

# Friday Times

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SHAWWAL 25, 1440 AH | FRIDAY, JUNE 28, 2019

**9** State departments expected to lay off 3,000+ expats by new fiscal year



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## Surfers dazzle off Shuwaikh beach

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## Local

## Sexual harassment



Local Spotlight

By Muna Al-Fuzai

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Sexual harassment was often considered a taboo that should not be talked about, and people did not even use the term “harassment”, until recently. But this is not a justification for ignoring harassment or pretending that it doesn’t exist. More importantly, harassment is not normal behavior, as well as being a crime punishable by law. Sexual harassment can take different forms, such as harassment through the Internet and social media by sending abusive and inappropriate comments, messages, images and videos via email, SMS and blogs.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) this week adopted a new international treaty to combat violence and harassment in the workplace, inspired by the #MeToo movement. The treaty, which will be binding on the governments which will sign it, was approved on the last day of the annual conference of governments, employers and workers’ groups. This decision came as a result of many calls, studies and research about the topic.

A recent study on sexual harassment at the United Nations over the past two years revealed that one third of the staff of the United Nations reported harassment during this period during their work with the UN. The most common types of harassment were lewd stories, sexual jokes, hostility and expressing views about appearance and body. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in a letter to his staff that the study contained surprising figures and evidence on what should be changed to improve working conditions in the UN. In February, the UN launched a 24-hour hotline for staff to report sexual harassment incidents and UN investigators will deal with all complaints.

The fight against sexual harassment and violence dominated the Golden Globe Awards after a series of scandals involving Hollywood producers, directors and actors, as numerous allegations emerged against filmmakers, which led to the exclusion of the defendants and denial of their participation in cinematic and artistic activities. Last year, the largest union of representatives in the US called for a ban on meetings with junior actresses in private hotel rooms to protect their members from “harassment or potential exploitation”. Dozens of celebrities in entertainment and politics were prosecuted after being charged with sexual misconduct.

In the aftermath of the #MeToo campaign, it seems that women in the Arab world were encouraged to talk publicly about what they are experiencing at home and in the street to reveal stories that are no less tragic, and many initiatives have emerged in the Arab world.

The president of the Egyptian Center for Women’s Rights said many Arab civil society organizations have succeeded in working with their governments and legislators to add the term sexual harassment in the laws, while Egypt, Tunisia and other countries have toughened penalties.

But with increasing harassment and sexual abuse, the question remains: How can sexual harassment and abuse be stopped against girls and women? I think the real challenge is to speed up the justice system and consider this issue a priority to protect the victims, because there are cultural influences that make many people see harassment of women as a simple issue, and some even assume that the women are the reason behind such incidents.

I think there is a key role to be played by parents in reducing sexual harassment of women. For example, by raising children’s awareness of the need to safeguard their privacy and that their bodies are inviolable. Teach children that they can say “no” if they feel danger and insecurity, and that they can refuse demands in any situation when they feel uncomfortable, and they should not be afraid of the consequences. They should never feel afraid or ashamed to disclose what may have happened to them or the disturbing things that might have been exposed to them.

Sexual harassment is a form of sexual violence against women and victims must be protected from such crimes. Everyone must accept that harassment is never an ordinary event that can be ignored or accepted.

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



Young children enjoy a walk on Anjafa Beach in Salwa during sunrise. — Photo by Mohammad Othman/KUNA

## Keep you and your money safe during summer holiday travel with these tips



IN MY VIEW

By Nawara Fattahova

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With the start of the travel season, local banks published advisories on their social media accounts for travelers as a precaution to avoid inconveniences during their visits abroad. But many people fail or read or forget these pieces of advice and instructions.

One of the most helpful tips is to download the mobile banking application of the bank. Through this application, the client can manage various needs while travelling and in Kuwait, which will save them time rather than visiting the bank’s branch or wasting money on phone calls.

Some banks block credit cards from being used abroad as a precautionary measure to protect their clients. The client should visit any branch of the bank if they don’t have the phone app to inform them about their trip to make sure that their credit card won’t be blocked, especially to high risk destinations.

Banks advise to always check the sales amount before entering the PIN, as well as checking the invoice in detail. Don’t leave any bill from a restaurant, hotel or other service establishment with the tip or the total amount sections blank.

Credit cards should be kept away from direct sunlight, as this may damage them. Use the safe placed in your hotel room to store your expensive and important items. Most hotels now have safes. Make sure you also keep the door closed and locked at all times. Repeated cases of theft have been reported in various countries, especially the favorite touristic destinations for Gulf nationals, so tourists are advised not to wear expensive watches and jewelry, espe-

cially when walking in the streets. It’s also recommended to avoid carrying expensive purses.

Keep your purse or wallet in an inside pocket and always watch out for pick pockets, especially when you are in a crowded place or distracted by watching street performers, in shops or on the metro.

Some banks also advise clients to check the ATM machine to make sure that there are no scanners installed. During the past few years, new ways of theft have been developed, out of which installing skimmers at ATM machines is the most popular, and many clients have fallen victim to this scam.

Don’t keep the purse containing your wallet or other expensive items in the overhead storage bin on the plane, especially during longer flights when you could fall asleep. This may result in ending up leaving the plane without your money, and only noticing later when you need to pay. Losing some of your money is better than losing it all. Try to put your cash and bank cards in at least two or three wallets, placing each wallet in a different bag or pocket. So if you unfortunately lose one wallet, you will still be able to survive with the spare money in the other wallets.

The best combination is having some cash (best exchanged here) and using credit or debit cards at points of sale. Withdrawing money from an ATM machine may be very costly, as your local bank will charge a withdrawal fee of around KD 1 for each transaction, in addition to the fee by the foreign bank and the unfavorable exchange rate. So one transaction may cost around KD 4. So it’s better to withdraw one large amount and avoid repeated withdrawals of smaller amounts.

When travelling to some countries, you will need cash. In Iran for instance, international credit or debit cards don’t work - neither at the stores nor for withdrawals. Only local cards work there due to the sanctions. So make sure you have enough money for the whole trip. In emergency cases, you can receive money transfers from some countries only.

What's your plan this Summer ?



WORKOUT

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Local

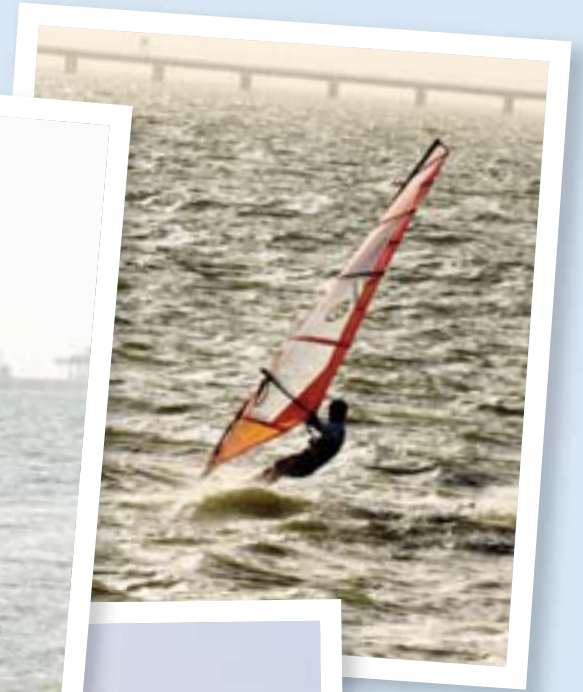
PHOTO FEATURE



A group of local water sports enthusiasts kite surf and wind surf in Kuwait Bay near Shuwaikh beach yesterday. Shuwaikh port, KPC, the National Assembly buildings and the newly opened Sheikh Jaber Causeway can be seen in the background.

— Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh





# Filipina domestic helpers

## offer advice, insight on working safe in Kuwait

By Ben Garcia

A Philippine Embassy lawyer recently filed a complaint against a Kuwaiti man for raping a domestic helper. A police source said the lawyer informed them the accused took advantage of the family being out of the house, then went to the helper's room and locked the door before raping her. She was offered money in exchange of her silence.

Last year, the murder of a Filipina housemaid inside her employer's house in Hawally triggered a diplomatic dispute between Kuwait and Manila, the illicit intervention of the embassy in rescuing their nationals kept prisoner in local employment and the expulsion of the Philippine envoy to Kuwait.

In the same year, another Filipina was rescued by authorities after a series of videos of her pleading for help went viral on Facebook. The Filipina housemaid showed in the video the bruises and burns which she allegedly sustained due to abuse by her employer.

Kuwait Times has documented most of these stories of death, abuse and mistreatment that happen inside the supposed comfort of an employer's home. Stories of housemaids beaten and mistreated are unfortunately all too common. So how can a domestic helper protect herself against abusive employers? How can she overcome challenges and differences in culture, language and even religion? We spoke to some domestic helpers in Kuwait, and here's what they said:

### Building trust

Emerald Estrada, a Filipina domestic helper for the past 10 years, said she understands her employer's reasons when she was not allowed a day off during her first two years at her employer's house, a common but illegal practice.

"They said they were trying to protect me during my first contract, when I was not allowed a day off. They told me I could go out if they go out too, but for me to go out alone, no way," she said. The domestic labor law says the domestic helper is entitled to one day off per week. "But when the employer says we cannot have a day off, we are stuck," Estrada noted.

"Maybe they didn't trust me yet. For me, it was okay; it takes time to build relationship and trust, so I stayed at home for two years. I know many Filipinas who have been in Kuwait for 10 years without a day off. They are still alive. If you do not like this, tell them to take you back to your embassy or agency," she said.

Estrada has experienced several types of verbal abuse, like she has come from a 'khad-dama' country, the maids are 'maskeen' and poor people, and they are slaves and the employers can do whatever they want because they bought them by paying cash from an



Kathryn Gonzales

agency.

"I hear this but I keep it to myself. It was painful, but I tell myself it cannot kill me - I want my salary only for my kids," she said. "When they accused me of taking something from their room, I told them to take me to the police so they would know if I really did it. I am sure that I didn't take anything from them, so my conscience is clear," she said. "Slowly, I earned the complete trust of every one of them. That struggle was only during the first two years of my contract," she added.

Estrada said she avoids the male members of her employer's family. "I don't talk to male members of the family. If they need something, I tell my madam to pass the message to me. In this way, I avoid any temptation and they can do the same. It's a matter of respect. They



Gina Morales

don't talk to me directly as well. I am afraid of the grownup male members of the family. But if you keep a distance, they can never hurt you. When they talk to me for a few seconds, I don't look at them in the eye. I also agreed to cover my head with a hijab and wear a black abaya at all times, especially when there are male members around. I remove the abaya only when I am in my room," she said.

### Experienced and confident

Gina Morales, another housemaid, said the first thing she did was to work and follow her employers' orders. "I just followed their orders - I wanted to impress my boss on my first day

and I kept this habit," she said. "Only later did I answer back. If there's something wrong, I don't stop talking when it is necessary. I don't keep my mouth shut. Once my boss reminded me that when she brought me from the agency, I was nice and kind, but I have become a tigress. But I think this was necessary to avoid the men of the family. I told them this is because I want to stay safe," she said, adding that the idea is to let them know that she is willing to submit only to work-related issues but not for anything illegal that doesn't conform to her job as a housemaid.

"I told them I will work hard and hope to complete my two-year contract without any hassle so I can go home. My bosses told me eventually that my attitude is good, so some members of the family will not take advantage of me. The hardest part was when they confiscated my mobile, passport and other documents. They said they will keep it and in times of need, I can take the documents from them. So I gave it to them without hesitation, and after two years, I went home. When I returned, they gave me twice off in a month, so I was happy, and they increased my salary too," Morales said.

When it comes to language, Morales said she couldn't be bothered because all the members of the family she is serving understand English. "I speak broken English, but we understand each other. My employer speaks English very well because she works in a bank. Their kids are also studying in an English school, so I don't face any language barrier. I can easily converse with them and convey my message properly, so I only experience minimal problems," she said.

Morales has been with the same employer for the past 16 years. "I started with a very small salary, but now my salary has doubled and I am still with them. Probably when they do not need me anymore, I can say I am ready to go home. I managed to give a better life and education to my two kids - a daughter graduated with a BS in Banking and Finance, and my son is in the second year of college studying criminology. I am a single parent, so I work hard for them," she said.

Kathryn Gonzales said she is happy she found a good employer, whom she has been serving for nine years. "I am lucky to work in the same place where my mother works. My mother came before the Iraqi invasion. She's has been with my boss for more than 34 years. My mother is still working with them, although she has slowed down because she is old. They treat us like part of the family," she said. "My mother knows the culture of Kuwait. She warned me to wear appropriate dress and make it a habit to close the door of our room. She said when talking to men in Kuwait, I should not look at them directly in the eye. I follow her advice religiously and do my work," she said.



Emerald Estrada

# GLASS FUSING, a developing creative craft in Kuwait



KUWAIT: Glass fusing and shaping by Kuwaiti specialists became a developing artistic craft in the country. Kuwait had opened a glass-fusing workshop seven months ago in Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyyah (DAI) to develop this craft. The workshop is the first of its kind in the Gulf region, providing programs on creativity in glass fusing. — KUNA



Iqbal known for his own typical style and approach thought quite differently on the wedding day as well as he very honestly promised his wife that now each year on 29th June we both will stay jointly or individually but in Room 306 Holiday Inn wherever we are. Today Saturday Iqbal will be staying in the same room 306 of the same hotel Holiday Inn Al Thuraya City, Kuwait on the same date 29th June 2019 for 34th year in continuity which

is unknown to human history. Traditionally speaking it is very well known globally that in east or west, south or north on wedding anniversaries couples normally exchange gifts or host party or dine out or fly out etc which Iqbal did not want to copy any of these codified traditions and instead he wished to craft his own modus of operandi which none had opted so far and Iqbal did triumph on this account.

## Local

# Kuwaiti Interior Minister discusses security cooperation with US, UK envoys

## Speaker receives British, Palestinian ambassadors



**KUWAIT:** Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah meets with US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman. —KUNA photos



**KUWAIT:** Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah meets with British Ambassador to Kuwait Michael Davenport.



**KUWAIT:** Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem meets with British Ambassador to Kuwait Michael Davenport.



**KUWAIT:** Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem meets with Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub.

**KUWAIT:** Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah held talks yesterday with the American and British ambassadors on bilateral relations and security cooperation. The Ministry of Interior said in a statement that the minister discussed with the US envoy Lawrence Silverman key issues of joint concern, affirming depth of the relations between the two friendly countries. Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah, during the meeting with the American ambassador, noted the existing security cooperation with Washington, also underlining the mutual and continuous cooperation between

them at the regional security level. Later yesterday, he hosted the British Ambassador Michael Davenport, holding talks on means of enhancing the cooperation between Kuwait and the United Kingdom. He also affirmed the depth and distinctiveness of the Kuwaiti-UK relations. In the meantime, Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem received yesterday in his office the British Ambassador Michael Davenport, as well as the Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub. Senior officials at the National Assembly attended the receptions, which were held separately. — KUNA

## Kuwaiti flag hoisted at Palestinian town

**RAMALLAH:** The municipality at the Palestinian town of Silvit yesterday hoisted the Kuwaiti flag side by side with the Palestinian flag on a street named after Speaker of the Kuwaiti National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem. The gesture is an expression of gratitude for Kuwait's support for the Palestinian just cause. Abdulkarim Al-Zubaidi, head of the municipality, said in a statement to the press that the Kuwaiti flag was raised aloft in appreciation for the Kuwaiti supportive stance, namely the stand by the Kuwaiti parliament expressing opposition to participation in the Manam workshop for the Palestinian question. Ghanem, on Monday, urged the Kuwaiti Government to take "a decisive and an irreversible stand to boycott" the forum in the Bahraini capital. — KUNA



### News in brief

#### Amir condolences with Egyptian president

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday sent a cable of condolences to Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi over the victims of the terrorist attack targeting northern Sinai town of El-Arish, which resulted in the death of seven cops. In the cable, His Highness the Amir underlined that Kuwait strongly condemns this heinous act, that this terrorist act was a blatant violation of international laws and a perilous escalation that threatens security and stability in the region. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables, while National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem sent a cable to the Egyptian Speaker of the House of Representatives Ali Abdel Aal. — KUNA

#### Qatar's anniversary

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday cabled Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani expressing congratulations on the sixth anniversary of taking the helm of power. His Highness the Amir, in the cable, lauded the widely acclaimed development in various sectors in Qatar, wishing the Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim lasting well-being so he may pursue leadership of the process of development in the brotherly country and attain further progress and prosperity for it and its people. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah addressed cables of identical content to the Qatari Amir. — KUNA

#### Kuwaiti pilgrims

**JEDDAH:** Facilitating affairs of Kuwaiti pilgrims was the focus of a meeting held on Wednesday between Kuwait's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Ali Khaled Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Prince Khalid Al-Faisal, the governor of Makkah and adviser to King Salman. The ambassador lauded huge efforts made by Prince Khaled to develop Makkah province and provide all services to visitors and pilgrims of the Grand Holy Mosque in Makkah. Sheikh Ali Khaled also commended success made during the last holy month of Ramadan and the big progress of the Arab, Gulf and Islamic summits hosted by Saudi Arabia in that month. He said this shows that Saudi Arabia has enormous potentials and big experiences to host such big events. He pointed to the opportunity of the Kuwaiti private sector's participation in economic conferences and investment in Makkah province. — KUNA



## Local

# State departments expected to lay off 3,000+ expats by new fiscal year

## Former Social Security chief sentenced to life in prison

By A Saleh and Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** The Central Service Commission (CSC) contacted state departments on behalf of the cabinet and urged them to make use of the summer to prepare lists of expatriates who must be laid off in order to implement the five-year plan to replace them with national manpower, namely in administrative jobs, well-informed sources said. The lists are expected to be submitted to CSC by January so that 3,000 or more expat employees expected to be laid off could be notified by the beginning of the new fiscal year, the sources added.

Further, the sources explained that the Ministry of Education is expected to lay off expat administrative staff members and teachers who could be replaced by Kuwaitis, adding that various state departments had been instructed to cut down the number of expat advisors and consultants. Meanwhile, the education ministry announced that it finished preparing lists of expat teachers and administrative staff members to be laid off, adding that undersecretary Dr Soud Al-Harbi signed the lists pending notifying the concerned employees so that they can start their termination procedures.

## Kuwait won't budge on Palestine: Deputy FM

**DUBLIN:** Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah has affirmed that Kuwait's policy toward the Palestinian cause will remain unchanged. The deputy foreign minister has noted that Kuwait will continue to abstain from normalizing relations with Israel unless demands of the Palestinian people have been met. In a statement to the press yesterday, he said that the Kuwaiti stance with respect of the Palestinian cause is an unwavering stand; supporting the authority and the Palestinian people in their quest to attain their legitimate rights.

The Palestinian cause is central for the Arab nation, Jarallah stresses. Kuwait's absence from Al-Manama workshop was in line with its principled stand toward the Palestinian cause and in response to the statement by the National Assembly not to take part in the forum, he explained further. Kuwait aspires to see the concerned super powers take into consideration reso-

**Life in prison**  
The criminal court yesterday issued a verdict in absentia sentencing the former director of the Public Institution For Social Security Fahad Al-Rajaan and his wife to life in prison, and returning the amounts they had embezzled.

**Investigation**  
Health Minister Dr Basel Al-Sabah ordered an immediate investigation concerning a video circulating online and showing casualty doctors at the Amiri hospital watching a football match while on duty.

**Water projects**  
The Ministry of Electricity and Water puts great hopes in the new water projects in view of the annually growing water consumption rates, said informed sources, noting that consumption rates in Kuwait had reached record levels despite the fact that over 93 percent of the water consumed in Kuwait is desalinated. The sources added that nine contracts with a total value of KD 333.5 million had been signed to pump water produced at Al-Zour

lutions of the international legitimacy and the Arab Peace Initiative that focus on the principle of the two states that guarantee interests of the brotherly Palestinian people, he has added.

Meanwhile, Jarallah affirmed that the Kuwait Government adopts "an approach" to open an embassy in the Irish capital. Mutual interests have been growing, thus warranting presence of diplomatic missions in the capitals of the two countries, Jarallah said following a meeting, along with accompanying officials, with the Irish Minister of State for the Diaspora and International Development, Ciaran Cannon, at the Irish Foreign Ministry headquarters in the capital Dublin.

It is high time for Kuwait which already operates a cultural office in Ireland to establish an embassy to manage the country's interests, particularly considering presence of 900 Kuwaiti students in Ireland. He has confirmed that his talks with the Irish official dealt with prospects of opening an Irish embassy in Kuwait and stationing a Kuwaiti diplomatic mission in Ireland. He lauded Ireland's support for Kuwait during the 1990 Iraqi aggression, estimated Kuwaiti businesses in the country at \$4 billion, also noting presence of the large number of students. — KUNA

Kuwait totally adheres to its commitment to slash the output according to the set quota, he said, hoping that the other states parties of the deal would adhere to their quotas. The ministerial commission for observing the production cut will hold a meeting to examine a recommendation by the technical committee with respect of examining all the influencing factors on the decision, namely current jitters due to possible economic growth sluggishness worldwide, along with the forecast impact on the demand in addition to the production by non-OPEC countries.

OPEC is scheduled to hold the 176th ministerial meeting in early July at the organization's headquarters in Vienna to take a decision on production slash, effective between last January and June 30. The planned session will be followed with a ministerial meeting with representatives of 10 non-OPEC oil-producing countries. OPEC and non-OPEC crude producers reached a deal in December 2018, taking some 1.2 million barrels of oil off the market, in a step largely intended to bring up the crude prices. — KUNA

desalination plant into the national grid.

**Behind schedule**  
Head of Kuwait Municipality's reform and development committee Humoud Oqlah Al-Enezi denied rumors which blamed municipality and the municipal council for 137 development projects falling behind schedule. "Only five of those projects are having technical problems with municipality regulations," he said.

**Physiotherapy practice law**  
Kuwait Physical Therapy Association (KPTA) said that a special committee would be formed soon to set a law for physiotherapy practice in collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MoH). Following a meeting with MoH's assistant undersecretary for medical support services Dr Fawwaz Al-Refae, KPTA chairperson Hana Al-Khamees said that Refae approved the committee and expressed full understanding of setting a special law for physiotherapy, adding that the topics discussed on the meeting included allowing physiotherapist to work for both the public and private sectors.



## Jleeb building evacuated after fire

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** A fire broke in a third floor apartment in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh yesterday, said security sources, noting that firemen from Jleeb and Ardhiya rushed to the scene where they managed to evacuate the entire building and deal with the blaze. No casualties were reported. Meanwhile, a vehicle caught fire while it was parked in an open yard in Khaitan, said security sources, noting that firemen rushed to the scene and managed to control the flames before spreading to other vehicles parked nearby.

**Int'l day against drugs**  
Under auspices of Interior Ministry's Undersecretary Lt Gen Essam Al-Nahham and the attendance of the assistant undersecretary for criminal security affairs Maj Gen Khaled Al-Deyyeen, the ministry launched yesterday a two-day celebration to commemorate the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, which falls on June 26. With the aim of boosting public awareness, the ceremony was held at the Avenues Mall in collaboration with the ministry's public relations and security media, the criminal evidence department, the drug control general department, the juvenile care department, in addition to the awqaf and health ministries. Speaking on the occasion, Deyyeen stressed the significance of combining all efforts to fight the criminal, social and economic impacts of drugs.

## Kuwait supports keeping deal on oil production slash

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait during OPEC's meeting next month will support extending the agreement of slashing crude oil output till end of 2019, Minister of Oil, Electricity and Water Dr Khaled Al-Fadel announced yesterday. In a statement to the press, the minister says Kuwait backs up all efforts aimed at restoring stability and balance to the oil markets, expressing hope that this approach will be helpful in improving the market basic factors, also with respect of trimming the crude glut.



At Party School, China  
grooms future leaders

## Feisty Trump sets tone as stormy G20 looms

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**BERLIN:** German Chancellor Angela Merkel attends a ceremony where the country's new Justice Minister was given her certificate of appointment by the German President at the presidential Bellevue Palace in Berlin yesterday. During the ceremony, Merkel suffered a new shaking spell, just one week after sparking concerns by visibly trembling at another official ceremony— AFP

# German Chancellor seen shaking again

## Health fears after Merkel shakes visibly at ceremony

**BERLIN:** German Chancellor Angela Merkel was seen shaking as she met President Frank-Walter Steinmeier yesterday, her second such bout within two weeks, but her spokesman said she was fine and she continued with her duties. Merkel, 64, has no history of serious health issues. She was attending a farewell ceremony for Justice Minister Katarina Barley, who is leaving to become a lawmaker in the European Parliament.

Standing next to Steinmeier as he addressed the gathering, Merkel started shaking visibly in her upper body then crossed her arms as if to brace herself. She was offered a glass of water but declined to drink it while Steinmeier spoke. Berlin is in the throes of a heatwave. On June 18, Merkel was also seen shaking when she met visiting Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy but later said she felt better after drinking some water. Asked if the chancellor would take part in this weekend's G20 meeting in Japan, the spokesman said: "Everything is taking place as planned. The chancellor is well."

After the ceremony with Steinmeier, Merkel went on to the Bundestag lower house of parliament for the swearing-in of the new justice minister. She showed no signs of shaking and looked relaxed, chatting and laughing with Vice Chancellor Olaf Scholz. Were Merkel to be incapacitated, Steinmeier would appoint a cabinet minister as acting chancellor until parliament elects a new chancellor. This need not be Scholz, a member of the Social Democrats, junior partner in Merkel's ruling grand coalition.

### Work ethic

Merkel is renowned for her work ethic and has a reputation for outlasting other leaders at European Union summits with her ability to focus on the details of complex discussions deep

into the night. In the past, she has joked that she is a "sleep camel" who can go days with just a few hours of sleep as long as she gets a full night of shut-eye at the weekend. She is due to go on holiday later in the summer. Merkel has loomed large on the European stage since 2005, helping guide the EU through the euro zone crisis and opening Germany's doors to migrants fleeing war in the Middle East in 2015 - a move that still divides the bloc and Germany.

### Merkel renowned for her work ethic

The chancellor faces a grueling schedule in the coming days. Later on, she flew to Japan for the G20 meeting before heading to Brussels for an EU summit on Sunday at which she will play a key role in trying to seal a deal on the distribution of the bloc's top jobs for the next five years. Asked about Merkel's latest shaking

episode, Interior Minister Horst Seehofer told reporters: "I won't comment on this. I have never taken part in remote diagnoses because for years I was too often the subject of remote diagnoses."

Merkel appeared her usual self when she fielded questions from lawmakers during an hour-long session in parliament on Wednesday, shortly after which she gave a speech at the Humboldt University of Berlin. Merkel began a stage-managed gradual exit from politics in October, when she said her fourth term as chancellor would be her last and that she would not seek reelection in 2021, when the next federal election is due. In December, Merkel handed over the chair of her Christian Democratic Union (CDU) to her protegee Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, though her unconvincing start in the role has set back the party's plans for a smooth leadership transition. When Merkel came into office in 2005, George W Bush was US president, Jacques Chirac was in the Elysee Palace in Paris and Tony Blair was British prime minister. —Reuters



## International

# Israel 'part' of the region's heritage, Bahraini FM says

## The Jewish people have 'a place amongst us'

**JERUSALEM:** Bahrain's foreign minister has said Israel is part of the region's heritage and the Jewish people have "a place amongst us" in a rare interview of an Arab official by an Israeli journalist. The interview—on the sidelines of the US-organised economic conference in Bahrain, intended to kickstart the White House's Middle East peace plan—was broadcast late Wednesday on Israel's Channel 13 television.

Bahrain's Foreign Minister Khalid bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa said the interview was his "first with an Israeli media channel, and let's hope that we can get the message through." "Israel is part of this heritage of this whole region, historically, so the Jewish people have a place amongst us," he said. "That's why it's so important and we didn't want to miss this opportunity, and I want to tell them we should talk." Khalifa's comments on rapprochement with Israel were unusually strong for an Arab official.

Israel has diplomatic relations with only

two Arab countries—Egypt and Jordan—but common concerns over Iran have brought it closer to Gulf nations in recent years. Bahrain's top diplomat also hit out at Iran in the interview, calling it "the major threat to the stability and the security of the region." The Palestinian Authority boycotted the two-day economic conference which took place in Manama on Tuesday and Wednesday, as it views US President Donald Trump's White House as blatantly biased in favour of Israel.

But Khalifa said the Palestinians had made a "mistake" by not showing up. "It's always a mistake to miss an opportunity to achieve peace," he said. Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner launched the \$50 billion (44 billion euro) initiative, touted by economic leaders as holding the potential to boost the Palestinians' economy. But the PA accused Trump of dangling the prospect of cash to try to impose political solutions, and of ignoring the fundamental issue of Israeli occupation. — AFP



MANAMA: White House adviser Jared Kushner speaks during the closing session of the US-sponsored Middle East economic conference 'Peace to Prosperity' in Manama on June 26, 2019. — AFP

## In Bahrain's resort, Yarmulkes, Mideast ambitions welcome

**MANAMA:** The fruity mocktails lay elegantly on the welcoming trays, the gala dinner served heaps of lamb and sea bass, and the mix of guests in the Bahrain luxury hotel was unlike any seen before. Jared Kushner, US President Donald Trump's son-in-law and adviser, launched his Middle East peace initiative in the sealed-off Four Seasons hotel along the Gulf where, in unprecedented scenes, some 30 Israelis were in the midst.

Just inside the air-conditioning away from the 40 degree Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) heat, Bahrain's foreign minister chatted in English like an old friend with guests from Israel, who were served foil-wrapped cuisine cooked in accordance with kosher dietary laws. Seven journalists from Israel were part of the trim press contingent approved by the White House, while yarmulke-wearing rabbis hobnobbed in hallways next to Arab dignitaries in flowing white robes and chequered keffiyeh head scarves.

"If every Arab country were to be like Bahrain, the Messiah would arrive!" exclaimed Rabbi Marvin Hier, founder of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, which fights anti-Semitism. Inspired by the turnout, Hier led some 15 Jews in a prayer service Wednesday at Manama's synagogue that spontaneously ended with singing and dancing. The synagogue was

largely abandoned but remained standing after the 1948 creation of Israel, which led to the flight or expulsion of Jews from around the Arab world and of Palestinians from the new Jewish state.

