

# Friday Times

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## Local

## Year of disputes



Local Spotlight

By Muna Al-Fuzai  
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Unfortunately, the daily news has become violent and disturbing. There is either an internal crisis in a regime or public crisis and chaos. It is indeed a year of dispute and conflict, and it seems to me that no one is safe. When a neighbor's house burns down, the house next door will be affected by smoke.

I believe that all people want to live in peace and prosperity, but when this hope is not being realized, and especially when the poor get poorer and corruption is widespread, an explosion occurs. It is a natural end for desperate people.

When a public movement turns into a news report on television channels, then the situation becomes an embarrassment for the political authority. No leadership wants to show the world its failure or inability to run its state. Tightening sanctions and distorting the objectives of the protest are the most likely scenarios to show the

No leadership wants to show the world its failure or inability to run its state

world media that it is an external conspiracy and sabotage against the state. Sadly, the demands of poor people usually get ignored.

Nowadays, the most prominent examples of people's movements followed by the world are those of Iraqis and Lebanese, who took to the streets to express their rejection of corruption, especially in light of the deteriorating infrastructure and suffering of low-income people.

Iraq, for example, is a very rich country. So it is really painful to see images of poverty and death there. The Iraqi and Lebanese people deserve the best and should be able to live in prosperity. Another example is when beautiful Barcelona witnessed a fourth strike in less than two years calling for the independence of Catalonia. Crowds came to the city in protest against a decision of the supreme court. Protesters blocked some roads and dozens of flights were canceled.

The conflict between Spain and Catalonia is well known, but the images shown on television appear to be violent, and naturally there was loss of life and property. I felt sorry for the horrific situation and the people there.

I believe that the reason for conflict with authorities today is that man sees himself as a partner in the state and not a subordinate. Therefore, the absence of social justice will lead to creating strife and discord in society.

I believe political systems have a great role in eliminating conflicts by playing their natural role and serving all segments of society through social justice. They should set the right priorities for the poorest first, because all revolutions in the world have come from the hungry classes as they suffer the most. Only then can peace be achieved.

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



KUWAIT: Vehicles drive on a main highway in Kuwait during sunset. — Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

## Realizing grief

IN MY VIEW

By Noha Al-Awadi  
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I always imagined that grieving over a loved one would be a very perceptible moment in time. I was under the false impression that it would be something that could be measured, that the grief would have a defined beginning and an end. That it would only last for so long, whether it be weeks or months, or longer. That it would be an overwhelming emotion that would eventually pass.

Yet now, on the second anniversary of my mother's death, I think that I have started to realize what grief truly is. Or rather, I have come to understand how my grief has manifested itself within me.

Instead of it being a punctuated emotion, my grief is more like a million shards of glass that have seeped into every part of my being.

I have also come to the realization that while my grief metastasized in October 2017, it actually began in the summer of 2009. My mother's diagnosis of Progressive Supra Nuclear Palsy (PSP) was exactly when I began to mourn her eventual loss. Yes, she would continue to fight the horrid and relentless disease for eight defiant years, but still - I grieved. Those who have been handed down similar sentences of "lifespan expectancies" will understand this choking, suffocating emotion.

You begin to chart the course of the disease. As with all progressive conditions, you start to do the guess work. Mapping symptoms, charting where your loved one stands. Swallowing issues? It's okay, they can still talk. Voice gone? No worries, still no aspiration. Vision obliterated? Still responsive and alert. The voices, the negotiation inside your head, it is all an endless fight against the inevitable unknown.

And all along, unbeknownst to me, this was my grief. This was me mourning the eventual death of my mother. When she was admitted to hospital, where she would spend the last three weeks of her life, the triage doctor pronounced the diagnosis: pneumonia.

Up until that point in time, I had been poised, collected, extremely pragmatic and forever hopeful. I was a rock. I had to be. I was Mama's rock, and I knew she was depending on my fortitude. For eight years, my resilience was my armor.

But I also was well aware of what this diagnosis meant, and I knew that my grief would be catapulted into real time very, very soon.

So I cried. For the first time, I cried and cried and cried. In the emergency ward of Al-Amiri Hospital, I was already mourning the impending, ever-nearing, loss of my mother, a full three weeks before her actual passing.

Two years on, the grief has not dissipated, and I am not expecting it ever will.

Instead, I have learned to pick through the slivers of broken glass. I have trained myself to search for the shattered pieces and to carefully collect and arrange them. They are always with me; I proudly carry this beautiful box full of love and memories of a lifetime, wherever I go. These fragmented pieces, in their entirety, have become a part of me, and this is how I am realizing my grief.

In my mother's memory, I urge you to consider making a donation to support scientific research in to progressive neurological conditions. For more information, or to make a contribution, please visit [www.curepsp.org](http://www.curepsp.org) or [pspassociation.org.uk](http://pspassociation.org.uk)

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Local



Exploring Kuwait's historic areas:

# JAHRA

By Faten Omar

As part of our occasional series exploring various areas of Kuwait, Kuwait Times visited Jahra to learn more about this historical residential area.

Jahra is located to the northwest of Kuwait City and is connected by a series of ring roads. It is the capital and oldest area of Jahra governorate. The area was known for its wells and cultivation of palm trees and vegetables in the past, but with urbanization, the green cover has shrunk. Jahra also has some historic relevance to Kuwait's history, as the Red Palace was the site of a famous battle.

"Jahra is one of the largest governorates in Kuwait. It has undergone major development and transformation," resident Ahmed Al-Turki told Kuwait Times. He added Jahra has a historical national park, but the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources must take care of it to serve the people of the area, and concerned parties must pay more attention and make it beautiful again as it is located in the heart of the province in a strategic place.





## Local



Photos show public spaces in Jahra.  
—Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



“The Jahra nature reserve is a good place to visit, as it is located 19 km west of Kuwait Bay and is considered one of the most biologically diverse locations in the country with various species of animals, birds and fish dwelling there,” he said.

For Faisal Al-Areefan, Jahra is a great place to live, as it takes you back to the original and traditional way of life of Kuwait. “But we seek a solution to put an end to the recklessness of young people who drift in the area and endanger the lives of people.”

Abu Hamad told Kuwait Times that residents of old Jahra’s blocks 1 and 2 want more services, stressing the importance of developing the waterfront of Jahra to become an entertainment place for the people of the area. He added stray dogs are common in old Jahra and cause many injuries. “The area needs attention. Streets need maintenance, as flying gravel is damaging the windows of most cars,” he said.





## Local

## Is Kuwait heading backwards?

IN MY VIEW

By Nawara Fattahova

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Kuwait is at a cross roads. Will it develop and become a regional leader? Will it embrace the vision of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for the 2035 New Kuwait and open for growth in tourism, investment and entertainment? There are many in Kuwait who hope so. But there are also those who continue to push back against the efforts to develop the country.

While other neighbor countries are hosting international entertainment and cultural events, Kuwait is falling behind - stopping concerts in the middle of the performance or yanking permissions just as performers are ready to take the stage. Just recently the organizers for a concert of Iraqi singers was punished and had its licenses suspended after complaints of 'people dancing in the venue' despite there being a reported 42 inspectors from the Information Ministry present.

And everyone has been talking about the K-pop

## All these bans and cancellations damage Kuwait's reputation

band, D-Crunch, whose performance was at the last minute barred despite being sponsored by the National Council for Culture, Arts, and Letters in cooperation with the Korean Embassy in Kuwait on the occasion of the 40th anniversary for the bilateral relations.

The cancellation allegedly stemmed from reports that the band 'went against public morals' but no official reason was given and the band had been nothing but respectful of Kuwait, Arab and Islamic culture during its tour of the region and performances in Abu Dhabi and Saudi Arabia in previous weeks.

Though we are still a few weeks away from the Kuwait International Book Fair, we are pretty sure some books will be on the banned list - possibly even from local authors.

All these bans and cancellations damage the reputation of Kuwait and in some cases, its relations with other friendly nations. Moreover, they do nothing to stop access to any information which is now freely available to all via the internet.

Instead they make Kuwait look backwards and fearful rather than an open, development-focused future leader of the region. Such decisions undermine organizers and businesses that want to promote entertainment activities in Kuwait, discourage tourism and embarrass the country in front of the rest of the world.

Our neighbors once came to Kuwait to attend musical concerts, watch the latest movies in cinemas, and attend theatre plays on stage, now it's the opposite and we will have to travel to our neighbors for cultural tourism.



KUWAIT: American cyber security expert Guillermo Christensen speaks during the seminar. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## If you don't want to be hacked, think like a hacker: US cyber security expert

By Ben Garcia

**KUWAIT:** If you don't want to be hacked, then you should think like a hacker. This might sound a bit cliché, but according to Guillermo Christensen, an American cyber security expert, it is the way forward to survive in the era of cyber technology. He was speaking at a seminar entitled 'State Cyber Hacking: Looking Backwards to Light the Path Forward,' conducted at the American University of Kuwait (AUK) Wednesday evening. His visit to Kuwait is arranged through the US State Department's Speakers Program.

