cyprus and Turkey. The island is divided between the internationally recognized Republic of Cyprus and a breakaway state set up after a 1974 Turkish invasion following a coup sponsored by the military junta then ruling Greece.

Cyprus had previously issued arrest warrants for the crew of a drilling vessel, the Fatih, which was deployed by Turkey to search for gas and oil in waters considered part of the EU state's exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

The Cypriot foreign ministry official said yesterday that between 10 and 20 individuals, firms and executives were now subject either to arrest warrants or other legal action, including non-Turkish persons or entities. All these actions were in relation to the deployment of the Fatih in Cyprus's EEZ, the official said, warning that similar action would be taken in the event of an anticipated breach by a second drill ship, the Yavuz. — AFP

## Brazil meat giants surge on trade deal, worries persist

RIO DE JANEIRO: Shares in Brazilian meat processing giants BRF and JBS rose sharply Monday after the signing of a historic trade deal that will open the European Union to South American agricultural products.

The EU and Mercosur trade bloc countries Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay sealed a pact Friday, ending 20 years of talks over one of the world's biggest regional commercial agreements.

Shares in BRF, one of the world's largest food companies, soared nearly nine percent on Brazil's Bovespa, while its rival JBS gained 5.5 percent, outstripping gains on the benchmark index.

While investors welcomed the accord, Brazilian farming experts expressed concern over the potential for excessive use of the deal's "precautionary principle" for food safety that enables European authorities to suspend approval for products if they perceive a risk to human, animal or plant health, even in the absence of conclusive scientific



RIO DE JANEIRO: Shares in food giant BRF soared nearly nine percent on Brazil's Bovespa Stock Exchange, while its rival JBS gained 5.5 percent following news of the Mercosur trade deal with the European Union. — AFP

evidence. "Historically Brazil has always been opposed to the inclusion of the precautionary principle, an EU demand, both in the World Trade Organization negotiation rounds and in bilateral talks," said Pedro Camargo Neto, a former president of the Brazilian Rural Society.

"In our view the rules already in place under the WTO multilateral agreement have been and still are sufficient to guarantee the health and safety of the people of the European Union," added the ex-agriculture

ministry official. A spokesman for the Brazilian Association of Meat Exporting Industries said a meeting between industry representatives and the government would be held today in the capital Brasilia to "assess the possible impacts" of the precautionary principle. "Everything has been negotiated to shield Brazil against the inappropriate use of this instrument," Pedro Miguel Costa e Silva, in charge of regional negotiations in the foreign ministry, was quoted by the economic daily Valor as saying Monday. — AFP

## Italy 2019 deficit set for 2%, Conte tells Brussels

BRUSSELS: Italy's public deficit is "perfectly on track" to reach 2.04 percent of gross domestic product in 2019, Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said yesterday, a level that would cut short any EU disciplinary procedures. "We're on track with the forecasts that we've made," Conte told journalists in Brussels.

"You'll remember the famous 2.04 percent for 2019, well we're perfectly on track." Rome and Brussels had initially agreed on the 2.04-percent figure in December, but the Italian government was forced to raise the forecast to 2.4 percent

in March given the deteriorated economic outlook. The cabinet calculated at a budget meeting late Monday that some 6.24 billion euros (\$7.0 billion) of additional revenues would now be coming in this year, while expenditure would rise only by an extra 130 million euros. Furthermore, a huge chunk of money earmarked for early retirement payments and a citizens' income for the less well-off has been frozen due to lower than expected demand.

So, the overall deficit for this year would be around 7.6 billion euros lower than anticipated, the cabinet said in a statement late Monday. "The best thing that we tell Italian citizens is that we're not cutting social or other spending, these are additional receipts," Conte said. "We made prudent estimates for some elements... this is an update to our accounts." On June 20, Conte had already suggested that Rome would achieve a deficit ratio of 2.1 percent this year, while the EU Commission is pencilling in a figure of 2.5 percent for the bloc's fourth-largest economy. — AFP

## Business

# France says 'not ready' to ratify giant Mercosur trade agreement

## Farmers and environmentalists step up resistance to accord

PARIS: France said yesterday it was "not ready" to ratify a huge trade deal agreed by the European Union and four South American countries, as farmers and environmentalists step up their resistance to the accord. The deal announced Friday by the EU and Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay is the largest ever struck by the EU.

It covers markets that total approximately 780 million consumers representing a quarter of global GDP. But while President Emmanuel Macron initially called it a "good" deal, government spokeswoman Sibeth Ndiaye said France would not be rushing to ratify it before seeing all the details.

Citing the 2017 EU-Canada trade deal, which France has yet to ratify, she told the BFM news channel: "We will do the same thing with the Mercosur countries... We will look at it in detail and depending on the details we will decide.

"France is not yet ready to ratify (the deal)," she said. The EU and Mercosur countries hailed the deal, which was 20 years in the making, as historic. EU leaders also presented it as a strong signal in favor of international trade at a time of growing protectionism in the US, which is embroiled in a trade war with China.

### 'Dark moment'

But the road to ratification by all 28 EU members could be a long one given the growing public hostility to free trade deals on the continent, even in traditionally trade-friendly countries.

Under the deal, 91 percent of customs duties on

European imports into the Mercosur countries will eventually be scrapped. In return, the EU will abolish 92 percent of duties currently imposed on South American imports. The negotiations had repeatedly stalled over the years because of opposition among European beef producers concerned about the impact of meat imports from Argentina and Brazil in particular.

The Copa-Cogeca union, which represents 23 million farmers across the EU, warned the deal "will go down in history as a very dark moment". Climate activists too have been up in arms over the deal, accusing Brazil of sacrificing its rainforests and indigenous peoples to the powerful agri-food sector.

French environmentalist and European parliamentarian Yannick Jadot said it was "shameful" of the European Commission to have signed a pact with climate-skeptic Brazilian leader Jair Bolsonaro, who has threatened to pull out of the Paris deal on tackling global warming. Under the deal, Mercosur countries will be able to export beef, sugar and poultry to Europe at preferential rates.

They will in return progressively eliminate duties on European cars and car parts, among other products, and open up their public sectors to EU companies.

The deal entails a "safeguard mechanism" allowing both parties to temporarily restrict agricultural imports in case of a deluge of imports that could harm local producers. It also contains a provision allowing European authorities to suspend approval for products that they perceive as a risk to human, animal or plant health. —AFP



OSAKA: In this handout released by Argentina's presidency, Argentina's President Mauricio Macri (left) and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker (right) greet each other as France's President Emmanuel Macron (second left), Spanish President Pedro Sanchez (third left), German Chancellor Angela Merkel (center) and EU Council President Donald Tusk look on during a press conference at the G20 Osaka Summit in Osaka. European farmers and environmentalists have denounced a historic trade deal signed between the EU and South American countries as a "dark moment", warning of unfair competition and dire consequences for the climate. —AFP

## Rich get richer, everyone else not so much in record US expansion

NEW YORK: Last month Pink Floyd frontman David Gilmour sold his guitar collection for \$21.5 million, including one piece - his famed "Black Strat" Fender Stratocaster - that went for nearly \$4 million to the owner of the US National Football League's Indianapolis Colts.

The "Money" singer set a musical instrument sales record in the charity auction, marking yet another milestone for a booming market just weeks after New York-based art dealer Sotheby's Holdings, auctioned Claude Monet's "Meules" for \$110.7 million, the most ever for an Impressionist painting.

And it is not just instruments or paintings in high demand among the world's billionaire set. Auction houses themselves now appear to be prized vanity purchases: Just a few days before the Pink Floyd auction, Franco-Israeli cable magnate Patrick Drahi, whose firm Altice earned significant money in the United States, made a \$3.7 billion bid for Sotheby's, which had just hosted the Monet sale.

Welcome to the longest US economic expansion in history, one perhaps best characterized by the excesses of extreme wealth and an ever-widening chasm between the unfathomably rich and everyone else. Indeed, as the expansion entered its record-setting 121st month on Monday, signs of a new Gilded Age are all over.

Big-money deals are getting bigger, from corporate mergers and acquisitions, to individuals buying luxury penthouses, sports teams, yachts and all-frills pilgrimages to the ends of the earth. And while these deals grab headlines, there is a deeper trend at work. The number of billionaires in the United States has more than doubled in the last decade, from 267 in 2008 to 607 last year, according to UBS.

"The rich have gotten richer and they've gotten richer faster," said John Mathews, Head of Private Wealth Management and Ultra High Net Worth at UBS Global Wealth Management. "The drive or the desire for consumption has just gone upscale." But there are also signs of struggle and stagnation at lower-income levels. The wealthiest fifth of Americans hold 88 percent of the country's wealth, a share that has grown since before the crisis, Federal Reserve data through 2016 shows. Meanwhile, the number of people receiving federal food stamps tops 39 million, below the peak in 2013 but still up 40 percent from 2008 even though the country's population has only grown about 8 percent.

Still, a decade ago, this kind of growth was not thought possible. The US financial system was in a shambles and people feared bank failures could permanently undermine capitalism. Policymakers scrambled to stabilize markets and boost asset prices when US housing markets unraveled. They did less to tackle income and wealth inequality.

Now, many of the signs of mega-wealth that preceded that financial crisis are once again on display.

The examples are big and small. The cost of a dinner at the French Laundry, the chic California restaurant, is up 35 percent to \$325 per person, from \$240 10 years ago, beating inflation by nearly 20 percent. Undergraduate tuition at Ivy League mainstay Columbia University is a hair under \$60,000 a year, up by half from \$39,000 in the 2008 school year. —Reuters

## Natural gas boom on a 'collision course' with Paris climate goals

PARIS: A global boom in natural gas pipelines and terminals is putting the energy industry on a "collision course" with the Paris climate goals, according to a new analysis of investment in the world's new favorite fuel.

More than 200 liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals are either under construction or in planning worldwide, mainly in North America, representing an outlay of \$1.3 trillion (1.15 trillion euros) according to data compiled by an industry watchdog.

The Paris deal in 2015 saw nations commit to limiting global temperature rises to "well below" two degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit) and to a safer cap of 1.5C if possible. To do so, scientists say the world must drastically slash its greenhouse gas emissions, a large proportion of which comes from burning fossil fuels for energy.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says that the safest way to reach for 1.5C would involve an immediate drawdown in fossil fuels, including a 75-percent cut in the con-

sumption of natural gas — in all its forms — by mid-century.

### Yet gas is booming.

According to the International Energy Association, gas consumption rose 4.6 percent in 2018 alone, accounting for nearly half of the global increase in energy demand. The surge was put down to ballooning production in the US and an insatiable demand for alternatives to coal in China. Industry and many governments argue that LNG is a so-called "bridge fuel" between coal and renewables such as wind and solar. But there is growing concern over the environmental cost of gas, for while it is better for the planet than coal, it also produces the potent greenhouse gases that are warming our atmosphere.

A report yesterday by Global Energy Monitor said that the scale of LNG expansion currently unfolding around the world could have a potentially larger impact on global warming than the expansion of coal-fired power plants.

This is down to the amount of methane LNG produces when it is extracted and transported. Methane is more than 80 times more potent in the short-term than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas. "The LNG boom is happening incredibly fast, just as methane is turning out to be a significantly worse actor than had been realised," said Ted Nace, executive director of Global Energy Monitor. "Even today, there's still talk of natural gas as a

## Brexit, economic fears send pound to two-week lows

LONDON: Sterling hit a two-week low against the dollar yesterday as surveys signalled the steepest reduction in construction output since the financial crisis, while Brexit developments continued to weigh on investors' minds.

The pound was down 0.2 percent at \$1.2615, having earlier touched a low of \$1.2607 after a British

## Export-dependent German industry feels pain of trade conflicts

BERLIN: Three German industry groups slashed their production forecasts for this year yesterday, citing trade conflicts that have plunged Germany's export-dependent manufacturers into a recession that is hindering growth in Europe's biggest economy.

Germany's export prowess had given it nine successive years of growth. But over-dependence on exports has made it vulnerable to prolonged trade conflicts, which have become a threat to an economy that's forecast to expand by just 0.5 percent this year.

The DIHK Chambers of Industry and Commerce more than halved its forecast for export growth forecast this year to 1 percent from a previous estimate of 2.5 percent. "Trade disputes and growing protectionism in many parts of the world are increasingly becoming reality for German companies abroad," the DIHK said. It added that growing skepticism about the world economy in many industrialized countries would weaken

demand for machines, services and cars made in Germany, where one in three jobs depends on exports.

Echoing this sense of gloom, the VDA carmakers' association said car sales in Europe would shrink by 1 percent this year. Sales in China were expected to fall 4 percent compared with 2018.

The auto industry, which accounts for 840,000 jobs in Germany, is grappling with a diesel emissions scandal that has cost it billions of euros and a switch to electric cars that puts at risk 75,000 jobs.

Carmakers are also facing the challenge of tougher emissions standards and a threat by US President Donald Trump to impose tariffs on cars imported from the European Union. Trump's trade war with China is a bigger concern for German exports, which rely on the world's two largest economies for growth.

The VDMA engineering association yesterday said the retaliatory tariffs on imported goods imposed by the United States and China would contribute to a 2 percent decline in production this year.

Other risks include uncertainties linked to Britain's planned departure from the European Union, Italy's confrontation with the EU over its fiscal plans, and rising tensions between Iran and the United States.



More than 200 liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals are either under construction or in planning worldwide, mainly in North America, representing an outlay of \$1.3 trillion (euros) according to data compiled by an industry watchdog. —AFP

bridge towards renewables, which is completely contrary to the facts."

### 'Locking in climate change'

A growing body of evidence suggests that upstream oil and gas activities are incompatible with mankind's plan to avert runaway planetary warming. A peer-reviewed study this week warned that future CO2 emissions from existing and proposed energy infrastructure would render the 1.5C limit unreachable.

It was published in the scientific journal Nature by a team of researchers from the United States and China. In April the campaign group Global Witness said that any new investment in fossil fuel exploration was incompatible with the Paris goals — and found that oil and gas majors planned to invest \$5 trillion doing precisely in years to come. Nace said all new pipeline investment risked being lost as the world transitions to greener energy solutions. —AFP

going to be the next British prime minister and the chances of the new leader striking a Brexit transition deal with the European Union before an Oct. 31 deadline.

"People have already baked in pretty weak expectations" regarding the state of the UK economy and recent mixed data "makes it quite difficult to try and judge the underlying growth," said Paul Hollingsworth, London-based UK economist at BNP Paribas. Moreover, "markets have been focused more on politics than the economy," Hollingsworth said.

Both candidates to lead the governing Conservative party - former London mayor Boris Johnson and foreign secretary Jeremy Hunt - have promised to increase spending and cut taxes. —Reuters



FRANKFURT AM MAIN: Traton SE chairman Andreas Renschler poses walks past the bull stature in front of the stock exchange in Frankfurt am Main, western Germany where the launch of the company's initial public offer took place on June 28, 2019. —AFP

"All this negatively influences investments, which would be delayed or cancelled," VDMA said.

The economy has been relying on domestic demand for growth. A consumption-driven growth cycle, helped by low interest rates, generous pay increases and

record-low unemployment, is so far compensating for the weakening exports. But there are fears that the slowdown in manufacturing could soon spread, increasing the risk of a recession. The Bundesbank has said economic output will fall slightly in the second quarter. —Reuters

What's On



# LOYAC launches 'Kon Social Entrepreneurship' programme



For the fourth year in a row and in collaboration with Babson College; the leading American college in social entrepreneurship, LOYAC recently launched its 'Kon Social Entrepreneurship' programme with platinum sponsorship from NBK, golden sponsorship from ZAIN and bronze sponsorship from Agility. The program is also hosted at AUK's continuous education center.

In this regard, LOYAC's deputy chairperson, Fadiya Al-Marzouq stressed the significance of entrepreneurship in developing national economy adding that the value of such projects lies in the social value they add to societies.

On her part, LOYAC's social creativity manager, Iman Al-Omar explained that the six-week program targets children ageing 12-16 years and that it is designed to develop their talents and skills to prepare them for the labor market.



## CBK holds job fair for disabled

Within its social responsibility activities, the Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) recently took part in the first Job Fair for the Disabled organized by the Public Authority for the disabled under the slogan of 'Partners in Employing Them'. CBK team visited the training location where a number of disabled citizens undergo a customer care training course.

Speaking on the occasion, CBK's senior human resources manager, Mohammed Al-Ballam said that it was integral to integrate disabled citizens in various state sectors through employing them and enrolling them in the economic development process.



## Student visa days at the US Embassy during July and August

The US Embassy's Consular Section will hold two Student Visa Days on July 16 and August 6, 2019 to support students currently studying or planning to study in the United States. The Embassy offers student visa appointments every day. However, hundreds of additional appointments will be offered to students who apply on Student Visa Days.

Encouraging Kuwaiti students to

pursue higher educational opportunities in the U.S. is one of the top priorities of the US Mission. Students should visit [www.ustraveldocs.com](http://www.ustraveldocs.com) to apply for their visa and schedule their interview. Student applicants should bring an original I-20 and a SEVIS receipt to their appointment. Follow us on our social media platforms for updated information. Visit us @ <https://kw.usembassy.gov> @USEmbassyQ8

## Immerse into the perfect escape this summer with Talise Spa at Jumeirah Messilah Hotel

This summer, treat yourself to exclusive spa indulgences at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa. Suffused with peaceful beauty and focused on sensory experiences to offer the perfect escape, Talise spa is nestled within an exclusive environment designed for your utmost rejuvenation and relaxation.