Rabbi Abraham Cooper, the Simon Wiesenthal Center's associate dean, called the service "very uplifting and also, at the same time, humbling". "We're seeing more and more normalcy of contact. People walking around with yarmulkes. The first time I came to town I had to wear my New York Mets baseball cap" to cover up, Cooper said. Bahrain and other Gulf Arab states have found common cause with Israel due to their tense relationships with Iran, whose Shiite clerical regime routinely threatens Israel but which has preserved an ancient Jewish community.

Bahrain's Sunni rulers have triggered an outcry from human rights groups for cracking down hard on protests led by Shiites, who make up most of the island according to unofficial estimates contested by the government. The kingdom sentenced activists to death and stripped others of citizenship on accusations of terrorism after the 2011 protests called for Bahrain to have an elected prime minister.

One group was conspicuously underrepresented at the workshop where the stated goal was boosting the Palestinian economy - the Palestinians. The Palestinian Authority boycotted the conference, fearing an attempt by the unabashedly pro-Israel Trump to impose a political solution, and only one Palestinian took a speaking role, although others were in attendance. — AFP

## 'A bribe' - Palestinians unmoved by US offer

**RAMALLAH:** An economic conference intended to kickstart a Middle East peace initiative by US President Donald Trump's son-in-law has failed to convince Palestinians, who boycotted it and treated it with disdain or disinterest. In a rare show of unity, all Palestinian factions condemned the conference in Bahrain before it started and the event received relatively little coverage in the Palestinian media, which is largely politically allied.

While calls for major protests failed to materialise, many Palestinians simply ignored the two-day event, having already decided no peace push from the US administration could be taken seriously. "Globally there was interest, but from the beginning for Palestinians there was none because if I have rejected something I have rejected it," said Rohi Ziadi, a university professor visiting a car showroom in Ramallah in the occupied West Bank.

"If my wife cooks me a meal I don't like, then I don't want anything to do with it. You can add some salt, etc, but I still won't eat it. And we don't want this conference." The Palestinian Authority government, based in the occupied West Bank, has been boycotting the US administration since late 2017, angered by a series of moves they saw as blatant pro-Israel bias. All major Palestinian businessmen also declined to attend the conference, accusing the United States of trying to use financial clout to buy off their aspirations for independence.

Only one Palestinian publicly appeared. Ashraf Jaabari was introduced as the chairman of the 250-member Palestinian Business Network, a previously unknown entity. It appears to be a rapid rebranding of the Judea and Samaria Chamber of Commerce, a body that represents Israeli settlers and a few Palestinians.

Jaabari and the other co-founder of the group, who is Israeli, could not be reached for comment. The vast majority of Palestinians reject such relations with settlers, whose communities are considered illegal under international law. The two-day conference in the Bahraini capital Manama did not discuss political issues between Israel and the Palestinians but instead focused on the potential economic dividends of peace.

At the end its driving force Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law and advisor, said he had "left the door open" if the Palestinians were interested in peace. "If they actually want to make their people's lives better, we have now laid out a great framework in which they can engage and try to achieve it," he said. Kushner's economic plan proposed a \$50 billion investment for the Palestinian territories and the region over 10 years and pledged to create up to a million new jobs. It painted a rosy future for the Palestinian territories based on state-of-the-art infrastructure and 5G mobile technology. — AFP

## International

# Morsi's death in Cairo prison raises fears for other inmates

## Relatives of inmates worry about their health

**CAIRO:** The children of high-profile Egyptian Islamists detained in the same prison as former President Mohamed Morsi before his sudden death last week say they fear for their parents' health. Morsi, 67, died after collapsing during a court appearance at Cairo's Tora prison complex, where he was moved after army chief-turned-President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi overthrew him in 2013 and cracked down on the Brotherhood and its supporters.

Other senior Brotherhood members are jailed in Tora's maximum-security "Scorpion" wing, often in solitary confinement. The families of four detainees, all at Tora, said their relatives were being held under extremely poor conditions, deprived of adequate healthcare. Reuters was unable to independently confirm the families' assertions about prison conditions and the state of health of their relatives.

An interior ministry spokesman and Egypt's State Information Service, which handles relations with the foreign media, did not respond to several calls and messages seeking comment about the families' accounts, including accusations that some of their relatives needed surgery for abuse suffered in detention.

Egyptian officials have previously denied mistreating prisoners or neglecting their health. Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh, a 68-year-old Islamist former presidential candidate who ran for election against Morsi in 2012, is held at Tora's Al Mazra wing. Arrested in February 2018, he is held in pre-trial detention over alleged connections with the now-banned Brotherhood. He de-

nies the charges, according to his son Ahmed.

Aboul Fotouh has diabetes, hypertension, heart and respiration problems which require him to sleep with an oxygen machine that he brought with him but does not work properly in the high temperatures of the prison cell, Ahmed said. "The doctor said that he has to undergo a prostate operation but they are not allowing it," he said. "They are deliberately not protecting his health... If they continue treating him like this, it will lead to the same result as Morsi."

Former Morsi aide Essam al-Haddad has been in solitary confinement since his arrest six years ago, and was moved to a solitary cell in the Tora hospital complex after having several heart attacks, his son Abdullah said. "His health has deteriorated significantly," Abdullah said. Another of Haddad's sons, Jihad, a Brotherhood spokesman, is held in Scorpion, where he suffered physical abuse after writing an opinion piece defending the movement for the New York Times in 2017, Abdullah said. "He was beaten and physically tortured," he added. "He says that his knee feels numb and he isn't getting any therapy... he is on the verge of losing his leg." A Cairo court overturned life sentences for espionage against Essam and Jihad in 2016 but both men are being retried.

According to one Human Rights Watch (HRW) estimate published in 2017, at least 60,000 people have been detained on political grounds since 2013. Liberal opposition figures swept up in Sisi's crackdown on dissent are also held at the Tora prisons. Sisi says there are no



**RABAT:** Protesters hold up mourning signs showing portraits of the late ousted Egyptian Islamist president Mohamed Morsi during a demonstration in the Moroccan capital Rabat. — AFP

political prisoners in Egypt. His backers say the crackdown was necessary to stabilise Egypt after its 2011 uprising. Morsi, who was on trial for espionage and had been sentenced to more than 40 years on other charges, was held in Tora's al-Molhaq prison and had been in solitary confinement since his arrest in 2013, according to his family.

He had previously fainted during hearings, suffered diabetic comas, developed a condition in his left eye, and had back and neck pains from sleeping on the bare floor of his cell, according

to statements from HRW citing Morsi's court testimony and the rights group's interviews with relatives. Reuters could not independently verify those specific ailments. His family visited just three times in six years, his son Abdullah told Reuters, accusing authorities of "gross medical negligence". Mohamed El-Beltagy, the 56-year-old secretary-general of the Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party, who has been handed several life terms and death sentences, is another of those held at Scorpion. His family also says his health is deteriorating.—Reuters

## 16 crushed to death at Madagascar rally

**ANTANANARIVO:** At least 16 people were crushed to death and dozens injured in Madagascar on Wednesday at a stadium hosting national independence day celebrations in the capital Antananarivo. The bodies of sixteen victims, including three children, were stored at the mortuary of HJRA hospital in the city, AFP journalists said. According to witnesses at the hospital, the accident occurred in the afternoon outside the Mahamasina stadium, where several thousand people had gathered for a concert following the traditional military parade held to mark the national holiday.

At the end of a military parade, security forces opened the gates to allow spectators to leave the enclosure, causing the crowd to mass outside the stadium, witnesses said. The police then immediately closed the gates and blocked the crowd, witnesses said, causing a deadly pile up. "When the organizers opened the gate, we were in the front row, in the queue," said Jean Claude Etienne Rakotoarimanana, 29, who suffered bruises from the crush. "Suddenly people ran to get in front of us. They shoved us, some even punched us and pulled us," he added, saying he then fainted. Madagascar President Andry Rajoelina, at a press conference with Rwandan counterpart Paul Kagame, offered his condolences over the tragic deaths. "There were too many people unable to enter the stadium," which led to the problem, he said, adding that the state would take care of the hospital bills of those injured.



**ANTANANARIVO:** The bodies of some of the victims are covered with sheets at the morgue at Joseph Ravoahangy Andrianavalona Hospital (HJRA) after at least 16 people died and dozens were injured during independence day celebrations. — AFP

Rajoelina visited the hospital taking care of those injured in the stadium crush. In September 2018, a deadly crush killed one person and injured 30 people in similar circumstances at the entrance of the same stadium during a football match between Madagascar and Senegal. On June 26, 2016, exactly three years before Wednesday's deadly crush, a bomb was detonated during a free concert in the Mahamasina stadium, killing three people and leaving scores more injured.—AFP

## 'Burkini' row shuts pools in French town

**GRENOBLE:** The two municipal swimming pools in the southeast French city of Grenoble have been shut down, despite the current heatwave, after a row over the use of full-body Islamic burkini swimsuit, the local mayor said Wednesday. On Sunday, and last month, Muslim women clad in burkinis went to swim in the pools at the initiative of the Alliance Citoyenne rights group, despite a municipal ban on the full-body swimwear.

The lifeguards at the pools asked for the shutdown because "they are there to maintain safety and they can't do that when they have to worry about the crowds," generated by the controversial swimsuits, the town hall said in a statement.

"We are working towards a positive solution" to the problem, it added. The row is the latest in France over face- and body-covering garments worn by Muslim women, which many perceive as subjugating women in a country with strict laws on secularism.

France - the country with Europe's largest Muslim population - was the first European country to ban the full-veil in public spaces in 2011. The European Court of Human Rights upheld the ban in 2014, rejecting arguments that outlawing full-face veils breached religious freedom. Earlier this year French sports retailer Decathlon was forced to back down from a plan to sell a runner's hijab in France after coming under fire.—AFP

# Europeans on alert as heatwave intensifies

**BERLIN:** Europe's record-breaking heatwave was forecast to intensify yesterday, with authorities on alert as temperatures threaten to surpass 40 degrees Celsius in some regions. The stifling heat has prompted traffic restrictions in France, sparked forest fires in Spain and fanned debate in Germany over public nudity as sweltering residents stripped off. Meteorologists blame a blast of hot air from northern Africa for the heat this week, which has already set new records in Europe for June.

Exceptional for arriving so early in summer, the heatwave yesterday and today likely send thermometers above 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) in France, Spain and Greece. In Spain, hundreds of firefighters and soldiers, backed by water-dropping aircraft, battled on Wednesday to put out a wind-fuelled forest fire that erupted in Torre del Espanol in the northeastern region of Catalonia. The worst is expected Friday when 33 of the 50 Spanish provinces face extreme temperatures, which could reach 44 degrees in Girona.

"Hell is coming," one Spanish TV weather presenter tweeted Wednesday. In France, temperatures "unprecedented" for their timing and intensity—since 1947 when detailed surveys started—were expected to reach at least 39 degrees over two-thirds of the country, said weather service Météo-France. Health official Jerome Saloman said the impact of the extreme heat was starting to be felt in France, with an increase in weather-related calls to emergency medical services.

Some schools are expected to close Thursday and Friday, while several cities—including Paris and

Lyon—restricted traffic to limit a build-up of air pollution. French authorities were taking no chances after the August 2003 heatwave was blamed for 15,000 deaths in the country, with television and radio broadcasts issuing warnings. In Greece, where around 100 people died in last year's deadly fires at the Mati coastal resort, hospitals and officials were on red alert with temperatures of around 45 degrees nationwide.

## Vintage wine year

Scientists warn that global warming linked to human fossil fuel use could make such scorchers more frequent. "Global temperatures are increasing due to climate change," said Len Shaffrey, professor of climate science at the University of Reading. "The global rise in temperatures means the probability that an extreme heatwave will occur is also increasing." But French winemakers said the hot weather was more than welcome as it could produce a superior vintage. "Two of three days of heatwave in Bordeaux at this time, it's magic!" Philippe Bardet, head of the Bordeaux Wine Council, told AFP.

Temperatures above 40 degrees Celsius would help burn off any of the mildew caused by residual damp, which is "very, very good for quality", Bardet said. The 70-year-old record for the highest temperature recorded for June was beaten in Germany as 38.6 degrees Celsius was recorded in Brandenburg, the German Weather Service (DWD) confirmed Wednesday. Meanwhile, police in Brandenburg cautioned a naked man for driving his



**PARIS:** A young man dives into the waters of the Canal Saint-Martin in Paris during a heatwave. Europeans braced yesterday for the expected peak of a sweltering heatwave that has sent temperatures soaring above 40 degrees Celsius, with schools in France closing and wildfires in Spain spinning out of control. — AFP

moped wearing only his helmet and sandals.

And in Munich, security guards ordered a group of women sunbathing topless on the banks of the river Isar to cover up. The move backfired, according to the Munich daily Sueddeutsche Zeitung, which quoted another sunbather as saying that she and others took their tops off "out of solidarity". It said an urgent motion was introduced in

a city council meeting Wednesday to allow topless bathing. Scores of people have drowned in Poland and Lithuania as they tried to cool off in lakes and rivers, authorities said.

The Polish weather institute IMGW said the country's highest ever June temperature was recorded on Wednesday in the southwest: 38.2 degrees Celsius. — AFP

## Feisty Trump sets tone as stormy G20 looms

**OSAKA:** US President Donald Trump set the tone yesterday for what promises to be a stormy G20 summit by lashing out at friends and foes alike over trade tariffs and foreign policy. The long-running US-China trade war looked set to dominate the two-day meeting of world leaders in Osaka from Friday but clashes also loomed over climate and hotspots including North Korea and Iran.

On board Air Force One en route to Japan, Trump fired off a characteristically bullish tweet, chiding long-standing ally India for "unacceptable" tariffs on American goods. "India, for years having put very high Tariffs against the United States, just recently increased the Tariffs even further. This is unacceptable and the Tariffs must be withdrawn," tweeted Trump.

The US president had earlier taken aim at China, saying Beijing wanted to do a deal because the world's number-two economy was "going down the tubes". Furious at what he sees as an unfair advantage in the trading system, Trump has already hit Beijing with \$200 billion in levies on Chinese imports and appeared to threaten more. "You have another \$325 billion that I haven't taxed yet - it's ripe for taxing, for putting tariffs on," he said in an interview with Fox Business Network.

Chinese President Xi Jinping touched down in Osaka several hours before Trump in driving rain as a potential typhoon edges towards Japan. The two leaders are expected to meet Saturday. Trump touched down just before 7pm local time, the president clutching an umbrella and walking gingerly down the plane steps. In Beijing, commerce ministry spokesman Gao Feng said that China's attitude was "very clear". "We consistently oppose the bullying trade tactic of unilaterally slapping on tariffs," said Gao.

Most experts say a formal deal is unlikely at the summit due to a

lack of time to prepare the complex issues involved and believe a ceasefire and commitment to keep talking is the most likely outcome. "I would be very, very surprised if they could work out all of these complicated disagreements in the next few days," said David Dollar, a China expert at the Washington-based Brookings Institution. "I think if Xi Jinping and President Trump have some negotiations... that will have a very positive impact on the world economy," Naoyuki Yoshino, head of the Asian Development Bank Institute, told AFP.

## 'Never seeks war'

While US-China trade is likely to dominate the meeting, world leaders are also facing a perfect storm of geopolitical hotspots from Iran to North Korea and Venezuela. Tensions with Tehran are at fever pitch after Trump pulled back from military action at the last minute in response to the downing of an unmanned US drone.

Before leaving for the G20, Trump said he did not seek conflict with the long-time US foe but warned it "wouldn't last very long" if war did break out. Iran will be one of several topics when Trump meets his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the meeting, along with arms control, the crisis in Venezuela, and Ukraine. "I'll have a very good conversation with him," Trump told reporters at the White House. "What I say to him is none of your business."

## Sony television

Hosts Japan have desperately tried to steer attention away from the Trump show and on to the formal aspects of their G20 agenda, including the challenges posed by ageing populations and climate change. World leaders flew into Osaka in the driving rain, with concerns over the health of German Chancellor Angela Merkel who suffered a second shaking attack yesterday.

"Confrontation tends to attract attention... but Japan, as the chair, hopes to find common ground rather than differences in opinions," said Prime Minister Shinzo Abe as he left Tokyo for Osaka. But tensions over the final statement on climate change are likely to burst into the open, with a German source saying it was "particularly difficult this year" to reach agreement. EU Council President Donald Tusk summed up the pre-meeting mood by predicting "a difficult summit" in talks with Abe, according to a Japanese government source.—AFP

## 'Baby India': Video shows newborn found in a bag

**WASHINGTON:** Police in the US state of Georgia have released a poignant video of officers finding an abandoned newborn girl inside a plastic bag, as part of their efforts to find the child's mother. The video, recorded on an officer's body camera and made public on Tuesday, shows sheriff's deputies in Cummings, Georgia discovering the infant tied up in a bag and left by a roadside the night of June 6. They were responding to a caller claiming they heard a baby crying in the woods.

The Forsyth County Sheriff's Office "is continuing to investigate & follow leads" regarding the baby, whom they have named India, said the department on Twitter. "By releasing the body cam footage from the discovery of Baby India we hope to receive credible info & find closure." They added that India is "thriving." In the video, a deputy can be heard reassuring the baby as he unwraps her from the plastic bag, saying, "Look at you, sweetheart! Oh, I'm so sorry... look how precious you are."

He then hands her to medical first responders, who perform first aid on the infant before wrapping her in a blanket. Authorities have been looking for the girl's mother since June 6, taking to Twitter to ask if anyone in the area knows "a female who was in late stages of pregnancy." The video sparked an massive emotional response online, with hundreds of users sharing the video along with the hashtag #BabyIndia to help find the girl's mother.—AFP

## International

# Twin attacks threaten the new Ethiopian government reforms

## Details emerge of twin attacks linked to foiled coup

**BAHIR DAR:** The Baklaba and Cake cafe was heaving with customers when truckloads of heavily armed men in fatigues rolled up across the road outside the local government headquarters in Ethiopia's Amhara region. The men, some carrying two Kalashnikov assault rifles, stormed the building, sending customers enjoying a Saturday afternoon coffee in the cafe diving for cover, witnesses said. Within moments, the assailants had shot dead Amhara's president, an aide and fatally wounded the state's attorney general.

Hours later, 325 km to the south in Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa, gunshots rang out behind the high grey walls of a red-roofed villa as the military's chief of staff and a retired general were slain by a bodyguard. The attacks, described by the government as part of a coup attempt in Amhara, highlight the dangers Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed faces as he rolls out ambitious reforms in Africa's second most populous nation - a regional powerhouse whose economic boom is now threatened by deepening ethnic and regional fissures.

Since Abiy came to power in April 2018, attention abroad has focused on the rapid political, economic and diplomatic changes he has been introducing in one of the continent's most closed and repressive countries. "The world out there wanted to believe the fairy tale. They became obsessed with their own narrative," said Tamrat Giorgis, the managing editor of the Addis Fortune, a privately-owned English-language newspaper. "But that doesn't chime with what is happening on the ground. It is much more complex and scary."

## 1 dies, several hurt as suicide bomber hits Tunisia capital

**TUNIS:** Two suicide bombers blew themselves up in separate attacks on police in the Tunisian capital yesterday, killing one police officer and wounding several other people, the government said. It was not immediately known who was behind the attacks, which come months before an election and at the peak of a tourist season in which Tunisia is hoping for a record number of visitors.

Separately yesterday, 92-year-old President Beji Caid Essebsi was taken to a military hospital after suffering a "severe health crisis", the presidency said. The first suicide bomber targeted a police patrol in Charles de Gaulle Street in central Tunis. One police officer was killed and at least one other as well as three civilians were wounded, the Interior Ministry said. Shortly afterwards, a second suicide bomber blew himself up near a police station in al-Gorjani district.

### Fragile reforms

Abiy has loosened the iron grip the central authorities held over a deeply fractured nation, freeing imprisoned opposition leaders, rebels and journalists, lifting bans on some political parties and sealing a peace deal with arch-enemy Eritrea. His plans to partially privatise some state enterprises have piqued the interest of foreign multinationals hoping to profit from market of 100 million people, and should breathe life into the debt-laden economy.

But the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), itself a coalition of four ethnically-based parties, faces strident challenges from newly emboldened regional powerbrokers demanding more influence and territory. Ethnic violence has killed hundreds of people. That, and a severe drought, means some 2.4 million people are currently displaced in Ethiopia, the United Nations says. "Abiy's reforms removed the lid on many accumulated grievances," said Rashid Abdi, an independent Horn of Africa analyst. "Making the transition to a more open society is always dangerous."

Abiy's response to his biggest challenge yet will not only define his leadership but could determine whether Ethiopia will sustain its decade-long boom, or spiral into the violence that has plagued neighbouring Somalia and South Sudan. Former intelligence officer Abiy, son of a Muslim father and Christian mother, is from Ethiopia's largest ethnic group, the Oromo, who spearheaded years of anti-government protests that eventually drove his predecessor to resign last year. Abiy has

the right profile to reassure several disgruntled sections of Ethiopian society, analysts say.

### Deep divisions

But the divisions Abiy must bridge in Amhara and elsewhere are old and deep. Asamnew Tsige, the rogue general accused of orchestrating Saturday's violence, often invoked them. "Five hundred years ago, we faced a similar test," Asamnew told graduating Amhara Special Forces this month,

referring to the historical expansion of Oromo people into Amhara.

The history of Amhara, which has provided Ethiopia with its national language, is a source of pride for many who belong to the country's second largest ethnic group. Some there resent the fact the previous federal government was dominated by Tigrayans who make up about 6% of the population - and now the prime minister is an Oromo. Border disputes simmer with neighbouring Oromia and Tigray. — Reuters

Four people were wounded, the Interior Ministry said. Heavily armed police cordoned off the locations of the attacks, one of which was about 200 metres away from the French embassy. Reuters witnesses saw people rushing away from the scene, while the body of one suicide bomber lay on the ground. Ambulance cars arrived. "I was shopping with my daughter and we heard a big explosion. We saw the body of the terrorist lying on the ground near a police vehicle after he blew himself up," said a man who give his name only as Mohamed.

Interior Ministry spokesman Sofian Zaak said the attackers had not yet been identified, and he called on the public to show strength and not panic. People appeared to heed that message: Within minutes of the attacks, they could be seen sitting as usual in cafes up and down Habib Bourghiba, the main street. In a show of more open defiance, some 300 people gathered on the same street and held up pamphlets saying: "We do not fear terror, Tunisia is no place for terrorism." They chanted the national anthem and slogans praising the security forces.

Tunisia has been battling militant groups operating in remote areas near the border with Algeria since an uprising overthrew autocratic leader Zine Abidine Ben Ali in 2011.



**ADDIS ABABA:** People mourn as members of the army carry one of the coffins covered with the Ethiopian national flag as they arrive for the National funeral service of Chief of Staff of the Ethiopian defence forces Seare Mekonnen and of Major-General Geza'e Abera, a retired former senior official in the Ethiopian army. — AFP



**TUNIS:** Body parts lie next to a shrapnel riddled vehicle as Tunisian forensic work at the site of attack in the Tunisian capital's main avenue Habib Bourguiba yesterday. — AFP

High unemployment has also stoked unrest in recent years. Last October, a woman blew herself up in the centre of the capital Tunis, wounding 15 people including 10 police officers in an explosion that broke a long period of calm after dozens had died in militant attacks in 2015. — Reuters

# Father, daughter drowning fuels anger at Trump migration policies

## Democrats furiously denounce Trump's immigration policies

**WASHINGTON:** A shocking photograph of a Salvadoran man and his baby daughter drowned in the Rio Grande fueled a surge of emotion around the world Wednesday - as US Democrats furiously denounced Donald Trump's immigration policies. "Trump is responsible for these deaths," said Beto O'Rourke, one of several Democratic White House hopefuls who took to Twitter to lash out at the president.

Former vice president Joe Biden, who is also seeking the presidency in 2020, called the image "gut-wrenching." "History will judge how we respond to the Trump administration's treatment of immigrant families & children - we can't be silent," he said. Trump retaliated by seeking to pin the blame on Democrats in Congress, saying "if we had the right laws, that the Democrats are not letting us have, those people wouldn't be coming up, they wouldn't be trying."

"They want to have open borders and open borders mean crime, and open borders mean people drowning in the rivers," Trump told reporters. The intertwined bodies in the viral photo are those of asylum-seeker Oscar Alberto Martinez, 25, and his 23-month-old daughter, Valeria. They drowned Sunday while trying to cross the Rio Grande from Mexico into Texas, while the child's mother watched helplessly from the river bank.

For many, the image evoked memories of a 2015 picture of a Syrian toddler drowned on a Turkish beach after a failed attempt to reach Greece. Speaking to AFP from her home in San Salvador, Oscar's grief-stricken mother, Rosa Ramirez, said her son dreamed



**MATAMOROS:** The corpses of Salvadoran migrant Oscar Martinez (left) and his daughter Valeria are transported to the forensic service in Matamoros, Tamaulipas State after they were found drowned. — AFP

of a better life for his baby daughter. "They only wanted to get to the United States.... they had this American dream," she said.

In Mexico, President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador also came under fire, accused by critics of putting vulnerable migrants in dangerous situations by making it hard for them to cross the country to request US asylum. Lopez Obrador came to power in Mexico vowing to safeguard migrants' rights, but faced with a tariff threat from Trump he agreed to crack down on undocumented Central Americans trekking toward the United States. He

responded by saying he has a "clear conscience." "We believe it is necessary to maintain good relations with the United States government, to avoid confrontation," he said.

Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, another 2020 candidate, described the photo as "horrific." "It is just one painful example of so many that demonstrate the reckless disregard for basic humanity that have come from Trump's policies," Sanders said. California Senator Kamala Harris, also running for the White House, called Trump's immigration policies "inhumane." "Children

are dying. This is a stain on our moral conscience," she said. Pope Francis added his voice to the global wave of indignation. "The Pope is profoundly saddened by their death, and is praying for them and for all migrants who have lost their lives while seeking to flee war and misery," said Alessandro Gisotti, a Vatican spokesman. Democratic Senator Chuck Schumer of New York displayed the picture on the Senate floor during a speech on Wednesday.

"How could President Trump look at this picture and not understand that these are human beings fleeing violence and persecution?" Schumer asked. "We can do something about this if the president would stop playing the political game of blame, blame, blame," he said. The Republican-controlled Senate passed a bill on Wednesday providing \$4.6 billion in emergency humanitarian aid for the southwest border but it must now be reconciled with a version passed by the Democratic-held House.

Once the differences are worked out the bill will go to Trump for his signature. The photo comes amid a public outcry in the United States over the poor detention conditions of migrant children following a visit to a Border Patrol center in Clint, Texas, by a group of lawyers and doctors. Nearly 250 children were transferred out of Clint on Monday but a Customs and Border Protection official said that some 100 were being sent back there. UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore said Wednesday she was "deeply concerned for the wellbeing of migrant children at the US-Mexico border." — AFP

## As migrants languish in border facilities, US Congress struggles to finalize emergency aid

**WASHINGTON:** Congress and the White House were attempting to broker a deal over how to spend emergency aid to address the migrant surge as lawmakers, private companies and presidential candidates raised alarms about immigrants facing dangerous conditions along the US-Mexico border. The Republican-controlled Senate passed by an overwhelming 84-8 vote a \$4.6 billion spending bill on Wednesday.

The Democratic-led House of Representatives on Tuesday night tied more strings to its approval of the money, setting standards for health and nutrition of migrants in custody after reports they lacked necessities such as soap and diapers. Now the two chambers are trying to strike a compromise to send to US President Donald Trump before Congress recesses at the

end of this week for the Fourth of July holiday.

The House on Thursday will consider adding to the Senate-passed bill several requirements that were in the House version, including medical, nutrition and hygiene standards for facilities holding migrants, and a three-month limit for any child to spend at an intake shelter, said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. It would also require the death of a child be reported within 24 hours.

Trump has made cracking down on immigration a centerpiece of his administration but officials are saying they will run out of money for border agencies soon. Border crossings hit the highest level in over a decade in May, straining resources and creating chaotic scenes at overcrowded border patrol facilities. The need for funding has become more urgent as attorneys last week called attention to more than 300 children detained in squalid conditions at a border patrol facility in Clint, Texas.

Children are supposed to be transferred quickly out of border patrol facilities and into shelters overseen by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). There are currently 178 children in border patrol facilities who have been there longer than 72 hours, Representative Diana DeGette said she was told by HHS on Wednesday. Adding to concerns was a harrowing photo published this week of a Salvadoran migrant

and his young daughter who both drowned crossing the Rio Grande from Mexico. Trump has said US asylum laws, which allow those who claim fear of returning to their home countries to seek protection through a US court process, need to be changed to deter migrants from coming. But so far the president has failed to push through any changes in Congress. At this pivotal time in US border policy, the head of the US immigration agency is resigning on July 5. The head of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Mark Morgan, will take his place, an official said.

Immigration advocates have long complained about inadequate conditions in border patrol facilities, often called "hieleras" - or "iceboxes" - by the immigrants held there because they are so cold. But the stark images and descriptions of detention conditions has spurred some companies and employees to take action.

On Wednesday, several hundred people, including employees of Wayfair Inc, rallied in Boston to protest the online retailer's sale of furniture for a detention facility in Carrizo Springs, Texas housing migrant children. Also on Wednesday, Bank of America Corp said it will no longer finance operators of private prisons and detention centers, joining peers in distancing itself from a sector that has triggered protests over Trump's policies. — Reuters

## International

# 25 years on, massacre survivors embittered at French failings

## Incident remains a source of pain in relations between Paris and Kigali

**PARIS:** A quarter of a century ago, two Rwandan Tutsis, Eric and Bernard, looked out with anxiety and hope from the hiding places they had found to escape genocidal killers. They thought salvation could be at hand from their plight in the hills of Bisesero in western Rwanda as they glimpsed French soldiers from Operation Turquoise who had arrived days earlier under a UN mandate.

It was June 27, 1994. But in an incident that remains deeply controversial and a source of pain in relations between Paris and Kigali, the French soldiers did not take immediate action to stop what was an impending slaughter. The soldiers came back three days later, but this provided a window for genocidal killers to massacre hundreds of people in one of the worst single episodes of the Rwandan genocide.