"In the past when the nations of the world fought many battles to win peace; the famous cliché was that if you want peace, prepare for war. Today, we have a new motto; if you do not want to be hacked, think like a hacker," Christensen said. "Our next battlefield will start from cyber security. Maybe by breaking security systems of the electricity grid of one nation. Or maybe, one country might attack another by hacking its energy systems, taking down all communications systems, etc."

"In some countries of the world, they are using internet to spread propaganda," he noted. "Their objective is to confuse people and to create discord among citizens. It is a very effective mechanism, and nowadays it is hard to tell where it comes from, what is the truth and not behind information we've got at hand from social media."

Christensen went on to mention historical incidents that resemble modern-day cyber hacking and used in warfare. "Cyber security in 1914: In World War I, there was a fleet in Canada waiting for the instructions to sail out in the ocean, its mission was to destroy the cable connection in the ocean

in order to cut off electricity and power signals of Germans. They did that deliberately, and they were very successful in doing so," he said. Christensen added that even telegraphs at that time were intercepted by a mathematician which also resulted to changing the course of war and history. They call that act 'information warfare.' "Hacking someone's communication can create a huge impact and could change country's history. We are exactly in the same ship right now, but this time, easier and much faster, the effect of that is there, but people would not even realize it. In the US 2016 elections, no one even realized that all these messages and emails were coming from the Russians, it took them times to realize it;

and its changed history, whether they changed the result of elections or not we don't know (yet)," he said.

On a separate interview, Christensen shared some facts of history so "that people will know and learn the lesson of the past." "Hacking is everywhere. There are already large amounts of money involved in hacking; money are being lost because of cyber hacking, and it is happening

everywhere," he said. "We are discussing with Kuwait the need for the government and private sectors to work together and cooperate. It's been a huge lesson we learned in the US and it took us 20 years to learn it well; and when we got it right, it made us possible for government and companies to respond to cyber threats and attack more quickly," he noted.

During Secretary Mike Pompeo's visit to Kuwait for the third US-Kuwait Strategic Dialogue in March 2019, both the US and Kuwaiti governments agreed on the need for close cooperation to prevent cyber threats. In September 2018, the US and Kuwait signed Letter of Intent on Cyber Security Cooperation.

“ Our next battlefield will start from cyber security ”



# Kuwait Times

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## Local

# Endorsing VAT requires National Assembly's approval: Kuwaiti official

## Gulf economic integration shouldn't be affected by differences: Kuwait

**RIYADH:** Kuwaiti Minister of Finance Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf said yesterday that the value-added tax (VAT) could not be imposed without approval of the National Assembly (parliament). Kuwait is a state of institutions and has a constitution, thus the VAT could not be enforced without consent of the National Assembly, Minister Hajraf stated. He was reacting to a question in this respect during a seminar, titled "The Middle East Welcomes Businesses: How the region has turned into an axis for international investments," held as part of the third Future Investment Initiative (FII) forum, hosted by the Saudi capital, Riyadh. Legislations and regulations are necessary to impose any tax, he said, also noting that other member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council namely Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain, had already endorsed and implemented the GCC VAT Treaty.

### Political views

Meanwhile, Hajraf said that GCC economic integration should not be affected by any differences, opinions or political views among some Member States of the Gulf Cooperation Council. Hajraf made his remarks at the "Middle East welcomes business" session yesterday, held as part of the forum with the participation of Saudi Finance Minister Mohammad Al-Jadaan and Bahraini Minister of Finance and National Economy Sheikh Salman Al-Khalifa. Minister Hajraf explained that the economy affects every citizen in all Gulf countries, "which is what we focus on in the Gulf Economic Committee," he added.

He stressed that what has been achieved during the past 30 years under the umbrella of the Gulf Cooperation Council is very good,

pointing out that the differences between the GCC countries happens in all countries of the world, "and we must work to resolve it," he said. Hajraf pointed out that the visions and plans of the GCC countries are working in an integrated manner, and support each other to achieve the best way to give the private sector the ability to play its role, stressing that the GCC states will work in the economic aspect in an integrated manner.

In the meantime, Saudi Minister Jadaan said "we are introducing Gulf resolutions every year in order to improve economic unification, such as allowing GCC citizens to do their business in any Gulf country as it citizens, which applies to most professions." "We, as ministers, meet at least twice a year and every time we work on new laws," he said.

### Global attention

Hajraf had earlier stressed the importance of the Future Investment Initiative, which has become the focus of the world's attention. Hajraf made the statement on Wednesday on the sidelines of the initiative, adding that the big participation of this year reflects the importance of the event. The initiative includes a number of key fields like energy, stock markets, banks, sovereign funds, alternative energy, technology, the impact on investment and infrastructure, he noted. In the initiative, there were meetings with a number of experiments all over the world that were keen to be present, he pointed out. "We listened to expertise of Brazil and India, the speech of Jordan's King Abdullah II and the vision of Saudi Arabia," the minister said.

Saudi Arabia's hosting of this key economic event for the third year in a row is a big success



**RIYADH:** Kuwaiti Minister of Finance Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf (second from right) participates in a seminar held as part of the third Future Investment Initiative (FII) forum. — KUNA

of the Kingdom, Hajraf said, expressing Kuwait's pride for this progress. He said this success is a success for Kuwait. Saudi Arabia, under the leadership of King Salman bin Abdulaziz and by the follow-up of Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman, has made many accomplishments in several domains, Hajraf made clear. He lauded Saudi Arabia's hosting of the annual G20 leaders' summit due in November, 2020, which is the biggest economic event.

This will be in favor of boosting economies of GCC member states, and reflects that the region is rich not only by oil but also by the minds

and ideas of its people and youth, he said. He also extolled all efforts made in preparing and organizing this event, hoping that it will continue and make further progress. The FII is organized by Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund and in the presence of a number of head of states and decision makers. The initiative held under the patronage of King Salman bin Abdulaziz and under the chairmanship of Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman seeks to shed light on future industries and enriching discussion on the ability of investment in contributing to pushing development in the world. — KUNA

## Kuwaiti PM receives KAA board



**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with members of Kuwait Arts Association's board of directors. — KUNA

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received yesterday at Seif Palace members of Kuwait Arts Association's board of directors, including its Chairman and

veteran Kuwaiti singer Abdulaziz Al-Mufarrej. The meeting was attended by Director of His Highness the Prime Minister's Diwan Sheikhha Etemad Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. —KUNA

## Kuwait's FM invited to OIC meeting in Doha

**KUWAIT:** Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah yesterday received an invitation from his Qatari counterpart, Sheikh Mohammad bin Abdulrahman AlThani, to partake in the ministerial meeting of the contact team tasked with Somalia within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The OIC meeting is scheduled in the Qatari capital, Doha, on November 3. Sheikh Sabah Khaled received the written invitation during a reception of the Qatari Ambassador to Kuwait Bandar Al-Atiyah. The meeting was attended by the Assistant Foreign Minister for Affairs of the Bureau of the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, and a number of senior officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled received credentials of the new Cambodian Ambassador to Kuwait Hun Han. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled expressed during reception of the new Cambodian envoy to the country, held in his bureau at the Foreign Ministry headquarters, his hope that the ambassador would be successful in his new mission. The Kuwaiti minister also hoped relations between Kuwait and Cambodia would be boosted further. The meeting was attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah, Ambassador Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad, Assistant Foreign Minister for Protocol Affairs Ambassador Dhari Al-Ajran and a number of senior officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. — KUNA



# Customs to destroy 6,500 kg fake goods shipment stopped at airport

## Watches, bags, other products carrying logos of famous trademarks

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Airport customs foiled an attempt to smuggle into Kuwait counterfeit products that arrived in a shipment weighing 6,500 kilograms from an Asian country yesterday. The goods, which contained watches, bags and other products carrying logos of famous trademarks, will be destroyed according to customs rules. Meanwhile, customs officers arrested a number of passengers yesterday who were found in possession of marijuana, psychoactive drugs and narcotic drops at Kuwait International Airport. In other news, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry announced that a company was referred to commercial prosecution for selling shoes with pictures of mosques and Islamic decorations on them. Hawally commercial supervision department confiscated the goods that were on display at a garments and shoes store.



**KUWAIT:** Fake goods found in a shipment that arrived to Kuwait yesterday.



**Drugs found with passengers at Kuwait International Airport.**

## Municipal Council team tours Clean Fuel Project

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** A Municipal Council team visited yesterday the Clean Fuel Project's site along with Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) officials to inspect environmental aspects and construction's progress. Chairman of the Municipal Council Osama Al-Otaibi said that the delegation confirmed during the visit that the project meets the highest international environmental standards, expressing pride in the fact that "Kuwaiti youth are working on such major projects."

"We are looking forward for the completion of the project which is 98 percent complete," Otaibi said, adding that the council supports KNPC and plans to allocate more lands for it. Otaibi was accompanied in the tour by his deputy Abdullah Al-Mahri and members Dr Hassan Kamal, Maha Al-Baghli, Meshaal Al-Hamdhan, and Abdelsalam Al-Randi, as well as the council's secretary general Bader Al-Rifae.

Meanwhile, KNPC Deputy CEO for Projects Abdullah Al-Ajmi said the company was honored to receive the delegation, noting that some units at the Clean Fuel Project are already operational and others are being commissioned successively. He added that the project's budget is KD 4.680 billion, including KD 4.198 that have already been spent, noting that the total budget is enough to complete the project.