Experience a blend of luxury and well-being by indulging in an exclusive new 120-minute treatment, Amra 24kt Golden Opulence. The ultimate in opulence and splendor, this ritual engulfs the senses and engages the mind to the most enigmatic experience. The journey starts with a 24kt Gold foot ritual to ease the pressures of the day, then relax and unwind with the aroma of sumptuous elegance of rich amber top notes of effervescent citrus on a sumptuous heart of aromatic herbs, perfectly nestling on a base of rich woods and musk. After a complimentary body cleanse, the body is drizzled with pure 24kt Gold Body Oil and massaged with AMRA 24kt Gold Plated Hot stones. The journey concludes with the body being encapsulated by the Golden Splendor of AMRA's infamous precious drops of gold, leaving the skin captivating and you radiant.

Embrace vitality, beauty and achieve exquisite inner balance with the 120-minute treatment Summer Delight. This is a perfect experience commencing with the cleansing Moroccan Hammam, followed by a relaxing full body massage before concluding with an uplifting foot ritual.

Guests looking for a truly indulgent and relaxing experience this



summer can opt for the 90-minute treatment, Top to Toe. Start your experience with a full body muscle melting massage to release muscle tension, continuing with a soothing scalp and foot massage and concluding with a nourishing personalized facial. Recreate a synergy of mind, body and soul with the Summer Soother treatment that promises to make you radiant, hydrated and luminous. The luxurious 90-minute ritual includes full body exfoliation followed by a relaxing body massage and finished with a revitalizing foot treatment and soothing body butter application. Ladies and Gents can re-energize with exclusive membership packages at Talise Spa. Members will have unlimited access to a state-of-the-art gym, hydro pool, sauna, steam, snow room, experience showers and the Himalayan salt room. They can also pamper themselves with their array of complimentary treatments including one session each of The Cure Facial, Ultimate Aromatherapy Experience Massage, three Yoga sessions, access to the Spa Wellness classes and more exciting benefits.

## Mazhavillu Salmiya Zone begins free Malayalam classes

MarThoma Yuvajana Sakhyam free Malayalam Classes "Mazhavillu" conducted in Salmiya Zone was inaugurated by Rev Shibu K. (Vicar - St James MarThoma Church). The meeting started with the opening prayer by Jibin Jee (Sakhyam Secretary). Rev Baiju Samuel (Vicar - Kuwait City MarThoma Parish) presided over the function.

The Malayalam Basha Padana Kalari is being conducted for the past ten years under the leadership of Kuwait City MarThoma Yuvajana Sakhyam. Solos were performed by Anna Elizabeth Raju

and Joven C. Jose. Text books were distributed to the teachers Mrs. Rachell Oommen, Mrs. Chechamma Sunu, Mrs. Annie George, Mrs. Reeja Mathew and Mrs. Sharon Melvin by Rev. Shibu K. (St James MarThoma Church).

Jebin Abraham (Vice President) welcomed all and Parimanam Manoj (Convener) proposed the vote of thanks. Melvin George (Convener) compered the program. Those who are willing to send the children for free Malayalam classes may please contact: 97542985, 99691201.



KUWAIT: Kyrgyzstan Ambassador to Kuwait Samar Gyul Adamkulouva hosted a farewell dinner for outgoing colleague Erlanusbaev at the Embassy. Diplomats of Kyrgyzstan community, members and media persons attend the event. — Photos by Yasser Zayyat

# Antarctic sea ice in dizzying decline since 2014: Study

**WASHINGTON:** After mysteriously expanding for decades, Antarctica's sea ice cover melted by an area four times greater than France in just a few years and now stands at a record low, according to a study published Monday.

Scientists already knew Antarctica was thawing at an increasing rate, like the Arctic, because of accelerating discharge from glaciers, the rivers of ice that push up slowly against the shore.

But between 1979 and 2014, they observed a phenomenon that was both intriguing and reassuring: the sea ice cover was expanding.

From 2014 to 2017, however, "the Antarctic lost almost as much as the Arctic" over almost 40 years, NASA climatologist Claire Parkinson told AFP, and the trend has continued ever since.

From a peak area of 12.8 million square kilometers, the sea ice cover receded two million square kilometers for reasons that remain unknown.

"It went from its 40-year high in 2014, all the way down in 2017 to its 40-year low," said Parkinson, whose findings were published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS).

The team analyzed microwave measurements from NASA and military satellites over the period to build up the most precise picture to date of the historic sea ice cover, measuring only area but not thickness.

Neither the reason for the earlier expansion nor the

current decline are well understood. Competing hypotheses exist, pinning the changes on everything from the hole in the ozone layer to shifting winds and ocean currents, but it's far from clear cut.

"None of the hypotheses are good in my opinion," said Douglas Martinson, an oceanographer from Columbia University, one of the paper's peer reviewers.

But he cautioned against trying to apply findings from the Arctic to the Antarctic, saying it would be "like comparing apples to army trucks."

The Arctic is an ocean surrounded by land, while Antarctica is a continent surrounded by oceans, where icebergs are less constrained.

Unlike the Arctic, Antarctica is not warming and remains the coldest place on Earth, as well as its largest source of freshwater.

Its mountains are covered in ice are capable of raising the level of the oceans by 57 meters, according to a 2013 study.

Chris Rapley, a climate scientist from the University College of London, said the previous gains did not in any way undermine the thesis of global warming.

"It simply demonstrates that in a complex, interconnected system, counter-intuitive outcomes can occur—at least for a while.

"We have a tendency to seek simplistic explanations of cause and effect, when in reality the situation is much more complicated and nuanced." — AFP

## French doctors to end life support in right-to-die case

**LILLE:** French doctors are set to begin removing life support from paralysed road accident victim Vincent Lambert yesterday, in what could be the final act in a hugely controversial right-to-die case that has drawn in Pope Francis.

The main doctor treating Lambert, Vincent Sanchez, informed his family by email that he intended to start removing his feeding tubes in line with a French court ruling last Friday, according to the message that was shared with AFP.

The doctor urged family members to ensure that "support to Mr Vincent Lambert is as peaceful, intimate and personal as possible". Lambert, 42, has been in a vegetative state since a 2008 car accident, with the question of whether to continue keeping him alive artificially bitterly dividing his family and the nation.

Legal battles in French and European courts over the last six years have pitted Lambert's Catholic parents and

two of his siblings—who want to keep him alive—against his wife and six other brothers and sisters.

His wife Rachel, who is his legal guardian under French law, has maintained that Lambert had made clear before the accident that he would not want to be kept alive artificially, though this was never put in writing.

Multiple medical assessments over the years ordered by the courts have found that Lambert, a former psychiatric nurse, has no chance of recovering. Doctors at the hospital in Reims, northern France, have made five attempts previously to remove life support before being forced to reinstate it following court rulings obtained by Lambert's parents.

The last attempt to remove his tubes was made in May this year, but was then overturned by a Paris appeals court. The UN committee on disabled rights has also asked France to keep Lambert alive while it conducts its own investigation into his fate—a request the French government has rejected as non-binding.

In what was hailed as a definitive legal judgement by a lawyer representing Lambert's wife, France's top appeals court, the Cour de Cassation, ruled last Friday that life support could be turned off.

The case has rekindled a charged debate over France's right-to-die laws, which allow so-called "passive" euthanasia for severely ill or injured patients who are being kept alive with no chance of recovery. — AFP

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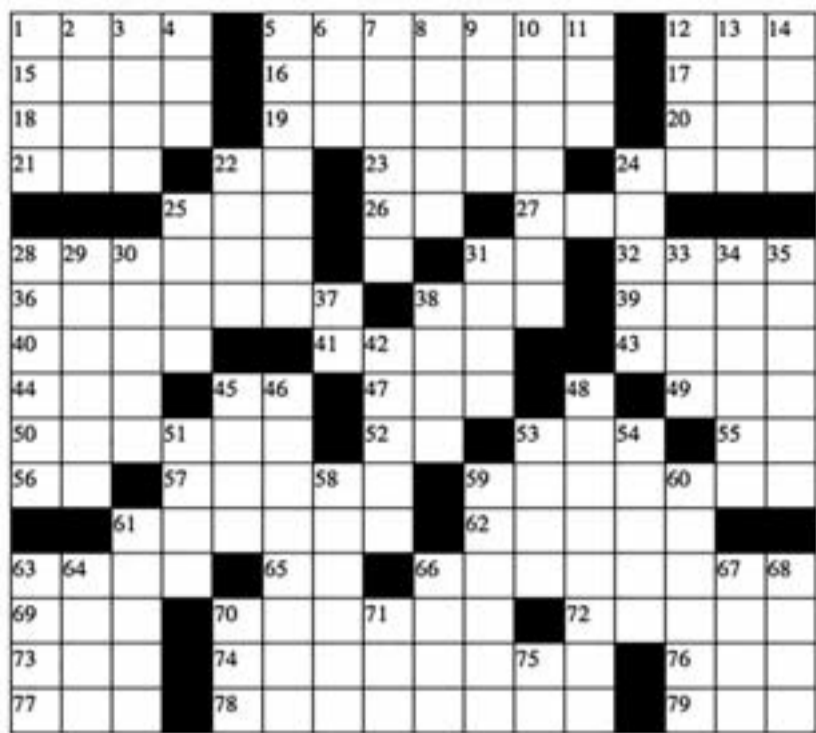
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Stars

CROSSWORD 2247



ACROSS

1. A French abbot.
5. An irregularly shaped spot.
12. The syllable naming the first (tonic) note of any major scale in solmization.
15. A sudden short attack.
16. make ready or suitable in advance for a particular purpose or for some use, event, etc.
17. Any of various primates with short tails or no tail at all.
18. In bed.
19. Of or related to the pain of angina pectoris.
20. Goddess of the dead and queen of the underworld.
21. A room or establishment where alcoholic drinks are served over a counter.
23. Any of several large turkey-like game birds of the family Cracidae.
26. The square of a body of any size of type.
27. A young woman making her debut into society.
28. A city in central Tanzania.
32. A Scottish word.
36. (anatomy) Occurring singly.
39. Indicating the most important performer or role.
40. Tree bearing large brown nuts containing e.g. caffeine.
41. A small nail.
43. The basic monetary unit of most members of the European Union (introduced in 1999).
44. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
47. A federal agency established to coordinate programs aimed at reducing pollution and protecting the environment.
49. Long and light rowing boat.
50. A state in the United States in the central Pacific on the Hawaiian Islands.
52. A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
55. A soft yellow malleable ductile (trivalent and univalent) metallic element.
56. Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).
57. A republic in eastern Africa.
62. Tree (as opposed to shrub).
63. (Scottish) Bluish-black or gray-blue.
65. The fifth day of the week.
69. An associate degree in applied science.
72. Arm again.
73. A luminance unit equal to 1 candle per square meter measured perpendicular to the rays from the source.
74. The state capital of South Australia.
76. Tag the base runner to get him out.
77. Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
78. A great raja.
79. A knockout declared by the referee who judges one boxer unable to continue.

DOWN

1. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
2. A small cake leavened with yeast.
3. A coffin along with its stand.
4. A doctor's degree in education.
5. A German machine gun.
6. According to need (physicians use PRN in writing prescriptions).
7. Having legs of a specified kind or number.
8. An addictive narcotic extracted from seed capsules of the opium poppy.
9. (Irish) Mother of the Tuatha De Danann.
10. The father of your father or mother.
11. The fatty flesh of eel.
12. Tropical woody herb with showy yellow flowers and flat pods.
13. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
14. Goddess of the dead and queen of the underworld.
22. Edible starchy tuberous root of taro plants.
24. Lower in esteem.
25. A one-piece cloak worn by men in ancient Rome.
29. Not divided into zones.
30. A rule made by a local authority to regulate its own affairs.
31. An informal term for a father.
33. (Sumerian) Sun god.
34. A long noosed rope used to catch animals.
35. A funnel-shaped device towed as a target by an airplane.
37. A metallic element having four allotropic forms.
38. Plant with an elongated head of broad stalked leaves resembling celery.
42. A summary that repeats the substance of a longer discussion.
45. A German art song of the 19th century for voice and piano.
46. Pearl oysters.
48. Biennial or perennial herbs of north temperate regions.
51. Widely cultivated in tropical and subtropical regions for its fragrant flowers and colorful fruits.
53. Queen of England as the 6th wife of Henry VIII (1512-1548).
54. Language used in a figurative or nonliteral sense.
58. A name for the Old Testament God as transliterated from the Hebrew YHWH.
59. Small genus of Asian evergreen trees having columnar crowns and distinguished by leaves lacking a midrib.
60. A Buddhist who has attained nirvana.
61. Follower of Rastafarianism.
64. Concerning those not members of the clergy.
66. Any culture medium that uses agar as the gelling agent.
67. A republic in the Middle East in western Asia.
68. A platform raised above the surrounding level to give prominence to the person on it.
70. A rapid escape (as by criminals).
71. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
75. A person who announces and plays popular recorded music.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

This is a great time for your close relationships. They seem to take on more emotional depth, power, and mean more to you now. You are finally starting to realize you need the support of those closest to you for you to thrive. No one should take on as much responsibility as you attempt to handle on your own. Remember to be humble. It is ok to ask for help and to admit you can not do everything on your own. This is a difficult thing for you to do, due to the desire you have to be totally independent. No man is an island.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You have always had a soft heart. There is a special place in your heart for children. You seem to be drawn to their innocence. Today you may find the opportunity to spend some special time with a child who is special to you. This is a great opportunity to spend use some of your creative energy to express your feelings. An art project with this child would be a wonderful way to spend your time this evening. Nothing compares to time spent with a child with a paintbrush in their hand. You may see an undeniable sense of admiration in the eyes of this child. Little things mean a lot to little ones.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You are able to see what future brings very clearly now. You can see the road ahead and you are ready to move forward. You are able to make clear decisions and things really seem to be falling into place for you. Progress at this time is easy. You may feel invincible. Be careful not to bite off more than you can chew now. You tend to be overconfident and not put much thought into your decisions. You are very optimistic and may find yourself taking chances you would usually refrain from taking. You may spend much time exploring your emotions and this could be a time you get in touch with your roots and find purpose in your life.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

A need to be respected seems to be a very emotionally charged issue in your life. You will not settle for anyone to treat you any other way. They can either treat you with respect or they have no place in your world. It seems you have a knack for not only organizing things but also organizing the people around you. You are able to put each person into the position they will be most productive. This does not go unnoticed in the workplace. It seems as if your upper management may have their eyes on you. You exhibit management qualities and may soon find yourself offered a new position or you may be asked to lead a new project. Shoot for the stars.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your independence is not always looked at with envy. At times others feel as if you may think you are above them. They see it as an insult that you refuse to include them in your projects and exclude them from the decision making process in the work place. We are all surrounded by someone who looks for reasons to be offended. These are not the most pleasant people to have in our lives. Do not take offense to their attitude. Instead push on and do your thing.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Contrast is evident in your life today. That's doesn't have to mean conflict. There is a difference. Cultivate your fun-loving, romantic side. But, don't ignore your uncomfortable, needy feelings. Your insecurities make you more compassionate toward those who are looking for comfort. They will find you reassuring. You will bring peace into the lives of others today.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Love and expressing all the deep emotions you have for others becomes very important to you. You may be feeling a need to be needed. Never doubt that you are. You may find yourself in deep appreciation of everyone and everything around you. You are able to find beauty in every situation and in everything that surrounds you. This is time in your life filled with love and others are drawn to your loving ways and kind heart. Be careful today, as all around you becomes so appealing. You may want steer clear of the mall to resist the urge to bring all that catches your eye home with you. Libra, a shopping spree could not only find you loving all you see, but also wanting to bring home everything you see!



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

The sky is the limit. You feel unstoppable. It seems you are deep in reflection and past experiences are helping you deal with your present circumstances. You may realize there is someone in your life you need to forgive in order to be able to move forward. You're experiencing a more sensitive side and putting more thought into seeing things from other people's point of view. This helps you understand those close to you better and helps dissolve boundaries that have been standing in your way. This helps bring more peace into your life and harmony into your world.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You may feel as if the sky is the limit today. There are no limits to what you can accomplish when you set your mind to it. Focus and determination are your friends today. You are optimistic and have faith in yourself and your abilities. You may find this to be a great time to explore your emotions and feelings. You may be feeling some sort of restlessness. An emotional experience, a sort of divine wanderlust is what you crave.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

This may be a great day to enjoy a good book or catch a movie. An escape from reality may be just what you need. This could clear your mind and leave you feeling refreshed and rejuvenated. You feel your most secure when surrounded by friends. You may be feeling a real need for a change in your life. You may feel as if you want to throw out the old and bring in the new. You have had this on your mind for a while and today seems the day you really begin to act on it. It seems a change in the right direction may bring great reward into your life. You will send enjoy world you have no desire to escape from.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

This is a great time of understanding in your world. You could find yourself really enjoying a special time with someone you love. Your world is full of love, optimism, and faith. What a wonderful time full of wonderful feelings! You may feel led to take a chance on a deep emotional level. This risk could bring great reward into your world. This is a time you are truly exploring your feelings, you are experiencing a new emotional experience. This is a wonderful feeling and a wonderful time in your life. You are ready to experience all the world has to offer you.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Things really seem to be going your way. You find this a time you are filled with appreciation. You can truly enjoy your life situation now. Your senses are heightened. Your taste is impeccable. You will be able to use this to your benefit in any decorating you do or any purchases you make now. You may find others seek your opinion in many aspects of their own life. If anyone is trusted to make the right choices and right decisions, it is you.