Both Eric Nzabihimana, 55, and Bernard Kayumba, 50, were plaintiffs in a high-profile legal case in France that sought legal consequences. But to no avail. Eric remembered how Interahamwe militias ran amok through the area as the wounded, mutilated by machetes, took refuge in the forests. The return of the French soldiers on June 30, 1994, was too late for Eric's little sister, Josephine, 12, and his wife Catherine, 28 who were killed on June 28 and June 29 along with hundreds of other Tutsis.

The killings were carried out by militia allied to the Hutu government which had been backed by Paris for years. Their deaths came towards the

end of the 100-day killing spree that left an estimated 800,000 people dead, most of them members of the Tutsi ethnic minority.

### 'Begged them'

"It was nearly three months that I was in the forests," Eric said. "On the outskirts of Bisesero, I saw a convoy of lorries and I said 'maybe it's the French soldiers', so I came out of my hiding place. "I said 'Help, we're being chased by armed killers'. They did not stop and I was obliged to put myself in the middle of the convoy." "We showed the corpses that were building up close to us, which were still bloody. I told them that 'we thought that you had come to help us and you need to do this now. Otherwise, tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, there is going to be no-one left.'"

"We begged them," he said. He accused the French military of saying on June 27 that they were "not ready today", telling the terrified people to stay in their hiding places until they returned a few days later. They did indeed return, Eric said, on June 30 to save those people who were still alive. "They did something, this we need to acknowledge. But what we accuse them of is only doing it after media pressure and that they should have done this before."

### 'Why not an hour?'

Bernard, who was 25 at the time, said he found the attitude of the French soldiers "incom-



**PARIS:** Rwanda's genocide Tutsi survivors of Bisesero massacre Eric Nzabihimana (left) and Bernard Kayumba pour soil from Bisesero land into the Seine river in Paris. —AFP

prehensible", saying he had had to spend one month hiding with seven people in a hole dug at night. "We were totally exhausted, we were between death and life. There were corpses here and there and we told them not to leave as then the killers would descend on us" from the surrounding hills. "But they said that they were not well prepared and that they were going to watch the zone with helicopters and then come back,"

he added. "They had the means of communication... But why in three days and not an hour?" Bernard argued that if the French had carried out their mission "and stayed on June 27, some 1,000 Tutsis would never have been killed over the course of those three days. "For me, Bisesero is a French scandal and the French military needs to acknowledge its failure in saving the Tutsis in Bisesero." — AFP

## Trump, Kim Jong Un exchanged 12 letters

**SEOUL:** Donald Trump and Kim Jong Un have exchanged a total of 12 letters since the beginning of last year, South Korea's Unification Minister said, with the North Korean leader the more assiduous suitor in their nuclear bromance, penning eight. "Since 2018, chairman Kim has written eight letters to President Trump, and President Trump has written four letters to chairman Kim," Kim Yeon-chul, the South's Unification Minister in charge of inter-Korean affairs, told reporters.

"I guess those leaders recognise the importance of resuming the dialogue between the two countries as they are constantly exchanging letters." Seoul is set to host the US President this weekend as it tries to rekindle nuclear talks that have stalled since the collapse of a second summit between Trump and Kim in Hanoi in February.

Minister Kim's comments Wednesday came hours after the South's President Moon Jae-in said Pyongyang and Washington were engaged in "behind-the-scenes talks" for another summit and noted the most recent exchange of letters between Trump and Kim. On Sunday, the North's state media said Kim received a personal message "of excellent content" from the US president, just days after Trump said Kim had sent him a "beautiful letter".

The US president's trip to Seoul comes a week after Chinese leader Xi Jinping made a highly symbolic visit to Pyongyang. Xi is expected to meet Trump at the G20 summit in Japan this weekend and analysts say his trip to the North was intended to signal to Trump his influence with Kim. Minister Kim said there was "strategic competition" between China and the US on the issue of the North's nuclear arsenal, adding Beijing, Washington and Seoul needed to cooperate. — AFP

## Cigarette, electrical 'may have caused' Notre-Dame's fire

**PARIS:** A poorly stubbed-out cigarette or an electrical fault could have started the devastating fire that ripped through Paris' Notre-Dame cathedral in April, French prosecutors said Wednesday, while ruling out any criminal intent. The statement by prosecutors, which also said an investigation was being opened into possible negligence, was the first official evaluation of the causes of the April 15 fire at the world heritage landmark that shocked France and the world.

But well over two months after the fire, it still offered no concrete conclusions over what caused one of the most catastrophic fires involving a cultural monument in the history of Paris. French investigators were examining many hypotheses "including a malfunctioning of the electrical system or a fire which started with a badly stubbed-out cigarette", said a statement. But it said there was no evidence to back up any theory of "a criminal origin" to the fire.

The statement, signed by chief Paris prosecutor Remy Heitz, said the preliminary conclusions had been based on 100 interviews with witnesses. But it emphasised that the investigation had still not identified the actual cause of the fire, even if "certain failures" had been laid bare. It was not yet possible to conclude whether an electrical fault or a cigarette is the most likely theory, it added. "Deeper investigations, using significant expertise, will now be undertaken," it said.

### Steeple debate

The statement said a preliminary investigation for negligence had been opened, without targeting any single individual. The inquiry has been entrusted to three investigating magistrates who have the power to press charges against anyone suspected of negligence.

In April, a spokesman for scaffolding company Le Bras Freres which had been involved in restoration work admitted that workers had smoked on the site from time to time. "We regret it," the spokesman said at the time, adding: "In no way could a cigarette butt be the cause of the fire at Notre-Dame." The April 15 inferno felled the steeple and consumed the 12th-century lattice of oak beams supporting the roof. However, to global relief, the two great mediaeval main towers of the edifice survived.

The damage to the beloved landmark, which survived the French Revolution and two World Wars, triggered an international outpouring of emotion and pledges of donations towards its reconstruction. President Emmanuel Macron has set an ambitious target of five years to restore it. Up to 150 workers have been working at the cathedral daily since the fire, continuing to remove debris and stabilise the structure. On June 15, two months after the fire, clerics conducted the first mass inside the cathedral since the blaze, donning hard hats along with their robes for their safety.

Macron has called for an "inventive" rather than identical reconstruction of the 19th-century steeple, but polls show the French favouring a more conservative approach. A YouGov survey published at the end of April showed that 54 percent want the iconic cathedral to be rebuilt in identical fashion. Legislation on the reconstruction has been blocked in parliament over disagreements between the upper and lower houses and is now only expected to be adopted at the end of July. — AFP



## International

# New Istanbul mayor a catalyst for change in old Erdogan stronghold

## Imamoglu seen appealing to voters in Turkish heartlands

**ISTANBUL:** Through his 16 years in power, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has been able to rely on the pious electorate of Istanbul's Eyup district, where for centuries Ottoman sultans received their ceremonial sword after ascending to the throne. But on Sunday, it turned its back on his Islamist-rooted AK Party (AKP) for the first time since 2002 and helped opposition candidate Ekrem Imamoglu become mayor - a historic reverse that could also spell trouble for Erdogan in Turkey's Anatolian heartland, where his grip on power could also be vulnerable.

Several voters in Eyup who ditched the AKP criticised Erdogan's campaign rhetoric as divisive and - perhaps more alarming for the president as the country grapples with economic hardship and a debilitating row with the United States - praised Imamoglu's strong rapport with Turks of all kinds. "Imamoglu has a stance which is more embracing of society. He opened himself up and accepted everyone with encompassing and constructive language," said retired teacher Ahmet Cetin, 57, adding that he and his wife used to back the AKP.

The abrupt turnaround in Eyup, where Imamoglu - a practising Muslim but belonging to the secularist Republican People's Party (CHP) - took 54% of the vote, was mirrored in other traditional AKP strongholds across the city. There is speculation, thus far dismissed by Imamoglu, that the 49-year-old could use Istanbul as a platform to challenge Erdogan nationally as the CHP's future presidential candidate.

Cetin said that, if he was to build on his election success,

Imamoglu needed above all to retain affinity with voters in Anatolia, the territory in Asia that makes up most of Turkey and where people are more conservative. For one such Eyup voter, Ayse Esintokan from Kahramanmaraş in southern Turkey, he is already doing that. "We like the way he speaks, as someone from Anatolia like us. He speaks like one of the people and mixes with them," she said outside her spices store.

### 'His own path'

Due to take office yesterday after 25 years of rule by the AKP and its Islamist predecessors, Imamoglu was little known across Turkey three months ago. He narrowly won an initial election in March that was annulled after AKP appeals, setting up Sunday's re-run which gave him a decisive victory. Many of Istanbul's 15 million residents have roots elsewhere in the country and, after carrying a sense of injustice through a campaign in which he sought to bridge divides between devout and secularist voters, he now shoulders the expectations of a long lacklustre opposition.

Esintokan said whether Imamoglu would be equal to the task would depend on him maintaining a distance from the CHP's traditional secularist stance. "He can achieve success if he goes on his own path," she said. She and others criticised CHP leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu as divisive and polarising - an accusation also commonly levelled at Erdogan.

"Imamoglu is not the classic CHP profile," said retired teacher Cetin. If he "can maintain that old embracing style of the Anatolian

people he will succeed. But if he returns to the old CHP it can end with a CHP fiasco," he said while walking with his wife near the Eyup Sultan Mosque. Imamoglu prayed there after his win in March, and its origins date back to the Ottoman conquest of Istanbul in 1453. It contains a mausoleum marking the spot where the Prophet Mohammad's standard bearer is said to be buried.

While some praised the new mayor's campaign style, others among the 10 voters whom Reuters spoke to worried that Erdogan - himself a former Istanbul mayor and who prayed at the same mosque on the eve of Sunday's election - was being unfairly dismissed. Shopkeeper Zulkarni Okunus, 57, said voters had either ignored Erdogan's achievements in developing Turkey or were too young to appreciate them. "The people showed ingratitude," he said as he drank tea with friends at a table outside his shop. "Imamoglu does not have any successes. Nobody knows him."

Yet Erdogan's campaigning style alienated others, who noted a contradiction in him accusing the opposition of terrorism links and then highlighting a call by jailed Kurdish militant leader Abdullah Ocalan for the pro-Kurdish party to remain neutral in the vote. "Who cooperated with the terrorists in the last three days of the election? People are not stupid," said women's hairdresser Cemil Canbayraktar, 37, who had supported the AKP in the past. "The president came from this municipality in his time," he added. "Ekrem Imamoglu is now going through the same thing and there will be better and greater days. All the people believe this." — Reuters

## Kyrgyzstan faces new crisis as ex-president stripped of immunity

**BISHKEK:** Lawmakers in Kyrgyzstan voted yesterday to lift the immunity of a former president, paving the way for a prosecution that could provoke a political crisis in the fragile Central Asian state. Prosecutors accuse 62-year-old Almazbek Atambayev of making illegal land purchases and of corruption, but he enjoyed immunity from criminal prosecution as a former leader. Kyrgyzstan's parliament, loyal to Atambayev's successor Sooronbai Jeenbekov, voted 103 to six in favour of lifting that protection.

Moves against Atambayev may lead to a major power struggle in Kyrgyzstan, which has seen a series of political crises and revolutions since gaining independence with the 1991 break-up of the Soviet Union. The defiant former leader has stepped up security at his residence in the village of Koi-Tash, outside the capital Bishkek, with around 200 "guards" checking visitors' bags, and a press centre has also been set up there.

Around dozen supporters arrived on horseback at the residence in the foothills of Kyrgyzstan's Tien Shan mountains yesterday, an AFP journalist saw. Nomadic yurts or tents have been set up outside the premises to house visitors. Speaking to journalists on Wednesday, Atambayev said he would "stand to the end" against the charges and "has no intention of complying with the courts and prosecutors." "I am not afraid of anything in this world. I've been in jail, had attacks on my life, I was poisoned," said Atambayev, who served as president from 2011 to 2017. "If I submit to this mafia clan then maybe half the population of Kyrgyzstan will fall," he said in a reference to the Jeenbekov administration. Long in opposition, Atambayev became Russia-allied Kyrgyzstan's first elected president to hand over power peacefully in 2017, following revolutions in 2005 and 2010.

### Rough-and-tumble politics

But he is also a symbol of the impoverished Central Asian nation's rough-and-tumble politics. He was active in securing Jeen-



**KOI-TASH:** Former Kyrgyz president Almazbek Atambayev meets with supporters in the village of Koi-Tash near the capital Bishkek. — AFP

bekov's election victory in 2017 during a feisty campaign that saw a criminal case opened against the main opposition candidate, whom Atambayev repeatedly smeared in public. Atambayev said Wednesday that Jeenbekov had been a personal friend before the two fell out publicly. He said Jeenbekov should have been "an older brother to the government" as president, but instead had several Atambayev allies arrested, including 41-year-old prime minister Sapar Isakov, jailed on corruption claims.

Like Atambayev before him, Jeenbekov has been accused of using state agencies to get rid of political opponents. "Now I understand that this person only needed power," Atambayev said. Jeenbekov, who hails from the south of the country, has accused his predecessor of seeking to dominate him. Atambayev, a northerner, said he feared Jeenbekov's presidency has widened a long-standing regional rift that "wasn't a problem" during the last few years of his presidency. Atambayev's critics, however, accuse him of exploiting north-south divisions to bolster his weakened public standing. The conflict between the two men will be watched in Russia and China, whose political and economic interests in the country deepened during Atambayev's rule. But Atambayev said he was not too concerned about the geopolitics. "Of course I have the best feelings and relations towards the Russian leadership, but we need to focus on the situation inside the country," he said. "Innocent people are simply being thrown in jail." — AFP

## 2 die as plane hits building in Siberia

**MOSCOW:** A Russian passenger plane overshot the runway, crashed into a building and caught fire at an airport in Siberia yesterday, killing two crew members, officials said. The small An-24 aircraft, travelling from Ulan-Ude in Siberia, was attempting an emergency landing at Nizhneangarsk airport, the regional government of Buryatia said.

But the plane went 100 metres off the tarmac and "crashed into a waste treatment facility building". "The plane caught fire," it said on its official Instagram account. Two crew members were killed and 43 passengers, including a child, survived. Investigators launched a probe into possible violation of air safety regulations, the transport investigators of Eastern Siberia said in a statement. The plane belonged to regional Angara airline and was on a regular flight. — AFP



**NIZHNEANGARSK:** Firefighters work on extinguishing a fire on an An-24 passenger plane after its emergency landing at Nizhneangarsk airport. — AFP

## International

# Marxist Minds: At Party School, China grooms future leaders

## Students learning the intricacies of 'Xi Jinping Thought'

**BEIJING:** In a secretive school in China's capital rows of students face a giant video projection of Xi Jinping, making careful notes on the lecture on their leader's guiding principles. Sitting in red-covered chairs in a school dotted with statues of late Chinese leaders, the mostly male students are being groomed to become elite members of the Communist Party. In particular, the students are learning the intricacies of "Xi Jinping Thought".

President Xi is himself a former head of the Central Party School, but now his guiding philosophy is part of the curriculum for the cadres studying their way up the political ladder. The usually highly secretive school in Beijing gave a rare tour to foreign media during a tightly controlled visit this week. Statues of late Chairman Mao Zedong—also a former dean—and late paramount leader Deng Xiaoping dot the leafy campus. The students are already stationed in the apparatus of the regime, such as the spokeswoman of the foreign ministry who was spotted during the visit. None were allowed to speak to the press. "Through the theoretical education and the culture of the Party spirit, we strengthen the solidarity within the Party, we are here to serve the Party and the country's governance," said the vice-head of academic affairs of the Party School, Wang Gang.

In one classroom, rapt pupils listened to a giant video projection of Xi proclaiming that "the clear waters and the green mountains are as precious as the mountains of gold and silver".

The class was called "Xi Jinping Thought and Ecological Civilization". In office since 2012, the Chinese leader has consolidated power as the rubber-stamp parliament enshrined "Xi Thought" in the constitution and removed term limits last year.

### Taboo subjects

Established in 1933, approximately 1,600 students attend the school each semester, averaging about 40 years of age. On the training programme are courses on Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, and the theory of Deng—the architect of the late 1970s reforms that started China's rapid economic take-off. But there is also content on economic, military and international issues. Classroom absences are not allowed without a valid reason and campus discipline is strict, according to Chinese media.

Xi has demanded more party discipline since taking power, overseeing a crackdown on corruption that has punished more than 1.5 million officials. Under him, the party has also tightened its hold on society—an approach reflected in the ethos of the school. "We obviously forbid any discussion or topics that would run counter to the major decisions made by the leaders," Wang said. Yet "we also talk about the Cultural Revolution and the Tiananmen incident to better understand history and better choose the way forward," Wang adds.

The bloody crackdown on Tiananmen Square protests in 1989 is a taboo topic in China while



**BEIJING:** Adult students seen in a class at the Party School of the Chinese Communist Party's Central Committee, during a government-organised tour for foreign journalists in Beijing. - AFP

the Cultural Revolution, a period of social and political upheaval under Mao, is a sensitive subject. The school used to be cut off from the world but today it allows its teachers to go abroad on exchanges, according to Chinese media. It has also welcomed renowned foreign visitors such as German Chancellor Angela Merkel, former US secretary of state Henry Kissinger or former UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon. And the courses are in tune with current news, like the trade war with Washington.

"The Chinese and US economies are very complementary, the Trump administration's approach of applying sanctions, customs surcharges will only exacerbate existing problems," said Yu Jun, deputy dean of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, speaking at the Party School. "With the internet and artificial intelligence, the thinking of younger generations is changing," says Zhu Lingjun, the deputy leader in charge of reflecting on the Party's evolution at the school, his nose deep in his notes.

## Fake tourists, car crashes: How China blocks reporters

**KASHGAR:** The three men were so busy staging a fake car crash they failed to notice the very people they were trying to block: foreign journalists heading towards one of China's notorious internment camps. A small truck slowly inched towards a car parked on the road before stopping - just short of contact - as the reporters drove past the scene. The "accident" later drew a crowd of onlookers as a line of trucks queued down the highway. Police halted traffic, blocking the road leading towards the camp.

Though a botched attempt, this incident illustrates the great lengths Chinese authorities go to obstruct journalists from covering topics deemed sensitive in Xinjiang, a restive northwest region where large numbers of mostly Muslim ethnic minorities have been rounded up into re-education camps. On a recent six-day trip to Xinjiang, AFP was able to document three of them - razor-wired complexes with imposing block buildings. One was within walking distance of farmland, while another was clearly visible from nearby dwellings. One centre was just around the corner from a water park.

After initially denying their existence, the Chinese government has gone on a public relations blitz to counter the global outcry against what Beijing calls "vocational education centres"

- and defends as necessary to battle religious extremism. Since last October, the Xinjiang government has also organised camp tours for diplomats and media outlets. But it has made independent reporting in the region extremely challenging, with journalists almost constantly followed by plainclothes officials, making it difficult to talk to locals without putting them at risk.

Roadblocks and construction work, which suddenly materialise when reporters near re-education camps, are also a constant headache. When AFP reporters tried to approach one internment camp in Hotan, roads were roped off within seconds after an unmarked car that had been following them sped ahead. In the end, the only option was to photograph the camp - a fenced off compound surrounded by a swath of sand and desert scrub - from afar.

The security clampdown in Xinjiang, where authorities have implemented unprecedented levels of surveillance, has also made it impossible to move freely around the region. Police checkpoints at city borders prevented AFP reporters from travelling outside regional hubs without alerting local propaganda officials.

In some cases, whole cities were closed off. While driving to Artux city, where a mosque is believed to have been destroyed, AFP was forced to turn around by police at a checkpoint who said the road was closed for driving tests - all day for the next five days. "Please understand our work," said the police officer. At the same checkpoint, two women claiming to be tourists also appeared. For the next hour, they followed AFP in a dark purple van because they were "lost".

Even when AFP reporters went past the fake car crash to take pictures of a camp from a nearby village, the tourists parked close by. —AFP

## Inquiry launched after suicide of bullied gay man

**YANGON:** An investigation has been launched into the death of a gay Myanmar man, whose final note on Facebook detailing the homophobic bullying he suffered at work has prompted widespread outrage and calls for law changes. Kyaw Zin Win, a 26-year-old librarian at Myanmar Imperial University, posted a final message Sunday detailing how he had suffered harassment from colleagues after being forcibly outed. Hundreds of mourners turned up Wednesday for the funeral in Yangon where his body was cremated in a casket wrapped in a rainbow-coloured flag. Some hid their faces from the media in the socially conservative country where many are afraid to come out.

Same-sex relations remain illegal under a colonial-era law and rights groups say homophobia and discrimination are entrenched even though more space has opened up for the LGBTQ community in recent years. "We will investigate the case," Yu Lwin Aung from Myanmar's National Human Rights Commission told AFP yesterday, adding they would speak to family members and the university's management today.

But the commission does not have the power to instigate legal proceedings and there is currently no legislation that could be used against the perpetrators, Nang Hsu Mon Thar from rights group Colors Rainbow told AFP. "This case highlights the gaps in the law," she said, repeating calls from LGBTQ advocates for the decriminalisation of gay sex and an anti-discrimination law. The university has offered its "most sincere apologies" to Kyaw Zin Win's family. —AFP

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FridayTimes

# Lifestyle

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A boy looks up at the installation entitled "Tornado by plastic waste" by artists from the social enterprise To He at the exhibition "Plastics Planet" in Hanoi yesterday. —AFP

## Can Spider-Man untangle Marvel's future?

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## Lifestyle | Music &amp; Movies



A giant inflatable Spider-Man is displayed on the red carpet for the 'Spider-Man: Far From Home' World premiere at the TCL Chinese theatre in Hollywood. — AFP



British actor Tom Holland arrives for the 'Spider-Man: Far From Home' World premiere at the TCL Chinese theatre in Hollywood.

## After 'Endgame': Can Spider-Man untangle Marvel's future?

Spider-Man has barely finished saving the world with the Avengers, but he's swinging back into cinemas for a new solo outing at a key moment for Marvel's record-smashing superhero movies. While Earth is now safe from master villain Thanos's evil clutches, an epic storyline spanning all 22 previous Marvel films of the most lucrative franchise in film history ended with April's monster hit "Avengers: Endgame." Several key characters have died, including Robert Downey Jr.'s wildly popular Tony Stark, who kicked off the whole juggernaut of interconnected Marvel movies in 2008's "Iron Man."

And plans for the next set of superhero films featuring Thor, Hulk and the remaining gang are tightly under wraps, leaving fans in a frantic spin. What next for the \$21 billion-grossing franchise? "Spider-Man: Far From Home," out July 2, offers some answers. It picks up the story soon after the spectacular, tear-jerking conclusion to "Endgame" and finds its hero counting down the days to summer vacation in Europe while worrying about his crush on a girl from class. Despite its light-hearted premise, dastardly villains inevitably pop up in Venice, Prague and London to thwart Peter Parker's puppy love.

So too do a handful of familiar faces from previous Marvel films—with a few hints of what lies in store for the next set of movies. "What comes next will be very different, will be very unique," Marvel Studios president Kevin Feige told AFP. "Mr Stark is irreplaceable, but I think there are other heroes that are still around and that are quite important in the cinematic universe that will in surprising and unexpected ways step up to various leadership roles now that Tony has gone," he added.

### 'Crown jewel'

Who that means is unclear. But Spider-Man has quickly become central to Marvel's "cinematic universe." For decades he has been the "crown jewel" of the Marvel comic book empire, and in financial terms he is one of the most successful superheroes in movie history. But Spi-

der-Man's on-screen arrival alongside Marvel's Avengers was delayed because rival studio Sony owns the movie rights. Sony's Spider-Man films before 2017's "Homecoming" did not share characters with the Avengers films, and had different actors in the lead role.

An almost unprecedented, and still highly secretive, deal struck between the Hollywood giants in 2015 to "share" Spider-Man brought the webslinger into the fold. Despite the success of the collaboration, boosted by the well-received casting of British actor Tom Holland, there are no guarantees the studios' deal will last. Feige refuses to be drawn on whether more collaborations are in the pipeline, while Sony last year produced an Oscar-winning Spider-Man animation separate from Marvel Studios' domain.

### 'Almost time'

Meanwhile the Hollywood press has reported that Marvel could unveil its next bonanza of films as soon as July's Comic-Con. Untitled Marvel films appear on parent company Disney's release schedule for May and November next year. Hopes are high that characters from "Fantastic Four" and "X-Men"—acquired by Disney from Fox—will soon be brought into the melee. According to Feige, the "entirely new saga" on its way could mean "a new character from our comics that most people have never heard of" or a "new chapter in a storyline of a character we've already introduced on screen."

When will we know? "It's almost time," he teased. For lifelong fans including "Far From Home" director Jon Watts, it is enough to get their Spider senses tingling. "There's so many things that could happen, especially now as Marvel moves into their next phase," he said. "Figuring out Spider-Man's place in that world I think is going to be a really fun challenge." — AFP

## Bollywood's newest A-lister tackles caste, sexual violence

A young man with erectile dysfunction, a pianist who pretends to be blind, and a sperm donor raking in the cash: unconventional roles have catapulted Ayushmann Khurrana into Bollywood's A-league. Now the 34-year-old, one of the most popular actors in Hindi cinema at the moment, is set to tackle two of India's weightiest subjects—caste discrimination and sexual violence. Khurrana plays an upper-caste police officer assigned to investigate the rape and hanging of a low-caste woman in "Article 15", which hits screens across India on Friday.

Such cases are depressingly common in the pages of India's newspapers, but it is rare for Bollywood—renowned for its cheery song and dance routines—to give them top billing. "This practice has been going on for decades. With a film like 'Article 15', the discussion about caste discrimination comes into the mainstream," Khurrana told AFP. The film's title refers to the section of India's constitution which outlaws discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex and place of birth. The movie—directed by Anubhav Sinha—drew inspiration from several true stories, including a 2014 gang-rape and the 2016 flogging of a low-caste Dalit family.

It is a departure from Khurrana's usual roles in family comedies, and Sinha was initially sceptical about casting the actor as police officer Ayan Ranjan. "Ayushmann is aware of his branding as a family audience, which is why at first even I could not see him in this part. But I was stoked by his keenness and conviction for this subject matter," Sinha told AFP. Khurrana began his career in theatre, moving onto radio and reality TV before debuting in Bollywood in 2012 in the romantic comedy "Vicky Donor" where he played the sperm donor. — AFP



In this file photo Indian Bollywood actors Ayushmann Khurrana and Bhumi Pednekar (top) pose for a photograph during a promotional event for the Hindi film 'Shubh Mangal Saavdhan' in Mumbai. — AFP

## Lil'Buck, US dancer mixing street and classical, ready for next level



US street dancer and actor Charles Riley, aka LiliBuck, poses during a photo session on June 24, 2019 in Paris. — AFP

"I'm just getting started," says dancer Lil' Buck, whose hybrid style mixing street with classical has already earned him a devoted following. And with a documentary on him due out in autumn, he looks set to leap higher into the public eye. He and French director Louis Wallecan were in Paris this week for a special preview of the film, "Lil' Buck: Real Swan", at the Champs Elysees film festival. He took time out to talk to AFP about his career. Charles "Lil' Buck" Riley was born in Chicago but grew up in Memphis. He learned his first dance steps when he was 12 from his big sister—a local style known as jookin—and was quickly hooked on dance. But he lived surrounded by poverty.

"I wasn't happy with a lot of how I was raised and grew up,

and things I have to be around, my environment. I kept myself happy with my family, my sisters and with dance." And dance was his way out. "I had no plan B, no anything but what I wanted to do, my dream, my focus, my goal was dance. So I focused a 100% on it." His mother, seeing his growing obsession, took him out of public school at the age of 15 and into a private school dedicated to the arts. "It was a turning point," he says. "It changed my life, because it was the first time I met people who think like me." In his old school, he was used to being laughed at. But in art school, "there is another energy, more creativity. "Everybody has good energy, and it makes you want to come back to school. You want to learn." — AFP



Women pose for a selfie with the Museum of Tomorrow in the background at the city of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



Tourists make a selfie in front of the Cathedral of Guadalajara, Jalisco state, Mexico.



A tourist takes a selfie next to the Christ the Redeemer statue.

# Selfies and the self: What they say about us and society



In this file photo taken on August 18, 2016, Jamaica's Usain Bolt takes selfie photos as he celebrates with fans after winning the Men's 200m Final during the athletics event at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games at the Olympic Stadium in Rio de Janeiro.



A family takes a selfie at the surroundings of the Museum of Tomorrow in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The selfie craze speaks volumes about the era in which we live: how images race around the globe and can dominate public discourse, eliciting strong emotions and even blurring the lines of reality. Sometimes, that can be a very toxic mix, experts say. "We are truly in the age of the picture, of the fleeting image," said psychoanalyst, essayist and philosophy professor Elsa Godart. "The selfie marks the arrival of a new sort of language that plays on the way we see ourselves, on our emotions."

Selfies are everywhere you look on social media. Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook and Twitter are flooded with the knowing poses: a teenager with her kitten, a Chinese man in front of the Eiffel Tower, newlyweds at Disneyland, a fan with a movie star. Selfies "put us in touch with a lot more people," said Brazilian psychoanalyst Christian Dunker.

For Pauline Escande-Gauquie, an expert in the study of signs or symbols, "the goal is above all to create or strengthen one's links with a particular community-with your fans if you're a celebrity, or with everyday citizens if you are a politician." The selfie is designed to create a heightened memory of an experience: usually snapped from above, at flattering angles, with an interesting background, selfies allow the total control of one's image. Selfie-takers often put themselves at the center of all things. "It is not a narcissistic problem, because narcissism is very positive, but a problem of ego, and overvaluation of the self," said Godart, author of "I take selfies, therefore I am." That overvaluation craves as many "likes" as possible-and can betray a self-centered me-me-me mentality.

## From urban climbing to 'chinning'

Spectacular selfies allow a person to show off their best side because they are often staged in phenomenal settings. Russia's Angela Nicolau-the queen of urban climbing-is known for her risky selfies at dizzying heights-atop the Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, or the vertigo-inducing Shanghai Tower. For Godart, "this is high-risk behavior and gives the feeling of flirting with death." At the other end of the spectrum is the selfie that actually devalues the person taking it-a trend

seducing more and more people, most of them young and scornful of societal ideals about beauty.