In other news, Kuwait Municipality's public relations said that the capital governorate inspectors carried out several field campaigns lately, which resulted in issuing 10 warnings for violations detected in buildings in Jaber Al-Ahmad.

## KU won't reduce minimum GPA for admission

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait University (KU) rejected demands to reduce the minimum GPA average for admission in its colleges during the next academic year. The call to drop down the minimum GPA required for high school graduates

to be entitled for KU admission came after the opening of its Shadadiya campus, which can take a larger number of students. The minimum GPA was raised in recent years based on claims that KU's old buildings could not take more than 7,000 new students a year.

Some MPs had reportedly made requests with Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Hamed Al-Azmi to issue a decision to increase the number of general secondary graduates accepted into KU to more than 7,000, and admit all applicants, suggesting that this can be made possible by simply reducing the GPA requirements.

When the source was asked about the possibility of increasing the number of expatriate

students, they said the university continues its policy of accepting the top 10 graduates in the science and arts divisions, the education minister scholarships, diplomatic missions, seats as decided by the university, in addition to expatriate children of Kuwaiti women.

In other news, several educational allied services employees staged a sit-in at the Education Ministry's building in protest of being left out of bonuses that were approved for education ministry employees, and warned they may give up supervisory jobs. Protesters rejected what they described as "marginalization of allied educational jobs," and being not included in the financial raise that was approved by the Civil Service Council.



**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Municipality's Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh cleanliness center arrested roaming vendors who sold meat in Hassawi, in a campaign that was conducted upon instructions of director of the area's cleanliness department. — By Hanan Al-Saadoun





New deadly quake hits southern Philippines

## Indonesia 'bride kidnapping' tradition fuels child marriage

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RAHIM YAR KHAN: Residents gather beside the burnt-out train carriages after a passenger train caught on fire near Rahim Yar Khan in Punjab province yesterday. — AFP

# 74 killed in Pakistan train fire

## Cooking gas cylinders explode on a train packed with pilgrims

**RAHIM YAR KHAN:** At least 74 people were killed and dozens injured after cooking gas cylinders exploded on a train packed with pilgrims in Pakistan yesterday, some dying after leaping from carriages to escape the inferno, authorities said. Television footage showed flames pouring out of three carriages as people could be heard crying during the incident, in a rural area of central Punjab province.

Some of the passengers - many of whom were pilgrims travelling to one of Pakistan's biggest religious gatherings - had been cooking breakfast when two of their gas cylinders exploded, Ali Nawaz, a senior Pakistan Railways official said. Many Pakistanis carry food on long train journeys, but gas cylinders are supposedly banned. Pakistan's railways minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed later told reporters that it had been a "mistake" to allow the cylinders on board.

Dozens of people crowded along the tracks staring at the burning carriages, which had been disconnected from the rest of the train, television images showed. Firefighters rushed to the scene near Rahim Yar Khan district. Rescue workers and soldiers could also be seen, as bodies were carried away covered in white sheets. "A cylinder exploded and I don't know how, fire erupted everywhere," one survivor, Muhammad Imran, told AFP from a hospital in Rahim Yar

Khan. "I jumped out of the train to save my life. There was a whole line of people behind me, they pushed," he said.

Muhammad Nadeem Zia, a medical superintendent at the hospital in Liaquatpur, the nearest town, told AFP some of the victims were killed by head injuries sustained as they leapt from the moving train. He said at least 44 people had been injured. Those hurt were being rushed to hospitals in the nearby city of Bahawalpur and elsewhere in Rahim Yar Khan district. Officials said many of the bodies were charred beyond recognition. Prime Minister Imran Khan said he was "deeply saddened" by the tragedy and had ordered an urgent inquiry.

### Religious pilgrimage

Khan said the train was the Tezgam, one of Pakistan's oldest and most popular rail services, which runs between the southern port city of Karachi to the garrison city of Rawalpindi, neighboring Islamabad. It had been diverted to facilitate the religious pilgrims travelling to Lahore. Passengers were travelling to attend the annual Tablighi Ijtema, one of Pakistan's biggest religious gatherings, which each year sees up to 400,000 people descend on a tented village outside Lahore for several days to sleep, pray and eat together. The majority of those killed

were pilgrims from southern Sindh province, Nawaz said.

The Tablighi Ijtema, which began yesterday and concludes on Sunday, was founded by religious scholars more than five decades ago and focuses exclusively on preaching Islam. It usually sees hundreds of camps and sub-camps set up on the dusty site outside Lahore to accommodate people from across Pakistan, giving the gathering a festival feel. Stalls sell cooked food, raw chicken and meat, vegetables and fruit, and even electrical appliances and batteries for mobile phones at a subsidized rate.

Railways minister Ahmed said it had been "tradition" for authorities to allow people travelling to the festival to board trains carrying cooking cylinders. "I admit our mistake... this will not happen in the future," he told journalists in televised comments from the nearby city of Multan. "A tragedy that could have been avoided but ever since I can recall while travelling by train no baggage check or restrictions enforced," human rights minister Shireen Mazari tweeted.

### 'Could have been avoided'

Nawaz said two of the carriages were economy coaches, while one was business class, and that up to 88 passengers can fit into each. Train accidents are common in Pakistan, where

the railways have seen decades of decline due to corruption, mismanagement and lack of investment. In July, at least 23 people were killed in the same district when a passenger train coming from the eastern city of Lahore rammed into a goods train that had stopped at a crossing. Accidents often happen at unmanned crossings, which frequently lack barriers and sometimes signals.

### Amir sends condolences

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent yesterday a cable of condolences to President of Pakistan Aref Alvi. His Highness the Amir expressed his deepest condolences and sincere sorrow over victims of the train fire accident, which took place earlier in northeastern Pakistan and led to death and injury of dozens of people. His Highness prayed to Allah Almighty to bestow His mercy and forgiveness upon the deceased victims, inhabit them in His wide paradise, inspire their families with patience and solace, and grant the wounded a swift recovery and wellness. On their part, 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 to the Pakistani President. — Agencies



# Saudi Arabia opens doors to tourists amid reforms

## New tourism industry faces huge training challenge

**RIYADH:** Saudi Arabia has opened its doors to tourists, but faces huge challenges to train an estimated one million staff needed to operate the sector, according to the head of one forthcoming mega-project. The ultra-conservative kingdom announced in September that it would offer tourist visas for the first time, relaxing rules that had largely restricted visits to business travelers and Muslim pilgrims.

But despite a slick global advertising campaign, Saudi tourism infrastructure is still scant - in contrast to its ambitions to welcome 100 million visitors by 2030. The Red Sea Project, to be built across an archipelago of 90 islands and stretching into nearby deserts and mountains, will open for business in 2022, its CEO John Pagano said at a major investment forum in Riyadh.

"The challenges are going to be related to investing in our people, training the workforce that we need for the future," he told AFP on the conference sidelines. "A million people will be working in the tourism sector, so we need a country-scale initiative to train tourism professionals." The first phase of the mega-project off the Saudi port city of Jeddah envisages 14 luxury hotels built on five islands, with resorts in the mountains beyond.

Unlike other destinations around the Red Sea, led by Egypt and Israel, Saudi Arabia is opting for a luxury tourism model along the

lines of the successful industries in Oman and the United Arab Emirates. "We are going to limit the number of visitors because over-tourism is a major cause of environmental damage," Pagano said. But he added that the Red Sea project alone promises to deliver 70,000 jobs and \$5.9 billion towards Saudi GDP annually.

"In Saudi Arabia, tourism makes up just 3.4 percent of GDP so there is a huge opportunity to grow in an industry that currently doesn't exist," he said. Developing tourism is one of the major planks of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's drive to wean the economy off its decades-long dependence on oil revenues. The Crown Prince has sought to shake off his country's ultra-conservative image, lifting a ban on cinemas and women drivers as well as allowing concerts and sporting extravaganzas.

But Saudi Arabia, which forbids alcohol and enforces strict rules on gender segregation, may not be the easiest sell for global tourists. To encourage visitors, authorities announced they would allow unmarried foreign couples to rent hotel rooms together, and that foreign women were not obliged to wear the body-shrouding abaya that is still expected in public for Saudi women.

"The best way to face the challenges is to open the country up, show what's happening," Pagano said. "This country is going through a



**AL-ULA:** Photo shows an aerial view of the Elephant rock in the Ula desert near the northwestern Saudi town of Al-Ula. Citizens from 49 countries are now eligible for tourist visas online or on arrival to Saudi Arabia, thanks to a landmark decision enacted last month, relaxing rules that had largely restricted visits to business travelers and Muslim pilgrims, with the authorities banking on large cities like the capital Riyadh and the western Red Sea port of Jeddah through large-scale investments, including in entertainment. — AFP

major transformation, every day you see new things happening that people said would never happen." "By the process of tourism we are

going to change the perception of the wider public, by people coming, physically experiencing what Saudi Arabia has to offer." — AFP

## CIA-backed militants killing with impunity

**KABUL:** CIA-backed Afghan paramilitary groups operating with impunity are summarily executing civilians during botched nighttime raids and are responsible for the disappearances of suspects, a rights group said yesterday. The secretive militias, whose support from America's Central Intelligence Agency continues a tradition stemming from the Soviet-Afghan war of the 1980s, have long hunted the Taliban and are seen as an important tool as the war against the insurgents intensifies.