Wordsearch Puzzle

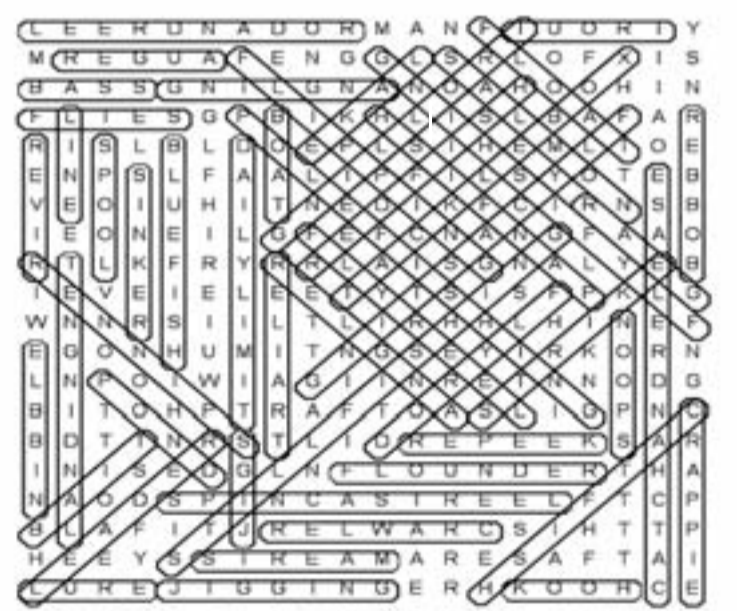
Homophones

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



- |          |           |          |        |
|----------|-----------|----------|--------|
| AIRLESS  | FISHER    | KNEADING | ROOT   |
| HEIRLESS | FISSURE   | NEEDING  | ROUTE  |
| ALLOWED  | FRAYS     | MARQUEE  | ROUGH  |
| ALLOID   | PHRASE    | MARQUEZ  | RUFF   |
| BALD     | GILDED    | MUSTARD  | SCENE  |
| BAWLED   | GUILD     | MUSTERED | SEEN   |
| BERRIES  | GRAFT     | OVERDO   | SUITE  |
| BURIES   | GRAPHED   | OVERDUE  | SWEET  |
| CLICK    | HANDMADE  | PACED    | THRONE |
| CLIQUE   | HANDMAID  | PASTE    | THROWN |
| CUED     | INVADE    | PRAISE   | WAST   |
| QUEUED   | INVEIGHED | FRAYS    | WASTE  |
| FARROW   | JEWEL     | REEK     |        |
| PHARAOH  | SOULE     | WREAK    |        |

Canada Day

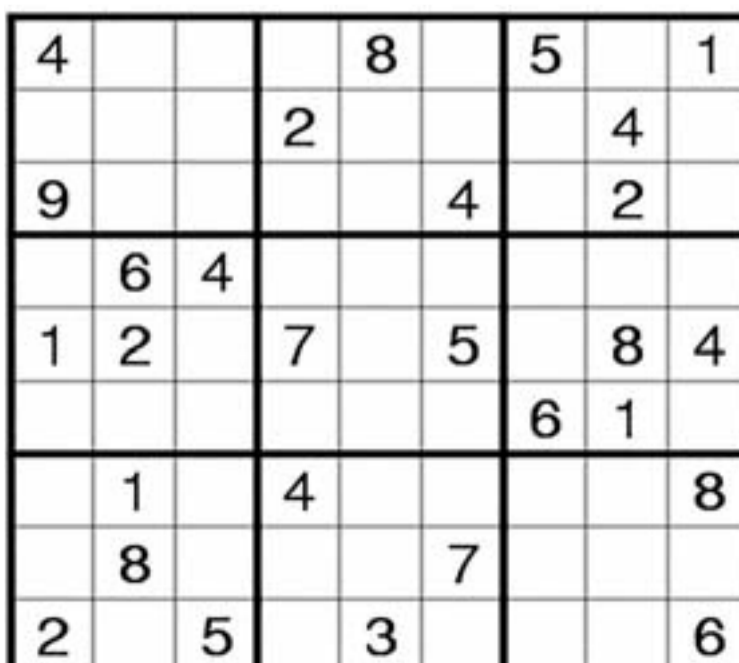


The hidden message is: CANADA IS FREE AND FREEDOM IS ITS NATIONALITY.

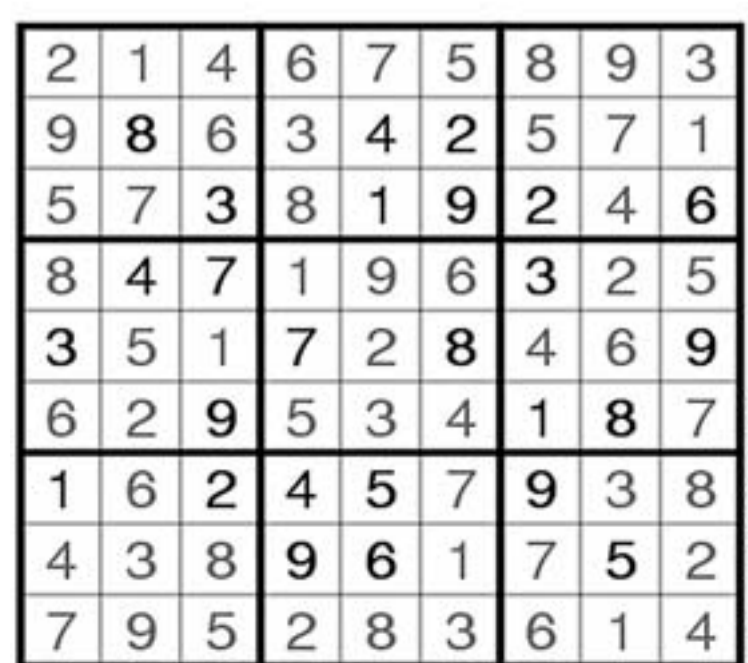
Yesterday's Solution



Daily Sudoku



Yesterday's Solution



# Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, JULY 3, 2019



A boy walks on the top of a Soviet era monument for Ukraine and Russia union in Kiev. — AFP

## BIG CATS OF INSTAGRAM: PAKISTANI ELITE'S LOVE OF EXOTIC WILDLIFE



A caretaker walks with a white lion at a private zoo in Karachi.



A lion and lioness are pictured in a cage at a private zoo in Karachi.



Bilal Mansoor Khawaja, a private zoo owner, looks at his white lions in Karachi.

**B**ilal Mansoor Khawaja beams as he runs his palms over the ivory coast of a white lion, one of thousands of exotic animals at his personal "zoo" in Karachi, where a thriving wildlife trade caters to Pakistan's gilded elite. "These are... (some) of the rarest animals I own," boasts the 29-year-old industrialist of his leashed lion. Pakistani laws make it easy to import exotic animals, but once inside the country regulation is almost non-existent. This has led to an untold number of such creatures—especially big cats, seen as symbols of wealth and power—being imported or bred across Pakistan in recent years, much to the horror of helpless wildlife officials.

Social media is littered with videos of wealthy Karachiites cruising with lions sitting in the front seats of luxury SUVs, while newspapers have featured reports of arrests of residents brazenly taking their big cats out for strolls and drives. Khawaja estimates there are up to 300 lions within Karachi's city limits alone, kept in gardens, inside rooftop cages, and at farm houses across the sun-baked metropolis of about 20 million—notorious for its grinding traffic, crumbling infrastructure, and lack of green spaces. Khawaja calls his handful of lions and a tiger the "crown jewels" of a larger collection of more than 4,000 animals he has amassed in recent years.

He insists his collection—made up of some 800 different species—is not about status or prestige but simply a manifestation of his love for pets. "We Pakistanis have a problem: where our heart is soft, it's very soft. Where it's hard, it's very hard," he gushes. To care for his flock, he has more than 30 people working in shifts and four vets on staff. The entire operation costs a fortune, Khawaja admits, although he refuses to provide an estimate of just how much he shelled out for his personal zoo. But the cost and the series of minor injuries he has accrued over the years at the hands of his prized pets are well worth it, he claims. "With every injury my love for these animals... grows more," he smiles. His nine-acre property where a portion of his animals, including zebras, flamingos, and horses, reside is smack in the middle of a dense neighborhood in the megacity.

### Lion farming

Exotic animal dealer Aleem Paracha, who claims to be one of the top three importers of exotic animals in Karachi, says that for 1.4 million rupees (\$9,000) he can deliver a white lion to a client in up to 48 hours—and do so entirely legally. Certificates from the countries of origin along with permits from authorities are provided for any animal brought into Pakistan in accordance with an international treaty to protect endangered species.

But Paracha says there is also a network of breeders across Pakistan that can also provide lions at a moment's notice, including at least 30 in Karachi. "In Karachi, lion farming is going very well," he explains. And while indigenous species are fiercely protected in Pakistan, the same protections are not extended to imported animals. The government has guidelines regarding the treatment and type of enclosures big cats and other exotic species should be provided with.

But "the law is silent" on breeding, explains Javed Mahar, head of Sindh province's wildlife department. Uzma Khan, a technical advisor with the World Wildlife Fund, says there is not even an authority monitoring government-run zoos, which are notorious for neglect, let alone the private sector. "There's lots of private breeders and they are very shady," Khan adds.



In this picture Bilal Mansoor Khawaja, a private zoo owner, sits with his white lion in Karachi. — AFP photos

### 'The law is silent'

Meanwhile owners like Khawaja may have the means and passion to provide the hearty diet for their animals, but others have been known to fall short. Karachi veterinarian Isma Gheewala says lions suffering from calcium deficiencies are common at her clinic, where she says she has treated between 100 to 150 big cats over the years. "The bones become extremely brittle," she says. "And even if they jump like a foot down, they will injure some bone or the other and then it takes a long time for the animals to recover."

But both Paracha and Khawaja dismiss claims they are doing anything harmful by taking exotic species out of their natural habitat and raising them in Pakistan. "A lot of animals, either they're extinct or they're on the edge of being extinct," argues Khawaja, adding: "I don't want the next generations to not see these animals." But conservationists like Khan at the WWF dismiss such arguments. She explains: "An animal in captivity is not the way it is in the wild. 'What's the point of having an animal which is not hunting, which is in a cage not showing its natural behavior?'" — AFP

After backlash, **Kardashian** drops 'Kimono' name from underwear line

**"K**imono" is now a no no, Kim Kardashian West said Monday. The pop culture icon announced that she will change the name of her new "Kimono" line of underwear, after being accused of cultural appropriation. Kardashian, who is married to rapper Kanye West, sparked a social media storm last week when she unveiled the new line, with some in Japan accusing her of disrespecting the traditional outfit. Following the backlash, which included the trending Twitter hashtag #KimOhNo, Kardashian revealed on Twitter and to her 142 million followers on Instagram that she would change the name.

"When I announced the name of my shapewear line, I did so with the best intentions in mind," Kardashian said. "My brands and products are built with inclusivity and diversity at their core and after careful thought and consideration, I will be launching my Solutionwear brand under a new name," she said. Once a standard of the Japanese wardrobe, the kimono is now often reserved for special occasions, such as weddings and coming-of-age ceremonies, and is mostly worn by women. The mayor of Japan's ancient capital Kyoto was among those who asked the reality television star to consider renaming her shapewear line.

"Kimono is a traditional ethnic dress fostered in our rich nature and history," Kyoto Mayor Daisaku Kadokawa wrote in a letter to Kardashian. "(I) ask you to reconsider your decision of using the name Kimono in your trademark," Kadokawa said. Explaining her decision to change the name, Kardashian said "being an entrepreneur and my own boss has been one of the most rewarding challenges I've been blessed with in my life." — AFP



In this file photo Kim Kardashian and Kanye West arrive for the 2019 Met Gala at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. — AFP



Models present creations by Christian Dior during the Women's Fall-Winter 2019/2020 Haute Couture collection fashion show in Paris. — AFP photos

# OFF WITH THEIR HEELS! DIOR LEADS FOOTWEAR REVOLUTION



Lebanese fashion blogger Lana El Sahely poses prior to the start of the Christian Dior Women's Fall-Winter 2019/2020 Haute Couture collection fashion show in Paris.

Off with their heels! Dior had fashionistas rocking back on their stilettos Monday by taking footwear down to earth with a bump in its Paris haute couture show. Citing a famous quote that high heels "were nothing but a modern version of Chinese foot binding", proudly feminist designer Maria Grazia Chiuri went full tilt for the liberating power of flats. She took a saw to the tottering stiletto to create black elasticated spartan sandals that almost doubled as tights, giving them "a couture allure that also frees up movement so you can be in contact with nature," she told AFP.

On a day when women creators dominated the Paris catwalks, the Dutch designer Iris van Herpen also sheared off her heels, cantilevering the stilettos that went with her stunning ethereal creations which are unlike anything else in fashion. The big innovations in Dior's almost entirely black autumn winter collection were the gothy thigh-length sandals, punky feathered tights and a series of embroidery dresses that echoed body art at its classiest. Chiuri, the first woman ever to lead the iconic French house, said the idea was to question what we wear. Indeed, the opening look—a white classical tunic worn by her muse, the British model Ruth Bell—carried a quotation by social historian and design guru Bernard Rudofsky, "Are clothes modern?"

### Feminists in net veils

It was also from the Austrian author of "The Unfashionable Human Body" that Chiuri took her inspiration to cut the heel down to size-wearing the spartan sandals herself—although a few low-flying kitten heels did creep in. This was perhaps the Italian's sharpest collection since she became the first woman to head the iconic French house in 2016.

Chiuri took Dior's New Look classics and gave them a controlled punky elegance for Generation Z, draping every model in black net veils or little fascinator berets by British milliner Stephen Jones. Dior's headquarters, a 19th-century mansion not far from the Champs Elysees, was turned into a black-and-white surrealist landscape for the show by the British-born feminist surrealist Penny Slinger. With "The Handmaiden's Tale" star Elisabeth Moss sharing the front row with singer Celine Dion and actress Priyanka Chopra, Chiuri upped the feminist vibe with a tribute to the caryatids, the female forms which hold up so much classical and neo-classical architecture, in a series of tunic dresses. "They have always shouldered the weight of the world," she said. In the final look, she hammered home the point again, with a model wearing a gilded maquette of the building as a tribute to the women who work in its studios.

### Hypnotized by Van Herpen

Van Herpen's breathtaking collection which she called "Hypnosis" was all about lifting us into another realm of lightness. The gravity-defying genius of her iridescent creations have often been compared to the silvery transparent creatures of the deep. And this time she outdid herself in what she called "the hypnotic visualization of nature's tapestry". The show was staged around a staggering piece of moving sculpture called "OmniVerse" by the American artist Anthony Howe, that echoed the shimmering anemones and squids that her high-tech gowns evoke.



Karen Wazen poses prior to the start of the Christian Dior Women's Fall-Winter 2019/2020 Haute Couture collection fashion show.

Celine Dion took her place in the front row wearing one of Van Herpen's earlier creations. Like everyone else, the Canadian watched goggle-eyed as Van Herpen premiered a new "Hypnosis" technique developed with British neuroscientist Professor Phillip Beesley, where satin is cut into thousands of exquisite "0.8mm (0.03-inch) waves, with each interlinked and designed to move faster than the eye can follow". The show finished with an "Infinity" dress with its own moving mechanism designed along with Howe which mimicked his installation.—AFP



# Salalah Rotana Resort The Jewel of Arabia



The five-star Salalah Rotana Resort opened in March 2014 in the capital of the southern Omani Governorate of Dhofar. Only 35 kilometers from Salalah Airport, Salalah Beach is spread over 15.6 million square meters, with an 8.2-kilometer beachfront, and is home to Salalah Rotana Resort. Surrounded by one of Oman's most breathtaking natural settings, the resort is nestled between spectacular mountains, fresh water springs and tropical scenery.

Rotana prides itself on identifying desirable travel destinations and the 422-room waterfront resort in Salalah is part of the company's steady expansion plan. Salalah Rotana Resort marks Rotana's first hotel in Oman, representing the half-way mark for the group's plans for 100 hotels by 2020. Set on the pristine Arabian coast, each of the resort's luxury rooms and suites are located directly on unique lagoons. An elaborate network of manmade Venetian waterways connects the property to the Indian Ocean and are filled with 105,000 square meters of seawater, refreshed every four days using natural tidal patterns.

With a promise of treasured time, the resort provides five-star opulence synonymous with the Rotana brand, infused with traditional Omani hospitality. Drawing inspiration from the landscape's natural beauty and culture, the heart of the hotel features high ceilings and a central, internally-lit handmade red clay dome complementing the wooden finishing and decorative Mashrabiya latticework windows. In-room furnishings have been carved from desert rock while Arabesque geometric designs and stone archways, constructed using traditional techniques,



resemble atriums.