Some of these people have started "chinning"-taking unflattering shots of themselves from below, creating double chins. Even deeply depressed people are part of the selfie phenomenon, "which allows them to exist too," said Godart. There is also a growing trend of photobombing other people's selfies-sabotaging their message without them knowing.

Selfies are also a tool for activists-environmentalists posting 'before' and 'after' pictures of beaches for clean-up campaigns or supporters of breastfeeding posing with a suckling infant. "It's very intimate but there is a real message behind it," said Escande-Gauquie. Chinese artist Ai Weiwei has used selfies as a political tool, to challenge the communist rulers in Beijing or show support for migrants risking death to cross the Mediterranean.

Celebrities deploy the selfie to promote their business interests-every time Kim Kardashian poses nude for her 141 million Instagram followers, it makes headlines. More edgy are the "beautifulagony" selfies on flickr, which show the faces of people masturbating. "It is by being seen by another that they will finish masturbating. One makes love by a look, with the screen in between," said Godart. Selfies snapped near the remains of relatives can challenge the concept of death-it's "a way of making a person who is no longer with us live again," said Godart. "In the virtual world, there is no death."

## Selfie addiction

In the end, selfies can become a powerful-and dangerous-addiction. "Just like with any other phenomenon, there are excesses," said Escande-Gauquie, author of "Everyone selfie!" "For some people, it can become compulsive, developing into a dependence on being seen by others." Some apps allow selfie-takers striving towards some ideal of beauty to use filters that will eliminate wrinkles and refine features. "It's a travesty," said Escande-Gauquie. "If not dealt with in a playful manner, it can become something of a disease ... an identity dissonance that can be dangerous, especially for teenagers." — AFP

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A tourist makes a selfie in front of the Teatro Degollado in Guadalajara, Jalisco state, Mexico. —AFP photos



Tourists pose for a “selfie” photograph with a cell phone at the Giza pyramids necropolis on the southwestern outskirts of the Egyptian capital Cairo.

## Five things to know about selfie economy

Long dismissed as a symptom of narcissistic youth culture, the not-so-humble selfie has become big business. As hotels vie to become the next viral hotspot and new technology is developed to cater to those searching for that perfect picture of themselves, here are five things to know about selfies.

### The beginning

When front-facing cameras were first added to primitive mobile phones in 2003, they were not intended for users to endlessly pose for self-portraits. They were introduced on phones like the Sony Ericsson Z1010 to enable video calls for business meetings.

### The experience economy

The ensuing selfie explosion was perfectly timed to take advantage of changing consumer habits during the rise of the “experience economy,” a term first used by authors Joseph Pine II and James Gilmore in a 1998 issue of the Harvard Business Review. They said that consumers were increasingly prior-

itizing fleeting but expensive experiences - such as fine dining or holidays to exotic locations - over purchasing more traditional material goods.

It didn't hurt that such experiences could now be immortalized with a quick selfie shared on social media to masses of (hopefully envious) followers. Indeed, consulting firm McKinsey & Company found that personal-consumption expenditures on “experience-related services” surged by 5.3 percent in the United States between 2014 and 2016, while spending on goods increased by only 2.5 percent. In Western Europe meanwhile, spending on experiences jumped five percent between 2015 and 2017, compared to a 2.3 percent rise for goods.

### Selfie spots

The image has been shared on social media so many times that you may have seen it already - a swimmer paddling in a steaming infinity pool that sheers off onto a stunning vista of snowy Swiss Alps. “The Hotel Villa Honegg in Switzerland has become very fa-

mous on social media for selfies in its swimming pool,” says Johanne Saget, the head of “The One Consulting” firm that focuses on the luxury sector.

Other hotels not so blessed with such natural beauty have found others ways to court selfie tourists. In 2014, the Mandarin Oriental luxury hotel launched a “Selfie in Paris” package tour of the French capital, costing a bracing 995 euros (\$1,135). In Athens, the Hotel Grand Bretagne has a designated “selfie spot” for pictures with the Acropolis in the background, while the Marriott hotel chain offers “selfie sticks” during check-in at its Desert Springs Resort in California.

### Selfie tech

The rise of the selfie has also shaken the photography world as its centre of gravity has shifted towards Asia, where most smartphones are manufactured. Chinese tech giant Huawei has become an industry leader for smartphone cameras after teaming up with Germany's Leica, while Xiaomi developed a selfie lens hidden under the phone's screen. “This evolution (of mobile phone cameras) went side-by-side with social medias able to trail your life and what you do, and also recording everything,” says Roberta Cozza, an analyst at American research firm Gartner.

### The future

For Cozza, the “next big thing will be AI (artificial intelligence). Cameras will be able to help users to scan the environment, objects for example.” Samsung's “Bixby Vision” function on its new smartphones combines its AI voice assistant with augmented reality to recognise and classify objects captured by the camera. The technology is still in its infancy, but could soon have myriad uses, including a new way to shop. Say, for example, you like the look of the shoes a fellow commuter is wearing on the train. You could point the smartphone camera at the shoes, which would then find them online and let you immediately buy a pair. —AFP



Alana Ancelmo, 32, takes a selfie in front of the graffiti mural Ethnicity made by the international famous Brazilian graffiti artist Kobra at the promenade of the Rio de Janeiro Port Area in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



In this file photo A Tuareg tribeswoman uses a “selfie stick” to take a picture on a cell phone while attending a traditional ceremony in the Libyan desert in the western Awal region near the borders with Tunisia and Algeria, about 600 kilometers southwest of the capital Tripoli.



In this file photo taken on March 13, 2019 Libyan youths take a selfie during the national day of the Libyan costume at the Martyrs Square in the capital Tripoli.



In this file photo taken on September 06, 2018 Saudi groom Basil Al-bani poses for a selfie with his friends during his wedding at his home in the Red Sea resort of Jeddah.

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## Selfies - five times more deadly than shark attacks

Selfies, which have become a global sensation in the last decade or so, have remarkably killed five times more people than shark attacks. And the death toll has crept up incrementally each year as smartphones become more sophisticated and selfie-sticks increase the range at which people can snap themselves, prompting them to take bigger risks for the perfect shot.

Between October 2011 and November 2017, at least 259 people died taking selfies around the globe, according to India's Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care, compared to just 50 people killed by sharks in the same period. While women take the most selfies, young men, who are more prone to take risks, make up three quarters of the selfie deaths - in drownings, crashes, falls or shooting accidents.

India, with a population of more than 1.3 billion and 800 million cell phones, holds the record for the number of people dying in the act of photographing themselves, with 159 recorded so far. That is more than half of the global total - and a testament of sorts to the nation's love of group photos and its youthful population. India has seen selfie-snapping groups of youths die when they were hit by a train or drowning when their boat sank at the moment they were clicking the shutter.

The situation has become so dire that India has set up "no selfie" zones - 16 of them in the city of Mumbai alone. The country came in far ahead of Russia (16 deaths), the United States (14) and Pakistan. In Russia, people have fallen from bridges and high-rise buildings, shot themselves or even died while handling a land mine. Police issued a guide to "selfies without danger" in 2015. In the United States, most of those involved in selfie deaths fatally shot themselves while seeking the perfect pose. A number of people have fallen to



In this file photo taken on August 30, 2017 Muslim pilgrims take a selfie at the Grand Mosque in the holy Saudi city of Mecca, on the eve of the start of the annual Hajj pilgrimage.

their deaths at the Grand Canyon.

Rescue services in Croatia used Twitter to ask tourists to "stop taking stupid and dangerous selfies" after a Canadian miraculously survived a 75-meter (250-foot) fall in the Plitvice lakes region. In January, Taiwanese social media celebrity Gigi Wu - known as the "Bikini Climber" for taking selfies on top of mountain peaks dressed in a bikini - died when she fell into a ravine. She was 36.

### Inappropriate selfie spots

Even when they are not fatal, selfies can be extremely macabre. In 2014, a Brazilian woman sparked rage online when she took a smiling selfie in front of the coffin of presidential candidate Eduardo Campos at his funeral. Social media influencer Sueli Toledo also caused a stir online when she posted a picture on Instagram with the caption, "My look today for the funeral of a super friend."

Selfies in places deemed sacred or hallowed - especially when they honor the dead - can also raise questions. At the former Nazi death camp of Auschwitz in Poland, visited by 2.1 million people every year, museum staff do not hesitate to contact people who post selfies deemed to be inappropriate. From Brazil to Vietnam and



In this file photo taken on April 01, 2019 an Iranian Shiite Muslim pilgrim takes a selfie in the Iraqi holy central city of Najaf as believers prepare to mark later this week the anniversary of seventh Shiite Imam Musa Al-Kadhim's death in the 8th century.

Germany, witnesses to traffic accidents have posted selfies at the scene of the crash - generally seen as gauche. More and more, selfies - even in tourist havens - are becoming a bit of a nuisance for locals. Residents of the picturesque Rue Cremieux in Paris were so disturbed by the constant stream of selfie-snapping tourists outside their windows that they started their own Instagram account, clubcremieux, where they publish pictures of the most absurd posers outside their doors, skewering them with barbed captions. The same thing happened in Hong Kong, where residents of the vast multi-colored Quarry Bay apartment complex put up signs banning photos.

In Brazil, several youths made a buzz on Facebook in 2017 when they posted smiling selfies taken among terrified bus passengers who had thrown themselves to the floor during a shooting. Facing the mad frenzy of endless selfies, Vienna has launched a campaign for a digital detox. The Belvedere Museum has put up a large copy of Gustav Klimt's classic painting "The Kiss" near the original and added a giant red hashtag, so that visitors can take their selfie next to the facsimile and actually look at the real work of art. — AFP

## From Rio to Rome, a battle for selfie supremacy

Under the immense Christ the Redeemer statue that overlooks Rio de Janeiro and its picturesque Guanabara Bay, dozens of tourists jockey for position to get selfies with the stunning panoramic view illuminated by the setting sun.

A tangle of arms and selfie sticks are lifted for solo shots, couple snaps, family photos: getting the perfect picture with the statue or Sugarloaf Mountain in the background is the goal. The only definite fail? Ending up with other tourists taking selfies in the frame. Brazil is a selfie-mad country. But it is hardly alone. Around the globe, selfie culture has become a facet of daily life - social media sites are flooded with pictures, tourist attractions are overrun with those seeking selfie nirvana.

In some cases, that quest for the ideal happy snap has been deadly, when amateur photographers take the hobby too far. For celebrities, it can be a moneymaker. But for the average tourist, it's a way to make memories. Philippe, a young French engineer on holiday in Brazil who has Christ-like long hair, positions himself in front of the imposing Christ the Redeemer statue, an Art Deco work made of reinforced concrete and soapstone. "My colleagues laughed, saying I look like Jesus. So I needed to take a selfie to send them," he said. But he isn't all in on the idea.

"On social media, it can give a false impression. People only post pictures of beautiful things - the sun, Rio, the beach," he said. "People end up getting depressed because they have the idea that their life is crappy." For Brazilian Daniela Lemes, taking selfies is "a happy moment, shared with family (...) in marvelous places like this one." On the other side of Rio, at the waterfront Museum of Tomorrow, aesthetician Tatiana da Silva de Paula admits she takes 100 to 200 selfies a day. "First I take some to see how I look. Then I post them on social media for my friends and family," she said.

### Selfie wars

About 9,000 kilometers (5,600 miles) away, in the heart of Rome, the Trevi Fountain is the must-have selfie spot. Sarah and Fivos, a British couple from Manchester who came to the Eternal City to celebrate their 10th wedding anniversary, were part of the selfie scrum. "We are happy with the selfie we took, but with so many people, you have to wait for the right moment to get the good shot with no people in the frame," said Fivos. Nearby, Elia and Chiara, two young Italians, took a selfie with their parents in the background... taking a selfie.

On this day, as on most days, there is such a huge crowd at the fountain, immortalized by Fellini in "La Dolce Vita," that tensions can mount. In August last year, police had to separate two groups of tourists who had come to blows when they wanted to take a selfie at the same spot. In Athens, even celebrities join the millions of tourists seeking romantic mementos. Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg showed up at the Acropolis with his wife in May, after music legend Paul McCartney did the same.

### Practically a national sport

In Egypt, before the Great Pyramid outside Cairo - the last of the ancient Seven Wonders of the World still standing - Bangladeshi tourist Sheila Ahmed uses her smartphone to do as so many have done before her. "Generally, I am not a fan of selfies but it's easier to just hang up your phone and take a picture of yourself at whatever place you want," she said.

"Especially here I am in front of the Great Pyramid - where would I want to take a selfie if not here?" In the United States, at Mather Point on the majestic Grand Canyon's south rim, picture-taking is constant, but some go to extremes - and the very edge of the cliff.

"We can see well enough from here," British tourist Kathryn Kelly said, looking at a woman in an especially risky spot. "I don't see the point stepping closer to the edge." In South Korea, taking selfies is practically a national sport. To mark his 100 days in office, President Moon Jae-in shot a selfie video message. North Korea seems to be the last place on Earth immune from selfie fever, where people prefer more traditional pictures. Nevertheless, the country's leader Kim Jong Un has posed for two selfies - with a Singaporean minister and a Russian journalist. — AFP



Tourists pose for a selfie photograph in front of Jerusalem's Old City from the Mount of Olives on June 4, 2019.



In this file photo taken on June 22, 2019, a man poses for a "selfie" photo with a cell phone as he awaits the arrival of the deputy head of Sudan's ruling Transitional Military Council (TMC) and commander of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitaries, during a rally in the village of Abraq, about 60 kilometers northwest of Khartoum.

## Trans indigenous women eke out a tough living in Colombia



Members of the Embera Chami indigenous community are seen at the Bajo San Juan reservation, near Santuario, Risaralda department, Colombia.— AFP photos



Transgender women of the Embera Chami indigenous community, Monica (left) and Michael, walk along a street in Santuario, Risaralda department, Colombia.

When Erika Aisama decided to live as a transgender woman in an indigenous community in Colombia, the punishment was brutal: her father shaved her head and she was locked up in the stocks, medieval-style. At age 13, she decided to flee the reservation of her Embera Chami tribe in western Colombia and go pick coffee beans for a living. "I was dying. That is what I thought. But I do not want to die. So I am going to fly," said Aisama, now 18 and one of about 50 indigenous trans women living and working in the coffee-growing town of Santuario.

When there are beans to harvest, Aisama can just about make ends meet—earning just a few dollars a day, toiling from Monday to Saturday. It is only during her rather short weekend that Aisama and her colleagues get to really feel like women, leaving the coffee plantations and strolling through the streets of Santuario, a conservative town of some 15,000 people. Colombia's constitution recognizes the rights of LGBTQ people, but indigenous communities have been slower to accept them.

Within the Embera Chami group, people who are assigned male at birth and later identify as women are seen as indulging a whim, said community leader Ruben Dario Guipa. Indigenous people view themselves as never changing, he added, so living as a transgender man or woman "is really serious," he added. Dario Guipa said he does not understand why tribe members would seek to "change the way they look."

### Under-reported violence

For indigenous people in Colombia—who make up 3.4 percent of the population—living life as a transgender man or woman can be painful and violent. Just ask Aisama about being locked up—both wrists trapped in a wooden frame reminiscent of something from the 17th century—for public humiliation. Veronica Tascon, a colleague of Aisama who is also a transgender woman, said they can suffer rejection from their relatives, and sometimes even be banished by community leaders—if they don't run first. This is not



Members of the Embera Chami indigenous community remain at the Bajo San Juan reservation, near Santuario, Risaralda department.



Transgender women of the Embera Chami indigenous community, Erika (left) and Veronica, put make up on after collecting coffee at a farm.



Transgender women of the Embera Chami indigenous community, Monica (left), Veronica (second left), Andrea (second right) and Erika rest after collecting coffee at a farm in Santuario.



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Transgender women of the Embera Chami indigenous community collect coffee at a farm in Santuario, Risaralda department.

limited to indigenous transgender women, however. Violence against transgender people in general is under-reported in Colombia, because of reluctance to call the police or confusion in identifying a victim's gender, says an NGO called Colombia Diversa. At least 29 transgender women were murdered in Colombia last year, the group says. "I advise the trans girls here not to go home, and they do not go home," Tascon said after a day of picking coffee beans in steady rain.

**On the margins**

Transgender women started arriving in Santuario from the reservation about six years ago and now there are around 50 of them living in town, says researcher and anthropologist Jairo Tabares. There is no official count. On weekends, the women gather in large groups in Santuario's town square—to chat and shop, mostly. Sunday is the day for sweethearts. John Palacios, 23, strolls past a church with his trans girlfriend Jessica Bucama, 19. They both work on the coffee plantations. And on this day, they are both dressed to kill.

"I am in love," said Palacios, who expresses sadness however that Bucama cannot have children with him. While the locals ac-



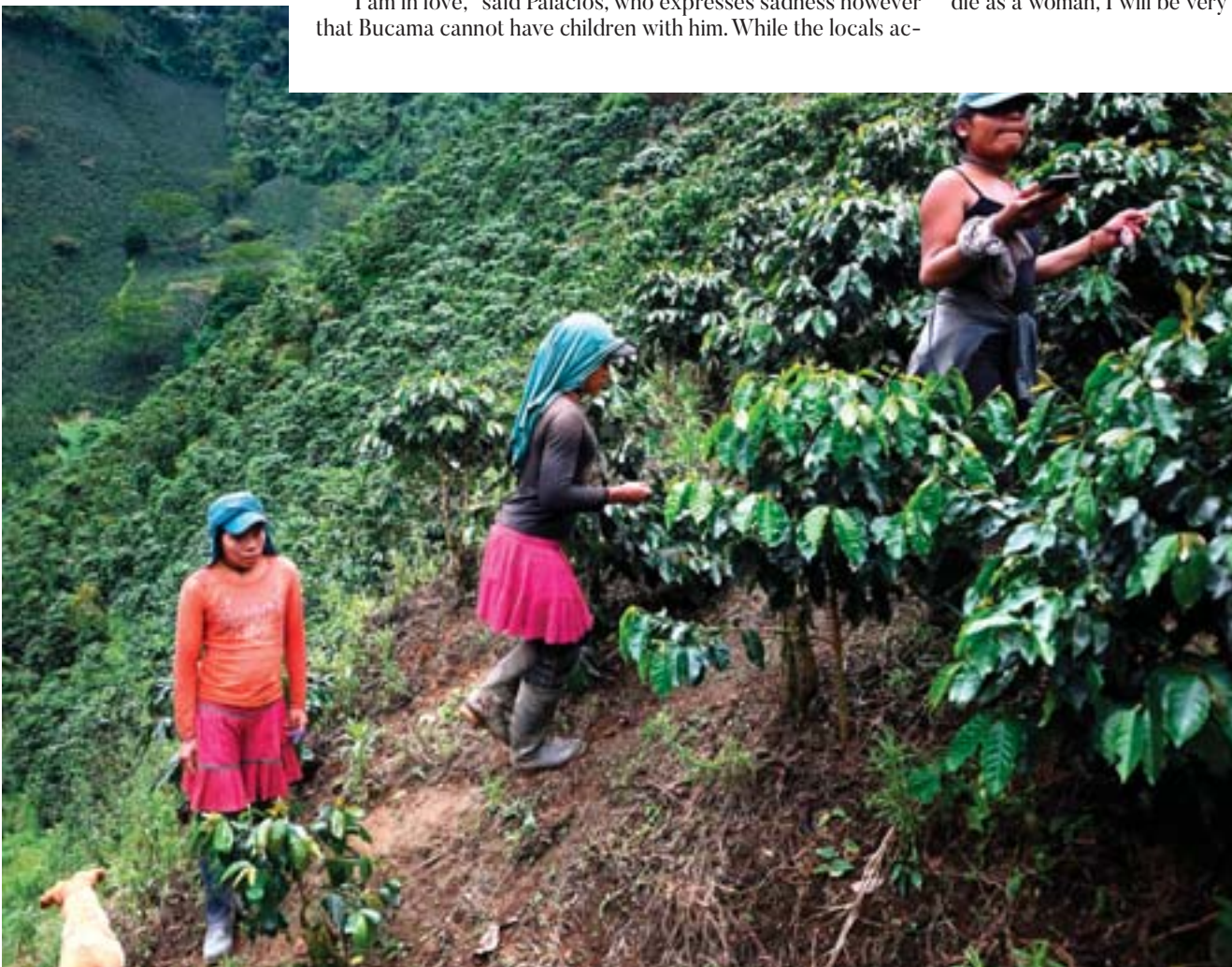
cept the transgender women on the surface, they remain on the margins of society, admitted Mayor Everardo Ochoa. At night, the women go back to their barracks-style dormitories on the plantations.

**Hard work, low pay**

At one plantation called El Paraiso, a dozen women are at work. The pay is meager. Tascon makes 27 dollars a week, more than most, getting paid by the weight of what she picks. But from that, her expenses at company stores are deducted along with room and board. At harvest time, plantation owners complain of a labor shortage. They say non-indigenous people do not want this kind of grueling work. "If it were not for the Emberas, I don't know what we would do," said Jorge Martinez, the plantation's manager.

The mayor says both sides come out winning. But Tabares, the anthropologist, insisted that for all the bragging Santuario does about being open-minded, these women provide a much-needed cheap source of labor. Tascon says she dreams of leaving coffee beans behind some day and going far away to another country to have sex reassignment surgery and, eventually, children. "If I can die as a woman, I will be very happy," she said. — AFP

A transgender woman of the Embera Chami indigenous community, Monica, collects coffee.



Transgender women of the Embera Chami indigenous community collect coffee at a farm in Santuario.



Transgender people of the Embera Chami indigenous community, Monica (right) and Michael, pose for a picture while collecting coffee at a farm in Santuario.



Transgender women of the Embera Chami indigenous community, are transported in a car to collect coffee at a farm in Santuario.

# 5 dishes every new graduate should learn how to make



By Katie Workman

**S**o your kid is going out into the world. Flying the coop. Time for them to learn how to cook. Maybe, just maybe, you didn't do as good a job as you'd planned teaching them their way around the kitchen (cough - me too, despite what one might think). And just maybe you'd like to give them a little help before they are standing in front of an empty fridge with a frying pan in their hand and a blank expression on their face.

Here are 5 basic dishes that should give anyone a head start in the kitchen, including options for breakfast, lunch and dinner. These are talked-through recipes, without specific quantities, just to get the ball rolling. If you are working to help your kid get more comfortable in the kitchen, you may want to use these as guidelines, and print out or copy some family favorite versions or other simple recipes.

## 1. MIGAS

Many cooks feel that knowing how to make an omelet is a baseline kitchen skill, but that might feel a bit fussy to a young person just starting out. Scrambled eggs are good to know too, but let's go one step more interesting.

Migas is a flexible, madcap egg scramble, with roots in Spanish, Mexican and Tex-Mex cooking (depending on who you ask), and it's easy and satisfying. You essentially saute up some vegetables, like peppers and onions, and maybe add some crumbled chorizo or other sausage. Then add beaten eggs and crushed tortilla chips, and stir the whole thing up in a skillet until the eggs are cooked and the tortilla chips have softened slightly into the mixture. Finish with some cheese and maybe salsa, sour cream or other toppings, and you have the kind of breakfast (or lunch or dinner) that will make a whole lot of people a whole lot of happy.

## 2. ROAST CHICKEN BREASTS OR THIGHS

A roast chicken is also something many people consider

a classic, but what's even easier - and requires no carving at the end - is roasted chicken pieces. For the most basic, roasted, bone-in and skin-on chicken breasts and thighs, start by preheating the oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit. Rub the chicken pieces with a bit of olive or other oil, place them, without touching, on a rimmed baking sheet or baking dish that has been sprayed with nonstick spray. Sprinkle them with salt and pepper and roast for 30 to 45 minutes, depending on the size of the pieces, until cooked through - to an internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit if you have an internal thermometer, or until the juices aren't pink when you cut into the pieces with a sharp knife. Play around with different spices and herbs along with the salt and pepper, such as an Italian blend or a mixture of chili powder, paprika, and cumin, and rub those into the skin after you oil the chicken pieces.

## 3. RICE

Knowing how to cook simple rice on the stove means that whatever leftovers you have (either homemade or from takeout) can be stretched into a full bowl meal. And then you can top the bowl with condiments and add-ins like Sriracha sauce, soy sauce, sliced avocado, chopped tomatoes or shredded cheese.

To make white rice, bring 2 cups water to a boil in a medium saucepan. Add 1/2 teaspoon salt and an optional tablespoon of butter or cooking oil. When the water has returned to a boil, stir in 1 cup white rice. Let the water return to a simmer, stir, cover the pot, and turn the heat down to low. Simmer covered until the rice is tender and all of the liquid is absorbed, which will take from 17 to 20 minutes. Turn off the heat and let it sit, covered, for three minutes. Remove the lid, fluff the rice with a fork and serve warm.

## 4. ENGLISH MUFFIN PIZZAS

Sounds kind of specific, don't it? Well, it's safe to say that if you know how to make an English muffin pizza, you

could have breakfast, lunch and dinner covered. Also a hearty midday snack. This is a recipe for plain pizzas, but you can add anything on top that you would add to regular pizza: slivered cooked onions or peppers, sliced olives, chopped cooked broccoli, pepperoni and so on.

Toast a split English muffin in a toaster or in a preheated, 350-degree Fahrenheit oven until very lightly brown, three to four minutes. Spoon a few tablespoons of jarred tomato paste evenly over each half. Lay a slice of mozzarella, about the size of the muffin, over each half. Put them on a baking sheet or some foil, and bake or toast until the cheese is melted. Give a final sprinkle of salt and pepper, and, if available, dried oregano.

## 5. SOUP

If you have the basics of soup down, then you can almost always make a meal out of the odds and ends in your fridge, and from random produce that might be on sale. Also, soup is always a good vegetarian option. Start by heating a bit of oil in a large pot, then adding some longer-cooking ingredients and aromatics, like chopped onion, shallots, carrots, winter squashes, potatoes, broccoli and cauliflower. Make sure all the ingredients are chopped into pieces small enough to fit in a soup spoon. Stir and cook for about 5 minutes. Then add several cups of broth - chicken, beef or vegetable - and bring to a simmer. Simmer until the vegetables are close to tender, anywhere from 10 to 20 minutes.

Then add shorter-cooking ingredients like chopped or crushed tomatoes (canned or fresh), drained and rinsed canned beans, zucchini or summer squash, shredded or cubed cooked beef, pork, turkey or chicken, cooked rice, orzo or grains, peas or corn. Stir in some dried or fresh herbs (such as thyme, basil, oregano, rosemary), and salt and pepper to taste. Simmer for another 15 minutes or so until it smells like soup. You can top the bowls with grated or crumbled cheese. If new graduates have these five dishes under their belt, that is a very good start.

# CALIFORNIA FISH tacos are a light and fresh surfside treat

**A** surfside treat, California fish tacos feature battered and fried crispy white fish and sprightly pickled vegetables. When done right, they are light and fresh, with a lively mix of textures and flavors. This recipe may look involved, but the components come together quickly, so invite your friends to help. The frying uses a mere 3/4-inch layer of oil (no splattering vats).

We made an ultrathin batter by adding two sources of carbonation, beer and baking powder; they provided lift and their slight acidity limited gluten development. Frying in batches helped maintain the oil's temperature. For toppings, we quick-pickled onion and jalapenos and then used the brine to brighten shredded cabbage. Slice fish on the bias if your fillets are not 4 inches wide. Serve with green salsa if desired.

## CALIFORNIA-STYLE FISH TACOS

### Ingredients

Servings: 6

Start to finish: 1 hour

Pickled Onion and Cabbage:

1 small red onion, halved and sliced thin

2 jalapeno chiles, stemmed and sliced into thin rings

1 cup white wine vinegar  
2 tablespoons lime juice  
1 tablespoon sugar  
Salt and pepper  
3 cups shredded green cabbage

### Tacos:

2 pounds skinless white fish fillets, such as cod, haddock, or halibut  
Salt and pepper  
3/4 cup all-purpose flour  
1/4 cup cornstarch  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1 quart peanut or vegetable oil  
18 (6-inch) corn tortillas, warmed  
1 cup fresh cilantro leaves  
1 cup crema

### Preparation

For the Pickled Onion and Cabbage: Combine onion and jalapeños in medium bowl. Bring vinegar, lime juice, sugar, and 1 teaspoon salt to boil in small saucepan. Pour vinegar mixture

over onion mixture and let sit for at least 30 minutes, or refrigerate for up to 2 days. Transfer 1/4 cup pickling liquid to second medium bowl, add cabbage, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 1/2 teaspoon pepper and toss to combine.

For the Tacos: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 200 F. Set wire rack in rimmed baking sheet. Cut fish crosswise into 4 by 1-inch strips. Pat dry with paper towels; season with salt and pepper. Whisk flour, cornstarch, baking powder, and 1 teaspoon salt together in large bowl. Add fish and toss to coat evenly.

Add oil to large Dutch oven until 3/4 inch deep. Heat over medium-high heat to 350 F. Remove 5 or 6 pieces of fish from batter, allowing excess to drip back into bowl, and add to hot oil, briefly dragging fish along surface of oil to prevent sticking. Adjust burner, if necessary, to maintain oil temperature between 325 F and 350 F. Fry fish, stirring gently to prevent pieces from sticking together and turning as needed, until golden brown and crisp, about 8 minutes. Using slotted spoon or spider skimmer, transfer fish to prepared wire rack and place in oven to keep warm. Return oil to 350 F and repeat with remaining fish. Serve fish and pickled onions and cabbage with tortillas, cilantro, and crema.



# North America's BEST NATIONAL PARKS day



There's no better way to see the natural wonders of North America's national parks than on foot. From easy rambles through Southern forests to hair-raising scrambles across narrow rock faces thousands of feet in the air, get out of the car and make some memories on these one-of-a-kind day hikes.

#### GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK

Bright Angel Trail - Short

Start/Finish: Bright Angel Trailhead

Duration: Mile-and-a-half resthouse - 2-3 hours; Three-mile resthouse - 4-5 hours; Distance: 3 miles/ 6 miles; Difficulty: Moderate-difficult

If you have limited time in the Grand Canyon, you can't do much better than this beautiful hike. The wide and well-maintained corridor trail offers shady rest-houses and stretches along a delightful creek. At the trailhead, the canyon beckons in all its glory. If you suffer vertigo, look to the left for a while - the first five minutes are the hardest. Highlights include two tunnels, Native American pictographs and the visual reward of the dramatically broad Tonto Platform.