But their rough tactics have long sparked controversy across Afghanistan. In a report, Human Rights Watch (HRW) documented 14 cases from late 2017 to mid-2019 in which it said CIA-backed "strike groups" committed serious abuses during night raids, such as one in the southeastern province of Paktia in which a paramilitary unit killed 11 men, including eight who were home for the Eid holidays. The CIA disputed the HRW report, saying many of the claims against Afghan militias were "likely false or exaggerated." In several cases, the raids - usually in Taliban-controlled areas - were accompanied by air strikes that "indiscriminately or disproportionately" killed civilians, HRW said, and sometimes, troops detained men and didn't tell families where they were being held.

According to data released this week by NATO, the US conducted 1,113 air and artillery strikes in September, a big increase on previous months that came as talks between the US and the Taliban collapsed. Night raids - where special forces troops blast doors and rush a building under the cover of dark - are a popular tactic that combines surprise, overwhelming firepower and night-vision equipment to stun occupants.

"In ramping up operations against the Taliban, the CIA has enabled abusive Afghan forces to commit atrocities including extrajudicial

executions and disappearances," said Patricia Gossman, the report author and HRW's associate Asia director. "In case after case, these forces have simply shot people in their custody and consigned entire communities to the terror of abusive night raids and indiscriminate air strikes."

### 'Death squads'

Afghan authorities and US forces have increased the use of paramilitary groups to combat a resurgent Taliban that has been hammering Afghanistan's beleaguered national security forces. Ostensibly part of the National Directorate of Security (NDS) but often operating almost independent of Afghan authorities, paramilitary forces do not fall under normal command chains and so have less oversight. Speaking to HRW, one diplomat referred to them as "death squads." CIA spokesman Timothy Barrett said the clandestine agency conducts its global operations in "accordance with law and under a robust system of oversight." He blamed the Taliban for sowing misinformation and noted that the insurgents do not operate under any similar rules.

"Unlike the Taliban, the United States is committed to the rule of law," CIA officials added in a statement. "We neither condone nor would knowingly participate in illegal activities, and we continually work with our foreign partners to promote adherence to the law." But Afghanistan's Office of the National Security Council, which oversees the NDS, said in a statement that the HRW report "reflected some realities", noting there was "some information that requires clarification."

"We are undertaking further reform initiatives to enable us to deal with these issues," the office said. Afghan militias have largely been recruited, trained, equipped, and overseen by the CIA, according to HRW. Ties date back to the 1980s, when the CIA was funneling money and equipment to Afghan rebels and mujahideen fighting Soviet troops. After a lull during the Taliban regime in the 1990s, the CIA re-established ties with warlords and militias fighting the insurgency following the September 11, 2001 attacks. — AFP

## No more dead ends: App helps navigate graveyards

**JERUSALEM:** An Israeli-developed app offers turn-by-turn voice directions to help cemetery visitors navigate large graveyards in search of a loved-one's resting place. "It will change everything," said Yehuda Hanfling, a service manager for Chevra Kadisha, the main group that oversees Jewish burials in Israel. The app, 'Gravez' is only available in Israel for now, but its developers plan to expand globally.

For a person visiting a grave or making their way to a funeral, finding the exact location can be tough in a large cemetery that is constantly changing. "People who haven't been to graves for years and want to reach (the grave) get lost because graves have been added, paths have been added everywhere," Hanfling said. Chevra Kadisha began operating the app in September.

By providing real-time, turn-by-turn directions on smartphones, Gravez aims to save cemetery goers a lot of stress, and time, in reaching the grave they are looking for. The developers, Corido, used drones and image processing tools to map over 1.3 million graves in 30 cemeteries in Israel so far for pedestrian and vehicle navigation, said Guy Liany, partner chief executive of Corido. "We map all the geographical elements, the paths, the plots, interest points, everything that depicts the outline of the cemetery," said Liany, adding that the cemetery managers constantly update the system. — Reuters



## International

# In Iraq protests, counting the dead 'a dangerous job'

## Anti-government demonstrations turn bloody

**BAGHDAD:** One protester killed. Then five. Suddenly, more than 40. As Iraq's anti-government demonstrations turned bloody, a network of rights defenders and medics began documenting deaths to fill a gag order on casualty numbers. Remarkably, the watchdog at the heart of the effort is itself a government entity: the Iraqi Human Rights Commission, created in 2012 but now facing its most important - and politically sensitive - mission yet.

When protests erupted on October 1, the first casualty report of one protester shot dead and 200 more wounded in the capital was released by the health ministry. But as more reports came in of live rounds and alleged indiscriminate force used against protesters across Baghdad and the south, the government clammed up. It released no further tolls, imposed an internet blackout and halted information-sharing with the commission. "The ministries of health and interior stopped giving us numbers," said Faysal Abdallah, a journalist by training and commission member since 2017. "So we started going to the morgues to get numbers of dead, the hospitals to learn of the wounded and the police stations for numbers of detainees," he said. As protests grew, the commission published statements on the rising toll, which would sometimes spike suddenly.

Those jumps, members said, reflected delays caused by the resistance they faced from hospital administrators wary of contravening official orders not to release figures. During the government's two-week internet blackout, the commission texted updated tolls to reporters and other monitors. When the internet returned with restrictions on social media, the rights body circumvented the blocks again to publish numbers on Facebook and Telegram, remaining the only

named source for a toll. It pledged to file a lawsuit against the health ministry for "misleading public opinion."

### 'Impossible to record'

The violence deployed against the initial wave of protests from October 1 to 6 sparked worldwide condemnation, and a government probe even concluded "excessive force" was used. The inquiry, whose results were released October 22, found that 157 people were killed, mainly protesters in the capital who suffered gunshot wounds to the head or chest. A United Nations report published the same day said it encountered difficulties in its own investigation because public hospitals had been "restricted" from sharing statistics with outside organizations, including the UN.

Indeed, several medics in Baghdad and the south declined to talk to AFP about the subject, citing "instructions." Others spoke anonymously and said they faced not only a gag order, but restrictions by security forces within the hospitals themselves. One doctor in the capital, who asked his place of work not be named, said security forces ordered ambulances not to pick up wounded protesters for several hours on October 4. "I'm sure the total death toll is much higher than the official numbers," the doctor said.

The commission has also recorded dozens of arrests by security forces in hospitals. Witnesses told AFP they had seen armed men recording the names and identifying information of patients in Baghdad hospitals, particularly if they were seeking treatment for tear gas or bullet wounds. "Many people came in with gunshot wounds but just asked to be bandaged and discharged because they were afraid of being arrested," a sec-



**BAGHDAD:** Iraqi demonstrators chant slogans and wave their country's national flags during ongoing anti-government demonstrations at Tahrir Square in the capital Baghdad yesterday. — AFP

ond medic in Baghdad said. "That makes it impossible for us to record the number of wounded properly," he added.

### 'No one's talking'

Protests resumed on October 24, with the commission documenting 100 deaths, mostly demonstrators, since then. Gathering reliable tolls has only become more difficult, with the most demonstrative case in the holy city of Karbala in the south. Clashes broke out there on October 28 between protesters and security forces, with

AFP's correspondent reporting heavy gunfire near the provincial headquarters. The governor and security forces said no one had died in the incident, but medical sources provided varied numbers. Karbala's forensics department said one 24-year-old male was killed, while a doctor there reported three dead had arrived at his hospital alone. "The forensics department has strict orders. No one's talking," the doctor said. Even the commission struggled to confirm a toll beyond the death reported by Karbala's forensics chief amid fears it was being boxed out. — AFP

## Protestors bond over falafel and tuk-tuks at iconic Baghdad square

**BAGHDAD:** It has become the focal point of protests and a social melting pot: Baghdad's Tahrir Square, the site of a week of anti-government rallies, has seen protestors bridge sectarian divides and challenge conservative norms. Men and women of all ages have pitched in to support the demonstrations, handing out food and treating the wounded as tuk-tuks zip past.

The drivers of the motorized rickshaws, typically seen in poorer parts of the capital, have become the unofficial heroes of the protest movement. "Tuk-tuk guys were rejected by society before, but now they've got a central place in the protests," said Ali Korani, a 26-year-old protester. "First aid or food, they bring it to us. Rescuing the wounded? Tuk-tuk. Need to get from one place to another? Tuk-tuk!"

The drivers, scrawny young men who use their horns liberally, have wrapped their cars in Iraqi flags, sparking cheers from protestors as they pass. Iraqi celebrities have

even been spotted snapping selfies with them, and the United Nations' top representative in the country, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, rode in one when she visited protestors in Tahrir on Wednesday. Korani praised them for their role in a movement calling for an end to official corruption. "We'll erect a statue to tuk-tuk drivers here in Tahrir and give them all the big SUVs used by officials," he said.

### 'Everything has changed'

Another social barrier has been cracked as crowds of women have joined the rallies. Iraqi society is largely conservative and in parts of the country, young men and women who are not married or related are rarely seen together in public. Samara, an engineering student in a black headscarf, is one of a growing number of students and schoolchildren skipping class to protest.