Ranging from 43 to 143 square metres, Salalah Rotana Resort boasts some of the most spacious accommodations in Oman. Private terraces, ensuite bathrooms and generous living areas make for a grand setting with optimal privacy and superior comfort. With four restaurants including Saffron, The Beach Bar & Restaurant, Silk Road and Olive, as well as the Arabesque Lounge & Terrace, the lobby lounge, the resort offers the perfect mélange of dining options from casual beachside cuisine and all-day-dining to fine dining Middle Eastern and Western cuisine.

Guests looking to rejuvenate and rebalance can make use of the Bodylines Fitness & Wellness Club and three impressive outdoor pools, Jacuzzi and tennis clubs or indulge in spa treatments at 'Zen the spa at Rotana', Rotana's home-grown spa concept derived from ancient holistic Asian philosophies. The spa features eight treatment rooms that blend natural Omani elements with holistic treatments and rituals including full body massages, facials and soothing wraps. The resort also has five fully equipped meeting rooms, a Grand Ballroom, state-of-the-art Business Centre and 250-seat private outdoor amphitheater, making it the perfect destination for both leisure and business travellers.

Whether socialising at the restaurant by the beach, relaxing poolside or spending time with children in the playful 'Flipper's Kids Club', Salalah Rotana Resort exceeds the expectations of even the most discerning guest.





In this file photo Avicii performs at the MLB Fan Cave in New York City.

— AFP photos



DJ Michael Brun poses for a picture during an interview with AFP in Brooklyn, New York.



In this file photo Jimmy Vallance of Bob Moses performs at the Outdoor Theatre during the 2019 Coachella Valley Music And Arts Festival in Indio, California.

## In post-Avicii electronic dance world, DJs pushing genre's limits

Just over a year after the death of dance music superstar Avicii, the electronic scene is in flux, faced with hip-hop's dominance as the youthful party music du jour. Artists in the once underground genre largely associated with nightclubs and raves are branching out, toying with new features in their acts like live instrumentals in a bid to stay fresh and win new fans. Avicii was one of the first DJs to take electronic music mainstream, playing to massive crowds at festivals and collaborating with pop stars including Madonna and Coldplay. The Swede's untimely death at the age of 28 left a void, with many calling Avicii EDM's version of Kurt Cobain, the Nirvana frontman who died at age 27.

Prior to his passing, the DJ cautioned that EDM—which includes styles like house, techno, trance and dubstep—must evolve to stay alive. “Since it got so big in America the past couple of years, dance music is taking over everywhere,” he told the London Evening Standard. “It’s important that it keeps changing so it doesn’t become a fad.” Now, with an eye for more musicality and performance art, many of today’s contemporary EDM artists are shelving the higher-intensity, party-pounding beats for

more experimental work. The Canadian duo Bob Moses has crafted a blended rock-electro style with live instruments and robust vocal hooks, breaking out of the warehouse scene they grew up in to play major festivals like Coachella and New York’s Governors Ball.

“When we came together in the time that we did and the place that we did—which was Brooklyn in, like, 2012 — it was all about underground dance music and warehouse raves,” said the duo’s Tom Howie. “That was like super punk rock—super new and exciting.” EDM’s move into the mainstream opened up new paths for the duo, they say, leading them to experiment with bringing mics and guitars into DJ booths to create a fusion sound. Jimmy Vallance—the other half of the group—says emphasizing the lyrics of their songs has allowed the pair to reach a wider audience. This way, they can “really let the songs speak, as opposed to leading with the production,” Vallance said.

### ‘Fresh and new’

At the influential Coachella festival this year, Russian DJ Nina Kraviz surprised many when she transformed

her set into an audiovisual live show—one way that critics say DJ culture can reinvent itself. As much performance art as techno, the attention-grabbing albeit polarizing performance saw the artist turn the stage into a furnished living room, in which she posed in mirrors, paced and sang along to her dreamlike beats.

French DJ Agoria has been involved in EDM since the rise of house and techno in the late 1990s that included the explosion of “French Touch” music, which saw acts like Daft Punk, AIR and Cassius sweep the club scene with disco-tinged tracks. For his new record released this year—entitled “Drift,” for “drifting through genres and tempos within a set”—he sought to alternate styles and moods to shake up his sound.

“As a producer, I don’t feel like spending my days at home doing the same loops,” he told AFP. “I wanted to do something fresh and new.” The 43-year-old, who founded the French electronic festival Les Nuits Sonores in Lyon, took that quest for newness to astronomical heights last year, collaborating with NASA to transmit music he composed 12.4 lightyears into space.

### ‘Democratization of sound’

For Brooklyn-based DJ Michael Brun, EDM and hip-hop have actually fed off and improved each other. “Hip-hop was doing a lot of interesting things production-wise that I think was pushing music forward,” the 27-year-old DJ, whose unique sound blends elements of EDM genres with styles from his native Haiti. For Brun, innovation in dance music is currently stemming from underground scenes outside of traditional EDM capitals like Berlin and Ibiza, particularly in places like South Africa, whose electronic scene has exploded in recent years.

Brun says the internet has led to a “democratization of sound.” “People put a little hint of their culture in, and it makes it evolve and become something else,” he said. “It’s such a good time to be an artist right now; you can pretty much do anything you want. As long as it’s honest to yourself, you will find a fan base somewhere.” — AFP

## Lady Gaga leads surge in women to become Oscar voters

Women accounted for half of the Hollywood royalty admitted to the Oscars-awarding film academy this year, the body said Monday, with Lady Gaga among those to be invited. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences issues a single round of invitations annually, and has significantly boosted its female and ethnic minority intake in recent times due to criticism over its mainly white, male membership. The board of governors three years ago vowed to double the number of women and non-white members by 2020, following calls to boycott the glitzy Oscars and an angry social media backlash under the hashtag #OscarsSoWhite.

Invitations to 842 people announced Monday included leading women such as Claire Foy, Elisabeth Moss and Gaga—who won a best original song statuette for “A Star Is Born.” It is the first time an annual intake has reached 50 percent female, organizers told AFP. Women outnumbered men among those admitted to the traditionally male-dominated director category this year, and also among writers and producers.

Following the latest admissions, the overall proportion of female academy members will rise to 32 percent, from one-quarter in 2015. Just below one-third admitted were people of color, meaning the Academy has already reached its goal of doubling non-white membership—albeit from a low bar of just eight per cent in 2015. The recruits include “Crazy Rich Asians” director Jon Chu, “Roma” actress Marina de Tavora, and “Black Panther” cast members Sterling K. Brown and Letitia Wright. “Thank you @TheAcademy you have made me really happy with this honor,” tweeted de Tavora.

### ‘Less American’

Newcomers this year span multiple generations, from British 23-year-old “Spider-Man” star Tom Holland to legendary French actor Jean-Louis Trintignant, 88. In the world of music, singers Adele and Annie Lennox and producer Mark Ronson are among those selected for their work on movie scores. Invitations were sent to members from 59 countries, adding to the academy’s increasingly global flavor. The organization is “becoming less and less American,” wrote journalist and author Mark Harris on Twitter.

The shift “will play into acting/directing/writing (Oscar) races in a big way in years to come,” he predicted. The academy has drastically boosted its overall intake as it moves to redress its gender and ethnic imbalances. Membership was traditionally capped at around 6,000 members, but will shoot comfortably above 9,000 with the



In this photo Lady Gaga speaks onstage during Pride Live's 2019 Stonewall Day in New York City. — AFP

latest inductees. The number of new members was slightly down on last year’s 928, but still the second-largest in the academy’s history.

It included many members more famous for their work away from the big screen, from TV actors such as Moss, Foy and “Homeland” star Damian Lewis to “Gone Girl” author Gillian Flynn. “It feels to me like the academy has forgotten that its full title is the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences,” wrote Hollywood Reporter columnist Scott Feinberg. Some 21 Oscar winners join the ranks this year. Those invited to join tend to accept. — AFP

## In France, Jackson fans sue over HBO documentary

Michael Jackson fan clubs are set to sue two alleged child abuse victims of Michael Jackson in a French court this week over their claims in the recent HBO documentary “Leaving Neverland”. Today’s hearing will take place at a court in the northern city of Orleans where the Michael Jackson Community, the MJ Street and On The Line groups will begin proceedings against the men they accuse of sullying the image of the late singer. The four-hour documentary broadcast on US channel HBO focuses on testimony by James Safechuck, 41, and Wade Robson, 36, who recount separate but consistent accounts of how their idol molested them as boys at his Neverland Ranch in California.

The two-part film, which was released in March, broke streaming records and prompted the Jackson family to sue for \$100 million (88 million euros). The French lawyer acting for the fan groups, Emmanuel Ludot, called the allegations “extremely serious” and likened them to “a genuine lynching” of Jackson, who died in 2009. Under French law, sullying the image of a dead person is a criminal offence, unlike in Britain or America where libel and defamation laws do not offer this protection.

The fan clubs are seeking symbolic damages of one euro each. Ludot had previously successfully sued Jackson’s doctor Conrad Murray for causing distress to his fans by giving the US pop legend the drugs that killed him. Five Jackson fans won symbolic damages of one euro each in 2014 after the court in Orleans agreed they had suffered “emotional damage” from the pop star’s death, but the ruling was seen as legally dubious by experts. A number of radio stations, from Australia to Canada have stopped playing Jackson’s music after the HBO documentary was aired, and the creators of “The Simpsons” also shelved one of the animated series’ classic episodes because it featured Jackson’s voice. Jackson died in 2009 aged 50 from an overdose of the anaesthetic propofol while under Murray’s care, as the “King of Pop” rehearsed in Los Angeles for a series of comeback concerts in London. — AFP



British rapper Stormzy, real name Michael Omari Owuo Jr, performs on the Pyramid Stage on the third day of the Glastonbury Festival of Music and Performing Arts. — AFP

## Grime star Stormzy ‘sorry’ for false Glastonbury claim

British grime star Stormzy apologized Monday for erroneously saying he was the first black British artist to headline Glastonbury music festival on Friday. The rapper, real name Michael Omari, apologized on social media to Skin, the lead singer of Skunk Anansie, after she noted that she had headlined the famous event with her rock band in 1999. “No disrespect intended I’m very sorry my apologies! Thank you for paving the way - love (and) respect,” Stormzy wrote on Instagram. The furor erupted over the weekend after the 25-year-old claimed on Twitter that he was “the first black British artist to headline Glastonbury”.

Skin, real name Deborah Anne Dyer, rebutted his claims in an Instagram post, writing “sorry Stormzy but we beat you to it in 1999!” She also noted her appreciation for the south London-born grime star, adding: “You’re amazing and we’re all very proud”. Stormzy is a cult figure in the British grime scene, which blends Jamaican dancehall and hip hop for a pulsating, hard-edged sound that first electrified London nearly two decades ago. Meanwhile British rockers Skunk Anansie formed in 1994, disbanded in 2001 and then reformed in 2009 — and are currently on tour in Europe. — AFP



Michael Jackson

## Centuries of Moon depictions on display in New York

Some 400 years of depictions of the Moon, particularly via photography, are going on display at New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art ahead of the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 landing. The Met will unveil its “Apollo’s Muse: The Moon in the Age of Photography” on Wednesday, approximately two weeks before of the five-decade mark since the 1969 space trip that landed the first two people on Earth’s satellite.

Visitors however, are not limited to the recent past. On display will be works dating as far back as 1610, when Galileo etched the giant glowing body in a book of astronomical observations. “The Moon has always been an object of both science and art, observation and imagination,” said exhibit curator Mia Fineman, during a press presentation. The Moon has been photographed since the medium’s earliest days, and in 1840 American John William Draper made the first daguerrotype—an early version of

the photo using silver-plated copper.

“The fascination with the Moon and the development of photography were linked and connected from the very beginning of this particular medium,” said Met Director Max Hollein. Special telescopes were developed with the sole purpose of photography and astrophotography became a trend in its own right. As snapshots of the Moon grew ever more precise, they circulated among the general public, increasing its mystique while bringing it up close and in person for many for the first time.

At the turn of the 20th century, Maurice Loewy and Pierre Henri Puisseux’s “Photographic Atlas of the Moon” marked a turning point. From 1894 to 1908, the pair meticulously charted the Moon from the Paris Observatory, home to the most powerful telescope in the world at the time. The entirety of their work has been reproduced for the first time for a museum at the Met.

“Without photography, they wouldn’t have been able to land a space craft on the Moon,” said Fineman. “They needed to understand the geography to find a landing site.”

Moon photos such as those on display at the Met have fueled the imagination of not only the public, but also artists, novelists painters and poets, providing the inspiration for such works as early French filmmaker Georges Melies’ 1902 iconic short film “A Trip to the Moon.”

“It’s our closest celestial companion,” Fineman said of the Moon. “It’s the only other planet that we can see clearly with the naked eye. And so it’s something that’s both near and far, both constant and changing. It’s a paradox.” The exhibit is open through September 22. — AFP



People look at a drawing by Etienne Leopold Trouvelot called “Total Eclipse of the Sun” (1882) on July 1, 2019, part of a new exhibition by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, to open today, called “Apollo’s Muse: The Moon in the Age of Photography”. — AFP

# Classifieds

Wednesday, July 3, 2019

**Kuwait Times**  
 Now you can browse  
[www.kuwaittimes.net](http://www.kuwaittimes.net)  
 e-mail: info@kuwaittimes.net

**STATE OF KUWAIT**  
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 Fax: (+965) 24348714  
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DAY: Tuesday 02/07/2019 Valid From 7 PM To 7 AM

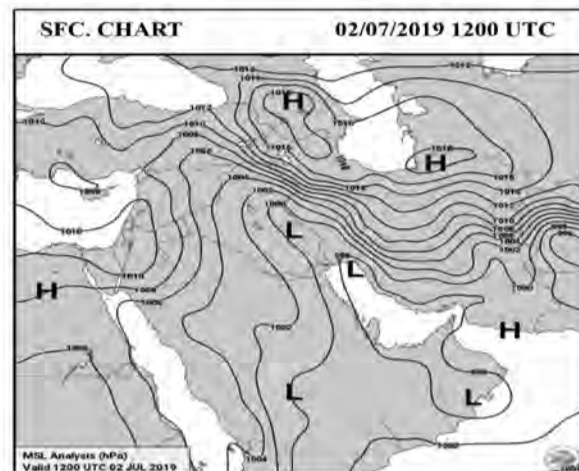
### Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

**BY NIGHT:** Relatively hot with moderate freshening at times over coastal areas north westerly wind, with speed of 20 - 45 km/h.

**BY DAY:** Very hot with light to moderate freshening at times north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 50 km/h causing rising dust over open areas.