Bright Angel Trail - Long

Start/Finish: Bright Angel Trailhead

Duration: Indian Garden, 5-7 hours; Plateau Point, 8-10 hours; Distance: 9.2 miles or 12.2 miles round-trip; Difficulty: Difficult

Continuing down the Bright Angel adds diffi-

culty but brings you to the shady oasis of Indian Garden. For an even more challenging and very exposed hike to expansive views of the inner gorge, cross Tonto Platform along a spur trail to reach Plateau Point. It's a popular destination for strong day hikers, but the long, exposed stretch can be searingly hot.

#### GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

Anthony Creek Trail

Start/End: Cades Cove picnic area

Duration: 2 hours; Distance: 2 miles to Anthony Creek Bridge; Difficulty: Easy

The most-visited National Park has plenty of rugged trails for experienced hikers that lead to stunning vistas. But for an introduction to the creek-and-forest charms of Cades Cove (and the Great Smoky Mountains in general), take this easy, kid-friendly ramble. With log bridges, burbling creeks, spring wildflowers and soaring trees, the backdrop for the trail is a page from a children's fantasy tale - just watch out for the horse poop!

#### YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Cathedral Lakes

Start/Finish: Cathedral Lakes Trailhead

Duration: 4-7 hours; Distance: 8 miles (upper lake); Difficulty: Moderate

Easily one of Yosemite's most spectacular hikes,



this steady climb through mixed conifer forest ends with glorious views of Cathedral Peak from the shores of two shimmering alpine lakes. Cathedral Lake, the lower of the two lakes, sits within a mind-blowing glacial cirque, a perfect amphitheater of granite. The upper lake is less spectacular when measured against the lower lake, but by all other standards it's utterly sublime.

#### YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

Mt Washburn

Start/Finish: Dunraven Pass trailhead

Duration: 4 hours; Distance: 4 miles; Difficulty: Moderate

Yellowstone's most popular day hike offers unsurpassed 360-degree mountaintop views, with the chance of spotting bighorn sheep and black bears. This popular return hike climbs gradually to the fire lookout tower on the summit of Mt Washburn for some of the park's best views. Interpretive displays in the lookout make this a memorable place to get a sense of the awesome scale of the Yellowstone super-volcano.

#### GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK

Leigh & Bearpaw Lakes

Start/Finish: Leigh Lake Trailhead

Duration: 3 1/2 hours; Distance: 4 miles; Difficulty: Easy-moderate

Though it's the most crowded sector of the park, there's scenery in the Central Tetons to please everyone: lakes, waterfalls, glaciers, canyons and viewpoints. This hike showcases all of it, in a fun, flat family outing skirting forest-clad, crystal-clear swimming holes. Always keep track of your picnic food, since bears are frequently spotted here. Along the way, your surroundings open up to fine views of Mt Moran and its Falling Ice and Skillet Glaciers. Hiking boots are stretched out over a coastline view as people are resting at the top of a mountain in Acadia National Park

#### ACADIA NATIONAL PARK

Beehive Loop

Start/End: Bowl Trailhead

Duration: 2 hours; Distance: 6 miles; Difficulty: Difficult

The only National Park in New England, Acadia has a handful of hikes that feel a bit like a European via ferrata, where you'll be ascending stretches of the trail with the help of iron, ladder-like rungs. Those with a fear of heights may want to skip this one. The trail goes right up the face of the mountain, and you'll soon find yourself climbing up steep sections along narrow exposed cliffs.

#### BANFF NATIONAL PARK

Lake Agnes & The Beehives

Start/Finish: Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise

Duration: 4 hours; Distance: 6 miles; Difficulty: Moder-



ate to Lake Agnes, moderate-difficult to Big Beehive

This is the walk that practically everyone who visits Banff National Park - and especially Lake Louise - wants to do. It's crowded, but the sights are unmissable, visiting a historic teahouse, two mountain lakes and a fantastic cloud-level lookout. The route takes in forest trails, hidden lakes and scenic viewpoints, but it is steep (especially around the Big Beehive). The teahouse is often busy, but it serves a huge selection of exotic teas, soups, cakes and sandwich platters.

#### BRYCE CANYON NATIONAL PARK

Navajo Loop-Queen's Garden Combination Trail

Start/Finish: Sunrise Point

Duration: 2-3 hours; Distance: 2.9 miles; Difficulty: Moderate

To hit Bryce Canyon National Park's signature features in a relatively short amount of time, this trail has it all. The Queen's Garden Connecting Trail descends to the garden of spires and follows the canyon floor, where tall pines provide shade and offer perspective on oversize hoodoos. Other highlights include Wall Street, the Silent City, Thor's Hammer and a detour to Sunrise Point, where you can gaze into the canyon for yet another perspective on the hoodoos.

#### ZION NATIONAL PARK

The Narrows

Start/Finish: Temple of Sinawava  
Duration: up to 8 hours; Distance: 10 miles; Difficulty: Difficult

Sometimes a bit more of a swim than a hike, this Zion 'trail' is actually the Virgin River. You'll be in the water the majority of the way upstream through this impressive canyon. If you hike up from the bottom, you don't need a permit and you can still reach the narrowest and most spectacular section. It's 5 miles to Big Springs (as far as day hikers are allowed) - but don't underestimate the distance: this is a long way to hike upstream!

Angels Landing

Start/Finish: Grotto shuttle stop  
Duration: 3-4 hours; Distance: 4 miles; Difficulty: Difficult

We saved the best - and scariest - for last. The best known of Zion's canyon hikes ends in a razor's-edge traverse and a chain-assisted scramble to the top. Grippy shoes are a must. This strenuous hike is not just a physical challenge, but a mental one for those with a fear of heights. Adventure lovers will have a blast - the exposed scrambling and unrivaled 360-degree panoramas of nearly the entire canyon ensure that Angels Landing lives up to the hype. —[www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com)



## Comic

### Word Search

#### World Currencies 1 - Word Search

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

- |         |            |         |
|---------|------------|---------|
| BAHT    | KRONE      | RAND    |
| BALBOA  | KWANZA     | RUFUYAA |
| BIRR    | LITAS      | TALA    |
| BOLIVAR | METICAL    | TENGE   |
| DINAR   | NAIRA      | TOLAR   |
| DOLLAR  | NEW SHEKEL |         |
| DRAM    | OUGUIYA    |         |
| FRANC   | POUND      |         |

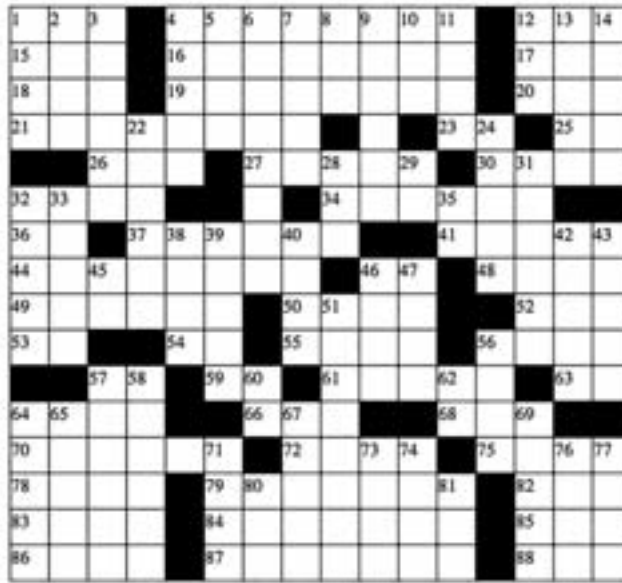
### Yesterday's Solution

#### Winter 2 - Solution

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

- |           |             |             |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| BLIZZARD  | HAIL        | SKIS        |
| BOOTS     | HOCKEY      | SLED        |
| CARNIVAL  | ICE FISHING | SLIPPERY    |
| CHRISTMAS | KNIT CAP    | SNOW BLOWER |
| EGG NOG   | OLYMPICS    | SNOW SHOVEL |
| FIREWOOD  | PARKA       | SNOWFLAKE   |
| FREEZE    | SEASON      | SOLSTICE    |
| GLOVES    | SKIING      |             |

### Crossword 2243



#### ACROSS

- The portion of the vertebrate nervous system consisting of the brain and spinal cord.
- A musical phrase repeated over and over during a composition.
- To an excessive degree.
- Imperial dynasty that ruled China (most of the time) from 206 BC to 221 and expanded its boundaries and developed its bureaucracy.
- A size of paper used especially in Britain.
- Electronic warfare undertaken to prevent or reduce an enemy's effective use of the electromagnetic spectrum.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- Primitive marine animal having a saclike unsegmented body and a urochord (a notochord) conspicuous in the larva.
- (informal) Of the highest quality.
- To whatever place.
- A radioactive transuranic element.
- A soft white precious univalent metallic element having the highest electrical and thermal conductivity of any metal.
- Airtight sealed metal container for food or drink or paint etc.
- A republic in the Asian subcontinent in southern Asia.
- Avatar of Vishnu.
- Of a temperature scale that registers the freezing point of water as 32 degrees F and the boiling point as 212 degrees F at one atmosphere of pressure.
- An East Indian sailor.
- A radioactive element of the actinide series.
- The agent to whom property involved in a bailment is delivered.
- Marked by quiet and caution and secrecy.
- Of or relating to or shaped like a toroid.
- Fatty pinkish flesh of small salmon caught in the Pacific and Great Lakes.
- A suspension of insoluble particles (as plaster of paris or lime or clay etc.) usually in water.
- The United Nations agency concerned with civil aviation.
- A unit of length of thread or yarn.
- A doctor's degree in optometry.
- Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).
- Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.
- A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.
- Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
- An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
- The largest continent with 60% of the earth's population.
- An informal term for a father.
- Having undesirable or negative qualities.
- The capital of Croatia.
- Danish physicist who studied atomic structure and radiations.
- A short labored intake of breath with the mouth open.
- A native American tent.
- A genus of orb-weaving spiders including common garden spiders and barn spiders.
- Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
- Any place of complete bliss and delight and peace.
- A sneezeweed of southwestern United States especially southern California.
- A light touch or stroke.
- A stick that people can lean on to help them walk.
- Cooked in steam.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

#### DOWN

- A wad of something chewable as tobacco.
- Medium-sized tree having glossy lanceolate leaves.
- A small fragment.
- Many times at short intervals.
- Smelling of fermentation or staleness.
- Either of two masses of lymphatic tissue one on each side of the oral pharynx.
- An ancient city in Asia Minor that was the site of the Trojan War.
- A committee in the executive branch of government that advises the president on foreign and military and national security.
- Any of various spiny trees or shrubs of the genus Acacia.
- Tastelessness by virtue of being cheap and vulgar.
- An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
- A beverage made by steeping tea leaves in water.
- English scholastic philosopher and assumed author of Occam's Razor (1285-1349).
- The ending of a series or sequence.
- A place where ships can take on or discharge cargo.
- The basic monetary unit in many countries.
- A chronic skin disease occurring primarily in women between the ages of 20 and 40.
- A very poisonous metallic element that has three allotropic forms.
- Small space in a tissue or part such as the area between veins on a leaf or an insect's wing.
- (archaic) Of persons.
- A soft silver-white ductile metallic element (liquid at normal temperatures).
- A river in northern England that flows southeast through West Yorkshire.
- An episode of such pastoral or romantic charm as to qualify as the subject of a poetic idyll.
- English essayist (1775-1834).
- Having the leading position or higher score in a contest.
- Sluggish tailless Australian arboreal marsupial with gray furry ears and coat.
- A rare polyvalent metallic element of the platinum group.
- Consideration in dealing with others and avoiding giving offence.
- The Hebrew patriarch who saved himself and his family and the animals by building an ark in which they survived 40 days and 40 nights of rain.
- Type genus of Cladoniaeae.
- (informal) Exceptionally good.
- A pen for swine.
- Of or relating to the sea.
- A public promotion of some product or service.
- The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
- The main city of ancient Phoenicia.
- Lower in esteem.
- (Irish) Chief god of the Tuatha De Danann.
- Gymnastic apparatus consisting of two parallel wooden bars supported on uprights.
- Steering mechanism for a vessel.
- A principle or condition that customarily governs behavior.
- Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
- A metabolic acid found in yeast and liver cells.
- Decay usually accompanied by an offensive odor.
- Experiencing or showing sorrow or unhappiness.

### Yesterday's Solution

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

### Daily SuDoku

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

### Yesterday's Solution

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

## TV Listings



01:25 The Unseen  
03:20 Patriots Day  
05:35 Andron  
07:20 Around The World In 80 Days  
09:20 Thor: The Dark World  
11:15 Andron  
12:55 Boone: The Bounty Hunter  
14:25 The Drowning  
16:05 The Tuxedo  
17:45 Captain America: The Winter Soldier  
20:00 Con Air  
22:00 The Chronicles Of Riddick



00:45 North Woods Law  
01:40 Expedition Mungo  
02:35 Into Alaska  
03:25 Lone Star Law  
04:15 North Woods Law  
05:02 Wildest Middle East  
05:49 Pit Bulls & Parolees  
06:36 RSPCA: On The Frontline  
07:25 Wild Africa: Rivers Of Life  
08:15 Mekong: Soul Of A River  
11:55 Wildest Islands  
12:50 Into Alaska  
13:45 Take Back The Harbour  
14:40 Extinct Or Alive  
15:35 Expedition Mungo  
16:30 Flying Wild Alaska  
17:25 Red Ape: Saving The Orangutan  
18:20 Into Alaska  
19:15 Evan Goes Wild  
20:10 Life On Earth: A New Prehistory  
21:05 Wildest Middle East  
22:00 After The Attack  
22:55 Pit Bulls & Parolees  
23:50 Evan Goes Wild



00:15 EastEnders  
00:45 Press  
01:45 Holby City  
02:35 Bad Move  
03:00 Hold The Sunset  
03:30 Death In Paradise  
04:25 Doctors  
06:30 EastEnders  
07:00 Last Tango In Halifax  
07:55 Holby City  
08:45 Casualty  
09:40 Bad Move  
10:00 Hold The Sunset  
10:30 Death In Paradise  
11:25 The Coroner  
12:10 Doctors  
12:45 Holby City  
13:35 The Musketeers  
14:30 Bad Move  
14:55 Hold The Sunset  
15:25 Doctors  
18:30 Shakespeare & Hathaway: Private Investigators  
19:20 Shakespeare & Hathaway: Private Investigators  
20:10 Press  
21:05 Trauma  
21:55 Les Miserables  
23:00 Save Me  
23:55 Doctors



00:00 Homicide Hunter  
01:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos  
01:55 Homicide Hunter  
02:50 It Takes A Killer  
03:45 Live PD: Police Patrol  
04:30 The First 48  
05:15 Homicide Hunter  
06:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill  
07:00 Live PD: Police Patrol  
07:20 The First 48  
08:50 Homicide Hunter  
10:30 Homicide: Hours To Kill  
11:25 Homicide Hunter  
12:20 Crimes That Shook Britain  
13:15 Live PD: Police Patrol  
14:10 It Takes A Killer  
15:05 Homicide Hunter

16:00 The First 48  
17:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill  
18:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
19:00 The First 48  
20:00 Homicide Hunter  
21:00 Live PD: Police Patrol  
22:00 The Jail: 60 Days In  
23:00 Live PD: Police Patrol



00:20 Rocketman  
00:45 Takeshis Castle Thailand  
01:10 Tosh.0  
01:35 Friends  
02:25 Kroll Show  
02:50 Takeshis Castle Thailand  
03:15 Tosh.0  
03:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
04:10 Broad City  
04:35 Impractical Jokers  
05:00 Are We There Yet?  
07:05 Lip Sync Battle  
07:55 Takeshis Castle Thailand  
08:20 Comedy Central Presents: Menna W FINA  
08:55 Takeshis Castle Thailand  
09:20 Ridiculousness Arabia  
09:45 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagef  
10:15 Friends  
12:20 Workaholics  
14:30 Lip Sync Battle  
15:20 Tattoo Disasters  
16:15 Tattoo Disasters  
17:10 Friends  
19:30 Martha And Snoop Potluck Dinner Party  
21:30 Teachers  
22:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
22:30 Norm Macdonald: Me Doing Stand-Up  
23:25 Broad City  
23:50 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah



00:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
00:30 The Food Inspectors  
01:20 My Cat From Hell  
02:10 Animal Battlegrounds  
02:35 Animal Battlegrounds  
03:00 Do You Know?  
03:50 Mysteries At The Museum  
04:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
05:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
05:30 My Cat From Hell  
06:20 Animal Battlegrounds  
06:40 Animal Battlegrounds  
07:00 Do You Know?  
07:50 Mysteries At The Museum  
08:40 Weather Top Tens  
09:30 Weather Gone Viral  
10:20 Storm Chasers  
11:10 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
12:00 Insane Coaster Wars: World Domination  
12:50 Life On The Line Australia  
13:40 Battle Bots  
14:30 Strange Evidence  
15:20 Do You Know?  
16:10 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
17:00 My Cat From Hell  
17:50 Animal Battlegrounds  
18:15 Animal Battlegrounds  
18:40 Do You Know?  
19:30 Guy's Grocery Games  
20:20 Breaking Magic  
20:45 Breaking Magic  
21:10 Tricks On The Streets  
21:35 Tricks On The Streets  
22:00 The Next Great Magician  
22:50 Into The Pride  
23:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
Discovery ID



00:00 Jonbenet: An American Murder Mystery  
02:00 True Conviction  
03:00 Jonbenet: An American Murder Mystery  
04:30 Jonbenet: An American Murder Mystery  
05:20 Disappeared

06:10 Blood Relatives  
07:00 Killer Instinct With Chris Hansen  
08:50 Deadly Secrets  
09:45 Deadly Secrets  
10:40 Disappeared  
11:35 Murder Chose Me  
12:30 Murder Chose Me  
13:25 Blood Relatives  
14:20 Reasonable Doubt  
15:15 Deadly Secrets  
16:10 Disappeared  
17:05 Breaking Homicide  
19:00 Dead On Arrival  
21:00 Dark Waters: Murder In The Deep  
22:00 Dead On Arrival  
23:00 Betrayed



00:00 Alex & Co.  
00:25 Alex & Co.  
00:50 Evermoor Chronicles  
01:40 Alex & Co.  
02:05 Binny And The Ghost  
02:55 Hank Zipzer  
03:45 Alex & Co.  
04:35 Violetta  
05:25 Binny And The Ghost  
05:45 Rolling With The Ronks  
06:00 Jessie  
07:15 A.N.T. Farm  
08:30 Freaky Friday  
10:00 101 Dalmatian Street  
10:10 Shake It Up  
11:25 K.C. Undercover  
12:40 101 Dalmatian Street  
13:05 Kitty Is Not A Cat  
13:30 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
13:55 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
14:20 101 Dalmatian Street  
14:45 Kitty Is Not A Cat  
15:10 Raven's Home  
16:25 Bunk'd  
17:40 Liv And Maddie  
18:55 Bizaardvark  
19:20 Descendants Wicked World  
19:25 Bizaardvark  
20:15 Stuck In The Middle  
21:05 Disney Mickey Mouse  
21:10 Stuck In The Middle  
21:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
22:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
22:50 Lolirock  
23:10 Evermoor Chronicles  
23:35 Binny And The Ghost



00:00 The Lion Guard  
00:25 Disney Junior Music Nursery Rhymes  
00:30 Trulli Tales S1  
01:00 PJ Masks  
01:25 PJ Masks  
01:50 The Hive  
02:00 Zou  
02:15 Zou  
02:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster  
03:20 The Hive  
03:30 The Hive S2  
03:40 Zou  
04:25 The Hive  
04:35 The Hive  
04:45 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:10 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:35 The Hive  
05:45 PJ Masks  
06:00 PJ Masks S2  
06:15 PJ Masks  
06:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons S3  
07:00 Disney Muppet Babies S1  
07:15 PJ Masks S2  
07:30 PJ Masks  
08:00 Vampirina  
08:30 Fancy Nancy S1  
09:00 Sofia The First S3  
09:30 Elena Of Avalor  
10:00 Doc McStuffins S3 Splits  
10:55 Toy Story Toons  
11:00 PJ Masks  
12:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S1 Splits  
12:20 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S1 Splits

12:40 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S1 Splits  
13:00 Fancy Nancy Splits S1  
14:00 Vampirina S1  
15:00 Gigantosaurus S1 Splits  
15:55 Toy Story Toons  
16:00 The Lion Guard  
16:30 Elena Of Avalor  
17:00 Gigantosaurus S1  
17:25 Mickey And The Roadster Racers - Chip And Dale's  
17:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2  
18:00 Fancy Nancy S1  
18:30 Vampirina S2 Splits  
18:45 Vampirina S1  
19:00 PJ Masks  
19:30 Puppy Dog Pals  
20:00 The Lion Guard  
20:25 Mickey And The Roadster Racers - Chip And Dale's  
20:30 Elena Of Avalor  
21:00 Gigantosaurus S1  
21:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2  
22:00 Fancy Nancy S1  
22:30 Vampirina S2 Splits  
22:45 Vampirina S1  
23:00 PJ Masks  
23:30 Puppy Dog Pals



00:15 Ultimate Survival  
01:05 Incredible Engineering Blunders: Fixed  
01:50 How Do They Do It?  
02:35 What On Earth?  
03:20 Misfit Garage  
04:05 Misfit Garage  
04:50 How Do They Do It?  
05:35 Auction Kings  
06:00 Storage Wars Canada  
06:20 Auction Kings  
06:45 Ultimate Survival  
07:35 The Last Alaskans  
08:20 Gold Rush  
09:10 Alaska: The Last Frontier  
09:55 Salvage Hunters  
10:45 How Do They Do It?  
11:30 Misfit Garage  
12:20 Misfit Garage  
13:05 Storage Wars Canada  
13:30 Auction Kings  
13:55 Salvage Hunters  
14:40 Railroad Alaska  
15:30 Wildest Europe  
16:15 Diesel Brothers  
17:05 Alaska: The Last Frontier  
17:50 Gold Rush  
18:40 How Do They Do It?  
19:05 How Do They Do It?  
19:25 Misfit Garage  
20:15 Misfit Garage  
21:00 Wheeler Dealers  
21:50 Diesel Brothers  
22:40 Shifting Gears With Aaron Kaufman  
23:30 The Last Alaskans



00:15 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
00:35 Boyster  
01:00 Boyster  
01:25 Counterfeit Cat  
01:45 Counterfeit Cat  
02:10 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
02:35 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
03:00 Boyster  
03:20 Boyster  
03:45 Dude That's My Ghost  
04:10 Dude That's My Ghost  
04:35 Counterfeit Cat  
05:00 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
05:29 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
06:00 Marvel's Spider-Man  
06:25 Space Chickens In Space  
06:35 Marvel's Avengers: Black Panther's Quest  
07:00 Phineas And Ferb  
08:00 Gravity Falls  
08:50 Pair Of Kings  
09:40 Big City Greens  
10:00 Big City Greens

10:25 Kick Buttowski  
10:50 Phineas And Ferb  
11:00 Gravity Falls  
11:25 Gravity Falls  
11:50 Milo Murphy's Law  
12:05 Marvel's Avengers: Black Panther's Quest  
12:30 Supa Strikas  
13:20 Lab Rats  
14:10 Pair Of Kings  
15:00 Marvel's Spider-Man  
15:25 Disney Mickey Mouse  
15:30 Space Chickens In Space  
15:55 Big City Greens  
16:20 Big Hero 6 The Series  
16:45 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
17:00 Milo Murphy's Law  
17:31 DuckTales  
17:55 Phineas And Ferb  
19:00 Gravity Falls  
19:50 Marvel's Avengers: Black Panther's Quest  
20:15 Lab Rats  
20:40 Lab Rats  
21:05 Kick Buttowski  
21:30 Big City Greens  
21:55 Disney Mickey Mouse  
22:00 Milo Murphy's Law  
22:29 Milo Murphy's Law  
23:00 Dude That's My Ghost  
23:50 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja



00:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
01:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
02:00 E! News  
03:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
04:00 WAGs  
08:00 E! News: Daily Pop  
08:55 Model Squad  
11:40 E! News  
12:35 Very Cavallari  
15:20 E! News: Daily Pop  
16:15 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian  
19:00 E! News  
20:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
21:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
22:00 Botched  
23:00 Botched



00:10 Dinner Date  
01:00 Emmerdale  
01:30 Coronation Street  
02:30 Kate's Wardrobe Secrets  
03:25 Her Majesty's Cavalry  
03:55 Gino's Italian Coastal Escape  
04:20 This Time Next Year  
05:15 Dinner Date  
06:15 Couples Come Dine With Me  
07:10 Kate's Wardrobe Secrets  
08:05 Her Majesty's Cavalry  
08:35 Gino's Italian Coastal Escape  
09:00 This Time Next Year  
09:55 Dinner Date  
10:55 Couples Come Dine With Me  
11:50 Kate's Wardrobe Secrets  
12:45 Emmerdale  
13:15 Coronation Street  
14:15 Couples Come Dine With Me  
15:10 Royal Wives Of Windsor  
16:00 What Would Your Kid Do?  
16:55 Cannonball  
17:50 Dinner Date  
18:50 Emmerdale  
19:15 Coronation Street  
20:10 Royal Wives Of Windsor  
21:00 What Would Your Kid Do?  
21:55 Cannonball  
22:50 Emmerdale  
23:15 Coronation Street



00:15 Clash Of Warriors  
01:00 UFO Hunters  
01:45 Cities Of The Underworld  
02:30 Ancient Impossible  
03:15 Ancient Aliens  
04:45 Battles BC

05:30 Jurassic Fight Club  
06:15 Million Dollar Genius  
07:00 UFO Hunters  
07:45 Cities Of The Underworld  
08:30 Ancient Impossible  
09:15 Ancient Aliens  
10:00 Ancient Aliens  
10:45 Battles BC  
11:30 Jurassic Fight Club  
12:15 Million Dollar Genius  
13:00 UFO Hunters  
13:45 Cities Of The Underworld  
14:30 Ancient Impossible  
15:15 Ancient Aliens  
16:45 Battles BC  
17:30 Jurassic Fight Club  
18:15 UFO Hunters  
19:00 Cities Of The Underworld  
19:45 Ancient Impossible  
20:30 Ancient Aliens  
22:00 Search For The Lost Giants  
22:45 Jurassic Fight Club  
23:30 Million Dollar Genius



00:20 Mountain Men  
01:05 Pawn Stars  
01:50 American Pickers  
02:35 Storage Wars  
03:25 Ax Men  
04:15 Forged: Iron & Fire  
05:05 Forged In Fire  
06:00 Counting Cars  
06:45 Mountain Men  
07:30 Pawn Stars  
08:15 American Pickers  
09:00 Storage Wars  
09:45 Ax Men  
10:30 Forged: Iron & Fire  
11:15 Forged In Fire  
12:00 American Pickers  
15:00 Fifth Gear  
18:45 Ancient Aliens  
19:30 Storage Wars: Barry's Best Buys  
21:00 Secret War On Drugs  
22:15 Pawn Stars  
22:40 American Pickers



00:00 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea  
01:00 Ultimate Airport Dubai  
02:00 What's For Sale With A View  
02:55 A House Of Its Time  
03:50 Access 360 World Heritage  
04:45 What's For Sale With A View  
05:10 Chasing Time  
05:40 The Wine Show  
06:35 Island Hunter  
07:30 Fish Tank Kings  
08:25 Confucius Was A Foodie  
09:20 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen  
10:15 Eat Street  
11:10 The Wine Show  
12:05 Island Hunter  
13:00 Fish Tank Kings  
13:55 Confucius Was A Foodie  
14:50 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen  
15:45 Eat Street  
16:40 The Wine Show  
17:35 Island Hunter  
18:30 Fish Tank Kings  
19:25 Confucius Was A Foodie  
20:20 Fish Of The Day  
20:45 The Game Chef  
21:15 Eat Street  
22:10 Croatia's Finest  
23:05 Island Hunter



00:00 The Story Of God With Morgan Freeman  
00:50 Primal Survivor  
01:40 Inside Cocaine Wars  
02:30 One Strange Rock  
03:20 World's Most Extreme  
04:10 The Story Of God With Morgan Freeman  
05:00 Primal Survivor  
06:00 Inside Cocaine Wars  
07:00 One Strange Rock  
08:00 The Story Of God With Morgan Freeman  
09:00 Jurassic C.S.I.  
10:00 Yukon River Run  
11:00 Innovation Nation  
12:00 Money Meltdown



## Stars



### Aries (March 21-April 19)

Plan a special outing with someone near and dear to your heart. Special time with someone you love will be very emotionally satisfying to you today. You are in a loving mood. You are focused on building a stronger relationship and you will find this very satisfying. This is the ideal time to tap into your creative energy. Look around for a need that is not being met. The answer could be a simple invention with a huge impact. Your mindset is perfect for this. You will be able to not only use your talent to benefit your needs, but also help others. This could be a win-win situation for you.



### Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Prepare for a major event. This may put an end to your old way of life. You may find independence is a necessity now rather than a choice. You are on your own and this may mark a time of increased responsibility and accountability. Some soul searching may be in order to face this new life. Take your time and spend sometime meditating or relaxing to access your new situation. Do not ask yourself, Why me? You know why. Because you can handle any obstacle that is put in your path.



### Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Things may seem too good to be true. In an almost magical sense it seems that all of your dreams are coming true. Goals seem attainable now. Everything seems to be falling in your lap. You are being smiled upon and you have a new love for life. This is the result of your hard work and dedication. You may find that karma has a way of repaying your good deeds and there seems to be no other explanation for this vast array of good fortune. This is a great time to get all of your affairs in order and continue to dream big.



### Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Your words have more power than you could ever imagine. Use them wisely. This is a time others will find you very persuasive. You are a natural born leader and may find yourself asked to lead the pack today. You are starting to discover may career opportunities will begin to present themselves to you. Choose your friends wisely and be sure to keep only those who have your best interest at heart in your circle. You may find not everyone is supportive. Jealousy and envy may rear its head in your world today. Keep your chin up and keep going full steam ahead!



### Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your peers are appreciative of your ability to be able to make constructive suggestions or to help them with practical decisions, which relate to group issues. Knowing exactly what the public wants at this time is yet another feather in your hat. Your name and reputation are spreading quickly. Expect an upgrade soon in your job identity and pay. The idea of value or a greater appreciation for things of value is fun to comprehend this afternoon. It is most assuredly a time when tangible things have a great deal of importance. Your emotions or the feelings of those around you should be quite clear, making it a great time to reflect and truly understand individual family members and your connection in the family.



### Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Today may find you feeling as you encounter a road block at every turn. Perhaps, today is not the day for big decisions. You may find yourself a bit frustrated and preferring a bit of isolation. You are simply not in the mood for people. You may feel as if you are not able to get your point across to anyone and may feel greatly misunderstood. You could find yourself at odds with those close to you and should remember to try and remain calm as conflict and confrontation seem to be seeking your company today. Today would be a great day for re-organizing and reflection to get yourself back where you want to be.



### Libra (September 23-October 22)

You have a special place in your heart for those close to you. You seem to be the one the younger generation in your life look up to and admire. Your advice and guidance maybe sought from someone who looks to you as a mentor. You may feel as if your greatest growth comes when you are helping others. Today may be one of those days you are spinning your wheels getting physical tasks accomplished. Before frustration takes hold, stop and realize your shoulder to lean on and your listening ear and wonderful advice may be a much greater accomplishment than a completing a simple chore. Libra, be proud of who you are and what you mean to others.



### Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Things may seem too good to be true. In an almost magical sense it seems that all of your dreams are coming true. Goals seem attainable now. Everything seems to be falling in your lap. You are being smiled upon and you have a new love for life. This is the result of your hard work and dedication. You may find that karma has a way of repaying your good deeds and there seems to be no other explanation for this vast array of good fortune. This is a great time to get all of your affairs in order and continue to dream big.



### Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

A need for power and control is a driving force in your life now. You long to be in control of everyone and every aspect of your world. You may find that others see you as being more assertive than usual and are caught off guard by the change in you. You find you are curious and seeking answers to subjects and mysteries you find intriguing. Today could find you doing a bit of soul-searching trying to find answers to all that fascinate you about who you are, who you have become, and where life finds you today. This is a day solutions to old problems seem to fall into your lap. You may find much support from someone close to you that truly admires your more eccentric qualities.



### Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Your relationships seem to take on a new importance for you now. You have come to realize you gather strength from the support of those closest to you. You may experience a bit of a wakeup call today. A refreshing reminder that helps you remember it is ok to put yourself first. You are not responsible for anyone's happiness but your own. Always putting others ahead of yourself after time can cause you to be unhappy. Take some time today to spoil yourself. This will be rewarding and satisfying to you.



### Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Lady Luck is smiling down on you. Today is one of those days that it seems you can do no wrong. Everything is going your way and you are full of happiness and energy. This is a great time to seek advice from an elder. You are well aware that with age comes knowledge. You may find the advice you receive from this person is good and just the bit of encouragement you needed to make a leap forward. Live without fear. Aquarius. Take a chance and enjoy everything this day has to bring. Make plans today for future events as you will find everything seems to fall into place. What a great day.



### Pisces (February 19-March 20)

There is a reason they make chocolate AND vanilla. What appeals to one may not always appeal to the other. People are different. They have different options and different outlooks on life. You may find yourself running across someone who could not be any more opposite of you. This person will not be someone whose company you enjoy. You can always turn a negative situation into something positive. Sit and have a talk and really listen to what this person has to say. Sometimes listening to understand rather than listening to respond can shed great light and understanding on a situation.

## Country Codes

Afghanistan	0093	Jordan	00962
Albania	00355	Kazakhstan	007
Algeria	00213	Kenya	00254
Andorra	00376	Kiribati	00686
Angola	00244	Kuwait	00965
Anguilla	001264	Kyrgyzstan	00996
Antigua	001268	Laos	00856
Argentina	0054	Latvia	00371
Armenia	00374	Lebanon	00961
Australia	0061	Liberia	00231
Austria	0043	Libya	00218
Bahamas	001242	Lithuania	00370
Bahrain	00973	Luxembourg	00352
Bangladesh	00880	Macau	00853
Barbados	001246	Macedonia	00389
Belarus	00375	Madagascar	00261
Belgium	0032	Majorca	0034
Belize	00501	Malawi	00265
Benin	00229	Malaysia	0060
Bermuda	001441	Maldives	00960
Bhutan	00975	Mali	00223
Bolivia	00591	Malta	00356
Bosnia	00387	Marshall Islands	00692
Botswana	00267	Martinique	00596
Brazil	0055	Mauritania	00222
Brunei	00673	Mauritius	00230
Bulgaria	00359	Mayotte	00269
Burkina	00226	Mexico	0052
Burundi	00257	Micronesia	00691
Cambodia	00855	Moldova	00373
Cameroon	00237	Monaco	00377
Canada	001	Mongolia	00976
Cape Verde	00238	Montserrat	001664
Cayman Islands	001345	Morocco	00212
Central African Republic	00236	Mozambique	00258
Chad	00235	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Chile	0056	Namibia	00264
China	0086	Nepal	00977
Colombia	0057	Netherlands (Holland)	0031
Comoros	00269	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Congo	00242	New Caledonia	00687
Cook Islands	00682	New Zealand	0064
Costa Rica	00506	Nicaragua	00505
Croatia	00385	Nicaragua	00227
Cuba	0053	Nigeria	00234
Cyprus	00357	Niue	00683
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Norfolk Island	00672
Czech Republic	00420	Northern Ireland (UK)	0044
Denmark	0045	North Korea	00850
Diego Garcia	00246	Norway	0047
Djibouti	00253	Oman	00968
Dominica	001767	Pakistan	0092
Dominican Republic	001809	Palau	00680
Ecuador	00593	Panama	00507
Egypt	0020	Papua New Guinea	00675
El Salvador	00503	Paraguay	00595
England (UK)	0044	Peru	0051
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Philippines	0063
Eritrea	00291	Poland	0048
Estonia	00372	Portugal	00351
Ethiopia	00251	Puerto Rico	001787
Falkland Islands	00500	Qatar	00974
Faroe Islands	00298	Romania	0040
Fiji	00679	Russian Federation	007
Finland	00358	Rwanda	00250
France	0033	Saint Helena	00290
French Guiana	00594	Saint Kitts	001869
French Polynesia	00689	Saint Lucia	001758
Gabon	00241	Saint Pierre	00508
Gambia	00220	Saint Vincent	001784
Georgia	00995	Samoa US	00684
Germany	0049	Samoa West	00685
Ghana	00233	San Marino	00378
Gibraltar	00350	Sao Tome	00239
Greece	0030	Saudi Arabia	00966
Greenland	00299	Scotland (UK)	0044
Grenada	001473	Senegal	00221
Guadeloupe	00590	Seychelles	00284
Guam	001671	Sierra Leone	00232
Guatemala	00502	Singapore	0065
Guinea	00224	Slovakia	00421
Guyana	00592	Slovenia	00386
Haiti	00509	Solomon Islands	00677
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Somalia	00252
Honduras	00504	South Africa	0027
Hong Kong	00852	South Korea	0082
Hungary	0036	Spain	0034
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Sri Lanka	0094
Iceland	00354	Sudan	00249
India	0091	Suriname	00597
Indian Ocean	00873	Swaziland	00268
Indonesia	0062	Sweden	0046
Iran	0098	Switzerland	0041
Iraq	00964	Syria	00963
Ireland	00353	Taiwan	00886
Italy	0039	Tanzania	00255
Ivory Coast	00225	Thailand	0066
Jamaica	001876	Toga	00228
Japan	0081	Tonga	00676

# CLINIC PAGE



**Kuwait Times**  
248 33 199

Friday, June 28, 2019

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

- Diagnosis/Treatment of General Ear, Nose, and Throat conditions in adults & pediatric
- Minimally Invasive Endoscopic sinus surgery including Balloon sinuplasty
- Minimally Invasive Microscopic Endoscopic Ear surgery
- Diagnosis & treatment of Otolgy and Audiology (Hearing loss, Tinnitus & balance disorders)
- Facial Plastic and reconstructive surgeries (Rhinoplasty, Otoplasty, Fillers & Botox injections)
- Diagnosis & treatment of snoring & obstructive sleep apnea in clinic without surgery
- Diagnosis & treatment of voice and swallowing disorders
- Diagnosis & Treatment of Head and Neck benign & malignant tumors.

Salmiya, Belajaf Street, Tel: 1881122

**DR. FAHAD S. BUHAIMED**  
Consultant Cosmetic Dermatologist & Hair Transplant, NY

**ACADEMIC CERTIFICATES:**

- Dermatology board certified.
- Fellowship training program in cosmetic dermatology and hair transplant, New York, USA.
- Member of American cosmetic dermatology society.
- Referee reviewer of International Journal of Dermatology.

**SPECIALIZED IN:**

- Dermatology & Cosmetic Treatments.
- Laser Treatments.
- Hair Transplant & Restoration.
- Body & Face Contouring.
- Injectable Fillers & Botox.

SHARL, Ahmad Alshar, Building 16, Floor 11.  
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@DrFahadS, @DrFahadS, @DrFahadS  
Email: dr.fahad@beautybeyond.com.kw  
www.beautybeyond.com.kw

**DR KHALED ALMERRI**  
Consultant Interventional Cardiology  
Department: Heart & Vascular Center

**Specialized in:**

- 1- Diagnostic and therapeutic cardiac catheterization (Angiography and Angioplasty), Aortic valve implantation.
- 2- Diagnosis and treatment of coronary artery diseases
- 3- Diagnosis and treatment of heart failure, cardiomyopathies and valvular diseases.
- 4- Diagnosis and treatment of high blood pressure and high cholesterol.
- 5- Diagnosis and treatment of syncope, palpitations and cardiac arrhythmias.
- 6- Non-invasive diagnostic procedures echocardiography, exercise stress test, and 24-hour blood pressure and Holter monitoring

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Otorhinolaryngology (E.N.T)  
**Dr Hamoud Abdullah Alarouj**  
ENT Specialist

- Laryngology Fellowship - Canada
- Fellow of the European Board Otolaryngology - Head & Neck Surgery
- Member of the American Academy of Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery
- Member of the British Laryngological Association
- Member of the Canadian Society of Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery
- Member of the European Laryngological Society

**Specialized in:**

- Management of benign and malignant vocal cord lesions.
- Vocal cord augmentation.
- Treatment of spasmodic dysphonia.
- Adenotonsillectomy using latest techniques.
- Thyroid surgery.
- Surgery for the deviated nasal septum.
- Endoscopic sinus surgery.
- Treatment of allergic rhinitis.
- Treatment of snoring.
- Treatment of vertigo.

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

**Scope of Clinical Practice:**

- General & Laparoscopic Surgery
- Single Port Surgery
- Treatment of Colo-Rectal Diseases, including Colorectal Cancer
- Surgical treatment of Inflammatory Bowel Disease
- Treatment of Perianal Fistula & Complex Perianal Fistula (cryptoglandular)
- SWAT Procedure (Treatment of Fistula through Robot-assisted)
- Treatment of Intractable Bowel Symptoms
- Colonoscopy & Gastroscopy
- Stomach Balloon Insertion & removal
- Bariatric Surgery - Lap Sleeve Gastrectomy
- Gallstones & Mechanical Intestinal Surgery
- Colonoscopic Hydrotherapy & Fecal Incontinence Treatment
- Laparoscopic mini hepatectomy
- Transanal minimally invasive surgery

**Academic Certificates, Trainings & Fellowships:**

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

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Email: aahaddad@daralshifa.com

**Dr. Ahmad Alaeddine**  
Head of Cardiology departmenta at Dar Al Shifa hospital

- Consultant Interventional and conventional cardiologist.
- Specialised in the Diagnosis and treatment of all adult cardiac diseases, including those cases that need urgent intervention in Cath lab (primary angioplasty).

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**Dr. Hani Haider**  
General Surgery Consultant

**American Board Certified in General Surgery**  
Member of the Society of American Gastrointestinal & Endoscopic Surgeons (SAGES)  
Higher specialization in Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary surgery & Organ Transplantation  
Member of many prestigious surgical societies.

- Day care surgeries
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- Minor surgeries (lipoma, sebaceous cyst, ingrowing nail)
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- Breast surgeries
- Thyroid & adrenal surgeries
- Cholecystectomy & laparoscopic appendectomy
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**Dr. Abdullah Hadi**  
Cardiology Department  
Consultant - Internal Medicine  
Interventional Cardiology & Adult Cardiology

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Sunday, Monday and Tuesday from 9:30 am to 5 pm  
Thursday from 9:30 am until 1 pm

**Friday is a holiday.**

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- Snoring and OSAP Surgery
- Rhinoplasty with open and closed techniques
- Microscopic Middle Ear Surgery and Tympanoplasty
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- Thyroid and parathyroid surgery
- Micro laryngeal surgery

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

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

Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368   Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - S11 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B

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

**Academic Certificates – Training**

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

**Scope of clinical Practice.**

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

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

**Dr. Husain Alenezi**

-Board Certified Urologist.  
-Endourology Society-Approved Fellowship In Endourology And Robotic Surgery At Western University, Ontario, Canada.

**Expert in diagnosing and treating:**

- Urinary Stones (Kidney, Ureter & Bladder) By Endoscopy & Laser
- Prostate Cancer And Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia
- Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms In Males And Females
- Tumors And Malignancies Of The Urinary Tract (Kidney, Adrenals, Ureter, Bladder And Testes)
- Male Factor Infertility And Varicoceles (Microscopic Surgery)
- Erectile Dysfunction

Contact Taiba Hospital: 1808088   94449452   Twitter: @DrHusain\_Urol

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# Classifieds



## Airlines

Kuwait Airways	171
Jazeera Airways	177
Wataniya Airways	22 066 536
Turkish Airlines	1884918
American Airlines	22087425
	22087426
Jet Airways	22924455
FlyDubai	22414400
Qatar Airways	22423888
KLM	22425747
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6
British Airways	22425635
Air France	22430224
Emirates	22921555
Air India	22438184
Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Egypt Air	22421578
Swiss Air	22421516
Saudia	22426306
Middle East Airlines	22423073
Lufthansa	22422493
PIA	22421044
Bangladesh Airlines	22452977/8
Indian Airlines	22456700
Oman Air	22958787
Turkish Airlines	22453820/1
Aeroflot	22404838/9

## 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

## STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



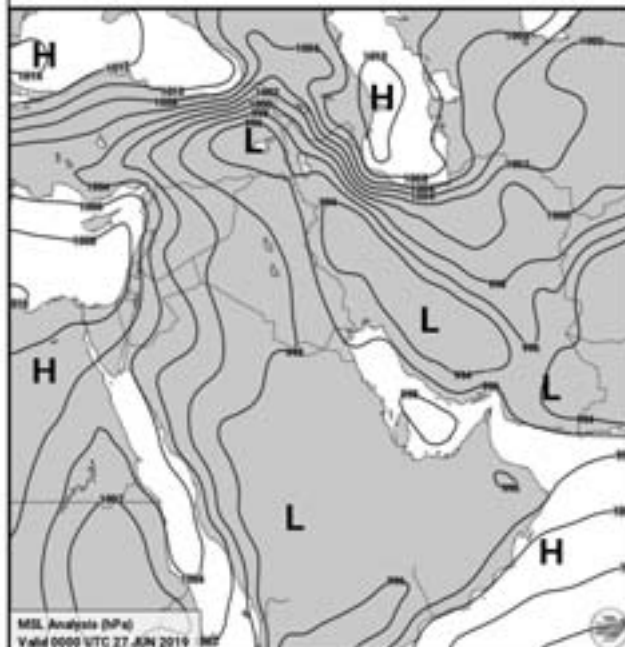
Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 6819 - 6817  
Fax: (+965) 24348714  
[www.met.gov.kw](http://www.met.gov.kw)



### Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

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

**BY NIGHT:** Relatively hot with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 10 - 38 km/h.

WEATHER WATCH			Fresh wind	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 27/06/2019 0000 UTC	
KUWAIT CITY	49 °C	38 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	49 °C	31 °C		
ABDALY	49 °C	32 °C		
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C		
JAHRA	50 °C	34 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	48 °C	31 °C		
SALMIYAH	44 °C	38 °C		
AHMADI	47 °C	38 °C		
NUWAISIB	48 °C	32 °C		
WAFRA	49 °C	32 °C		
SALMY	47 °C	31 °C		

### 4 DAYS FORECAST

DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Friday	06/28	Very hot	51 °C	31 °C	NW	15 - 38 km/h
Saturday	06/29	Very hot	49 °C	29 °C	VRB-NW	06 - 32 km/h
Sunday	06/30	Very hot	49 °C	30 °C	NW-N	08 - 38 km/h
Monday	07/01	Very hot with a chance for rising dust	49 °C	30 °C	N-NW	12 - 55 km/h

### PRAYER TIMES

Fajr	03:16
Sunrise	04:51
Zuhr	11:51
Asr	15:25
Sunset	18:51
Isha	20:24

### RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT

MAX. Temp.	50 °C
MIN. Temp.	29 °C
MAX. RH	21 %
MIN. RH	05 %
MAX. Wind	N 60 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

# Business

FRIDAY, JUNE 28, 2019

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CHENNAI: An Indian resident fills a bucket with water from a tap at a residential complex in Chennai. — AFP

## India's rainfall deficit raises fears for crops

### Sowing of summer crops down 12.5% due to scanty rains

**MUMBAI:** India's monsoon rains were below average for the fourth straight week, with rainfall scanty over central and western parts of the country in the week ended on Wednesday, raising concerns about major crop production and the impact on the nation's economy. Monsoon rains are crucial for the country's farm output and economic growth. About 55 percent of India's arable land is rain-fed, and agriculture makes up about 15 percent of a \$2.5 trillion economy that is Asia's third-biggest.

And India's economy, which grew at its slowest in more than four years over the January-March quarter, isn't in any condition to take a big hit from a poor monsoon. If the rains don't improve over the next two to three weeks, India could be facing a crisis that hammers crop harvests and rural demand. Companies that sell everything from tractors to fertilizer to consumer goods to farmers would be vulnerable.

"Sowing has already been delayed by three weeks. If the monsoon doesn't revive in two, three weeks, then the entire season could be wiped out," said Harish Galipelli, head of commodities and currencies

at Inditrade Derivatives and Commodities in Mumbai. India received 24 percent less rainfall than the 50-year average in the week ended on June 26, data from the India Meteorological Department (IMD) shows. In some areas, such as the eastern part of Madhya Pradesh, known for growing soybean, the deficit was as high as 69 percent, the data shows.

The monsoon has so far delivered 36 percent less rainfall than normal since the start of the season on June 1 due to a delay in the onset of the seasonal rains. The sowing of summer crops such as rice, soybeans and corn has been lagging as a result. Farmers had planted summer-sown crops on 9.1 million hectares as of June 21, down 12.5 percent compared with the same time last year, according to provisional data from India's Ministry of Agriculture.

#### Wet monsoon critical after 2018 drought

India needs a good monsoon this year as in 2018 a drought ravaged crops, killed livestock, emptied reservoirs and drained water

supplies to city dwellers and some industries. Hardest hit were the western states of Maharashtra and Gujarat, along with Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in the south, and Madhya Pradesh in central India. Some municipalities like Chennai, Mumbai and Hyderabad were forced to cut water supplies to ensure their reserves lasted until monsoon rains replenished reservoirs.

The IMD has forecast average rainfall in 2019, while the country's only private forecaster, Skymet, has predicted below-normal rainfall. A normal, or average, monsoon means rainfall between 96 percent and 104 percent of a 50-year average of 89 cm during the four-month monsoon season from June to September, according to the IMD's classification. Farmers like Baburao Tadas from Wardha district in Maharashtra are praying for normal monsoon rains after their incomes were hit by erratic weather and lower crop prices over the past few years. "I will plant cotton if we get rainfall in the next fortnight, otherwise I will switch to short duration crops such as corn or soybean," Tadas said.—Reuters

## Business

# Sino-US trade truce hopes rekindle risk appetite

## Europe, Asia lifts MSCI world share index after 4 down days

**LONDON:** Risk appetite returned to world markets yesterday following a media report the United States and China have tentatively agreed to a truce ahead of a highly-anticipated weekend meeting of the two nations' leaders in Tokyo. The South China Morning Post (SCMP), citing sources, said Washington and Beijing were laying out an agreement that would help avert the next round of tariffs on an additional \$300 billion of Chinese imports.

On Wednesday, US President Donald Trump said a trade deal with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping was possible this weekend, though he was prepared to impose tariffs on virtually all remaining Chinese imports if talks fail. "But the truce cake seems to have been baked," the SCMP cited one of its sources as saying. Hopes that the world's two biggest economies would finally reach an agreement were enough to cheer investors, sending MSCI's broadest index of world shares up over 0.2 percent after four days of back-to-back losses. Germany's trade-sensitive DAX led Europe's early gains with a 0.7 percent jump with the other main bourses and Wall Street futures all up between 0.2 percent-0.6 percent. Asia had finished strongly with China's blue-chip index closing up 1 percent and Hong Kong's Hang Seng and Japan's Nikkei ending 1.4 percent and 1.2 percent higher. "The market is focusing on the hope that there will be a trade truce (between the US and China)," said ING's chief EMEA FX and rates strategist Petr Krpata.

"We still think though that it would be temporary

and that things will get worse again over the summer before they get better." The trade row has already rattled investors who have ditched shares for the safety of bonds and gold this year. It has also prompted the US Federal Reserve to shift 180 degrees from raising interest rates in December to now signaling a cut as soon as next month. Many traders were still circumspect and expected the market to remain in a narrow range until after the weekend meeting of G20 leaders in Osaka, Japan, where Trump is also holding bilateral talks with other nations. "Focus continues to be on the G20 meeting with a story in the SCMP...lifting the entire market, although the details suggest nothing has actually been agreed yet," JPMorgan said in a note. "Overall it seems more likely that tariffs are hiked than not, following the meeting, though the timing of this may be confused by a desire for positive optics."

### Less than 50

Trump weighed into US monetary policy on Wednesday, accusing Fed Chairman Jerome Powell of doing a "bad job" and "out to prove how tough he is" by not cutting interest rates. Markets are convinced the Fed will indeed ease at its next meeting in July, but had to scale back bets on a half-point cut following cautious comments from various policy makers. Futures are 100 percent priced for a cut of 25 basis points next month, and imply a 22 percent chance of 50 basis points. The probability of a less aggressive



BEIJING: An investor watches a board showing stock information at a brokerage office in Beijing, China. —Reuters

Fed and expectations of a Sino-China trade truce helped ease the selling pressure on the U.S. dollar, which rose 0.1 percent to 96.300 on a basket of currencies from a three-month trough of 95.843. The dollar bounced modestly against the yen to 108.13 and away from a low of 106.77. The euro likewise eased back to \$1.13505 from a top of \$1.1412.

The dollar's gains took a little of the shine off

gold, which broke a six-session winning stretch and eased to \$1,403.94 per ounce. Oil prices ran into profit-taking too, having gained overnight on a larger-than-expected drawdown in crude stocks as exports hit a record high and surprise falls in refined product stockpiles. Brent crude futures eased 55 cents to \$65.92, while US crude lost 47 cents to \$58.91 a barrel.—Reuters

## Taiwan rejects HK firm's skyscraper bid

**TAIPEI:** Taiwan has vetoed a \$2 billion bid by a Hong Kong-led consortium to build a twin skyscraper in Taipei citing national security concerns, arguing the company is too heavily influenced by mainland China. Hong Kong-listed Nan Hai Corporation had successfully bid to build the "Taipei Twin Towers" along with Malaysian property developer Malton Berhad in a TW\$ 60 billion deal that was billed as the city's biggest construction project in years. But on Wednesday Taiwan's Ministry of Economic Affairs blocked the project citing Nan Hai's links with China.

"Nan Hai's close ties with China is a grave threat to (Taiwan's) national security if it were allowed to develop," Yang Shu-ling, spokesperson for the ministry Investment Commission, said. The commission noted that half of Nan Hai's management and board of directors are Chinese nationals, adding it was concerned the company could be "influenced by mainland policies". The planned 76-storey site was particularly sensitive, Yang added, because it was located next to Taipei's main station and metro systems.

"This involves the issue of national security because of its close proximity to greater Taipei's important transportation hub for metro, high speed rail, railway trains and buses," Yang added. Taiwan retains huge business links with China but relations between the two governments have plummeted since the 2016 election of President Tsai Ing-wen who does not recognize Beijing's "One China" policy. Beijing has since cut off communication with her administration, ramped up military drills and poached some of Taiwan's dwindling allies. —AFP

## OPEC set for rollover, may discuss oil curbs

**LONDON:** OPEC is expected to roll over a deal on cutting supplies at a meeting next week and discuss deepening the curbs that have been in place since Jan 1, Iraq's oil minister yesterday. A deal between the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and allies including Russia to curb output by 1.2 million barrels runs out at the end of June. Meetings on July 1-2 in Vienna will discuss the next steps.

"The rollover at least would be at the same level because it has not been very effective, it has been effective to a certain level to minimize the glut in the market, but there are now ideas or calls for agreeing (on) even more," Oil Minister Thamer Gadhban said. He said the issue would be discussed in Vienna but declined to specify what alternative level of cuts were being suggested.

Sources said this month that Algeria had floated an idea of deepening the cut by some 600,000 bpd. Gadhban also told reporters in London that Exxon had completed an evacua-



RUSSIA: A view shows a well head and a drilling rig in the Yarakta Oil Field, owned by Irkutsk Oil Company (INK), in Irkutsk Region, Russia. —Reuters

tion of its staff from an oilfield in southern Iraq for security reasons. Contractual wrangling and security concerns have held back a \$53 billion deal with the US energy giant to boost Iraq's oil output at its southern fields, Iraqi government officials have said.

Gadhban said on the sidelines of the CWC Iraq Petroleum Conference in London that the two sides were

drawing up a heads of agreement, adding one snag related to pricing and inflation adjustments remained. "We are now working on final draft of our agreement. The point has to do with pricing, inflation and deflation, related to cash flow how to look at the price and returns. It's purely a technical point, not political," the minister said.—Reuters

## Business

# China urges US to lift sanctions on Huawei as Trump-Xi meeting looms

**BEIJING:** The United States should immediately remove sanctions on Chinese telecoms equipment maker Huawei, a commerce ministry spokesman said yesterday, days before the two countries' leaders are due to meet for talks on trade. China opposes US abuse of export controls and urges the United States to return to a track of cooperation, said the spokesman, Gao Feng. US President Donald Trump said on Wednesday a trade deal with Chinese President Xi Jinping was possible this weekend when they meet at a summit of leaders of the Group of 20 (G20) in Japan, but he was prepared to impose tariffs on virtually all Chinese imports if disagreement persisted.

Trump has suggested that Huawei could be part of a deal. The Wall Street Journal reported that Xi planned to present Trump with terms for ending the trade dispute, including removing a ban on the sale of US technology to Huawei, citing Chinese officials with knowledge of the plan. The report also said China wants the United States to lift all punitive tariffs and abandon efforts to get China to promise to buy even more US goods than it previously agreed to do - a reiteration of long-standing demands.

The United States has put Huawei, the world's largest maker of telecoms equipment and its second biggest maker of smartphones, on an export blacklist, citing national security issues. The listing bars US suppliers from selling to it without special approval. Huawei has denied its products pose a security threat. "We urge the United States to cancel immediately sanctions on Chinese companies including Huawei to push for the healthy and stable development in Sino-US ties," Gao said, when asked whether the two sides were expected to reach a deal on measures facing Huawei and

other Chinese tech firms.

Gao noted that Xi told Trump during a phone call last week - a gesture that rekindled hopes of a deal - that he hoped the United States could treat Chinese firms fairly. Earlier in May, the United States accused China of reneging on pledges to reform its economy, infuriating Beijing and leading to a collapse in trade talks. The US Commerce Department announced last week it was adding several Chinese companies, and a government-owned institute involved in supercomputing with military applications, to its national security "entity list" that bars them from buying US parts and components without government approval.

China would consider putting foreign firms on a list designating them "unreliable" if they adopted discriminatory measures against Chinese entities, hurt its industries and threaten its national security, Gao said. Details of the list would be released soon, he said.

## Prevent escalation

On May 31, the commerce ministry said it was working on an "unreliable entities list" after the United States imposed additional tariffs on \$200 billion of Chinese goods and added Huawei to the US export blacklist. Trump is set to meet Xi for talks in Osaka at 11:30 am on Saturday. Asked about a news report that a truce in the trade war with the United States had been struck after Trump agreed to halt the next round of US tariffs on another \$300 billion of Chinese goods, Gao said China would welcome action that helped reduce tension.

"We welcome actions that help manage differences and prevent an escalation in frictions," he said, without answering directly whether a deal was expected at the summit. Yesterday, the



**IZUMISANO CITY:** Chinese President Xi Jinping, center, arrives at Kansai airport in Izumisano city, Osaka prefecture to attend the G20 Osaka Summit.—AFP

South China Morning Post said the United States and China had agreed to a tentative truce in their trade dispute, citing sources. Other media outlets have speculated about different outcomes of the meeting between the presidents. The Wall Street Journal said the chief US trade negotiator, Robert Lighthizer, and his Chinese counterpart, Liu He, were expected to meet before the leaders. China's foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang stressed that China would not be scared by US threats of more tariffs. "The Chinese people are not afraid of pres-

sure and never buy this kind of strategy," he told reporters. In a commentary yesterday, the ruling Communist Party's People's Daily said a US attempt to win a "quick and easy" trade war had proven to be futile and the Chinese people must not be fearful. "It's very clear that some people in the United States are insisting on curbing China's development using excuses of trade frictions," it said. "At this moment, fear is no use." "If China concedes blindly under the pressure of (US) hegemony, this will really be a volte-face-esque historic mistake."—Reuters

## NZ inquiry slams 'clumsy' incoming Irish central bank boss

**WELLINGTON:** Ireland's incoming central bank chief was criticized yesterday for his "clumsy" handling of an accidental budget leak in New Zealand that he blamed on hacking. In a damning report, New Zealand's State Services Commission (SSC) said Treasury Secretary Gabriel Makhlof was more intent on blaming others for the security breach than addressing his own failures and those of his department.