"Boys usually think us girls are weak and we can't go into these kinds of places, but the opposite is true," she said. "We found all religions, all provinces, without divides. Everything has changed. We're one now," she told AFP, her pistachio-green eyes glimmering. The majority of Iraqis are Shiite, with a large Sunni minority in the west and an autonomous Kurdish region in the north. The country has been rocked by decades of back-to-back conflicts, including a particularly bloody period of sectarian violence around 2005 and the rise and fall of the Sunni extremist Islamic State group between 2014 and

2017. But the young protestors in Tahrir say they're putting the country, where the youth make up 60 percent of the 40 million population, on a new path. "Without us, the country would have been destroyed," said Aminah Karim, a medical student with an Iraqi flag wrapped around her shoulders. "We're building a new society here that is healthier and includes everyone."

### Food for the soul

But to revolt, one must eat. In Tahrir, protestors can take their pick from falafel and beans, bowls of hot lentil soup and burgers with fries, available around-the-clock and mostly for free. "I'm making food for everyone!" said Ibrahim Abdelhussein, doling out plates of rice and tender meat. He even cooks masgoof, an iconic Iraqi delicacy of chargrilled, fatty carp eaten by hand.

At a makeshift medical clinic, volunteer Zainab Al-Kaissi pointed out a huge pile of donated medicines. "Why am I here? Because I'm Iraqi!" said the 39-year-old proudly, sporting a white visor over her pink headscarf. The field hospital was set up to treat those affected by tear gas fired by security forces. The gas has left people struggling to breathe and some protestors have even died after being hit in the head or chest by the searing-hot canisters. Some pharmacists have offered discounts of nearly 40 percent to those buying painkillers, bandages and inhalers for demonstrators. — AFP



## International

# Lebanon protesters face off with security forces

## Protesters fight on amid political deadlock

**BEIRUT:** Lebanese protesters faced off with security forces yesterday as they tried to block reopened roads and prevent their unprecedented non-sectarian push for radical reform from petering out. The resignation of Prime Minister Saad Hariri's government on Tuesday had been met with cheers from the crowds seeking the removal of a political class seen as corrupt, incompetent and sectarian.

The fall of the government under pressure from the street had led to an easing of the lockdown that has crippled the country of six million inhabitants. While some life returned to the streets of Beirut and other cities this week, die-hard protesters were reluctant to lose one of the few forms of leverage they have to press demands that go far beyond the cabinet's resignation. "Giving up is out of the question," said Tarek Badoun, 38, one of a group of demonstrators blocking the main flyover in central Beirut.

The tug-of-war between demonstrators seeking to block roads and security forces under orders to reopen the country for business repeated itself yesterday. The mass mobilization, which has seen hundreds of thousands protest nationwide, has so far been largely bloodless, despite sporadic scuffles with counter-demonstrators

from the established political parties. Some schools have reopened this week and banks were due to reopen on Friday, as the protests piled more economic pressure on a country that has been sliding towards default in recent months.

"The political class is banking on the protests running out of steam, that much is clear," said Karim Bitar, a professor of international relations in Paris and Beirut. "It hopes the Lebanese, choked by economic hardship, will resume their daily lives," he said. President Michel Aoun has asked Hariri's government to stay on in a caretaker capacity until a new one can be formed but Lebanon has entered a phase of acute political uncertainty, even by its own dysfunctional standards.

With a power-sharing system organized along communal and sectarian lines, the allocation of ministerial posts can typically take months, a delay Lebanon's donors say the debt-ridden country can ill afford. French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said it was "essential for Lebanon's future that a new government be formed rapidly to carry out the reforms that the country needs". The new government would need to "address the legitimate aspirations expressed by Lebanese and take the decisions in-



**BEIRUT:** Lebanese riot police officers remove anti-government protesters as they dismantle a roadblock in the ring-bridge in the Lebanese capital Beirut yesterday. — AFP

dis- pensable to the country's economic recovery," he said. France is a major donor and retains significant influence in its former colony. According to press reports, consultations for the formation of a new government are barely under way, such is the rift between Hariri and his coalition rivals.

Among the possible scenarios is one which would see Hariri return at the helm of revamped line-up that includes technocrats, one of the demands of the protesters. "A technocratic government is a possibility," political analyst Amal Saad-Ghorayeb said. —AFP

## Migrants on Greek islands 'on the edge of catastrophe'

**ATHENS:** The situation for migrants in camps on Greek islands is "explosive" and "on the edge of catastrophe", the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights said yesterday. Greece has once again become the main point of entry for people seeking asylum in Europe and it is struggling to accommodate them despite the availability of EU funds.

"The situation of migrants, including asylum seekers, in the Greek Aegean islands has dramatically worsened over the past 12 months," Dunja Mijatovic told reporters at the end of a five-day visit. "Urgent measures are needed to address the desperate conditions in which thousands of human beings are living. What we see in practice is telling me that human rights are not respected. This is an unacceptable situation," she said.

With parliament scheduled to approve a tougher new migration law later, the government has said it has some 75,000 asylum requests to process. Mijatovic said there are an estimated 100,000 refugees and migrants in the country. Despite regular relocations to the mainland, there are over 34,000 people living in overcrowded Greek island camps. The government has

pledged to move 20,000 of them to camps on the mainland before the end of the year.

### 'Struggle for survival'

Mijatovic, who visited camps on the islands of Lesbos and Samos and in Corinth, said she was "appalled" by the unhygienic conditions in which asylum-seekers live on the islands. "There is a crying lack of medical care and sanitation in the vastly overcrowded camps I have visited. People queue for hours to get food and to go to bathrooms, when they exist," she said.

"On Samos, families are chipping away rocks to make some space on steep hillsides to set up their makeshift shelters, often made by trees they cut themselves. This no longer has anything to do with the reception of asylum seekers. This has become a struggle for survival." Mijatovic urged Greek authorities to accelerate transfers out of the islands and boost local hospitals which are currently unable to handle the strain. She also called on other EU states to help in more ways than just financially, by accepting more asylum-seekers, particularly unaccompanied minors who now

number over 4,000.

"The solidarity Greece needs is not there... I'm talking about real actions, other European countries taking the responsibility as well," she said. "People are suffering tremendously. It's not something I can continue watching without raising my voice... what I can assess is that there is not enough political will" among "certain" other EU states, the commissioner said.

"In a way, we are failing to show that Europe is still a place where human rights are respected. It's not just Greece." In her home country of Bosnia, there are some 10,000 asylum-seekers in a camp near a minefield, Mijatovic said. Greece's new conservative government, which took over in July, has vowed to tighten asylum rules, step up naval patrols to deter migrant boats and to send 10,000 people back to Turkey next year. There have been clashes between different migrant groups and between migrants and the police.

The Greek parliament yesterday is to adopt a new migration law enshrining the policy changes, but Mijatovic says the draft she saw "raises concerns from a human rights perspective." Human rights groups have also criticized the bill, saying it introduces stricter rules for receiving asylum seekers, delays access to the right to work, narrows the definition of family, and imposes more burdens on torture victims in being recognized as such.—AFP

## 'Easy money and a better life': Vietnam migrants undeterred

**HA TINH:** The traffickers have gone underground but they'll come back, villagers and brokers say, with the deaths of 39 migrants in a truck in Britain unlikely to deter the country's vast pool of rural Vietnamese from making perilous journeys abroad. The dead are yet to be formally identified, but many are feared to be Vietnamese from the impoverished central provinces where the pull of a better life outweighs the risk of passage west.

Trafficking networks reach deep into these remote communities. Brokers arrange flights - often into Russia - and plot the route into the UK on trucks, where many villagers end up working on cannabis farms tucked into suburban houses or in nail salons. For now, the networks have vanished from the remote central Vietnamese towns stained by dread that their loved ones are among the British truck dead.

But they "are not going to disappear" said one broker in Hong Linh district in Ha Tinh province, where several of the missing come from. "They might just temporarily stop." Towns in this part of the country are largely bereft of young people - many have already left for overseas. The money they send home has been used to fund house renovations and buy cars and motorbikes in a part of the country where most people are farmers and fishermen.

The ones that remain still harbor dreams of going overseas, enticed by success stories which ricochet across these quiet, cut-off communities. "I want to go abroad when I finish school next year," said 17-year-old Tran Manh Thang in Hong Linh, whose father is a farmer. "It's easy to earn money and I can have a better life." He says he will try to go to South Korea first and from there set his sights on Europe, where he hopes to work as a waiter. "It's nicer in Europe, from what I see on the internet and hear from neighbors," he said. —AFP



## International

# Twitter to ban political ads worldwide on its platform

## Facebook's Zuckerberg defends company's policy

**NEW YORK:** Twitter Inc will ban political advertising on its platform next month, the company's chief executive said on Wednesday, a move that won praise from Democrats and scorn from Donald Trump's presidential campaign. "We've made the decision to stop all political advertising on Twitter globally," said Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey in a statement. "We believe political message reach should be earned, not bought."

Analysts do not expect the ban, which takes effect on Nov 22, to significantly reduce Twitter's business. Its shares fell 1.9% in after-hours trading. Social media companies, including Twitter rival Facebook Inc face growing pressure to stop carrying ads that spread false information that could steer elections.