WEATHER WARNING: No Current Warnings

STATION	MAX. REC.	MIN. EXP.
KUWAIT CITY	45 °C	33 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	46 °C	34 °C
ABDALY	46 °C	32 °C
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C
JAHRA	47 °C	32 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	44 °C	32 °C
SALMIYAH	40 °C	33 °C
AHMADI	44 °C	35 °C
NUWAISIB	47 °C	31 °C
WAFRA	46 °C	32 °C
SALMY	44 °C	30 °C



DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Wednesday	07/03	Very hot causing rising dust over open areas	48 °C	34 °C	NW	15 - 50 km/h
Thursday	07/04	Very hot causing rising dust over open areas	48 °C	35 °C	NW	20 - 50 km/h
Friday	07/05	Very hot causing rising dust	47 °C	35 °C	NW	25 - 60 km/h
Saturday	07/06	Very hot and Dusty	48 °C	36 °C	NW	25 - 60 km/h

TOMORROW PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	03:18
Sunrise	04:52
Zuhr	11:52
Asr	15:26
Sunset	18:51
Isha	20:23

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	46 °C
MIN. Temp.	36 °C
MAX. RH	28 %
MIN. RH	09 %
MAX. Wind	N 57 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

All times are local time unless otherwise stated. UP:0 2019/07/02 14:56 UTC V1.00 T2.4 8-1/ع.ع.ع

## Hospitals

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

## Clinics

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

## CHANGE OF NAME

I, Robin Kadanenkottu Mathew S/o Mathew Kadanenkottu Thomas, holder of Indian Passport No. 54164643 issued in India has changed the given name in passport from Mathew Robin Kadanenkottu to Robin Kadanenkottu Mathew, resident of Chittar PO, Pathanamthitta, Kerala. Solemnly declare. (C 5651)

I, Kasim holder of Passport No. H8470593 issued in Kuwait hereby Change name on my Passport from given name Kasim to surname Bhotvawala and given name Kasim Yusuf. (C 5653)

I, GILBERT LUCAS FERNANDES, DOB 01/01/1997, Passport No. T1942816, issued in Kuwait on 24/01/2019. Currently my surname on the passport is GILBERT LUCAS and my given name is FERNANDES. I, hereby declare that my given name(s) is GILBERT LUCAS and my surname is FERNANDES. (C 5652)

I, Lancy Thomas D Cunha, holder of Indian Passport No. J7413137, having permanent address in India at Bethel House, Derebail Konchady Cross Road, Near Vishwa Geeth Complex, Mangaluru - 575006, Karnataka, India, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as under: Given Names: Lancy Thomas and Surname: D Cunha (C 5654) 3-7-2019

## Airlines

Kuwait Airways	171
Jazeera Airways	177
Wataniya Airways	22 066 536
Turkish Airlines	1884918
American Airlines	22087425
Jet Airways	22087426
FlyDubai	22924455
Qatar Airways	22414400
KLM	22423888
Royal Jordanian	22425747
British Airways	22418064/5/6
Air France	22425635
Emirates	22430224
Air India	22921555
Air India EXPRESS	22456700
Sri Lanka Airlines	22438185/4
Egypt Air	22424444
Swiss Air	22421578
Saudia	22421516
Middle East Airlines	22426306
Lufthansa	22423073
PIA	22422493
Bangladesh Airlines	22421044
Indian Airlines	22452977/8
Oman Air	22456700
Turkish Airlines	22958787
Aeroflot	22453820/1
	22404838/9

## Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw) DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Wednesday 3/7/2019				Departure Flights on Wednesday 3/7/2019			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
FEG	441	Asyut	00:05	JZR	713	Sohag	00:10
IGO	1757	Kochi	00:10	MSC	412	Asyut	00:15
THY	772	Istanbul	00:20	JZR	707	Luxor	00:20
JZR	254	Amman	00:20	MSR	615	Cairo	00:30
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	FDB	072	Dubai	00:30
KAC	102	London	00:50	BBC	044	Dhaka	00:40
JZR	722	Alexandria	01:00	FEG	342	Sohag	01:05
JZR	734	Cairo	01:00	JZR	409	Delh	01:10
MSR	618	Alexandria	01:35	IGO	1758	ochi	01:10
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	KAC	677	Dubai	01:50
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	THY	773	Istanbul	01:50
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:50	DLH	625	Frankfurt	01:50
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	KAC	285	Dhaka	02:00
KKK	1268	Istanbul	01:55	KAC	363	Colombo	02:00
JZR	262	Beirut	02:05	KAC	417	Manila	02:00
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	JZR	705	Asyut	02:00
QTR	1086	Doha	02:40	JZR	111	Doha	02:10
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	MSR	619	Alexandria	02:35
THY	1404	AYT	02:45	THY	765	Istanbul	02:50
PGT	860	Istanbul	02:50	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:50
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:50	KKK	1269	Istanbul	02:55
THY	768	Istanbul	02:55	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05
JZR	502	Lahore	02:55	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:10
KAC	156	Istanbul	02:55	UAE	854	Dubai	03:30
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	THY	769	Istanbul	03:50
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:00
RJA	648	Amman	03:05	OMA	644	Muscat	04:05
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	QTR	1087	Doha	04:15
KAC	418	Manila	03:20	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	JZR	1735	Cairo	04:40
OHY	352	Istanbul	04:00	QTR	1077	Doha	05:00
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	OHY	351	Istanbul	05:00
KAC	796	Madinah	04:25	IGO	1752	Chennai	05:10
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:25	JZR	251	Amman	05:10
JZR	404	Hyderabad	04:50	KAC	303	Mumbai	05:15
KAC	382	Delhi	04:55	KAC	103	London	05:20
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	THY	1465	Istanbul	06:00
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:05	FDB	070	Dubai	06:00
THY	770	Istanbul	05:20	THY	771	Istanbul	06:30
JZR	402	Mumbai	05:25	GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	RJA	649	Amman	07:00
KAC	552	Cairo	05:45	KAC	167	Paris	07:15
JZR	112	Doha	05:50	JZR	121	Dubai	07:15
BAW	157	London	06:10	JZR	113	Doha	07:30
JZR	708	Luxor	06:15	RBG	550	Alexandria	07:30
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:15	KAC	165	Rome	08:00
JZR	714	Johag	06:20	KAC	171	Frankfurt	08:00
KAC	678	Dubai	06:40	BAW	156	London	08:00
RBG	559	Alexandria	06:50	MSR	602	Cairo	08:00
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:50	IGO	1756	CNN	08:10
MSR	601	Cairo	07:00	JZR	151	Mashhad	08:15
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:05	FDB	054	Dubai	08:35
IGO	1755	CNN	07:10	KAC	545	Cairo	08:50
KAC	358	Kochi	07:25	KAC	539	Sharm el-Sheikh	08:50
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	KAC	501	Beirut	08:50
QTR	1084	Doha	08:00	KAC	561	Amman	08:55
KAC	354	Bengaluru	08:00	KAC	613	Bahrain	09:00
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:05	KAC	511	Mashhad	09:05
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	KAC	117	New York	09:05
JZR	706	Asyut	08:25	QTR	1085	Doha	09:10
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:50	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:15
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
OMA	641	Muscat	09:00	KAC	157	Istanbul	09:20
GFA	209	Bahrain	09:05	KAC	773	Riyadh	09:40
KAC	384	Delhi	09:10	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:15	JZR	731	Cairo	09:45
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20	UAE	856	Dubai	09:50
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	JZR	301	Istanbul	09:55
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	09:55
IAW	157A	Al Najaf	10:00	OMA	642	Muscat	10:00
SYR	341	Damascus	10:00	KAC	101	London	10:05
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	10:20	GFA	211	Bahrain	10:05
JZR	252	Amman	10:20	IRA	175	Shiraz	10:15
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	QTR	1071	Doha	10:30
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	KAC	617	Doha	10:40
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	FDB	056	Dubai	10:40
JZR	1736	Cairo	11:05	IGO	1754	Ahmedabad	10:40
JZR	114	Doha	11:10	SYR	342	Damascus	11:00
KIS	6032	Mashhad	11:30	IAW	158A	Al Najaf	11:00
JZR	122	Dubai	11:45	JZR	221	Riyadh	11:20
TBZ	6605	Mashhad	11:55	AXB	890	Mangalore	11:20
IAW	157	Al Najaf	12:00	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35
JZR	410	Delhi	12:00	JZR	305	Istanbul	11:45
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	MEA	405	Beirut	11:55
RBG	553	Alexandria	12:30	JZR	213	Jeddah	12:05
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:30	JZR	715	Sohag	12:10
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	QTR	1075	Doha	12:10
MSR	610	Cairo	12:45	KIS	6033	Mashhad	12:30
CLX	7912	Luxembourg	12:45	TBZ	6606	Mashhad	12:55
				IAW	158	Al Najaf	13:00
				JZR	123	Dubai	13:10

# Haftar-Turkey tensions risk igniting proxy war in Libya

**TRIPOLI:** Libya's military strongman Khalifa Haftar, by provoking Turkey, seeks to divert attention from battlefield setbacks and draw in his backers, at the risk of a proxy war between regional rivals, experts say. The strongman of eastern Libya who launched an assault on the capital three months ago threatened Friday to attack Turkish interests in the country, accusing Ankara of providing military support to his rivals, the Government of National Accord (GNA). His forces arrested six Turkish nationals before releasing them on Monday after Ankara threatened to retaliate.

On Sunday, Haftar's fighters said they destroyed a Turkish Bayraktar drone in a strike on an airport in Tripoli. Tensions have spiked since pro-GNA forces announced last week their recapture of the town of Gharyan, 100 km from Tripoli, that Haftar had turned into a command center for his stalled offensive against the capital. The field marshal's attack on Turkey seeks to cover up what was a humiliating military defeat, according to Libya analysts. "It's really an attempt to muddy the waters, said Jalel

Harchaoui, a researcher at the Clingendael Institute think-tank in The Hague.

He said the loss of Gharyan was a blow on two fronts: It would handicap the Tripoli campaign and also led to the discovery of US-made Javelin missiles apparently supplied to Haftar's Libyan National Army (LNA) by the United Arab Emirates, his backer along with Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Harchaoui, however, said Turkey had achieved its goal and fended off the Tripoli assault by delivering armed drones to the GNA in May and "does not need an escalation at this stage".

According to defense specialist Arnaud Delalande, the Turkish military has been providing training on Bayraktar TB2 drones and piloting them until the GNA technicians are ready. LFA forces destroyed two of the Turkish drones on the ground at the capital's Mitiga airport on June 8 and said that another one was bombed on Sunday. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has confirmed his country backs the GNA and supplies it with weapons under a "military cooperation agreement". He told reporters on June 20 that Turkish backing

had allowed Tripoli to "rebalance" the fight against Haftar.

The conflict in Libya has turned into "a proxy war between two regional axes: On one side the Turkey-Qatar axis... and the other the Saudi-Egyptian-Emirati axis which is battling Islamist forces by supporting the return of authoritarianism to the region", said Jana Jabbour, a Turkish foreign policy specialist. She said the aim for Turkey was "a regional order which safeguards its interests in the face of the growing assertiveness of Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates".

By venting his wrath at Turkey, Haftar hopes to provoke "a more direct involvement of Ankara, which would in turn oblige his sponsors to do the same", said Delalande. Both the LNA and GNA accuse each other of using foreign mercenaries and receiving military support from foreign powers. Libya itself has been mired in chaos since a NATO-backed uprising that toppled and killed dictator Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, with a multitude of militias vying for control of the oil-rich country. — AFP



ISTANBUL: In this file photo taken on Sept 20, 2018, a Turkish unmanned aircraft is displayed during the Teknofest festival at Istanbul's new airport. — AFP

## Congress in turmoil after Gandhi quits

**NEW DELHI:** Rahul Gandhi has spurned appeals to reconsider his resignation as leader of India's Congress Party after losing a second general election to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, an aide said yesterday, as the party faces its worst crisis in a decade. Stuck between a leader determined to quit and party officials unwilling to accept his leaving, Congress is effectively leaderless more than a month after its election drubbing and facing key state polls later this year.

Chief ministers from five Congress-ruled states went to New Delhi on Monday where they spent two hours trying to convince Gandhi to reverse his May 25 decision to resign. "We told him our point of view, openly, in a long conversation," Ashok Gehlot, a senior Congress leader and chief minister of western Rajasthan state, told reporters. "We hope he will consider our view and take the right decision," he said.

A close aide to Gandhi, speaking to

Reuters after the meeting, said the 49-year-old was firm about stepping aside as Congress president, a position he held since succeeding his mother, Sonia Gandhi, in late 2017. "He will never change his mind," the aide said, requesting anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media. "He feels that the way forward is not him continuing as Congress president ... and let somebody outside the Gandhi family be Congress president," the aide said, adding the party cannot "just depend on one person, one family".

Gandhi will remain in politics to help rebuild Congress from the ground up, the aide said, rather than stay on as leader due to his family's political lineage. The Nehru-Gandhi family has dominated the party, and through it Indian politics for decades, producing three prime ministers, but Modi and his Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have accused Congress of promoting "dynasty" politics. — Reuters

## Iraq 'loophole' allowing it to buy Iran power

**BAGHDAD:** Iraq is establishing a financial "loophole" to continue buying vital gas and electricity from Iran despite US sanctions, AFP has learned, mirroring a European mechanism that came into effect Friday. The "special purpose vehicle" (SPV) would allow Iraq to pay for imported Iranian energy in Iraqi dinars, which Iran could use to exclusively buy humanitarian goods, three senior Iraqi officials said. The workaround would allow Baghdad to keep the lights on and avoid shortage-driven protests without triggering US sanctions, as it treads an increasingly precarious tightrope between its two main allies Tehran and Washington.

One senior government official told AFP it was the product of months of talks between Iraqi, Iranian and US officials. "The Iraqi government will continue to pay Iran for gas by depositing money into a special bank account inside Iraq, in Iraqi dinars," the official said. "Iran will not be able to withdraw the money, but will be able to use it to purchase goods from outside Iraq."

Iraq has an outstanding bill of around \$2 billion for previous gas and electricity purchases, according to Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Zangeneh. A US official told AFP that Washington was aware of the mechanism's creation. The US embassy in Baghdad declined to comment, while Iran's embassy did not respond to an AFP request. Two additional high-level Iraqi officials confirmed Baghdad was establishing such an account with US knowledge, but could not say whether payments into the account had begun. "How else is Iraq supposed to pay what it owes Iran? We have no other choice," the second official said.

### 'Iran's ATM'

To offset its notorious power shortages, Iraq imports around 1,400 MW of electricity and 28 million cubic meters of gas for power stations from neighboring Iran, which together make up about a third of Iraq's power supply. That reliance has angered the US, which slapped tough sanctions on Iran last year but has granted Iraq several temporary waivers to keep purchasing Iranian power until October.

The US insists Iraq wean itself off Iranian energy, but Baghdad has said that could take up to four years, during which it would need to keep purchasing at least Iranian gas. To do so, the central banks of Iran and Iraq agreed in February to create a payment method that steers clear of US sanctions, Iran's state news agency IRNA said, without providing additional

details. That would mean not dealing in US dollars and purchasing only "humanitarian goods" allowed by the US - like food and medicine.

"We would become Iran's ATM," another Iraqi official told AFP. According to two of the senior Iraqi officials, Baghdad's SPV would likely be set up at the Trade Bank of Iraq. The TBI has handled most of the Iraqi government's international transactions since its establishment in the aftermath of the US-led invasion in 2003. A senior TBI source told AFP the bank had been involved in the negotiations but the account had not yet been created. "The US Treasury has confidence in the TBI's processes. We are in discussions to reach an agreement, which would be fully within US exemptions," the source said.

It would effectively be a "loophole" around sanctions, said Ahmed Tabaqchali, senior fellow at the Sulaymaniyah-based Institute of Regional and International Studies. "It's like a ledger. You record the money paid, and Iran has that much credit in Iraq," Tabaqchali told AFP. The system would work much like INSTEX, a mechanism recently activated by Britain, Germany and France to trade legitimately with Iran without falling foul of US sanctions.

Still, the system is fraught with political, financial and practical complexities. Iraq's economy relies almost exclusively on oil revenues, paid in dollars, which leaves Baghdad extremely vulnerable to any punitive measures the US could take in response to a violation. — AFP

## EU leaders strike deal to give...

Continued from Page 1

Von der Leyen had the crucial backing of French President Emmanuel Macron, as well as the support of the Visegrad 4 bloc - Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia. This saved von der Leyen from the fate suffered by Timmermans, who was suggested by France and Germany as commission chief instead of the early frontrunner Manfred Weber.

A marathon 18-hour negotiating session that began on Sunday evening broke up without agreement on as the V4 plus Italy, where the populist government shares some of the Eastern Europeans' anger at Brussels over migration, refused to countenance Timmermans. As he arrived at the summit on Tuesday, Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babis slammed Timmermans, who pushed a softer line on migration, as "absolutely unacceptable". "He has always pushed a

migration policy which is unacceptable for us, so this man is absolutely unacceptable and I can't see why the prime ministers of France, Spain, the Netherlands and Germany weren't able to understand," Babis said.

Other countries - including Ireland, Latvia and Croatia - also objected on the grounds they had not been properly consulted about the French-German plan cooked up on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Osaka at the weekend. Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez initially stood firm behind fellow Social Democrat Timmermans yesterday, but after a morning of bilateral and small group meetings among leaders, the Dutchman's chances were finally buried, according to two sources close to the talks.

Deciding the top jobs was complicated by the fragmentation of the EU political landscape in the May elections to the European Parliament. The centre-right EPP and centre-left socialist group, the dominant forces in EU politics for years, lost their combined majority in the assembly. The liberals, which include Macron supporters, are increasingly assertive over the choice of top jobs after they and the Greens made significant gains in the polls. Protracted wrangling to dish out the EU's top jobs is not new: In 2014 it took three summits to fill the posts. — AFP

actions; we shape our actions in response to what the market does," Novak said.

Monday's gathering of OPEC ministers ran almost five hours late into the evening as ministers discussed the details of the new charter. Iran was more skeptical of the idea and its oil minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said on leaving the meeting that the charter would have "no impact on OPEC and its mechanism or decision taking".

John Hall, chairman of British-based consultancy Alfa Energy, told AFP that Moscow was clearly seeking to seize the initiative. "I have always believed that Russia would never be a party to anything that it was not able to control and, having supported OPEC ... Russia has not only taken over the timing of the meeting but also the outcome," Hall said. "Without Russia and other sympathizing non-OPEC producers, Saudi would have lost control and OPEC would have failed in the face of rising US output, increasing the pressure on OPEC to cut its output and in so doing, see its market share diminish," he added.

Meanwhile, Zanganeh warned in Vienna that OPEC could "die" if its role was reduced to rubber-stamping decisions made in advance. Yet Saudi Arabia's Energy Minister Khalid Al-Falih remained resolute over Moscow's contribution. "I think Russia's influence is welcome," Falih said yesterday. "Saudi Arabia and Russia are ... delivering the largest cuts (so) we agree first and then discuss our agreement with our colleagues from other countries. I think it only helps to reach the unanimous consensus." — Agencies

## Mumbai wall collapse kills...

Continued from Page 1

large swathes of Mumbai received around 350 mm of rain overnight into yesterday morning, the most in a decade. The deluge left low-lying areas submerged. "Everything around us is flooded. It's scary and the problem persists every year despite government promises," Vishal Agawane, a 32-year-old resident of the Dharavi slum, told AFP. Around 1,000 people living close to the city's Mithi river were evacuated to higher ground as it threatened to burst its banks, said Kamble, the disaster management spokesman.