"I have concluded that Mr Makhlof failed to take personal responsibility for the Treasury security failure and his subsequent handling of the situation fell well short of my expectations," SSC chief Peter Hughes said. "Mr Makhlof is accountable for that and I'm calling it out." Makhlof, who will leave his job in Wellington this week before becoming Central Bank of Ireland governor in September, initially said the leaks last month resulted from systematic and delib-

erate hacking.

However, it soon emerged that the treasury had not fallen victim to a sophisticated cyber-attack, instead it had accidentally published budget details on its website that could be accessed using the search bar. The SSC found Makhlof acted in good faith when he first described the leaks as a hack and he had shown no political bias against the opposition that released the information.

But it found he was less forthcoming after receiving updated advice about the nature of the leaks and continued to imply the problem was a hack, rather than a treasury mistake. Hughes said it would be meaningless to punish Makhlof when he was leaving anyway, but the bureaucrat's reputation had been damaged by his failure to handle the leaks properly. Hughes said he was disappointed Makhlof had declined to appear publicly to express regret over the affair.

Makhlof released a statement after the report's release apologizing that budget information was not kept secure. "The report confirms I acted at all times in good faith and with political neutrality. It also confirms that I acted reasonably, other than in my descriptions of the incident," he said. "I am pleased that my honesty and integrity are not in question." The Irish government announced Makhlof's appointment last month, saying he was a candidate following of international caliber with extensive knowledge of financial markets and economic policy.—AFP

## Game console makers oppose China tariffs

**WASHINGTON:** Game console makers Microsoft, Sony and Nintendo have joined forces in opposing expanded tariffs on China, saying the plan would make their products unaffordable for the coming holiday season. In comments filed with the US Trade Representative, the three firms said President Donald Trump's threat to impose tariffs on an additional \$300 billion in goods from China would lead to steep price rises for US consumers.

"A price increase of 25 percent will likely put a new video game console out of reach for many American families who we expect to be in the market for a console this holiday season," the companies wrote in comments filed jointly June 17 and available online. They added that for those who end up buying despite higher prices, the overall cost to consumers is estimated to be \$840 million from the tariffs. The companies said the proposed levies would also lead to a loss of jobs and a negative impact of \$350 million for the US economy. They said the tariff plan would be disruptive to the sector, noting that about 96 percent of video game consoles imported into the United States were made in China.

"It would cause significant supply chain disruption to shift sourcing entirely to the United States or a third country, and it would increase costs—even beyond the cost of the proposed tariffs—on products that are already manufactured under tight margin conditions," the letter said. It added the tariffs would "add significant costs that would depress sales of video game consoles and the games and services that drive the profitability of this market segment."—AFP

## Business

# Sri Lanka tourism fighting back from Easter bombings

**COLOMBO:** Sri Lanka's tourism industry is recovering faster than expected after the Easter Sunday suicide bombings shook the island nation, giving a much-needed boost to the economy, Finance Minister Mangala Samaraweera said. The country was hit by mass cancellations after Islamic State-backed jihadists attacked three churches and three hotels on April 21, leaving 258 dead, including dozens of foreigners.

Yet even in the bombing's aftermath, domestic tourists filled hotels, and visitors from key European markets are already starting to return, Samaraweera said in an interview on Wednesday. Samaraweera had initially predicted that Sri Lanka could lose 30 percent of its tourism revenues—about \$1.5 billion this year—but now believes the loss will be less than one billion. “We are beginning to feel that the situation was not as dire as we expected,” Samaraweera said. “Bookings are coming back.” Hotels were able to keep staff by offering “excellent packages” to Sri Lankan tourists, he added.

## Interest-free loans

The government also set aside hundreds of millions of dollars to provide cheap credit for tourism businesses hit by the crisis. Bus companies, bed and breakfast owners and the makers of Buddhist festival decorations all received interest-free loans, the minister said. “Even the musicians who accompany the processions claimed they were out of pocket,” he said. After five years

in which Sri Lanka has faced a series of blows, Samaraweera said the economy could get to five percent annual growth from next year if calm was restored.

“The last five years have not been easy for Sri Lanka,” he said, referring to floods and then a drought, which were followed by a political crisis in 2018 and the 2019 attacks. Sri Lanka's economy slowed to 3.2 percent last year, down from 3.4 percent in 2017, because of a power struggle between the country's president and prime minister. Samaraweera told parliament this year that the political battle had cost the economy \$1 billion in capital flight from debt and equity markets.

The International Monetary Fund has since revived a bailout program with Sri Lanka, and the government resumed international sovereign bond sales in March. “I hope that for this year we can come back to 3.8 - 4.0 percent growth, and in the next two years if it was five percent we would be happy.”

## Election boost

Sri Lanka raised \$2.0 billion this week in its first international bond auction since the bombings. The minister said the interest rates were lower than for a \$2.4 billion auction in March—before the attacks—and this showed confidence in Sri Lanka's ability to bounce back. “The international community has shown that they still have confidence in the good macro economic founda-



**COLOMBO:** In this file photo a foreign tourist, left, poses for photographs with a Sri Lankan mahout and his elephant ahead of a religious procession in Colombo.—AFP

tion we laid,” he added. Sri Lanka heads for a presidential election later this year, which could set off new political battles.

Economic activity usually spikes in an election year, partly because of increased government spending. Samaraweera said he may not present

a full 2020 budget by November as scheduled and instead present a temporary account to cover expenses of the first three months of the year. He said he wanted to allow a new president to decide on fiscal policy rather than imposing a budget on the future government.—AFP

## Worst of yellow vest economic impact in France yet to come

**PARIS:** The worst of the impact on the French economy of the yellow-vest protests, which rocked city centers across France last winter, is yet to come, a report said, predicting a wave of bankruptcies among small businesses in the second half of the year. The initial impact of the yellow-vest protests, which started in November as a revolt over high prices at the pumps and morphed into a broader challenge to President Emmanuel Macron's policies, was limited.

The national statistics office estimated it at 0.1 percentage points of national output or 2 billion euros in the final quarter of last year. But lawmakers from the opposition-controlled Senate said in a report published this week that the accumulated loss in turnover, which reached 30 percent in city centers on average over six months, will start taking its toll in the coming months.

The knock-on effect of delayed payments to suppliers, as well as temporarily suspended tax bills that will eventually come due, are expected to push many small shopkeepers into bankruptcy, lawmakers say. “Although the movement is losing steam, our hearings have revealed that the most serious and insidious consequences are yet to come,” lawmakers wrote in the report, citing feedback from local commercial courts.

“It's in the second half that a wave of debt defaults should happen, as well as a critical increase in the number of businesses going into administration or even bankruptcies,” the report added. Though the protests have gradually eased since



**PARIS:** A ‘Yellow Vest’ (gilets jaunes) worn by the anti-government movement, is attached to the base of a French flag flying above a roundabout in Bourg-Achard, northwestern France.—AFP

December, the report says business is not coming back strong enough to make up for the losses as consumers changed their habits, avoiding weekend shopping for example.

Macron unveiled more than 10 billion euros in concessions in December to protesters, blowing out France's budget deficit. Turnout at protests, which were held every Saturday, have dwindled in recent weeks, with only a few hundred protesters marching peacefully in Paris last week.—AFP

## India shelves sale of Air India

**NEW DELHI:** India has put on hold plans to sell a stake in debt-laden state-run carrier Air India because of high oil prices and volatile foreign currency movements, the country's junior civil aviation minister said yesterday. “The present environment is not conducive to stimulate interest amongst investors for strategic disinvestment of Air India in the immediate near future,” Hardeep Singh Puri said in parliament.

The government will revisit the sale once global economic conditions become more conducive, he said. India's aviation sector is facing turmoil with one of its biggest private carriers, Jet Airways, facing bankruptcy, while passenger growth in the market overall has slowed. India last year failed in its attempt to sell a 76 percent stake in loss-making Air India due to a lack of interest from bidders and said it would return with an alternative proposal soon.

While the government said at the time that it was forced to review the plan because of high oil prices, a weaker rupee and rising interest rates, potential bidders suggested they found some of the stake sale terms too onerous, making it a non-starter. The government has since hived off a part of the airline's debt, about 300 billion rupees, into a separate entity and is trying to sell off some of its assets and subsidiaries, such as the ground-handling unit, piecemeal.

“The government has prepared a revival plan for Air India which includes a comprehensive financial package,” Puri said, adding it would focus on increasing revenue and reducing costs. The government injected 39.75 billion rupees into the airline in the fiscal year that ended March 31. Air India is expected to report a loss of more than 76 billion rupees for the same year, Puri told parliament.—Reuters



## Business

# Trade tensions put transition to greener energy at risk

## World needs oil companies to remain good investment

**LONDON:** Trade tensions risk throwing the global economy's transition to greener energy into disarray and could hurt energy companies' preparations towards it, BP Chairman Helge Lund said as leaders of the world's largest economies gather for talks in Japan. Lund, in his first interview since taking office in January, said BP would rather see a rapid, orderly phasing out of fossil fuels than a delayed and disorganized transition.

The former chief executive of Norwegian oil group Equinor said BP as well as rivals such as Royal Dutch Shell and ExxonMobil would have a vital role to play to ensure a successful transition to low carbon economies. "It is better for us to see a path that goes rapidly," Lund said. "It will be very difficult for the oil and gas companies but that is a better and a preferred solution than an uncontrolled sudden change maybe 10, 15 years into the future."

London-based BP, like some of its peers, has taken steps towards meeting the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement to limit global warming, including setting targets to reduce carbon emissions from its operations, link them to managers' pay and ensure that investments are in line with the accords. But many investors say BP will have to do more, including tackling emissions from the fuels and products it sells to millions of customers daily, known as Scope 3 emissions, to prevent a catastrophic rise in global temperatures.

Lund said however that such Scope 3 targets would tie BP's hands to make future investments, whether in renewable energy or oil and gas. He nevertheless said the company's thinking around Scope 3 was likely "to evolve over time." BP has invested around \$500 million in renewable power, electric vehicle charging points and other low-carbon technologies over the past few years, a fraction of its annual spending that reached \$15 billion last year.

And the pressure on companies and governments to do more to curb greenhouse gases is rising as carbon emission levels show no sign of decreasing. In-

vestors managing more than \$34 trillion in assets, nearly half the world's invested capital, this week demanded urgent action from governments on climate change, piling pressure on leaders of the world's 20 biggest economies meeting this week. France has said it will not accept a final G20 communique that does not mention the Paris climate change agreement.

"The long-term framework around the energy transition is important. Over time it is much easier for big companies like BP if we have a stable global framework for trade and investments," Lund told Reuters at BP's London headquarters. Lund said an unprecedented level of cooperation was needed between companies and governments to bring greenhouse gas emissions to zero by the end of the century. He urged governments to introduce a price on carbon emissions to allow phasing out fossil fuels, even though only a handful of such schemes have been introduced around the world.

### Sound investment

BP has faced a wave of protests by climate activists, including a blockade on its London office and protests at events the company sponsors. Big investors, including Norway's sovereign wealth fund, are reviewing shareholdings in some oil and gas drillers, though not in BP and its largest rivals. Lund, who took part in discussions on a climate resolution with a group of investors earlier this year, believes most investors understand that modern societies are almost built on hydrocarbons.

BP forecasts that even with a rapid increase in wind, solar and other forms of renewable energy, fossil fuels will account for the majority of energy supply for decades to come. Lund also warned that attempts to curb fossil fuels too fast could harm societies. "It takes time to change energy systems ... If you try to build down the oil and gas industry quicker than you are able to build up a carbon neutral system you will pull societies back."

According to a sales brochure. Local media identified Siu as the 22-year-old CEO of an education company under his family's holdings and investment company, Cheung & Sons, a conglomerate involved in real estate, agribusiness, education and construction. The company did not respond to AFP's request for information about the purchase.

Its website lists a Matthew Cheung Siu-woon on its senior management team and says he started a company teaching Mandarin at the age of 19 while studying at a London university. Hong Kong is a city of stark contrasts where impoverished elderly people can be seen collecting cardboard to recycle on streets that boast one of the highest ratio of billionaires in the world. A recent report by real estate firm CBRE ranked Hong Kong as the most expensive residential city, with an average price of US\$2,091 per square foot. It listed the average property price in Hong Kong as US\$1.2 million—far above second-placed Singapore at \$874,372.

A September report by UBS said a "skilled worker" needed 22 years of income to afford a 60 square meter flat, up from 12 years a decade ago, with salaries staying largely the same since 2008. But the ultra wealthy have seen their fortunes continue to grow. According to Knight Frank's global wealth report, the number of billionaires in Hong Kong has grown from 40 in 2013 to 64 last year. The most expensive property in the city currently on sale is a four bedroom mansion listed by Christies that carries a HK\$448 million asking price. —AFP



LONDON: BP Chairman Helge Lund speaks during an interview with Reuters at BP's headquarters in London, Britain.—Reuters

Lund said large oil companies would be vital for the transition due to their large balance sheets, technical expertise and innovation skills. "To be a strong contributor in the long term we have to stay financially strong, we have to be a good investment."

Lund also said: "There is another dimension that we need to think about and that is if you believe that BP and other integrated oil and gas companies understand energy markets, they have significant balance sheets, they have technical capabilities, they have innovation capabilities, they can take risks - so in my mind business and these companies play an incredibly important role in the energy transition."

### Succession

Lund, 56, faces the task of leading BP through the energy transition and also overseeing the succession to Chief Executive Bob Dudley, who took the helm in

2010 following the crisis over the Deepwater Horizon rig explosion in the Gulf of Mexico. Dudley also steered BP through the oil industry's worst downturn in decades so that the company is now producing strong profits which reached a five-year high last year of \$12.7 billion.

"Bob is a very good leader, I am not sure where BP would have been without him," Helge said. Lund said BP's board was preparing a number of candidates to succeed Dudley, who turns 65 next year. Lund, a former consultant and political adviser in the Norwegian parliament rejected suggestions he could replace Dudley to become the next CEO. "I've been CEO for three companies. I thought about this when I left BG whether I should try to get one more (CEO) job or try to get a different life and I decided on the latter and I think it is rewarding," he said. —Reuters

## Hong Kong tycoon drops \$117 million on luxury home

**HONG KONG:** The 22-year-old son of a business tycoon has dropped US\$117 million on a luxury home in Hong Kong, the latest purchase to highlight the huge wealth gap in a city currently rocked by political protests. The cramped financial hub regularly tops various rankings of cities with the least affordable housing in the world, with even the cheapest apartments far out of the reach of most regular workers.

Rising inequality and a shortage of housing has helped fuel anti-government protests, the latest manifestation a series of huge youth-led demonstrations earlier this month demanding the withdrawal of a bill that would allow extraditions to the Chinese mainland. Matthew Cheung Siu-woon spent HK\$916m on the 8,674 square foot house, which was listed on the market in May and completed on Tuesday, according to a Land Registry document seen by AFP.

Located on The Peak on Hong Kong island, one of the most exclusive neighborhoods in the city, the six-storey house includes a swimming pool, garden, rooftop and private lift, ac-

## Ford says to slash 12,000 jobs all across Europe

**FRANKFURT AM MAIN:** US carmaker Ford said yesterday that it plans to slash a total of 12,000 jobs across Europe as part of a previously announced restructuring. The overall figure includes 5,400 layoffs already announced in Germany and 1,700 in Wales. The move comes as the company closes or sells six plants in Britain, France, Russia and Slovakia this year and next. The job cuts will come "primarily through voluntary separation programs", said Ford, which employs around 51,000 people and operates 24 factories around Europe.

As well as the factory closure in Wales, three sites in Russia, one in Slovakia and one in France will be shuttered. Yesterday is the first time Ford has publicly stated the jobs impact of its plans. Group chief executive Jim Hackett announced last autumn a massive restructuring of the American firm, aiming to save \$11 billion and turn Ford into a more "agile" group with faster decision-making processes. —AFP

## Sports

# Jaguares, Brumbies take winning streaks into semi-final showdown

**BUENOS AIRES:** The Argentine Jaguares and twice former champions the Australian ACT Brumbies boast long winning streaks ahead of a Super Rugby semi-final clash in Buenos Aires today. After a disastrous start to the season in which they lost four of six matches, the South Americans have won their last six to reach the last-four stage for the first time.

The Brumbies were equally slow out of the blocks and trailed the Melbourne Rebels in the Australia section before a dramatic improvement led to a club record seven straight wins. While the Argentines are eyeing a first final appearance only three years after debuting, the Brumbies hope to reach the title decider a fourth time having won the competition twice.

In the other semi-final, title favorites and regular season table-toppers the Canterbury Crusaders are favored to defeat fellow New Zealanders the Wellington Hurricanes tomorrow. Should the Crusaders succeed, they will also host the final in Christchurch, otherwise the winners between the Jaguares and the Brumbies get home advantage.

Argentine skipper Jeronimo de la Fuente has called on his team to defend with the same bravery they displayed in a 21-16 quarter-final triumph over the Waikato Chiefs last weekend. The inside centre was referring specifically to a spell during the closing stages when Chiefs launched multiple attacks inside the Jaguares' 22 only to be repeatedly thwarted.

"Our opponents committed a number of knock-ons because of the intensity of our tackling," said the Argentina Test back. "We defended magnificently throughout the match, but especially in that spell about 10 minutes from the end when it seemed inevitable that the Chiefs would score." De la Fuente said a secret of the Jaguares' success just three years after a poor first season in Super Rugby was self belief. "We focus on ourselves, we never stop working hard, we learn all the time from our mistakes and we like to dream of playing in the final."

### Big advantage

A big advantage for the Buenos Aires outfit is that this will be their fourth straight home fixture after an Australasia tour in which they won three of four matches. Having scored five tries to sink the South African Sharks, the Brumbies started a bus trip from Canberra to Sydney at 0600 the next day before flights to Auckland and Buenos Aires.

"It is going to be a hard task with the travel and everything but we have won there before," said Brumbies and Wallabies lock Rory Arnold. "They (Jaguares) are a world-class team, full of international players. They have got a good record and (have) been playing some really good footy. "From one to eight we have got good players, then some more on the bench. I am quite confident our pack will match theirs."

The pack will miss Wallabies flanker Pete Samu, though, after he limped off with a tight



**BUENOS AIRES:** Argentina's Jaguares centre Jeronimo De La Fuente (L) vies for the ball with New Zealand's Chiefs centre Marty McKenzie (R) during their Super Rugby match at Jose Amalfitani stadium. —AFP

hamstring just after half-time in the 38-13 walloping of the Sharks. Coach Dan McKellar hailed the team spirit and camaraderie after reaching the semi-finals, saying his side would "focus heavily on what we are doing well."

"We have confidence, we have belief, we have a group of blokes who love playing footy together, wearing the jersey and representing

our people." Should the Brumbies lose, it will be the final match for skipper Christian Lealifano, Henry Speight, Sam Carter and Arnold, all of whom are leaving the club. This is the fourth time the sides have met in Super Rugby with the Jaguares holding a 2-1 lead after losing at home in 2017 and winning away in 2018 and at home two months ago. —AFP

## Hurricanes bank on Barrett magic to end Crusaders curse

**WELLINGTON:** Wellington Hurricanes playmaker Beauden Barrett is under pressure to outshine his All Black rival Richie Mo'unga in Saturday's Super Rugby semi-final against the Canterbury Crusaders and reverse his team's woeful form against the defending champions. The Hurricanes are considered rank outsiders in Christchurch against the Crusaders, who boast a squad bristling with All Blacks as they chase a third straight title and 10th overall.

It's a frustrating situation for the Hurricanes — a side that won more matches than any other this season and features a two-time world player of the year in Barrett. Yet such has been the South Islanders' dominance over the Hurricanes in recent years that the men from New Zealand's capital find themselves practically written off by bookies and pundits before a ball has been kicked in anger.

The teams have met five times previously in finals matches and the Crusaders have won all of them, including a semi-final last year and the title decider in 2006. The Crusaders have also convincingly won their four most recent matches against the Hurricanes, including a 32-8 thrashing when they last met in March. That's without even taking into account the Crusaders' daunting home record in Christchurch, where they have not lost a playoff in Super Rugby's 23-year history and are currently on a 28-game unbeaten run. —AFP

## MLB eyes Europe 'toehold' with Yankees-Red Sox

**LOS ANGELES:** Major League Baseball is sending its heaviest hitters to London this weekend, where commissioner Rob Manfred hopes the Boston Red Sox and New York Yankees can give the game a "toehold" in Europe. "I hope that the two games in London will be viewed as sort of a groundbreaking, artistic success," Manfred said at recent MLB owners' meetings.

"We're talking probably the greatest rivalry — certainly in baseball, if not in sports — for two games." The Red Sox and Yankees, who will face off on Saturday and Sunday at London Stadium, have won 36 World Series between them. Boston's status as reigning World Series champions lends an extra gloss to a trans-Atlantic trip that will showcase an American League rivalry that has developed over more than a century. The Yankees, a brand known worldwide, own a record 27 World Series titles while the Red Sox — who broke an 80-year title drought in 2004 — claimed their ninth with a triumph over the Los Angeles Dodgers last season.

Manfred said the positive response to the teams' arrival in Britain was just what MLB was looking for as it seeks to follow the NBA and NFL in boosting its profile overseas. "We sold like crazy right out of the gate in terms of tickets and sold the two games out in a very short period of time," he said. "We're hoping it generates buzz around the game that will give us a toehold into a very important market in Europe." The two Yankees-Red Sox games at the former Olympic stadium that is now home to Premier League side West Ham, will be the first regular-season MLB games in Europe. The league is already planning the follow-up, with 2020 London games

between the St. Louis Cardinals and Chicago Cubs announced this month. While baseball historian David Block has unearthed evidence of a game played in Walton-on-Thames in 1749 — more than a century decades before the "national pastime" emerged in the United States — for MLB, this weekend's games are about the future. "There is a significant economic opportunity in Europe," Manfred told The Boston Globe, noting that some 20 European players are under contract to major league organizations and that MLB actively promotes the game overseas.

### 'Not a vacation'

Britain no longer has a professional baseball league, but the Netherlands and Italy do. In the run-up to the Yankees-Red Sox games, MLB's Elite European Development Tournament will take place in the London area, with 90 teenagers from 13 European countries and the US Air Force base at Ramstein in Germany competing in a showcase for league scouts.

Play Ball Park set up adjacent to London Stadium will offer youth baseball and softball. Baseball has long been a popular sport in parts of Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. More than a quarter of players listed on 2019 Opening Day 25-man rosters and inactive lists came from overseas, representing 20 different countries.

The Dominican Republic's 102 players marked the first time that any foreign country or territory exceeded 100. Venezuela had 68. This year's MLB season opened with two games in Tokyo and there were regular-season games in Mexico in March, April and May. Manfred told the Globe said he would like to take games to South Korea and, when suitable facilities can be worked out, to other countries in Europe.

For now, Manfred is counting on the Yankees and Red Sox to knock one out of the park for baseball. There is plenty at stake, with the Red Sox eight games behind the division-leading Yankees as the long regular season approaches the halfway. "It's not a vacation," Red Sox manager Alex Cora says. "We're chasing the Yankees right now and those two games are important." —AFP

## Sports

# Pressure off as Osaka hopes for better Wimbledon fortune

**LONDON:** With the burden of being world number one lifted, Naomi Osaka will set her sights on Wimbledon, buoyed by the support of Roger Federer and praying for a decent draw this year. The 21-year-old Japanese star saw her hopes of a third consecutive Grand Slam title end in a dispiriting third round exit at Roland Garros.

She admitted that loss to Katerina Siniakova, ranked 42 at the time, was “the best thing that could have happened” for a player so uncomfortable in the spotlight. Since then, she has lost her top ranking and will head into Wimbledon next week seeded at number two. Osaka could not be more thrilled.

“During my entire clay season, it kind of mattered and it showed because I was kind of stressed out the entire time,” she said when asked about the intense scrutiny which came with being the world’s top player who was hunting a Paris title to add to her US and Australian Open crowns. “Now, I’m just kind of having fun. I’m kind of chilling.”

At the French Open, Osaka complained that the pressures she faced were causing her to suffer constant headaches, stress and fatigue. However, when the Wimbledon draw is made on Friday, more headaches could be on the way. Her last two trips to the All England Club have ended in back-to-back third round losses against players at ease on grass courts.

In 2017, she was defeated by five-time cham-

pion Venus Williams who went on to reach the final. Last year, she fell to eventual champion Angelique Kerber with Osaka collecting just six games against the German on Centre Court. Osaka has just one win on grass this summer although she did make the semi-finals in Nottingham last year, losing to Ashleigh Barty, the Australian who has since taken her world top ranking.

“You know, grass, I’m not really that comfortable with it,” admitted Osaka, who said the challenges left her “screaming inside” during her win in Birmingham against Maria Sakkari last week. “It’s just really different to everything I have played on. As a little kid, I never played on grass.” It has been a roller-coaster first half of 2019 for Osaka. Since winning the Australian Open, she split with coach Sascha Bajin and has yet to make another final.

However, she has powerful support in the shape of 20-time major winner Federer who faced similar bouts of fluctuating form and self-doubt in his early years, especially after winning a first Slam at Wimbledon in 2003.

“After that I also didn’t win everything. From having nothing to lose it suddenly changes, everyone now feels like it’s an amazing win to beat you,” said the eight-time Wimbledon champion. “She has a head start with her two Grand Slams. Now she’s done it, she knows she can do it again. I think she’s doing pretty well. You can’t win every week, nobody does that.” —AFP



MELBOURNE: In this file photo taken on January 26, 2019 Japan's Naomi Osaka celebrates with the championship trophy during the presentation ceremony after her victory against Czech Republic's Petra Kvitová in the women's singles final on day 13 of the Australian Open tennis tournament in Melbourne on January 26, 2019. —AFP

## Federer was 'great draw' on '99 Wimbledon debut

**PRAGUE:** The 17-year-old youth on the other side of the Wimbledon net looked like an easy match-up for Jiri Novak, but the five-setter made the grizzled Czech rethink the man who would become “exceptional and an icon”.

Novak could breathe a sigh of relief as the scoreboard said he had beaten a certain Roger Federer of Switzerland 6-3, 3-6, 4-6, 6-3, 6-4 after two hours and 18 minutes in the first round in 1999. Federer made his Wimbledon debut that day 20 years ago but few imagined that the youngster would eventually go on to be widely regarded as the greatest player of all time.

“I was in the top 100, I had no problem qualifying for Wimbledon and I played against Roger who was a junior and a wild card,” Novak told AFP. “I was thinking — what a great draw, I wasn’t too good on grass so I thought this was a good chance to win a match,” added Novak, who was 24 at the time. He bowed out of that edition of Wimbledon in the second round, seen off by American Todd Martin in straight sets, and was never to make it past the third round at the All England Club.

Federer, the world junior number one in 1999 but 103 in the ATP rankings during Wimbledon, crashed out in round one in three of his first four appearances at the tournament. However, he made people sit up and take notice when he famously knocked out Pete Sampras on his way to the 2001 quarter-finals. Federer then won five Wimbledon titles in a row, and eight overall, his last coming in 2017.

“I thought he wasn’t bad but during the match I never thought he could achieve what he has,” said Novak of a player who has gone on to win 20 majors and 102 titles in total. “It was a tough moment, the grass used to be much faster so we didn’t play much and I didn’t like that, I kept struggling for rhythm.”

### ‘Exceptional, an icon’

“Then I met him at other tournaments, on concrete and clay, and I could see he’s good,” added Novak, who won seven ATP singles titles — four on clay and three on hard-court — and climbed to fifth in the world in 2002. “In total I played against him nine times, including finals at Gstaad and Vienna when he was already the world number one.”

Novak had a special relationship with Federer — not because of that Wimbledon match, but through Federer’s wife Mirka, born in Slovakia which formed a single country with the Czech Republic until 1993. “We had trainings together, we were a bit closer than normal because of Mirka and his Czech physiotherapist Pavel Kovac,” said Novak. “In the players’ room, we played table tennis or pool. He was always closer to the Czechs. But we never talked about his Wimbledon debut,” he added. Novak retired from the sport at 32 because of his family, but he stays on as a coach and keeps watching Federer on the circuit.

“I last saw him in the flesh about ten years ago, at a tournament in Miami,” said Novak, currently the head coach of Czech under-18 players. “I follow his results, I don’t watch each match he plays, but he’s incredible, he keeps winning tournaments at almost 38 years old and he’s still among the best in the world.” Asked to pick a favorite among Federer, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic, the former Czech star had no doubt. “I have played against all three and I know them all and they are all very cool, but Federer is simply exceptional, a real ad for tennis and an icon,” Novak said. —AFP

## Morning glories: Tokyo 2020 bids to beat the heat

**TOKYO:** Mist sprays, cooling scarves and pots of morning glory flowers were among the measures unveiled yesterday by Tokyo 2020 officials to beat the heat during next summer’s Olympics. Doctors have warned the Games could see deadly medical emergencies as athletes, volunteers and spectators face the sweltering Tokyo summer where the mercury can easily reach 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit).

Organizers plan to create shaded spaces, rest areas if people fall ill, cooling fans and misting stations to combat the heat. Tokyo 2020 also showed off a new line of licensed products designed to ward off heatstroke, including cooling scarves and sun visors. Sporting one of the scarves, Tokyo 2020 Games Delivery Officer Hidemasa Nakamura enthused: “It’s so cool when worn after putting in water.”

Nakamura also revealed that organisers are considering allowing fans to bring in their own drink bottles under certain conditions, adding that security and sponsorship issues had still to be worked out. Tourists will also be able to access special apps with heat warnings, he said. The plans will be “brushed up” later, including how much it will cost. Among the more unique “preventative measures” is the use of summer flowers as a “psychological measure.”

“We are planning to put in lines of morning glories and other flowers grown by elementary school children instead of unattractive steel fences,” said Nakamura. Schedules of sports such as the marathon, rugby sevens, triathlon and mountain biking have been brought forward to avoid the worst of the potentially blistering temperatures for the July 24 to August 9 Games. —AFP

## Sports

# 1992 all over again as Pakistan take identical World Cup path

## Countering Yasir is Australia's 'number one' priority: Siddle

**BIRMINGHAM:** Twenty-seven years and a generation apart, Pakistan's World Cup bears striking similarities with their 1992 campaign — when they started slowly but ended up lifting the trophy in Melbourne. An identical sequence of wins and losses, and other eerie parallels, have struck a chord with millions of fans who believe that Pakistan could be set to come out on top once again.