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg opened his earnings conference call on Wednesday by defending the company's policy to run ads from politicians containing false or misleading claims, saying that Facebook did not want to stifle political speech. The company confirmed to Reuters on Monday that some employees had criticized its policy in an internal letter. Zuckerberg estimated ads from politicians would account for under 0.5% of Facebook's revenue next year.

"I expect that this is going to be a very tough year," he said, adding that controversies over po-

litical content could lead to investigations. Facebook reported its third straight rise in quarterly sales growth on Wednesday, beating analysts' average estimate. Facebook has pledged efforts to deal with misinformation after Russian propaganda on the platform was seen to affect the outcome of the 2016 US presidential election, which was won by Trump, a Republican.

But the social media giant made a decision to not fact-check ads run by politicians, drawing ire from Democratic candidates running in the 2020 presidential election such as former Vice President Joe Biden and Senator Elizabeth Warren. "We appreciate that Twitter recognizes that they should not permit disproven smears, like those from the Trump campaign, to appear in advertisements on their platform," said Bill Russo, deputy communications director for the Biden campaign, in an emailed statement.

### 'Significant risks'

Biden has faced attacks from Trump, offered without evidence, about the foreign business dealings of his son Hunter. "It would be unfortunate to suggest that the only option available to social media companies to do so is the full withdrawal of political advertising, but when faced with a choice between ad dollars and the in-



**WASHINGTON:** The Twitter logo is seen on a phone in this photo illustration in Washington, DC. Twitter said that it would stop accepting political advertising globally on its platform, responding to growing concerns over misinformation from politicians on social media. — AFP

tegrity of our democracy, it is encouraging that, for once, revenue did not win out," said Russo. Brad Parscale, who is running Trump's re-election campaign, described Twitter's move as an "attempt to silence conservatives" and "a very dumb decision" for the company's shareholders.

"Will Twitter also be stopping ads from biased liberal media outlets who will now run

unchecked as they buy obvious political content meant to attack Republicans," Parscale said in a statement. "This is yet another attempt to silence conservatives, since Twitter knows President Trump has the most sophisticated online program ever known." A Twitter spokesman did not immediately respond to a request for comment. — Reuters

## Texas hospital livestreams brain surgery on Facebook

**WASHINGTON:** A young woman in Texas who remained awake for her brain surgery was able to speak to doctors during the procedure—and viewers from around the world looked on, as part of the operation was livestreamed on Facebook. By Wednesday, nearly 100,000 people had watched doctors removed a mass from Jenna Schardt's brain during a 40-minute video of the operation that was livestreamed Tuesday morning. In the video, the 25-year-old patient can be seen speaking with physicians on one side of a blue operating curtain while doctors in surgical masks work on her brain on the other side.

Schardt had a stroke due to a mass of blood vessels in her left temporal lobe that was affecting her ability to talk. Methodist Dallas Medical Center head of neurology Nimesh Patel told AFP. She remained awake as her skull was opened so that doctors could be sure they weren't damaging the parts of her brain that control speech as they worked—they asked her to say words such as bird, dog or number in order to make a "map" of her brain, Patel said. "In order for us to identify how to approach and remove the mass, we must determine areas that are safe," Patel said. They even asked Schardt about her dog to test her memory during the four-and-a-half hour surgery. "Brain surgery performed awake, although it is in our repertoire, is not routine," he said. "It all depends on where the lesion is located and if the patient wants to be awake or asleep." Schardt, from Illinois, is studying occupational therapy. She wanted to use the experience to educate viewers through the livestream, Patel, said, which was broadcast on the hospital's account. —AFP

## TB drug price slashed in global push to thwart killer disease

**HYDERABAD:** A pharmaceutical multinational yesterday slashed the price of a key anti-tuberculosis drug boosting the battle against the world's deadliest infectious disease, as a new treatment was also set to begin extensive testing. The initiatives came as the United Nations seeks to galvanize the campaign against TB, which killed 1.5 million people worldwide last year and saw 10 million more infected.

"This lifesaving drug has, until now, been completely unaffordable in developing countries," said Lelio Marmora, head of Unitaid, a global health initiative that helped broker the landmark deal, which will see the Sanofi company cut the price of its rifapentine drug by two thirds. The cheaper price will apply in 100 of the world's poorest nations. South Africa, where TB is a big killer, will roll out the drug from next year, Unitaid's program director Robert Matiru said.

Other major markets that could take up the treatments include India, which has a quarter of the world's TB cases, Indonesia, Philippines and Kenya, Sanofi's global health business chief Thibaud Lefort told AFP. "We are looking realistically next



**HYDERABAD:** English actress and ambassador for the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union), Claire Forlani (center) gestures with children during the field visit to meet Tuberculosis (TB) survivors at Malakpet slum area in Hyderabad. — AFP

year at adding at least five major countries and a dozen other smaller countries accelerating their efforts," he said.

### TB resistance

Lefort said his firm welcomed generic versions of the drug being produced. Aid agencies have become increasingly frustrated at the slow pace of fighting the disease, which the UN hopes to eradicate by 2030. The existing TB vaccine is almost a century old and only good for limited numbers of patients and forms of the illness. The battle has been held up by some TB strains becoming resistant to drugs.

"The reason drug-resistant TB is such a problem is because it is so much more difficult to treat, it costs so much more to treat and also... the morbidity and mortality is much higher," NIH's Peter Kim told AFP. Rifapentine, combined with the drug isoniazid, not only treats patients with TB, but also shields a person who is infected but not yet sick from developing the disease. With one quarter of the world's population carrying the TB infection, and up to 10 percent of them going on to develop the chronic lung disease, experts say preventive drugs such as rifapentine are central to eradicating the illness. —AFP



# UK election campaign hots up on Brexit day that never was

## Johnson riding high in opinion polls

**LONDON:** Prime Minister Boris Johnson sought yesterday to blame the opposition Labor leader for his failure to deliver Brexit, as both men stepped up campaigning on the day Britain had been due to leave the EU. Johnson is riding high in opinion polls ahead of the December 12 election but risks a backlash over failing to keep his “do or die” pledge to take Britain out of the European Union on October 31.

“Today should have been the day that Brexit was delivered and we finally left the EU,” the Conservative leader said in a statement. “Despite the great new deal I agreed with the EU, Jeremy Corbyn refused to allow that to happen - insisting upon more dither, more delay and more uncertainty for families and business.” Pro-EU campaigners breathed a sigh of relief that Britain had been given a stay of execution to avoid a Halloween Brexit nightmare, after stark predictions of chaos and disruption.

Johnson had vowed he would rather be “dead in a ditch” than tolerate another extension to the tortuous process, which began in 2016 after a knife-edge public referendum. But he was forced to ask the EU to delay Brexit until January 31 after MPs in the House of Commons refused to approve the withdrawal terms he had struck with Brussels. Labor leader Corbyn laid the blame squarely at Johnson’s door. “The failure to do so is his and his alone,” he wrote on Twitter.

### ‘Born-to-rule’ Tories

The fourth new Brexit deadline of January 31 will inevitably loom large in campaigning for what is the third general election in four years and the first in December since 1923. But Corbyn

is seeking to shift the debate onto more domestic subjects such as health and social care, and education. More than three years after the referendum that has increasingly divided Britain, Labour remains split over Brexit.

Its promise of a new public vote within six months of election has not been matched with details on how it would campaign. Ahead of an election rally in London, veteran socialist Corbyn attacked Johnson’s “born-to-rule Conservatives” who he said were only interested in protecting “the privileged few”. “This election is a once-in-a-generation chance to transform our country, take on the vested interests holding people back and ensure that no community is left behind,” he said.

Business leaders have claimed Labour’s renationalisation plans of certain key industries, including the railways, would cost at least £196 billion (\$254 billion, 227 billion euros). Johnson on Wednesday called the plan “pointless” and said it could trigger “economic catastrophe”, pledging to “invest massively” in the state-run health service and education. A National Institute of Economic and Social Research study, published on Wednesday, however, suggested Johnson’s Brexit deal could leave Britain £70 billion worse off in 10 years.

### Outgoing MPs blame abuse

Almost 60 MPs have announced they will not stand in the coming election, including many of them on the more moderate side of Johnson’s Conservatives. Among them is cabinet minister Nicky Morgan, who partly blamed abuse she has received for her decision to step down after nine

years in parliament. Divisions over Brexit have seen heightened rhetoric on all sides, while death threats against lawmakers and abuse on social media have risen in recent years. Morgan described the “clear impact on my family and the other sacrifices involved in, and the abuse for, doing the job of a modern MP”. Long-standing Conservative MP Caroline Spelman, who is also retiring, warned of a “wild west of internet abuse”.

### ‘Still not through this’

“We are still not through this,” Ventura County Fire Chief Mark Lorenzen told reporters. “We have another 24 hours of significant weather conditions, and a lot of threats.” Library officials said the archives and much of the memorabilia from the Reagan administration and from his time as governor of California were safely stored in an underground fireproof vault at the facility.