Train services on Mumbai's colonial-era rail network, a lifeline for the city's population, were disrupted due to waterlogged tracks, while motorists were seen pushing cars through flooded streets. Rescuers were sifting through the debris of the wall that collapsed in a slum area in Mumbai's north, in the hope of finding more survivors trapped under rubble. The dead included a 10-year-old girl, who was trapped alive under the debris for hours before rescuers pulled out her body in a 12-hour-long unsuccessful operation. A local rescue volunteer earlier in the day told the NDTV channel that they

heard the girl crying in pain and begging for water.

Building collapses are common during the monsoon, when dilapidated structures buckle under the weight of continuous rain. Three people, including a toddler, were also killed yesterday in Thane district, which borders Mumbai, when a wall collapsed at a school. Two waiters were electrocuted after rainwater gushed into a restaurant and came in contact with a live wire in Thane. Another person was critically injured. And six laborers died near the western city of Pune, 150 km from Mumbai, when a wall fell onto their makeshift shacks. At least 15 laborers died in a similar accident on Saturday.

Mumbai's streets regularly flood during the monsoon, which runs from June until September or October, and which provides India with most of its annual rainfall. In 2005, 950 mm of rain fell on the coastal metropolis in just 24 hours, killing more than 500 people. In August 2017, intense rainfall brought the commercial hub to a virtual standstill for two days and left at least 10 people dead.

Activists say Mumbai's susceptibility to floods has worsened in recent years due to a construction boom that is trying to keep up with the city's swelling population. Much of Mumbai's mangrove cover, which helps drain water, has been destroyed over the past decade to make way for glitzy high-rises. According to various studies, anywhere between 40 to 50 percent of the city's population live in slums, which become a sea of blue tarpaulin every monsoon as residents try to keep out the rain. — AFP

## Russian influence grows over...

Continued from Page 1

Yet OPEC was beaten to the punch after Russian President Vladimir Putin and Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman pre-announced the extension - but not the exact length - at the Osaka G20 summit on Saturday. Russia's powerful grip was in further evidence yesterday when its Energy Minister Alexander Novak was the first person to reveal that all OPEC ministers had agreed to tack nine more months to the previous OPEC+ December agreement. Russia, the second biggest global oil producer followed by number three Saudi Arabia, decided three years ago to hook up with OPEC to counter slumping oil prices.

OPEC Secretary-General Mohammed Barkindo compared the new partnership to a marriage, telling reporters: "It's for eternity!" "We're confident that with the course of time, probably by next time we meet, we may have some new members joining the charter," Barkindo said. Speaking through an interpreter after yesterday's meeting, Novak said that the new cooperation accord between OPEC and its allies was not only the result of growing US output. "We do not shape our strategy in response to US

## Philippines army suspects first...

Continued from Page 1

Sobejana added the suspect was a member of the Abu Sayyaf faction led by Hajan Sawadjaan, who allegedly plotted the attack on the Jolo cathedral in January. Abu Sayyaf has been blamed for some of the worst terror attacks in Philippine history, including frequent kidnappings of foreigners.

Members of the group have pledged allegiance to IS, including those who participated in the 2017 siege of the southern city of Marawi. Analysts have said suicide attacks could be taking root in the Philippines, driven by IS influence. "It is an escalation, but it's also a sign of increased radicalization," said Zachary Abuza, Southeast Asian security expert at the National War College in Washington.

"The change did not come with (Friday's) bombing, it came with the introduction of a lethal new ideology into the Philippines," said security analyst Sidney Jones. "The game-changer" was the Islamic State, she added.

As its "caliphate" crumbled in the Middle East, IS has stepped up its strategy of absorbing existing insurgent groups around the world and claiming their attacks. The group has had a presence for years in the south of the Philippines, where rugged terrain and weak government control provide a safe haven for fighters.

Suicide attacks indicate a higher level of commitment to the militant cause, experts say, and are often approved by the central leadership of IS, who trade off the media profile the tactic brings. The group has taken credit for Friday's blasts, as well as the deaths of over 30 people, killed in two previous attacks believed to be the work of suicide bombers. The first was a July 2018 van bomb at a checkpoint in southern Basilan island, followed by the explosions during Sunday mass in January at a Catholic cathedral in Jolo.

"Society is changing. Their method of attack is changing. Suicide bombing is the current and future method of attack," said Rommel Banlaoi, chairman of the Philippine Institute for Peace, Violence and Terrorism Research. At the same time, there are strong motivations from local militant cells to try to catch the eye of the IS central leadership with suicide attacks. "Members of the Islamic State in Southeast Asia might be thinking they really need to up their game to get back in the good graces of Islamic State central," said Abuza. — AFP



## Sports

# As Leonard ponders, free agency moves shakes up NBA landscape

## Raptors are trying to keep together their championship squad

**NEW YORK:** Kawhi Leonard's uncertain NBA free agency fate kept three teams in limbo Monday as players continued to make deals to shake the league landscape. Players and teams began agreeing to terms on new deals Sunday even though no contracts can be signed until next Saturday. Leonard, who led the Toronto Raptors to the NBA title last month, was expected to meet with the Los Angeles Lakers and Los Angeles Clippers plus the Raptors this week before making a decision on where to sign a new deal.

The Raptors are trying to keep together their championship squad while the Clippers, in Leonard's home town, have a similar young team that would offer him a starring role. The Lakers, who have cleared enough salary cap space, to make a top offer for the two-time NBA Finals Most Valuable Player, have a chance to form a super-team with LeBron James and Anthony Davis.

The Lakers were reportedly looking at D'Angelo Russell, who went to the Golden State Warriors for four years at \$117 million after trading Andre Iguodala to Memphis. Russell will partner Steph Curry in the Warriors' backcourt until Klay Thompson, who agreed to terms Monday on a five-year deal worth \$190 million to stay with Golden State, returns from a torn knee ligament.

Also reportedly waiting on Leonard's decision is Toronto guard Danny Green, who is being wooed by Dallas but could figure into the plans of the Lakers and Clippers as well. Other free agents looking for deals include Golden State center DeMarcus Cousins and Lakers point guard Rajon Rondo. The Lakers did land their first free agent Monday, 3-point shooter Troy Daniels on a one-year deal for \$2.1 million. The Clippers agreed to an extension with Patrick Beverley at three years for \$40 million and got forward Mo Harkless in a

deal with Miami. "Anybody got kawhi number??" Harkless tweeted.

### Nets land Kyrie, KD

In Sunday's biggest reported opening deals, Brooklyn secured two-time NBA Finals MVP Kevin Durant, who ruptured an Achilles tendon as Golden State lost in the NBA finals, and Kyrie Irving from Boston. Each accepted contracts below the maximum so the Nets could also grab center DeAndre Jordan, who was with Dallas last season.

Durant will miss next season while recovering, but Irving and Jordan join a squad that made the playoffs last season. Philadelphia landed Dominican big man Al Horford from Boston and traded with Miami for Josh Richardson in a deal that cost them guard Jimmy Butler. The 76ers already boast Australian playmaker Ben Simmons and Cameroonian front-line force Joel Embiid. Milwaukee, which won an NBA-best 60 games last season led by Greek star Giannis Antetokounmpo, kept Khristian Middleton, George Hill and Brook Lopez with new deals and added Wesley Matthews as a guard to replace Malcolm Brogdon, who signed with Indiana.

### Kanter goes to Celtics

Turkish center Enes Kanter announced he has agreed to a two-year deal to join ex-Charlotte guard Kemba Walker in Boston. The Western Conference, won by the Warriors the past five seasons, is up for grabs after the shakeup. New Orleans agreed to a two-year deal worth \$8 million with Italy's Nicolo Melli, the EuroLeague Finals top scorer last season for Turkish club Fenerbahce.

Utah added Serbian guard Bogdan Bogdanovic for \$73 million over four years from Sacramento plus center Ed Davis and playmaker Mike Conley. Dallas made a



**SAN ANTONIO:** In this file photo taken on June 11, 2013 Kawhi Leonard #2 of the San Antonio Spurs reacts after making a three-pointer in the third quarter while taking on the Miami Heat during Game Three of the 2013 NBA Finals at the AT&T Center. — AFP

four-year deal worth \$32 million with former Portland guard Seth Curry. Portland added center Hassan Whiteside as a fill-in until injured Bosnian big man Jusuf Nurkic returns, in a trade deal to help Miami obtain Butler. The biggest losers in free agency were

the New York Knicks, who had salary room for two top free agents but could not attract a big name, breaking up the money among lesser talents. Houston also missed out in trying to land a third star to join Chris Paul and NBA scoring leader James Harden. — AFP

## Special to play Davis Cup in Pakistan: India's top player

**LONDON:** India's Prajnesh Gunneswaran admits that being his country's top tennis star places him under an obligation to play a Davis Cup tie against bitter rivals Pakistan. India have been drawn to face their neighbors in Islamabad in September with a prize of being able to contest the World Group qualifiers at stake.

It will be the first time India have played a Davis Cup tie in Pakistan in 55 years. "I think I will play although it is still to be discussed as we have the option to go now," said the 29-year-old at Wimbledon on Monday.

"If I want to stay in the top 100 then those two weeks make an impact but playing for my country is very special and I want to do everything to do that. "If I had been number four or five in India I would be jumping at the chance. "Nothing should change being number one."

The long-running political tension between the nuclear-armed India and Pakistan spiked in February

over Kashmir, which both countries have fought two wars over since the territory was divided in 1947. A deadly suicide attack — claimed by a militant group based in Pakistan — in Indian-administered Kashmir killed 40 Indian troops.

In response, India staged its first air attack on Pakistani territory in decades, with Pakistan responding a day later. Despite those tensions, India were cleared to make the trip across the border as the Davis Cup is not a part of a bilateral series. When India last played in Pakistan in Lahore in 1964 they won 4-0. They won on home ground in Mumbai in 2006 while their third meeting in the tournament in 1973 had to be played on neutral territory.

On Monday, Gunneswaran made his Wimbledon debut but was defeated 7-6 (7/1), 6-4, 6-2 by 2016 runner-up Milos Raonic of Canada. His progress to the All England Club has come late in his career following a battle with stress fractures in both knees which left him without a ranking in 2015. Those physical problems are a thing of the past as is his bizarre decision to once incorporate the name of two-time major winner Pat Rafter into his personal email address.

"I was a big fan of his when I was younger so I created an email ID with his name," explained the world number 94. "I never used it for official purposes but some people in my school still have it." On Monday,



**LONDON:** India's Prajnesh Gunneswaran returns against Canada's Milos Raonic during their men's singles first round match on the first day of the 2019 Wimbledon Championships at The All England Lawn Tennis Club. — AFP

Gunneswaran insisted that his clash with big-serving Raonic, the 15th seed, had been decided by small margins. "There were a few lapses in concentration and they determined the match. I had chances but didn't convert. "I gave him early leads in the second and third sets and they were the killers." — AFP

## Lacob: Durant's 35 is retired while I own Warriors

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Golden State Warriors co-chairman and chief executive Joe Lacob said Monday that as long as he runs the NBA club, consider departing star Kevin Durant's number 35 jersey retired. The 30-year-old forward agreed to a free agent deal with the Brooklyn Nets on Sunday, joining Kyrie Irving and DeAndre Jordan in blockbuster dealmaking moves to make the New York club a title contender once Durant recovers from a ruptured Achilles tendon.

Durant won two NBA titles in his first two seasons with Golden State in 2017 and 2018 and helped get the Warriors into last month's NBA Finals, where they lost to the Toronto Raptors. Durant missed nine games in the playoffs with a calf injury then played only 12 minutes in game five of the NBA Finals before rupturing his right Achilles tendon, an injury that required surgery and is expected to sideline him for the entire 2019-20 season.

"Today, as he starts a new chapter in his incredible career, we thank KD for all of his contributions, for being an integral part to one of the most prolific runs in NBA history and wish him well as he continues his Hall of Fame journey," Lacob said in a statement. "As long as I'm co-chairman of this team, no player will ever wear number 35 for the Warriors again." That should effectively mean Durant's number will be retired long-term by the club, with Lacob's team moving to a new \$1 billion home arena in San Francisco next season.

"Three years ago, we were thrilled with the arrival of Kevin Durant, a transformative NBA player and one of the best to ever play the game," Lacob said. "He provided our fans and franchise with numerous highlights during his stay here — two NBA championships, two NBA Finals MVPs, three trips to the Finals, unparalleled efficiency — and carried himself with class and dignity both on and off the court." Lacob also cited Durant winning the NBA's annual Community Assist Award last year for philanthropic efforts. — AFP

## Angels pitcher Skaggs dies in Texas, game postponed

**LOS ANGELES:** Los Angeles Angels pitcher Tyler Skaggs has died before a scheduled Monday game against the Texas Rangers that has been postponed, the Major League Baseball clubs announced. The 27-year-old left-hander from Los Angeles was found dead in a Texas hotel room. No cause of death was immediately known. Police are investigating after discovering Skaggs' body with no sign of foul play.

"It is with great sorrow that we report Tyler Skaggs passed away earlier today in Texas," the Angels said in a statement. "Tyler has, and always will be, an important part of the Angels family. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Carli and his entire family during this devastating time." Skaggs, who would have turned 28 on July 13, last pitched on Saturday in Anaheim. He started and allowed two runs over 4 1/3 innings against Oakland and in 15 starts this season was 7-7 with a 4.29 earned-run average and 78 strikeouts in 79 2/3 innings.

"I am deeply saddened by today's tragedy in Texas," Major League Baseball commissioner Rob Manfred said. "All of us at Major League Baseball extended our deepest condolences to Tyler's wife Carli, their family, their friends and all of his Angels teammates and colleagues. "We will support the Angels organization through this most difficult period and we will make a variety of

## Nike pulls US flag shoe after Kaepernick objection: Report

**WASHINGTON:** Nike withdrew a shoe displaying an early version of the American flag after former NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick warned the design was associated with slavery, US media reported on Monday. Nike had unveiled the Air Max 1 USA featuring an American Revolution-era design known as the Betsy Ross flag imprinted on its heel to coincide with the United States' July 4 independence day.

The Wall Street Journal reported the US sportswear giant pulled the shoe following objections from Kaepernick, a Nike endorser who led kneeling protests during the



**SAN DIEGO:** Players for the San Diego Padres and San Francisco Giants stand during a moment of silence for pitcher Tyler Skaggs of the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim at PETCO Park. — AFP

resources available to Tyler's teammates and other members of the baseball family."

The Rangers expressed "deepest sympathies" for the "shocking loss" in announcing the postponement of the schedule series opener between the clubs at Arlington, Texas. Skaggs, who was scheduled to pitch in Thursday's final game of the series with Texas, had a 28-38 career record with a 4.41 earned-run average and 476 strikeouts over parts of major league seven seasons with the Angels and Arizona Diamondbacks. His death comes 10 years after Angels pitcher Nick Adenhardt was killed in a car crash. — AFP

national anthems of NFL games in 2016 to protest racial inequality and social injustice. Kaepernick said the design featuring 13 white stars in a circle was offensive because it was associated with a period of slavery, which was legal in the US after independence from Britain.

White supremacist groups hostile to diversity have also recently appropriated the design, the newspaper said. Nike shipped the shoes to retailers but then asked for them back, and had taken the design off its website, the Journal reported. "Nike has chosen not to release the Air Max 1 Quick Strike Fourth of July as it featured the old version of the American flag," a Nike spokesman told the Journal.

The price of a few pairs available on an online shoe reseller rose to as much as \$2,000 following the publication of the Journal's article, the newspaper said. Kaepernick and former San Francisco 49ers safety Eric Reid settled collusion lawsuits against the NFL earlier this year for less than \$10 million over claims team owners had plotted to keep them from playing. — AFP

## Lashley makes triumph from tragedy with PGA Detroit win

**WASHINGTON:** Nate Lashley, who overcame the plane-crash deaths of his parents and girlfriend in 2004 to realize his golf-career dream, captured his first PGA title Sunday at the Rocket Mortgage Classic. The 36-year-old American alternate, who was the last player to make the field, fired a two-under par 70 to complete a wire-to-wire victory at Detroit Golf Club, shooting 25-under 263 for 72 holes to defeat compatriot Doc Redman by six strokes.

"Just really emotional right now," Lashley said. "Just really thankful I got into the golf tournament. Winning on the PGA Tour is just a dream come true and I'm just glad I got it done today." Lashley carried a six-stroke lead into the final round after shooting a 63 on Saturday as he had on Thursday and he was never threatened over the final holes. Lashley, ranked 353rd in the world, claimed a berth in the British Open in three weeks at Royal Portrush as well as a PGA Tour spot for the next two years.

It marked an amazing high point after tragedy struck him 15 years ago when he was a University of Arizona junior. Lashley's parents and girlfriend died in a plane crash while flying home from watching him play in a tournament. It's why his voice was breaking after he tapped in for par on the 18th green to clinch the emotional victory, his older sister Brooke Lashley and current girlfriend Ashlie Reed hugging him on the 18th green in celebration.