In both World Cups, Pakistan started with a one-sided defeat to the West Indies, before recovering to win their second game — against Zimbabwe in 1992, and England this time around. At both tournaments, their third game was rained off and they then went on to lose their next two games and win the following two. Not only that, but the final win in both sequences was against New Zealand, who were unbeaten in both 1992 and 2019 until they ran into Pakistan.

"It was same, the same sequence of results, points and then we wanted Australia to beat the West Indies for us to qualify," said legendary fast bowler Wasim Akram, who played for Pakistan in 1992. "Then also we beat New Zealand — who was unbeaten then too. A lot of similarities, I hope the end result is also similar now and we win the World Cup," said Wasim, now a TV commentator.

In another similarity, Wasim was the leading wicket-taker in 1992 with 18 and another Pakistan left-arm pacer, Mohammad Amir, is second on the bowler's chart with 16 so far. "I am not sure if players are following all these (discussions) but this should motivate them," said Wasim. But Pakistan skipper Sarfaraz Ahmed played down any parallels with 1992.

"That's history but after we won against New Zealand someone told me that even in 1992 we chased down New Zealand's target with five balls to spare," said Sarfaraz, whose team reached their 238-run target in 49.1 overs on Wednesday. Fans are now hoping that the similarities don't end there, and even that they continue beyond the World Cup. "Imran Khan was Pakistan captain in 1992 World Cup and 26 years after that triumph he became country's prime minister, so Sarfaraz should also join politics and become premier in 2045," said one comment on social media.

### 'Belief is key'

Babar Azam says Pakistan have the belief they can win their remaining games to complete a dramatic turnaround and reach the World Cup semi-finals following victory against a strong New Zealand side on Wednesday. The 24-year-old hit a match-winning unbeaten 101 to anchor Pakistan's reply to New Zealand's score of 237 for six at Edgbaston.

Captain Sarfaraz Ahmed hit the winning runs in the final over as they finished on 241-4 to win by six wickets. Pakistan had a disastrous start to their World Cup campaign, losing three of their first five matches with a single victory, against England, and a no-result.

Their next game is on Saturday against Afghanistan, who have lost all seven of their matches at the tournament in England and Wales and they finish their group fixtures against Bangladesh, who are level with Pakistan on seven points.



**BIRMINGHAM:** Pakistan's Babar Azam celebrates after scoring a century (100 runs) during the 2019 Cricket World Cup group stage match between New Zealand and Pakistan at Edgbaston. — AFP

Sri Lanka are also in the hunt, one point behind but with a game in hand, meaning 1992 winners Pakistan must still rely on other results going in their favour to qualify from the 10-team group phase. "Belief has been the key," said Babar, who reached his 10th one-day international hundred off 124 balls with 11 fours. "We have the belief that we will win our next two games and then look ahead."

Babar, 24, said even when the team were struggling earlier in the tournament, they were confident they could turn their fortunes around.

"We were not winning matches but we talked to each other and had the belief that we could do it and now our focus is on the next game," he said. Defending champions Australia are the only team to have qualified for the semi-finals so far while New Zealand, India and England currently occupy the other top-four slots. Babar said his role had been to bat until the end of the innings. "I was given a role to bat until the end and others bat around me and that worked well as (Mohammad) Hafeez and then Haris (Sohail) batted well to establish partnerships," said Babar. — AFP

## Root: England must keep cool heads in India match

**BIRMINGHAM:** Joe Root expects emotions to run high against India on Sunday in a game England may have to win to reach the World Cup semi-finals in their home tournament. A heavy defeat by Australia at Lord's on Tuesday was England's third defeat of the tournament and leaves their hopes of reaching the knockout stage in the balance.

England are in fourth place in the 10-team table but are now just one point ahead of Bangladesh and Pakistan and two clear of Sri Lanka. The top four sides qualify for the semi-finals. Winning their last two group games would secure a semi-final spot but seeing off both India and New Zealand would require a sharp improvement from a side who have lost their way since starting the campaign as clear favorites.

When they walk out at Edgbaston this weekend, swathes of fans from Birmingham's big British Asian community will be backing India, heaping the pressure on the home side. "I personally think we have to be very calm about how we approach the next couple of games because the games themselves might get quite emotional, especially with the atmosphere at Edgbaston," said Test captain Root.

"We believe we're still more than capable of qualifying for the semi-finals and when that happens, it doesn't really matter how you got there because that's when the tournament really starts to kick in," he added. "We'll see these two games as quarter-finals if you like, which in a way when it comes round to the knockout stage should serve you well. "You're going to have to win big games at some stage in the tournament if you're going to go on and win it, so it may be that ours have come just a little bit sooner than we anticipated." — AFP

## Rampant Mercedes revisit scene of its darkest hour

**SPIELBERG:** Five days after a one-two triumph so comprehensive it sparked heated debate about Formula One's future, Lewis Hamilton's Mercedes team revisit this weekend the scene of last season's darkest hour. Team chief Toto Wolff, a native Austrian who knows the Spielberg circuit well, described the double DNF (Did Not Finish) in last year's Austrian Grand Prix as the team's lowest point in an otherwise hugely-successful season.

"That race was a cruel reminder of how quickly things can go wrong in our sport and that reliability and performance go hand in hand in F1," he said. "This year, our race finishing record has been good, but it would be complacent to ignore the fact that for two weekends in a row now, our mechanics had to perform the equivalent of 'open-heart surgery' on our cars. "We've faced a number of different issues on different components, each of which could have easily caused us to retire, so we need to get on top of those challenges as quickly as possible."

Despite those emergencies in Montreal and Le Castellet, Mercedes proved they have the resources and staff to cope and respond — demonstrating why they are an exceptional champion team and not solely reliant on Hamilton's extraordinary talent. Furthermore, despite their clear supremacy and record run of eight successive season-opening wins, Wolff has been at pains to suggest

recent criticism of the sport has been misjudged and, some observers believe, may indicate a widespread lack of understanding or other factors.

### Unexpected twists

In particular, he pointed out that Hamilton is under-appreciated, notably in his native Britain, and should be recognized as "maybe the best driver that has ever existed." He also warned that Spielberg's short lap, the altitude in the Styrian Alps, and forecasts of another weekend of searing heat, could make cooling a problem for everyone and throw up a race packed with unexpected twists. "What is clear for us is that we need to keep working diligently, stay humble and give it everything to do a better job than we managed 12 months ago," he said. Rivals Ferrari, meanwhile, still stinging from the setbacks suffered in Canada and France, plan to introduce more upgrades as they seek to resolve their car's performance problems.

They used a new floor and updated front and rear wings at Le Castellet, without success, reverting back to a previous floor during the weekend. "We brought some upgrades, some worked well, others not," said team boss Mattia Binotto. "I think it's always a shame when something is not working so we've got some homework to do, but that's ensuring that we've got some margin to improve the car." He added that Ferrari were set to consider reducing outright straight-line speed in favor of adding down-force to improve cornering. After finishing third, with Charles Leclerc, and seventh, with Sebastian Vettel, Binotto said they were pleased to be racing again immediately. "We are happy to be getting back on track so quickly because it's the best way to put ourselves to the test." — AFP

## Sports

# USA's Rapinoe takes on France and now her own president

**PARIS:** Megan Rapinoe, the US co-captain at the women's World Cup, has incurred the wrath of President Donald Trump who warned her not to "disrespect" her country after a video emerged of her vowing she would never go to the White House. Fearless and ferocious, Rapinoe finds herself facing battles on and off the field as her side prepare to face host nation France in the quarter-finals today.

The pink-haired attacking midfielder showed she is the USA's go-to-woman as she scored the two penalty kicks to put her side into the last eight with a 2-1 victory over Spain. But as she prepared on Wednesday for the biggest match of the tournament — one of the biggest ever in women's football — Rapinoe found herself facing unfriendly fire from her own president.

In a series of tweets, Trump accused Rapinoe, one of the most recognizable faces of the US team, of "disrespect" after the broadcast of a video clip in which Rapinoe dismissed the idea of visiting the White House if the US team win the World Cup. "I'm not going to the f\*\*king White House," Rapinoe said in the clip on Eight by Eight, a football magazine, repeating a point she had made before.

A furious Trump wasted no time in wading into the latest of his public feuds with high-profile athletes and celebrities. He first pointed out that until the US team won the World Cup they would not be invited to the White House. Then he picked up on video that showed Rapinoe not singing the national anthem before games.

"Megan should never disrespect our Country, the White House, or our Flag, especially since so much has been done for her & the team. Be proud of the Flag that you wear," the

president tweeted. Rapinoe, who has 156 caps and 47 international goals, is one of the four co-captains alongside Carli Lloyd, Becky Sauerbrunn and Alex Morgan. Lloyd has largely been used as a replacement for Morgan, who was not at her best against Spain and may still be carrying a knock, while Sauerbrunn's basic error led to Spain's equalizer, two minutes after Rapinoe gave the USA an early lead.

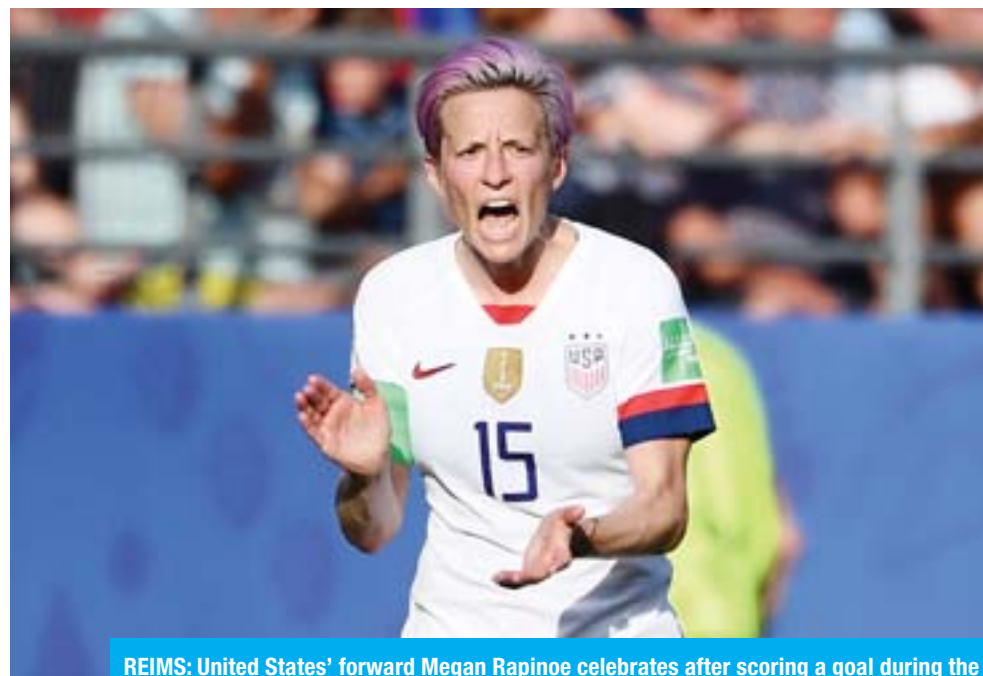
"She'll never have to buy another drink in her life because she bailed me out and she bailed the team out," said Sauerbrunn after Monday's win. It looks as though Rapinoe could get her wish for a "total sh\*t-show circus" at the Parc des Princes. Tickets for the match are fetching hundreds of euros on resale websites.

## 'Not going to fake it'

The French women, replete with the stars of Lyon, Europe's finest club side, are seeking their first ever World Cup and that means ending the USA's supremacy. "I think this is the game that everyone had circled. It's going to be a great match," said Rapinoe. For Rapinoe, the circus this week has also been off the field.

She had long signaled her unwillingness to visit the White House, joining other US sports stars to refuse to go since Trump became president. "I am not going to fake it, hobnob with the president, who is clearly against so many of the things that I am for and so many of the things that I actually am," Rapinoe told Sports Illustrated.

In 2012, she came out as gay shortly before playing a key role in the US women's gold medal-win at the London Olympics. She has since fought for LGBT rights. There were calls



**REIMS:** United States' forward Megan Rapinoe celebrates after scoring a goal during the France 2019 Women's World Cup round of sixteen football match between Spain and USA, on June 24, 2019, at the Auguste-Delaune stadium. —AFP

for her to be dumped by the national team after she supported NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick's 2016 protests by kneeling in solidarity during the national anthem. She is one of the leaders of the US women's fight for pay equality — they filed a lawsuit against the United States Soccer Federation in March accusing the organization of gender discrimination. "In every aspect of life, the more we can tackle the in-

equality from a lot a different angles, perspectives, different lanes the quicker we can rectify the problem," Rapinoe has said. Her willingness to stand up in key moments could be necessary in a feverish atmosphere in the French capital. "I feel pretty good when she's on penalties," said Rose Lavelle, who won the controversial second spot-kick against Spain. "I've watched her my whole life, she's clutch." —AFP

## Lampard will succeed as Chelsea manager: Terry

**LONDON:** Frank Lampard can be a successful manager of Chelsea due to his work ethic and ability to thrive under pressure, says close friend and fellow club legend John Terry. Lampard — who along with Terry won a treasure trove of trophies including three Premier League titles and the 2012 Champions League — is expected to leave second tier Derby after just one season in management and become Chelsea's new manager.

Maurizio Sarri's departure for Juventus after one season — in which they won the Europa League and qualified for the Champions League — opened the way for Lampard's return. Terry told the Daily Mail it is not because of their close friendship he believes Lampard — who will become the 14th manager since Russian oligarch Roman Abramovich bought the club in 2003 — will succeed in difficult circumstances.

He believes Lampard has the right stuff to meet the challenges head on. The thorniest could be the fact that Chelsea cannot replace their star player Eden Hazard — who signed for Real Madrid — due to a transfer ban although they are appealing it. "After the season he has had with Derby and with Chelsea's transfer ban in place, there is no-one better

equipped than Frank to succeed at Chelsea," said Terry. "It is perfect timing for him and the club." Terry, who is assistant coach at newly-promoted Premier League outfit Aston Villa, said Lampard is excellent in dealing with pressure.

## Dedication

"Frank was under pressure to succeed at Chelsea the day he arrived from West Ham (2001) and he never hid from that," said Terry. "He reveled in it and went on to become Chelsea's greatest-ever player. "What made him that player was his desire to drain every ounce out of his body and that of everyone around him in training.

"People would be amazed at his goal return but they just didn't realize how much dedication was put into that and his whole game. "He is just as exacting on himself now as a manager." Terry says that Lampard can use the transfer ban to get the best out of the young players coming through the Chelsea academy.

Sarri was criticized for not playing talented youngster Callum Hudson-Odoi enough and appeared reluctant also to field Ruben Loftus-Cheek, despite the 23-year-old midfielder having caught the eye for England at the 2018 World Cup. "For some time, perhaps only myself and Ruben Loftus-Cheek had come through the academy to become regulars and that has probably left many young players questioning their future," said Terry. "Callum Hudson-Odoi will be assured he has a big role to play at Chelsea. "Having Frank in charge and the transfer ban will give young players throughout the academy belief that there is a genuine pathway into Chelsea's first team." — AFP

## Rooney smashes winning goal from inside his own half

**LOS ANGELES:** Wayne Rooney scored a sensational goal with a blast from his own half for his US club DC United that triggered social media storm of applause across the globe yesterday. His 'goal of the season' lifted United to a 1-0 victory over Orlando City on Wednesday and saw the veteran former England striker dance an excited little jig.

The ex-Manchester United star hammered a 68-yard strike over the head of Orlando goalkeeper Brian Rowe and into the back of the net in the 10th minute. "I thought it was nice and it was special to score the goal this evening," Rooney told the DC United web site. Rooney was the most advanced DC United player as his team defended in depth. When the ball was hoofed clear, two City men converged but only deflected it into Rooney's path.

Facing the Orlando goal and with the ball bouncing in front of him, Rooney saw Rowe was out of his 18 yard box and smashed a first-time shot. As the ball swerved and dipped over the despairing goalkeeper, Rooney broke into a brief dance. He spread his arms wide in celebration as the ball curled inside the near post for one of Major League Soccer's goals of the year.

"It's something that I've practiced so many times," Rooney said. "Different managers and teammates are, like, why are you practicing this, you won't score from this position, but for nights like tonight that's why I do practice it." —AFP

## Sports

# Salah sends Egypt into Cup of Nations last 16

**CAIRO:** Mohamed Salah scored his first goal of the Africa Cup of Nations as hosts Egypt secured a place in the last 16 on Wednesday with a 2-0 win over the Democratic Republic of Congo. Ahmed Elmohamady prodded Egypt ahead on 25 minutes after a wicked Salah cross and the Liverpool star slammed in a second shortly before half-time to spark frenzied celebrations at a packed Cairo International Stadium.

Record seven-time champions Egypt rode their luck at times as DR Congo twice struck the crossbar in the first half but the Group A leaders held firm to join Nigeria as the first teams through to the knockout phase. Egypt overcame the distraction of Amr Warda being banished from the squad earlier in the day over mounting sexual harassment allegations. The claims surfaced earlier this week on social media platforms. Multiple women posted screenshots and testimonies of Warda's alleged lewd comments.

"I think the team is strong and the squad is strong but we are not happy to lose a member of our family," said coach Javier Aguirre. "The team focused more on our match and played the 90 minutes in a serious manner. I don't think the Egyptian team will be affected by the absence of anyone." Mexican Aguirre fielded the same side that defeated Zimbabwe 1-0, with centre-back Ahmed Hegazy sporting a mask after breaking his nose in the opening game of the tournament.

Salah was guilty of missing a hatful of chances in the curtain-raiser and this season's

Premier League joint top scorer again threatened inside five minutes here when an interception broke his way only for the Egyptian to skew wide under pressure. After four days of small crowds, another capacity 75,000 crowd turned out to cheer on the hosts in the capital, but they were nearly silenced when Marcel Tisserand slammed against the bar at a corner.

## Salah takes over

DR Congo came to Egypt as one of the most unpredictable qualifiers having finished third in 2015 only to make a timid quarter-final exit two years ago, and they fell behind for the second straight game as Elmohamady forced home after the ball fell kindly to him following an aerial challenge with Christian Luyindama. Having created the opener with his vicious right-wing cross, Salah then stung the palms of Ley Matampi with a powerful 25-yard free-kick.

Egypt would be rescued by the woodwork once more though when a deep cross was nodded back across goal by Bokadi Bope and Jonathan Bolingi's looping header bounced back off the bar. With his side riding their luck, Salah rose to the occasion and settled Egyptian nerves two minutes before half-time with a typically brilliant finish.

Played into space down the right by Mahmoud 'Trezeguet' Hassan, Salah skipped inside Tisserand and ripped a crisp low drive inside Matampi's near post to cue a volcanic eruption from the masses of delirious Egyptian support-



**CAIRO:** Egypt's forward Mohamed Salah (C) kicks the ball and scores a goal during the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations (CAN) football match between Egypt and DR Congo at the Cairo International Stadium. — AFP

ers. Mohamed El Shenawy produced an excellent sprawling second-half save to claw out a Jacques Maghoma header, but despite an improvement on a horror first outing, DR Congo now know they must beat Zimbabwe in their final game in order to possibly advance as one of the four best third-place finishers.

"The feelings are mixed when you play such

a match. Unfortunately we lost so the feeling is one of hurt, particularly for my players. They gave a lot and fought hard but didn't get the result," said DR Congo coach Florent Ibenge, whose side fell 2-0 to Uganda in their opening match. "We've got one match left against Zimbabwe and we can hope for third place. We're going to fight until the end." — AFP

## Morocco's coach hopes to torment Ivory Coast again

**CAIRO:** Since transforming perennial underachievers the Ivory Coast into African champions four years ago, Herve Renard has tormented them as coach of Morocco. The 50-year-old Frenchman, whose matchday shirts are always white, ensured the 2017 title defense of the Ivorians did not last beyond the first round as the fell 1-0 to the Moroccans.

Renard inflicted more misery on his former team in 2018 World Cup qualifying with a 2-0 triumph in Abidjan taking Morocco to Russia at the expense of the Ivory Coast. Considered potential winners of the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations in Egypt, Morocco and the Ivory Coast meet Friday in a Group D top-of-the-table showdown in Cairo. "This is a special game for me," said Renard, the only coach to win the Cup of Nations with two countries, Zambia and the Ivory Coast. Here, AFP Sport previews the Group D doubleheader with the Ivory Coast-Morocco clash followed by Namibia against South Africa, while Group E leaders Mali face Tunisia in Suez.

### Ivory Coast v Morocco

Both countries launched their campaigns with solitary-goal victories in sweltering mid-afternoon Cairo heat, but the Ivorians will have been the happier side. While they outmuscled South Africa and should have won by more than a Jonathan Kodjia strike, Morocco laboured to a win that came via a late Itamunua Keimuine own-goal.

Ivory Coast coach Ibrahim Kamara said "the result was more important than the performance. It was critical

not to fail in our opening match". Rather than slam a lack-luster Moroccan display, Renard hailed Namibia: "They were well organized and coached." While both nations should make the last 16, winning the group would set up a fixture against one of the third-place qualifiers while coming second means taking on the Group E winners.

### Namibia v South Africa

Namibia coach Ricardo Manneli played for his country when they were humiliated 4-1 by South Africa at the 1998 Cup of Nations in Burkina Faso "The best way to banish those memories would be to beat Bafana Bafana (The Boys). We have never won a Cup of Nations match and that is our priority," he said. "My players were heart-broken after holding Morocco for 89 minutes and then losing to an own-goal." South Africa were inept against the Ivorians and this match could decide which country sneaks through as a third-place finisher and which makes an early exit. England-born coach Stuart Baxter has warned his players not to underestimate Namibia because "this match is like a cup final for them".

### Mali v Tunisia

Tunisia coach and former France star Alain Giresse knows what to expect from Mali as he coached them twice at the Cup of Nations with mixed results. Under him, the Malians came third at the 2012 Cup of Nations in Gabon but made a first round exit in the same country two years ago without winning a match. Now Giresse hopes to bring the Malian Eagles down to earth after they achieved the biggest win of the 12 first series matches in Egypt, a 4-1 hammering of debutants Mauritania. The Mali scorers included burly Moussa Marega, who notched six goals for Porto in the Champions League last season, the equal third best tally. Tunisia were the only one of the six top group seeds not to collect maximum points and midfielder Ferjani Sassi blamed "an inability to convert chances" for a 1-1 draw with Angola. — AFP

## Neymar wants Barcelona return: Club's vice-president

**BARCELONA:** Brazilian superstar Neymar wants to return to Barcelona two years after quitting the club to join Paris Saint-Germain, Barcelona's vice-president said yesterday. "What is correct, at the current time, what I have read, what I have heard, which seems exact, is that Neymar wants to come back to Barcelona," Jordi Cardoner told a press conference at the Camp Nou.

But he stressed that Barcelona had made no contact so far with the world's most expensive footballer who joined the French champions for 222 million euros (\$252 million). For the moment the club acknowledged Neymar's interest in returning to Barcelona but said there was no recruitment effort on their part to resign him. "To say that Barca is working on recruiting Neymar, that is something I cannot agree with," Cardoner said.

"For the moment all that is happening — and not only with Neymar — is that a number of players would like to play for a great club like Barcelona. We will see what happens in timely fashion." "We are currently working on the phase of deciding which players we will not be keeping on next season," said Cardoner.

"We are recruiting no-one at the moment, especially not this player (Neymar) with whom we have had no contact." However, media reports indicated that intermediaries between PSG and Barca had hammered out the terms of the deal which would free the Brazilian star to return to Barcelona this summer.

According to other Spanish media reports this week, Neymar has offered to take a pay cut of 12 million euros a year to return to the club and Barca have reached a 'verbal agreement' to take him back. The 27-year-old spent four years at Camp Nou, winning the Champions League in 2015 and two La Liga titles in a potent attacking trio alongside Lionel Messi and Luis Suarez. — AFP

## Sports

# The gunslinger, assassin and predator: Uruguay-Peru promises a fun goal fest

**SALVADOR:** Have you heard the one about the gunslinger, the assassin and the predator? Football fans in Salvador attending the Copa America quarter-final between Uruguay and Peru soon will because that's what's in store for them on Saturday. Three of South America's most feared forwards will square off, weapons cocked and ready for battle.

Uruguay's Luis Suarez scored 25 goals for Barcelona last season and Edinson Cavani managed 23 for Paris Saint-Germain. Lining up opposite them will be Peru's Paolo Guerrero, a player who netted nine times for Brazil's Internacional since April after returning from a 14-month doping ban. With that kind of firepower on the pitch, fans in the northern Brazilian city should be in for a feast of goals.

"Suarez and Cavani are irreplaceable," said Uruguay's coach Oscar Tabarez a few months ago. "Given their incredibly high performance level, we can expect to achieve much more." Only hosts Brazil scored more goals than Uruguay in the group stages — in part thanks to a 5-0 thrashing of a self-destructing Peru in their final pool match — and only pitch-perfect Colombia managed a better record.

Uruguay's dynamic duo, both from Salto in the north west, are feeling confident ahead of the knock-out stages of a competition the country has won a record 15 times. "We're one of the potential winners. We're Uruguay, the team that has won the Copa America the most times, and we need to demonstrate this by win-

ning matches," said 32-year-old Suarez, the gunslinger, his country's all-time record goalscorer with 58. He's scored three times against Peru in the Copa America alone.

He and Cavani have found the net twice each here in Brazil, with the PSG forward bagging the crucial winner in Monday's 1-0 success over champions Chile that allowed Uruguay to top Group C. "We needed to win, we wanted to top the group and give a good account of ourselves and continue with this attitude," said 'the assassin' Cavani, 32, second only to Suarez with 48 international goals.

## The Predator

Lining up in Peru's attack will be their own all-time top scorer, Paolo Guerrero (37 goals). Alongside Eduardo Vargas of Chile, he's also the top active Copa America goalscorer with 12. Guerrero began his senior career in Germany and after a decade at Bayern Munich and then Hamburg, he left for Brazil where he helped Corinthians win the Club World Cup, scoring the only goal in the final against Chelsea.

But Corinthians' home stadium in Sao Paulo was the scene of Peru's painful scolding against the hosts and that's something Guerrero wants to put right.

"We have a rematch where we can make amends, we can do better, correct our mistakes," said 'the Predator' about Peru's quarter-final tie. Guerrero, 35, is also raring to go



RIO DE JANEIRO: Peru's Paolo Guerrero (L) scores past Bolivia's Adrian Jusino after eluding goalkeeper Carlos Lampe (out of frame) during their Copa America football tournament group match at Maracana Stadium. —AFP

after serving a 14-month doping suspension after testing positive for traces of cocaine. While other players are at the end of a long hard season, Guerrero is much fresher having played only a couple of months of football before the tournament began.

With a combined age of 99, time is not on

the side of these three veteran strikers and this may well be one of the last major competitions any of them features in. The era of the gunslinger, the assassin and the predator may soon be at an end, but football fans will be hoping they combine in explosive fashion tomorrow. —AFP

## Altidore bicycle kick puts US into quarter-final

**LOS ANGELES:** Jozy Altidore scored with an overhead kick as the United States finished first in its CONCACAF Gold Cup group with a 1-0 win over Panama on Wednesday. The US won all three of its Group D contests without conceding a goal and will now face Curacao in the quarter-finals on Sunday.

The Americans, who famously missed out on the 2018 FIFA World Cup after losing to Trinidad, wanted to win Wednesday to avoid playing Jamaica in the quarters. Jamaica beat the US 1-0 earlier this month when they met in a friendly in Washington, DC. The US is almost assured of advancing to the semis as they now face the tiny Caribbean Island of Curacao, who advanced despite scoring just two goals in group play. Curacao has a population of just 160,000 compared to the US with its population of 327 million.

Panama takes on Group C winners Jamaica on the same day. The other quarter-finals feature Canada against Haiti and Mexico facing Costa Rica. Both the US and Panama had chances to score in



KANSAS CITY: Jozy Altidore #17 of the United States celebrates after scoring during the second half of the CONCACAF Gold Cup match against Panama at Children's Mercy Park. —AFP

the first half but failed to finish. Panama goalkeeper Jose Calderon made a smart save off a left foot shot by Altidore in the 20th minute to keep it scoreless and that's how the teams went into halftime at Children's Mercy Park in Kansas City, Kansas.

Altidore's dynamic goal in the 66th minute was all the Americans would need to earn the three points. After a corner was headed back across the goalmouth, Altidore spun off a defender and beat

Calderon with a perfectly-timed bicycle kick. Altidore is coming back from a hamstring injury that forced him to take some time off. "It has been a rough time waiting," Altidore said. "I am just trying to get an opportunity again. To score again wearing these colors means everything to me." The goal was Altidore's 43rd for the national team, which ranks third all time behind the 57 of Clint Dempsey and Landon Donovan. —AFP

## Argentina's Armani wary of pacey outsiders Venezuela

**RIO DE JANEIRO:** Argentina goalkeeper Franco Armani warned his team-mates on Wednesday not to be caught out by minnows Venezuela when the sides meet in the Copa America quarter-finals. Argentina scraped into the knock-out rounds courtesy of a 2-0 win over invitees Qatar in their final pool match having gone into it bottom of Group B.

And now they're wary of avoiding a banana skin against the tournament minnows, one of only two of South America's 10 national sides — the other being Ecuador — never to win the Copa. "We need to score goals, to be very careful... to avoid a surprise," said the River Plate goalkeeper ahead of Friday's clash at Rio de Janeiro's Maracana stadium. Armani said Venezuela would "look to win back the ball quickly and attack" from the flanks, where "they have quick players."

And in Newcastle United forward Salomon Rondon, they have "a center-forward who holds up the ball well and has good movement." While 14-time former winners Argentina may have been a disappointment for many onlookers, Armani feels they are finding their form as they progress deeper into the competition. They began with a 2-0 defeat to Colombia before benefitting from a couple of contentious decisions in a 1-1 draw with Paraguay, only securing qualification to the latter stages with victory over Qatar. —AFP



CAIRO: Egypt's forward Mohamed Salah drives the ball during the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations (CAN) football match between Egypt and DR Congo at the Cairo International Stadium. — AFP

# Salah sends Egypt into Cup of Nations last 16

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