“It was a crazy morning, it was unexpected,” Duke Blackwood, executive director of the library told AFP. “At this point, most of the fire danger is out but there (are) still a lot of hot spots and smoke.” Authorities said it was unclear what caused the fire, which started near Easy Street and raced through hillsides toward neighborhoods. The blaze broke out amid unprecedented “extremely critical” red flag warnings in parts of southern California because of so-called Santa Ana winds, with potential gusts of up to 80 miles per hour (130 kilometers per hour) in mountainous areas. “We expect the Santa Ana winds to be howling,” the National Weather Service said, adding that the red flag warnings were in effect through Thursday evening. Some 18 million Californians live in the areas affected. — AFP



**LONDON:** Britain’s Labor Party leader Jeremy Corbyn (center) gestures as he launches the party’s election campaign in south London yesterday. Britain will go to the polls on December 12 in a bid to unlock the protracted Brexit deadlock. —AFP

## California fires: New blazes as dangerous winds fan the flames

**LOS ANGELES:** Firefighters in California struggled to contain a new fast-moving blaze on Wednesday that threatened thousands of homes and the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, as rare “extreme” red flag warnings were issued for much of the Los Angeles region. The so-called Easy Fire in the Simi Valley northwest of Los Angeles erupted around 6:00 am, forcing the evacuation of the library and nearby homes as it spread to more than 1,500 acres, officials said.

Fire crews raced to protect the hilltop library surrounded by dense brush as helicopters and aircraft dropped water and fire retardant on the flames fed by powerful wind gusts. “The fire outflanked us very rapidly, pushed by those 40 to 50 mile-per-hour winds,” Ventura County Fire Assistant Chief Chad Cook told reporters. Authorities said 7,000 homes were under mandatory evacuation orders affecting some 30,000 residents. By evening, the fire had spared the

building, though authorities warned the situation could quickly change because of the fierce winds that can spread embers for miles.

## The Democratic voters suffering under Trump

**NEW YORK:** Some broke with pro-Trump friends and family. Many quit social media and now refrain from talking about politics. Others say they had old emotional wounds reopened by his presidency. The anger felt in Democratic strongholds like New York towards Donald Trump since he was elected three years ago has been on ample display in street protests and on social media. But what is less discussed is how Trump’s victory has affected many Americans at a personal, psychological level - an impact that speaks to the country’s profound divisions with a year to go until the next election, on November 3, 2020.

Ruth - not her real name - is a Democrat-supporting architect in her 60s who lives in Arizona and who rejects Trump “with every fiber” of her body. When the naturalized American citizen, originally from Canada, discovered three years ago that two of her longtime friends supported Trump she said she was “mortified.” “It was devastating to me. I really had to do a lot of soul-searching as to how I was going to handle

“Sexually charged rhetoric has been prevalent in the online abuse of female MPs, with threats to rape us and referring to us by our genitalia,” she wrote for The Times newspaper. “It is therefore not surprising that so many good female colleagues have decided to stand down at this election.” An average of 86 MPs stood down in each general election between 1979 and 2015, according to Philip Cowley, professor of politics at Queen Mary University of London. — AFP

that in terms of our friendship,” Ruth said.

“In the end, I couldn’t do it. I could not turn my back on these people. We are still friends but not as close,” she said. “There will always be an obstacle between us now.” Cody Mayers, a software developer in North Carolina, wrote on the online forum Quora about how after he posted a humorous anti-Trump video he and his girlfriend fell out with her father. Contacted by AFP, Mayers declined to talk about the incident so as not to “reopen wounds.”

### ‘So toxic’

Donna Ramil, who works at Cornell University in New York State, is one of many people who now avoid all talk of politics to avoid drastic breaks with friends, relatives or new acquaintances. “In the past we used to joke about politics, people who knew I’m a Democrat would put a Republican sticker on my back and we would laugh. If somebody did that to me now I would be very offended,” she said. Ramil says she now has to be ultra-sensitive to the fact people may have different political views. “What you do is you just don’t talk about politics because it is so toxic. It’s crazy, it’s depressing,” added Ramil.

Jacqueline Daly, a retired New Yorker and practicing Catholic, gave up chatting about politics to mostly pro-Trump friends in her parish so as not to risk losing them. “A few times there has been a heated disagreement, like about immigration, caged children. — AFP



## International

# New deadly earthquake hits southern Philippines; 5 killed

## Third deadly quake in weeks hits south Philippines

**MANILA:** A powerful earthquake struck the southern Philippines yesterday, killing at least five people and sparking searches of seriously damaged buildings that had already been rattled by two previous deadly tremors in recent weeks. The 6.5 magnitude quake hit the island of Mindanao, the US Geological Survey said, causing locals to run to safety in the same area where a strong tremor killed eight people on Tuesday. The powerful shaking caused serious damage to a condominium building in the major southern city of Davao, about 45 kilometers from the epicenter.

Nine people were hurt at the building, and rescuers believed at least one was trapped in the rubble, a local disaster official said. Five people were killed in nearby Cotabato province, including a local official who was crushed to death, a police officer said. A hotel partially collapsed in another area, but a disaster official said the building had already been evacuated. Locals have been left terrified by a string of powerful quakes, and hundreds of aftershocks since the first powerful tremor struck on October 16.

"I panicked and I rushed outside. I was afraid the building might collapse," said Beth Lancian, a restaurant cashier in Davao. "There's been an earthquake almost every week." Pres-

ident Rodrigo Duterte was in his hometown of Davao when the shaking began, but his spokesman said he was unharmed. Some 12,000 people were already in shelters on Mindanao Island before yesterday's quake hit, the government said, either because their homes have been destroyed or they were too afraid to return to their residences.

### Landslides and debris

The Philippines suffers regular tremors as part of the Pacific "Ring of Fire", an arc of intense seismic activity that stretches from Japan through Southeast Asia and across the Pacific basin. In the 6.6 magnitude quake on Tuesday, a teenage boy was crushed by a falling wall as he tried to escape his school in Magsaysay, the town spokesman said. Rock and landslides unleashed by the violent shaking killed four others, while a collapsing wall crushed a man, authorities said.

Nearly 400 people were hurt, including some seven pupils and teachers hurt escaping their crumbling elementary school. The area was still suffering the effects of a 6.4-magnitude quake that hit less than two weeks ago, killing at least five people and damaging dozens of buildings. Residents fled homes across the



**KIDAPAWAN:** A policeman watches as a resident retrieves his motorcycle among the rubble of a damaged building after a 6.5-magnitude earthquake hit Kidapawan town, north Cotabato province, on the southern island of Mindanao yesterday. — AFP

Mindanao region and a mall caught fire in the city of General Santos shortly after the quake struck on October 16.

Hundreds of people were still displaced two weeks after that quake when the second one struck earlier this week, forcing thousands more from their homes. One of the deadliest quakes to

hit the Philippines recently was in April, when 16 people were killed as a building near the capital Manila collapsed and the secondary Clark airport was shut down after damage to the passenger terminal. High-rise structures in the capital swayed after the April quake, leaving some with large cracks in their walls.—AFP

## Fire engulfs World Heritage castle in Japan's Okinawa

**TOKYO:** A major fire devastated a historic Japanese castle on the southern island of Okinawa yesterday morning, destroying large parts of the World Heritage site's complex, local authorities said. The Shuri castle is a key part of a complex dating back to the Ryukyu Kingdom, and is believed to have been in use from around the 1400s. Most of the current structures are reconstructions based on original plans and photos of the old castle.

The fire was brought under control by early afternoon, a local fire department spokesman told AFP, adding that the blaze had consumed more than 4,800 square meters of the castle complex. "All the (three) main buildings have burnt down, with nothing left behind," Daisuke Furuken, another official with the Naha fire department, told AFP. On the scene, a local fire spokesman said the blaze had proved extremely difficult to control. "The radiant heat was very strong. Firefighters had serious difficulty approaching it," he said in comments shown on national broadcaster NHK.

It was not yet clear what caused the blaze, which was reported to authorities around 2:40 am. There were no reports of injuries. The fire started in the elaborate main building of the complex, a grand red

structure with traditional tiling on the roof, and spread quickly to nearby buildings. Television footage showed large orange flames engulfing the castle before sunrise, with daylight revealing the extensive damage done to the site. In some cases little more than charred and smoking wood was left behind.

### 'Symbol of Okinawa'

"I am extremely saddened by this. I am utterly in shock," Naha Mayor Mikiko Shirota told reporters. "We have lost our symbol." "Naha city will make our greatest possible efforts to do everything in our power" to deal with the fire and its aftermath, she pledged earlier, during an emergency meeting on the fire. The national government pledged it would make "all efforts" to rebuild the site. "It's sad. It's hard to put the feeling into words," a local resident told NHK. "I feel hollowed out... It's been a symbol of Okinawa."

Officials' preparations related to an ongoing festival at the site had been ongoing until 1:00 am, hours before the blaze erupted. But it was not clear whether there was a link to the fire. The complex was largely destroyed during World War II, when the headquarters of the Japanese army was dug underneath the monument.

But it was extensively restored, with the work on the main hall based on scale drawings and photographs taken before the destruction, as well as extensive archaeological excavation.