### 'Let's Go Lashley'

"Having my friends and family here, so many of them flew in, I'm just ready to go celebrate with them," Lashley said. "It's huge when you win. You get two years. You get all of this confidence going. You get to play in the (2020) Masters. I couldn't be more happy right now." Redman, a Monday qualifier making only his second PGA start of the year, took the other British Open spot on offer for July at Royal Portrush and collected special temporary US PGA membership for the remainder of the campaign by finishing second with a closing 67.

But the emotional day belonged to Lashley, who had turned away from golf after the tragedy and briefly sold real estate before changing his mind and chasing his dream, becoming a US PGA rookie at age 35 last year only to have a knee injury cut short his campaign. After starting this season on a medical extension, Lashley made enough money to continue on a secondary level, forcing him into Monday qualifying and into alternate's roles such as just missing out on last week's event in Hartford after sharing 28th at Pebble Beach two weeks ago at the US Open in his major debut. Lashley made the Detroit field on Wednesday when David Berganio withdrew.

No alternate had won a PGA title since Vaughn Taylor at Pebble Beach in 2016. Lashley sank a 15-foot birdie putt at the first hole and a 10-footer to birdie the third and reach 25-under. He made bogeys at the sixth and ninth but kept a five-shot edge on the back nine and responded with a seven-foot birdie putt at the par-4 13th. Fans chanted "Let's Go Lashley," ahead of his two-putt par at 16 and roared again when Lashley went up and down from deep greenside rough for birdie at the par-5 17th, sinking a seven-foot putt to set the stage for his closing effort. — AFP

## Sports

# England, New Zealand look to seize World Cup destiny

## Many pundits question their tournament nerve and nous

**CHESTER-LE-STREET:** England and New Zealand head into their final World Cup group match today, each knowing that a win would see them into the semi-finals. Even a defeat would not spell the end of either team's chances of emerging as one of the top four from the 10-team round-robin phase.

Were England to lose in Chester-le-Street, Pakistan could leapfrog them into the top four with victory over Bangladesh. Given that they play each other in their final pool match, only one of Bangladesh — who also still have to face India — or Pakistan can draw level with New Zealand in the event the Black Caps lose today.

And, with both Asian teams well behind on net run-rate, it would take a big New Zealand loss allied to a commanding Pakistan victory or two Bangladesh wins by big margins, to deny the 2015 losing finalists a place in the last four. But right now, England and New Zealand's World Cup destiny is in their own hands.

England travel to the northeast buoyed by a 31-run win over an India side that were previously unbeaten. Sunday's success against India, the team that recently replaced England at the top of the one-day international rankings, came after back-to-back defeats by Sri Lanka and reigning champions Australia had led many pundits to question their tournament nerve and nous. But the pleasing aspect for England, other than the result, was that the defeat of India was built on many of the factors that have been key to their ODI revival since a first-round exit at the 2015 World Cup.

Jonny Bairstow (111) and Jason Roy, who made 66 following his return from a hamstring injury, put on 160 for

the first wicket before the in-form Ben Stokes hit 79, his third successive fifty, to boost the total to 337-7. England, bidding to win their first World Cup, then kept things tight in the field, with Chris Woakes impressive and recalled paceman Liam Plunkett (3-55) once again taking wickets through the middle overs.

### A once promising campaign

"Winning a game like this, under the pressure we were under, can only stand us in good stead, potentially for the New Zealand game and hopefully after that," said Woakes. "You don't actually play much knockout cricket, so to put ourselves in the heat of the battle — obviously we'd rather have qualified by now — could potentially help us." By contrast, New Zealand head into the match following successive losses to Pakistan and Australia that have put a taken the gloss off a promising campaign.

An attack led by left-arm quick Trent Boult, who took a hat-trick hero against Australia, and featuring the express pace of Lockie Ferguson is a testing proposition for any side. New Zealand could now recall another paceman in Matt Henry at the expense of spinner Ish Sodhi, given the Riverside is not renowned for turning pitches.

But while several England batsmen have made hundreds at the World Cup, New Zealand appear dangerously over-reliant on captain Kane Williamson and fellow senior batsman Ross Taylor for runs. Colin Munro was dropped for the Australia game, while fellow opener Martin Guptill has managed just 85 runs from six innings since his 73 not out against Sri Lanka. Wicketkeeper-batsman Tom Latham is



**BIRMINGHAM:** England's captain Eoin Morgan (C) celebrates with his players after victory in the 2019 Cricket World Cup group stage match between England and India at Edgbaston. — AFP

averaging just 8.2 at this tournament. "We're still in charge of our destination and where we're heading, and that's always a nice thing to have," said Craig McMillan, New

Zealand's batting coach. "Obviously (Guptill and Latham) are short on runs but we're excited by the fact that we haven't quite clicked as a batting group yet." — AFP

## Holder promises West Indies will 'look after' Pooran

**CHESTER-LE-STREET:** West Indies captain Jason Holder vowed to "look after" Nicholas Pooran after his maiden one-day international century so nearly led to a stunning World Cup win over Sri Lanka on Monday. Sri Lanka posted an imposing 338 for six, a total built on Avishka Fernando's first hundred at this level, in a match between two sides whose hopes of qualifying for the semi-finals had already evaporated before a ball was bowled at Chester-le-Street.

But Pooran, well supported by Fabian Allen (51), got the West Indies close to a target of 339 — which would have been a new World Cup record for a winning side batting second — before they lost by 23 runs. Defeat meant the West Indies have now lost seven matches in a row after

starting the tournament with an impressive win over Pakistan. But Holder took some comfort from 23-year-old left-hander Pooran's century.

"Nicholas played an outstanding innings, he knocked it around as easily as he possibly could," said Holder as he reflected on Pooran's 118 off 103 balls, including 11 fours and four sixes. "What he has produced is what we expect him to produce, we want him to get better and improve," the all-rounder added. "We selected him for a reason and gave him full backing to go and play the game he wants to play."

"Yes he will make mistakes as a young player but it is important for development to take place. "We will look after Nicholas the best we possibly can, I expect big things. "He has got the talent, ability to change gears, he can improvise, has every shot in the locker and it is just a matter of him putting it together more often." For the West Indies, the winners of the first two World Cups back in 1975 and 1979, it was yet another case of what might have been after they squandered chances to beat reigning champions Australia and then saw Carlos Brathwaite fall just short of what would have been a match-winning six against New Zealand.



**MANCHESTER:** West Indies' Nicholas Pooran plays a shot during the 2019 Cricket World Cup group stage match between West Indies and India at Old Trafford. — AFP

"It is disappointing to come so close on a number of stages and not get that win," said Holder. The West Indies end their involvement at this World Cup against Afghanistan, still searching for their first

win of the tournament, on Thursday. "We have shown some fight this entire campaign," said Holder. "I'm proud of certain individuals who definitely put their hands up and put their hearts on the line." — AFP

## 'Crazy' to see me as Wimbledon favorite, says Auger-Aliassime

**LONDON:** Felix Auger-Aliassime showed up the stumbling NextGen flops at Wimbledon on Monday, becoming the first man born this century to win at the All England Club but described talk of him as a potential champion as "crazy". Stefanos Tsitsipas and Alexander Zverev are leading the 'NextGen' youngsters tipped for the top in tennis but crashed out of the Wimbledon first round.

However, 18-year-old Canadian Auger-Aliassime kept them on their toes by creating a little bit of history on his debut at the Championships. The 19th seed beat compatriot Vasek Pospisil 5-7, 6-2, 6-4, 6-3 to register his first Grand Slam win. "With the level I'm playing now and my ambitions, I look forward and I look to go even further than that," the teenager said.

The 2016 US Open boys' champion said the bookmakers' odds on him winning Wimbledon were unrealistic. "It would be a cool story," he conceded. "If I can go all the way, I'll go all the way. But it's a bit exaggerated to put me as maybe a fifth- or sixth-favorite to win the title. That's a bit crazy. "I'm already going faster than the majority and they want me to go even faster which I think is not sometimes realistic. "People have to relax. I'm 18."

### 'I didn't deliver'

Meanwhile Tsitsipas and Zverev said they had plenty of rethinking to do — and questioned whether they were made of the same stuff as the giants they are trying to replace such as Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic. German sixth seed Zverev, 22, long tipped as a future Grand Slam champion, lost 4-6, 6-3, 6-2, 7-5 to Czech qualifier Jiri Vesely, the world number 124.

Greek seventh seed Tsitsipas was beaten 6-4, 3-6, 6-4, 6-7 (8/10), 6-3 by world number 89 Thomas Fabbiano of Italy. "People expected things from me. I didn't deliver," said 20-year-old Tsitsipas. "When you get so much support, so much energy, so much positivity from everyone, and just ruin everything by yourself, it's devastating." As for the suggestion that things were just all happening too fast, the Australian Open semi-finalist said that was no excuse.

"Rafa and Roger seemed very mature and professional in what they were doing, they had consistency from a young age. They always did well tournament by tournament without major drops or inconsistency. "Something that we as the Next Gen players lack, including myself, is this consistency week by week." After losing to the lowest-ranked player ever to beat him at a Grand Slam, Tsitsipas was asked if he would take some time off. "Maybe I don't deserve a break," he shrugged.

Zverev failed to reach the Wimbledon second round for the first time ever. "I didn't lose this match on tennis. It's just my confidence is below zero right now," the 2013 boys' world champion said. "I get down on myself a lot. "Everything that happens outside the court affects you. The last two days, I would say, are very rough for me personally. I'm not going to get into details." Now Zverev wants to sort himself out in time for the US Open at the end of August. "I have a few months until the US Open. I'll figure it out. I've always said that the US Open this year is the tournament that I think I can have my breakthrough at the Grand Slams," he recalled. — AFP



**LONDON:** Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime returns against Canada's Vasek Pospisil during their men's singles first round match on the first day of the 2019 Wimbledon Championships at The All England Lawn Tennis Club. — AFP



**SPIELBERG:** Red Bull Racing's Dutch driver Max Verstappen celebrates on the podium in front of Ferrari's Monegasque driver Charles Leclerc after the Austrian Formula One Grand Prix. — AFP

## Formula One's young guns offer a vision of the future

**SPIELBERG:** Max Verstappen and Charles Leclerc are already hailed as future superstars of Formula One but Sunday's battle of the 21-year-olds in Austria was the clearest glimpse yet of what might lie ahead. Throw McLaren's 19-year-old British rookie Lando Norris into the youthful mix as well and the sport looks set on a glittering course.

All three put in standout performances throughout the weekend at Spielberg to put more established drivers into the shade. Ferrari's Leclerc and Red Bull's Verstappen thrilled the crowd with a wheel-banging, race-deciding battle in the closing laps. They were the youngest top two finishers in F1 history and Verstappen, a six times race winner, had never before stepped up to the top step of the podium without having at least one champion on a lower rung.

Finland's Valtteri Bottas, at 29 the old man on podium, finished third for Mercedes. Leclerc's three previous podium finishes, all third places, were with Bottas's five times world champion team mate Lewis Hamilton taking the winner's trophy. This was new territory for both youngsters.

Ferrari's four times champion Sebastian Vettel, 2007 world champion Kimi Raikkonen, now with Alfa

Romeo, and Hamilton had to settle for whatever points they could get in the Styrian sunshine. The late collision between the Red Bull and Ferrari, ruled a racing incident by stewards, and their differing opinions over the fairness of it also injected an early bit of needle into the fledgling rivalry.

Hamilton, who made his debut as a 22-year-old but is now 34, welcomed the rise of the next generation. "I'll go and fight the young 'uns, man!" he said after qualifying between pole-sitter Leclerc and third placed Verstappen, who moved up to the front row after the Briton was handed a grid penalty. "It's cool, I'm representing for the more grown men I guess."

While Leclerc and Verstappen kept the fans, many thousands in Dutch orange, on the edge of their seats, Norris also impressed. Starting fifth, he vaulted up to third at the start and passed Hamilton in a bold move around the outside at the first corner. Driving a car that was no match for Mercedes, Ferrari and Red Bull's challengers, he dropped back but not without giving Vettel, Verstappen and Raikkonen — the oldest driver on the grid — a fight.

Finishing an impressive sixth, his display in Austria came a week after a gritty drive into the points in a hydraulically hobbled McLaren that won him the "Driver of the Day" accolade at the French Grand Prix. "I was sceptical at first, I thought 'so young, can he cope with the pressure?'," Britain's 1996 world champion and Sky Sports television pundit Damon Hill said of Norris's season so far. "Not a hint of it ... he stayed out of trouble, as he said he wanted to do, and he got the result." — Reuters

## Wimbledon's Centre Court steam cleaned to kill pests

**LONDON:** Wimbledon's famous Centre Court has been steam cleaned to kill off any nasty pests lurking beneath the surface, head groundsman Neil Stubley said yesterday. The All England Club first trialled steam sterilising in 2017 and is now rolling it out around the courts. The technique involves covering the grass with polytunnels, drilling holes into the soil and blasting in steam, as the club adapts its practices in response to climate change and environmental concerns.

"We're very conscious about pesticide usage now," said Stubley. "We've started looking at alternatives to managing weeds, pests and diseases. "We're looking at steam sterilising as part of our annual maintenance of the courts. "As soon as you take that steam away, it's just cold water. There's no residual effect." The technique has been used for around a century, particularly in the Dutch glasshouse growing industry.

"We put loads of holes in the court beforehand and then we start pumping the steam in. As soon as we hit 70 degrees Celsius (158 degrees Fahrenheit), we know that it's killed anything like spores or pests that may live in the soil. "It gives us a complete clean surface. Then we shave the top off and then we reseed it and grow it back in for the following year." He said each court might need the treatment every five to 20 years. Besides Centre Court, the Courts 12 and 18 show courts have also been done, with Court One, the second-biggest, in line to be done after this year's tournament.

### Beauty of grass

Managing the 18 competition courts and 20 practice courts is a year-round operation. Each court is reseeded with a brand new surface after each championships. The grass was changed in the early 2000s from a creeping grass to a more tufted perennial rye grass, meaning the courts are harder. The firmness of each court is measured 25 times a day which informs how much water is sprayed on during the night. The drier the court, the more it is irrigated.

More than 20,000 measurements are done across the two-week Championships. "Each year is a challenge because you've got a living surface. As much as you try and manage it, it will be invariably dictated by the environment. "This year, it's a fairly nice, even temperature. It's low 20s, a bit of fair-weather cloud, nice blue skies, a slight breeze. It's perfect for the player, the spectator and the grass. "If you get a wet, damp day, the moisture in the air will naturally find its way into the plant and that becomes a little bit greasy. The beauty of grass is that you have to adapt to the environment." Stubley said there were 70 or 80 different plants around the grounds and some people come to see the horticulture as much as the tennis. The flowers are rarely stolen but sometimes spectators sit on them. — AFP

## Sports

# Mane misses penalty but scores twice as Senegal qualify to last-16

## War of words between the coaches preceded the game

**CAIRO:** Liverpool star Sadio Mane scored twice after having a penalty saved as Senegal defeated Kenya 3-0 in Cairo Monday to book an Africa Cup of Nations last-16 place. The Champions League-winning forward had a timidly-struck first half penalty saved by Patrick Matasi before making amends with a brace after a goalless opening 45 minutes.

Ismaila Sarr put Senegal ahead on 63 minutes and Mane netted on 71 and 78 minutes, his second goal coming from another penalty. Kenya were reduced to 10 men just before the second penalty was taken with Philemon Otieno sent off for a second yellow card. Algeria made 11 changes to the team that beat Senegal last week and still beat Tanzania 3-0 in Cairo to top Group C with nine points. Senegal were runners-up with six points, Kenya third with three and Tanzania, back at the tournament after 39 years, ended pointless. The qualification of Senegal raised to 12 the number of teams who have secured places in the second round, which kicks off Friday.

Hosts Egypt, surprise side Madagascar, Algeria and Morocco advanced as group winners and Uganda, Nigeria, Senegal and the Ivory Coast as runners-up. Guinea and the Democratic Republic of Congo have already taken two of the spots allocated to the four best third-place countries. With Algeria having qualified and Tanzania eliminated before the final group matches, the focus was on the battle for second place between Senegal and Kenya.

### War of words

A war of words between the coaches preceded the game with France-born Kenya handler Sebastien Migne suggesting Senegal lacked the mental strength to become African champions. Senegal coach Aliou Cisse responded by reminding Migne that his side were ranked 82 places higher in the world and the loss to Algeria was the first in four years in Africa.

Kenya were lucky to reach half-time level with Senegal at the June 30 Stadium as apart from the Mane penalty miss, captain Victor Wanyama was not punished for handling in the box. Patrick Matasi also made two great saves, blocking an Idrissa Gueye close-range shot and tipping a Sarr header over via the top of the crossbar.

Kenya came close to snatching the lead against the run of play just past the hour when a Dennis Omino snap shot was brilliantly parried by Alfred Gomis. A minute later and Senegal were ahead as Matasi fell while trying to clear a cross and Sarr turned to fire superbly into the corner of the net. Mane atoned for his penalty blunder by adding a second on 71 minutes, taking advantage of poor defending from Mohamed Musa off a long ball to run through and score.

Given a second penalty chance, Mane made no mistake, tucking the ball into the corner despite a brave attempt by the outstanding Matasi to reach it. At the Al Salam Stadium, Tanzania contained Algeria for 35 minutes before conceding three goals by half-time with Islam Slimani opening the scoring before Adam Ounas added two. — AFP



**CAIRO:** Senegal's forward Sadio Mane (L) fights for the ball with Kenya's midfielder Victor Wanyama during the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations (CAN) Group C football match between Kenya and Senegal. — AFP

## Reborn Sanchez feeling Chile's 'love' in Copa

**PORTO ALEGRE:** "All you need is love" sung the Beatles in their 1967 release of the same name, and according to Chile coach Reinaldo Rueda, that's what's been missing from Manchester United misfit Alexis Sanchez's game over the last 18 months. Over three and a half seasons with Arsenal following his £35 million (\$44 million) move from Barcelona — where he had to make way for the arrival of Uruguay's Luis Suarez from Liverpool — Sanchez built a reputation as one of the most feared forwards in the Premier League.

He was twice voted Arsenal's player of the year and featured in the 2014/15 Premier League team of the year. But in his 18 months with United, Sanchez has lost both form and confidence, and now the Premier League giants are reportedly desperate to offload him and his reported £400,000 a week salary. Yet Sanchez has shown signs of his old self at the Copa America, where he scored the winning shoot-out penalty against Colombia to send Chile into a semi-final meeting with neighbors Peru.

He also scored in each of Chile's opening two matches, victories over Japan and Ecuador, meaning he's scored more times in this month-long competition than he did in the entire Premier League campaign for United. According to Rueda, it boils down to one thing that is missing from his life in rainy Manchester: "love."

"In the national team and because of the attention they receive, the players don't want to leave," said the Colombian coach, who is no fan favorite himself due to leaving out popular goalkeeper Claudio Bravo from his Copa squad. "Despite not playing for their clubs, they come here with commitment and forge a strong group." Sanchez is a hero in his country having been one of the stars of Chile's back-to-back Copa America victories in 2015 and 2016 — the only ones in their history.

### The Wonder Kid

He's known as the "Nino Maravilla" — the Wonder Kid — in his homeland and is Chile's record goalscorer with 43. There's even been a film made about his life, in which he starred. As well as scoring the winning penalty against



**SAO PAULO:** Chile's Alexis Sanchez (facing camera) celebrates with teammates after scoring his penalty to defeat Colombia in the penalty shoot-out after tying 0-0 during their Copa America football tournament quarter-final match at the Corinthians Arena. — AFP

Colombia, he netted the decisive goal in the 2-1 victory over Ecuador, and helped blow out the scoreline late on in the 4-0 thumping of Japan. In Manchester, he managed just one Premier League goal in 20 appearances, although only nine of those were from the start.

He looked lost most of the time in the red shirt of United, rarely able to link up effectively with his teammates or produce any of the pace and trickery that was a feature of his career at Udinese, Barcelona and Arsenal. But he's not alone in putting behind him disappointing club seasons to thrive with his national team. Colombia's James Rodriguez, seemingly unwanted by either his parent club Real Madrid or Bayern Munich, where he spent the last two seasons on loan, was all creativity and ingenuity with Colombia in Brazil until they lost to Chile.

And Philippe Coutinho, jeered by Barcelona's fans and pilloried in the notoriously demanding Catalan press, scored a brace in Brazil's opening match against Bolivia and remains an unconditional starter in coach Tito's team. But while they can be under-appreciated at their European clubs, they remain adored by their countries' fans. "That's why players like Coutinho, James or Alexis, who didn't have a great season, become themselves again with the national team," said Rueda. "The treatment that is given to the players as professionals and as people generates the reciprocity that allows them to give their all." In his current form, Sanchez looks not only capable of leading Chile to an unprecedented third straight Copa title, but is putting himself in the shop window to earn a move to one of Europe's giants and end his United nightmare. — AFP

## Benitez to take charge of Chinese side Dalian Yifang

**SHANGHAI:** Champions League-winning manager Rafael Benitez said yesterday that he will join Chinese top-tier side Dalian Yifang, just days after his three-year reign at English club Newcastle United came to an end. "After a long path... We start a new challenge! I'm happy to begin this new project with Dalian Yifang," the Spaniard wrote on his verified Twitter account.

Benitez, who guided Liverpool to the UEFA Champions League crown in 2005 and has managed at European giants like Inter, Chelsea, and Real Madrid, parted ways with Newcastle last week. The 59-year-old becomes the latest big-name foreign manager to try his luck in the Chinese Super League (CSL), which have included the likes of Brazil's World Cup-winning coach Luiz Felipe Scolari, and Italian legend Fabio Cannavaro, who remains in charge at CSL powerhouse Guangzhou Evergrande.

Dalian Yifang, who are currently in joint 10th place in the CSL, also confirmed his appointment. "Dalian Yifang Football Club is honoured to have Mr. Rafa Benitez," the club said on its social media account. "We believe that through his efforts, he will be able to rebuild the glory and realise the expectations of the majority of fans." The club, which did not divulge terms, has never won the Chinese league title.

Unconfirmed reports have said previously that Benitez had been offered a contract worth £12 million (\$15 million) per year by Dalian Yifang. Benitez was a hugely popular figure at Newcastle after leading the club to promotion in his first full season and stabilising Newcastle in the Premier League over the past two years. Early in his coaching career, Benitez won two



**LIVERPOOL:** In this file photo taken on December 26, 2018 Newcastle United's Spanish manager Rafael Benitez gestures on the touchline during the English Premier League football match between Liverpool and Newcastle United at Anfield. — AFP

Spanish La Liga titles at Valencia, the come-from-behind Champions League title with Liverpool in the "Miracle of Istanbul", and was twice named UEFA Manager of the Year. He never won the English Premier League with Liverpool, however, but subsequently won some hardware at Chelsea and Napoli. Benitez didn't last a full season before Real Madrid dismissed him early in 2016, however.

Joining Newcastle shortly after, he was unable to save the team from relegation, but became hugely popular with fans by earning promotion straight back to the Premier League the following season. Newcastle finished well clear of relegation this season, raising hopes for the club's future. But Benitez has said that differing visions over strategy with club owner Mike Ashley prevented them reaching an agreement on a contract extension. — AFP

## Still a fan, Rashford hurt by Man Utd's decline

**LONDON:** Marcus Rashford wants to put Manchester United "back where they belong" after ending speculation over his future by penning a new four-year contract to remain at Old Trafford. The 21-year-old had attracted interest from Barcelona, among others, with his previous deal running out in 2020.

However, Rashford, a product of the United academy, wants to lead the rebuilding at United and believes he has felt the Red Devils' fall from grace under several different managers in recent years more than as a fan of the club. "It is a huge sense of pride and a huge feeling for me to sign the contract," Rashford told The Times. "Manchester United are one big family. Some clubs don't have that. That's why United are more than a football club to me."

"Me being a fan changes the emotional side of it. Say we lose a game, it affects me more than it should because I'm a fan. It hurts every day to see where we are now, (compared) to where we've been in the past. "It makes me more determined to put the club back where they belong." United finished 32 points behind local rivals and champions Manchester City in sixth in the Premier League last season and missed out on Champions League qualification.

Rashford believes the 20-time English champions can return to competing for the top honours in the coming seasons. "There's nothing I want more than to see the club winning the Premier League again, winning the Champions League again," he added. "Everybody here deserves much, much more than what we're giving them right now, not only the fans, the club itself. They don't deserve to be where they are now."

"As players, we're the ones who have the opportunity to try and forget about the past five, six years and put the club back on track." The appointment of Ole Gunnar Solskjaer as manager to replace Jose Mourinho also played a part in convincing Rashford to stay at the club. And he backed the Norwegian to succeed where David Moyes, Louis van Gaal and Mourinho have failed in the six years since Alex Ferguson's retirement. "The players have faith in the manager now," said Rashford. "It can take two or three seasons but I feel we're ready to take the first step." — AFP

## Dutch Arsenal connection gunning for World Cup glory

**PARIS:** The Netherlands stand one step away from their first ever women's World Cup final thanks to a core of players aiming to conquer the world after taking Arsenal back to the top in England. Vivianne Miedema's thumping headed opener in their 2-0 quarter-final win over Italy on Saturday helped give her side a last four clash with Sweden on Wednesday. It was her third in France after scoring an astonishing 31 goals in 28 games for the Gunners as they won their first Women's Super League in seven years.

Lining up behind her, for both club and country for the past two years, have been attacking midfielder Danielle van de Donk, centre-back Dominique Bloodworth and goalkeeper Sari Van Veenendaal, and Miedema recognised the impact having same players form the spine of both teams. "Obviously it's really easy, we've been playing together for two years, we play as a goalie, centre back, number 10 and me and it's the same at Arsenal so you get to know each other a lot better," Miedema said after beating the Italians.

"I just need to look at Dominique Bloodworth and I know where she's going to play the ball. It's the same with DVD (Van de Donk), we just have that connection. It helps me a lot and it helps our team a lot, and I'm happy that we've got that." Saturday's strike also increased 22-year-old Miedema's total as her country's top scorer to 61 in 80 matches for an international side considered relative minnows until very recently but who in the last three years have surged to the highest reaches of the women's game.

Since taking charge, initially as interim coach, in 2016, Sarina Weigman has led the Dutch to just their second ever World Cup two years after winning every match, and plaudits for the way they played, in the European Championships. "I didn't expect to be in the semi-finals of this World Cup," said Miedema, whose team have shown they know how to battle.

### 'I know exactly what they're doing'

The Dutch have struggled to express themselves in France but have won two matches in the dying seconds, including their 2-1 last 16 win over Japan, and have scored the majority of their goals in the final 20 minutes. "We've been complaining a lot that we've not played the best football but in the end we're in the semis, we've done amazing and we can be really proud," Miedema added. Jill Roord has just joined Arsenal, a move which would have further strengthened the Gunners' Dutch link had Bloodworth and Van Veenendaal not left pre-tournament.

However, both departing players agree with Miedema that the connection between the four Dutch dynamos is hugely important to their success. "I think it's very important. I realized on the pitch that Daniela and Viv are in front of me and I know exactly what they're doing," said Bloodworth. "I think we are all in the core of the team so I think it's important that we're so fluent in working together."

The 27-year-old Van de Donk has been crucial for Arsenal, scoring 13 times for the London club in their charge to the title last season and also winning the 2016 FA Women's Cup. She scored in the 3-0 Dutch hammering of potential final opponents England in the semi-finals of the Euros — her only goal of that tournament — and has proved to be a player for the big occasion. Van Veenendaal said the Arsenal quartet "feel each other" when they're out on the pitch. "We're all playing through the middle of the game and we know what we're doing and we know from each other what we're doing," she said. "I think that will definitely help." — AFP

**25** Angels pitcher Skaggs dies in Texas, game postponed



**26** England, New Zealand look to seize World Cup destiny



**27** Mane misses penalty but scores twice as Senegal qualify to last-16



BIRMINGHAM: India's captain Virat Kohli (C) leads his players as they celebrate after victory in the 2019 Cricket World Cup group stage match between Bangladesh and India at Edgbaston. — AFP

## India defeat Bangladesh to seal semis

Tigers roar but couldn't bite as India secure qualification

**BIRMINGHAM:** India opener Rohit Sharma hit his fourth century of the World Cup as Virat Kohli's side booked their place in the semi-finals with a 28-run win over Bangladesh at Edgbaston yesterday. Sharma's attacking 104 laid the foundation of India's 314 for nine after Kohli elected to bat first in India's penultimate match of the league phase.

Yet for the second match in a row Sharma — as happened during India's 31-run defeat by England at Edgbaston on Sunday — was dropped in single figures before making a hundred. India's bowlers then combined to dismiss Bangladesh for 286 with two overs to spare after star batsman Shakib Al Hasan top-scored with a valiant 66.

Jasprit Bumrah took four wickets and fellow paceman Hardik Pandya three, including the prize scalp of Shakib. Defeat ended Bangladesh's slim hopes of a place in the last four after they had impressed during wins over South Africa and the West Indies. The day belonged to the in-form Sharma, who played an attacking knock, hitting seven fours and five sixes in his 92-ball innings while being cheered on by another largely pro-India crowd in Birmingham.

Sharma and opening partner KL Rahul put on 180 — the highest stand for the first wicket in the tournament — to get India off to a flying start. But Sharma should have been out for nine only for Tamim Iqbal to drop a simple catch at deep midwicket following a mistimed pull off

paceman Mustafizur Rahman. Sharma was finally caught at extra cover by Liton Das off the bowling of Soumya Sarkar and Rahul, who filled an opener's slot following an injury to Shikhar Dhawan, was caught behind off Rubel Hossain for 77. Mustafizur took five wickets, including star batsman Kohli for 26, to check India's surge. The paceman struck twice in the space of three balls to dismiss both Kohli and Pandya.

Rishabh Pant once again showed his worth at the number four position with a brisk 48, using the short boundary at one side of Edgbaston to his advantage. MS Dhoni, who received flak for his slow innings in India's defeat by England on Sunday — their only loss so far this tournament — chipped in with a 33-ball 35. Paceman

Mohammed Shami struck early in Bangladesh's reply when Tamim, who made 22, chopped the ball onto his stumps. Shakib struck his sixth fifty-plus score that includes two hundreds to keep Bangladesh in hunt. But Pandya's second spell saw the all-rounder account for Liton and Shakib to leave Bangladesh struggling at 179-6 in the 34th over.

Shakib, who has been Bangladesh's go-to man, played well for his 46th ODI fifty but was undone by a slower ball and caught at extra cover. Mohammad Saifuddin made an unbeaten 51 only to run out of partners as Bumrah ended the match with two wickets in successive deliveries. Bangladesh face Pakistan in their last group match at Lord's on Friday. India meet Sri Lanka on the final day of the round-robin phase on Saturday. — AFP

## Federer overcomes scare, Barty and Kerber cruise

**LONDON:** Eight-time Wimbledon champion Roger Federer overcame a first set scare to reach the second round on Tuesday beating South African debutant Lloyd Harris 3-6, 6-1, 6-2, 6-2. Federer, whose great rival Rafael Nadal was also in action against Japanese qualifier Yuichi Sugita, took time to get going and was helped by his opponent suffering a calf problem midway through the match.

"I struggled early on, my legs were frozen and the ball was not going where I wanted it to," said Federer. "He was hitting big and things were going quickly. I was nervous for a set and a half. "So it took a good effort from me. Lloyd played a good match." If Nadal comes through, he will renew his bitter rivalry with Nick Kyrgios after the combustible Australian claimed a 7-6 (7/4), 3-6, 7-6 (12/10), 0-6, 6-1 win over countryman Jordan Thompson. Kyrgios, who stunned Nadal as a 144-ranked wildcard on his tournament debut in 2014, put in a typically raucous and charismatic display on

Court 3 where he fired 23 aces and 63 winners. However, while he progressed another of the top 10 seeds fell by the wayside-two-time French Open champion Dominic Thiem's lack of ease on grass being exposed by veteran American serve and volleyer Sam Querrey.

Querrey, a Wimbledon semi-finalist in 2017, prevailed 6-7 (4/7), 7-6 (7/1), 6-3, 6-0. "There's still things which are not easy," said Thiem. "I mean, last year and this year together I played four grass court matches, which is not a lot at all. "All the clay court season it takes a lot out of me," added the 25-year-old Austrian.

Women's world number one Ashleigh Barty and defending champion Angelique Kerber avoided the fate of second seed Naomi Osaka and came through their first round clashes safely. Barty beat China's Zheng Saisai 6-4, 6-2 while Kerber, the fourth seed, beat fellow German Tatjana Maria 6-4, 6-3. Whilst Barty did not have it all her own way in the first set being pegged back to 4-4 after leading 3-0 she had little trouble after winning the first set. "The first round is always very tough and it took a little time to get used to the court," said Barty. "It definitely took some time to adjust."

### 'Tournament of the year'

Barty, who is bidding to become the first woman since Serena Williams in 2015 to win both the French Open and Wimbledon in the same season, drew on

the film The Lion King to describe how she felt leading into the match. "Kind of came into it thinking kind of like hakuna matata (Swahili for no trouble and a title of a song in the film), just relax and go for it," said the 23-year-old.

Barty plays tricky Belgian Alison Van Uytvanck, who knocked out then defending champion Garbine Muguruza last year in the second round, for a place in the last 32. "It will be an exceptional challenge and it will be important for me to be strong on my serve," she said. Barty may have not been nervous but Kerber, who came into the tournament on the back of being the beaten finalist at Eastbourne last Saturday, confessed to being so before she walked out onto Centre Court. Her game appeared to reflect that as she lost her serve on several occasions but in the end won comfortably enough. "This is the tournament of the year where you really would like to play your best tennis," said Kerber.

"I think it was a little bit different, but the nerves and everything are the same. "Doesn't matter which Centre Court you are coming back as the defending champion." Meanwhile, Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge, left the plush confines of the Royal Box at Wimbledon to watch a British wildcard competing on the lowly outside courts. In a rare move for a member of the royal family visiting the All England Club, Kate took her place in among the 318 regular seats on Court 14 to watch Harriet Dart take on Christina McHale. — AFP



LONDON: Switzerland's Roger Federer runs to return the ball to South Africa's Lloyd Harris during their men's singles first round match on the second day of the 2019 Wimbledon Championships at The All England Lawn Tennis Club. — AFP