### 'A great monument'

The complex reopened as a national park in 1992. Thanks to the faithful nature of the reconstruction, the site along with the remaining ruins was registered along with other Ryukyu sites in the region as a World Heritage Site in 2000. "Five hundred years of Ryukyuan history (12th-17th century) are represented by this group of sites and monuments," the entry on the UNESCO website explains.

"The ruins of the castles, on imposing elevated sites, are evidence for the social structure over much of that period, while the sacred sites provide mute testimony to the rare survival of an ancient form of religion into the modern age." The reconstructed main hall of the Shuri castle in particular is praised as "a great monument symbolizing the pride of the Ryukyu people". The facility's Shurei-mon Gate, with its striking red-tiled roof, was featured on a special banknote issued in 2000 when the G8 summit was hosted in Okinawa.

And the Olympic torch relay for next year's Tokyo Summer Games was due to pass by the site as it travels around the country in 2020. Japan is dotted with historic castle complexes, most of which are careful reconstructions of original buildings.—AFP

## Gifts that bring Japan politicians down: Mangoes crabs and melons

**TOKYO:** Crabs, melons, mangoes, even humble potatoes and corn, have proved politically treacherous in Japan this past week, with two cabinet ministers forced to resign in quick succession amid suspicions of violating election laws. Justice Minister Katsuyuki Kawai's abrupt resignation yesterday came six days after former trade and industry minister, Isshu Sugawara, quit. Sugawara had been accused of election law violations by allegedly giving gifts of melons and crabs to voters in his Tokyo constituency as well as having his secretary present a monetary offering at a funeral.

Kawai had been accused of giving simpler gifts - potatoes and corn - along with mangoes, which are often a luxury fruit in Japan. They join a long line of politicians brought down by gift giving in a nation where an informal quid pro quo operates with presents as a matter of course in daily life. A housewife might give her neighbor some fruit, prompting expectations of a similar return gift at a later date. Friends exchange summer gifts of beer and noodles, or winter ones of ham and soap.

Other times the gifts are apologies: for the bother made by moving in, or the noise of a new baby. Monetary gifts play an important role in social events, with wedding guests all but expected to bring money - in special envelopes - to any ceremony. At funerals it is customary to make monetary contributions known as "Koden" - or incense - to be offered to the soul of the departed.—Reuters



## International

# 'Bride kidnapping' tradition fuels child marriage despite new ban

## Indonesia raises marriage age for girls from 16 to 19

**LEMBAR:** Fifteen minutes into their first date, Indonesian teenager Helma Yani received a marriage proposal from a boy she had just met. He spirited her away to a relative's house and a month later, at age 17, they were married. Yani is one of nearly 1.5 million child brides in Muslim-majority Indonesia, which has the world's eighth-highest number of underage unions according to the United Nations.

The government raised the marriage age for girls from 16 to 19 in September, but rights groups fear deep-rooted traditions and the practice of not registering unions could hamper efforts to end the scourge. On Yani's island of Lombok, the Sasak people continue a centuries-old tradition of "bride kidnapping", in which a woman is taken away by her future husband before a wedding.

Known locally as "merariq", Sasak elders say the kidnapping is part of an elaborate courtship ritual requiring consent from both parents, but is now widely abused to justify early marriages. "I didn't know what to do when he proposed so I said yes," said Yani, looking away shyly as she spoke in her village where children and chickens roam the streets. "We rode off on a motorbike from the beach to his relative's house." Her parents did not know where she was for days until the village heads came to say that Yani had been taken by the boy and was preparing for marriage. "I was angry and upset, I cried non-stop

as I tried to search for her," said her mother Nur Halima as she cradled Yani's two-month-old baby girl. "She had not finished school, but what can I do except let her get married? If she returns unmarried she could bring shame on our family," she said. Stories like Yani's are common across Lombok, but activists are fighting back with an unusual approach of joining forces with village elders to restore the traditional ways of "merariq".

### Marriages go unregistered

Globally 12 million girls become child brides each year, according to campaign group Girls Not Brides. They face greater risks of exploitation, sexual violence, domestic abuse and death in childbirth. In Indonesia, a Southeast Asian archipelago of 260 million, poverty and tradition lead to one in nine girls being married before age 18, according to official statistics. And the West Nusa Tenggara province, which includes Lombok, ranks among Indonesia's top 10 for child marriage. Lombok's bride kidnapping ritual dates back generations among the Sasak, an ethnic Muslim group of about 3 million who mostly live on the island east of the resort destination Bali.

At one time, negotiations were held between families after a Sasak man set his sights on a woman, in contrast to bride kidnappings plaguing countries like Kyrgyzstan, Mali and Ethiopia.

The man would then take the woman to an agreed location to see if they were compatible, as relatives supervised. Now the ritual often results in sad tales like Yani's - an easy excuse for men to force marriage on young vulnerable women. Once a girl is with a suitor for days, parents are typically so desperate to avoid social stigma they agree to the union.

In Lombok, which sends one of the highest numbers of Indonesians overseas as migrant workers, some parents feel their daughters can be better looked after in their absence if they marry. It also alleviates a financial burden. "It is done in the name of tradition, so people just accept it blindly regardless if it is right or wrong," said Faozan, of the local non-profit Village Children Protection Group.

Faozan, who like many Indonesians uses one name, said rampant underage marriage on Lombok has been linked to social ills ranging from divorce to unplanned pregnancies, maternal deaths and stunting among children. In addition, Islamic ceremonies are common. Islamic law permits such unions but because they are not formally registered women are often denied their rights and maintenance payments in the case of divorce.

Yani, who was married under Islamic law and divorced by her husband a month before she gave birth, is struggling to get her baby a birth certificate as her marriage was never formally

registered. Indonesia's Women Empowerment and Child Protection Ministry said in a recent statement that it planned to raise awareness through education among children, parents and religious leaders to end child marriage.

It did not reply to a request for comment. The government has stated that raising the age of marriage would save children from underage unions. The change came after Indonesia's top court last year ruled in favor of a petition by women's rights groups who argued the rule discriminated against girls, who could marry at 16 while the legal age for men is 19. But the new law permits exceptions if parents ask the court for permission, raising concerns that young women could still be forced to marry in large numbers.

### Weaving and buffalo

Wearing a traditional Muslim "songkok" prayer cap and a batik shirt, Sasak elder Muhamad Rais is among senior figures who advise local people on traditional customs in matters like birth, marriage and death. Since 2016 he has worked with local charities under a pilot project to revive the original "merariq" traditions, which he said are governed by a set of complicated steps that must be carefully followed before the "kidnapping ritual" takes place. "I am sad, embarrassed and angry," Rais told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in a bamboo hut where he regularly dispenses advice to villagers.—Reuters

## Shops shut, streets deserted as Kashmir loses special status

**SRINAGAR:** Shops and offices were shut in Indian Kashmir yesterday and the streets largely deserted as federal authorities formally revoked the restive state's constitutional autonomy and split it into two federal territories. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's decision in August to change Kashmir's status and tighten its grip over a region has stoked anger and resentment while a three-decade armed revolt rages.

Pakistan, which claims the whole of Kashmir, has condemned the move. Its ally China, which is locked in a separate decades-old dispute with India over the part of Kashmir called Ladakh, also slammed India for unilaterally changing its status. Just after midnight on Wednesday, the federal government's orders went into effect, dividing up the old state of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories - one Jammu and Kashmir, and the other the Buddhist-dominated enclave of Ladakh.

Both will be directly ruled by Delhi, and new lieutenant governors were sworn in at a high-security governor's premises later on. "The unful-

filled dream of integrating Jammu and Kashmir has been accomplished," said Home Minister Amit Shah, who is leading the political strategy to deal with Kashmir. India is hoping that by opening up property rights in Kashmir to people from outside the region it can reignite economic growth, create jobs and turn the focus away from the militancy in which more than 40,000 people have died.

It blames Pakistan for keeping the revolt alive, allegations that the nuclear-armed neighbour denies. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said Kashmir was a dispute left from history and it should be peacefully resolved. "The Indian government officially announced the establishment of so called Jammu Kashmir territory and Ladakh Union territory which included some of China's territory into its administrative jurisdiction," Geng said at a news briefing.

"China deplores and firmly opposed that. India unilaterally changes its domestic law and administrative divisions, challenging China's sovereignty and interests. This is awful and void, and this is not effective in any way and will not change the fact that the area is under China's actual control." India and China fought a war in 1962 and since then have been unable to resolve their border dispute. Pakistan and India have fought two wars since independence in 1947 and engaged in an aerial clash over the territory.

### Kashmiris left in lurch

Yesterday, there was little traffic on the streets of Srinagar, the main city in Indian Kash-



**KASHMIR:** Soldiers stand guard near Raj Bhavan, the official governor's residence, ahead the swearing-in ceremony of first lieutenant governor of Jammu and Kashmir union territory, in Srinagar yesterday. — AFP

mir, except for children going to school to complete hastily arranged exams. Many children have been kept out of school since the August clamp-down. Shops were shut as a mark of opposition against Kashmir's new status.

Authorities deployed additional paramilitary forces in parts of Srinagar where small protests have erupted in the past since the August 5 announcement of the change of status. Still, there were 20 small incidents of stone-pelting reported from Srinagar and other parts of the Kashmir valley on Wednesday, a state police of-

ficial said.

Former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Mehbooba Mufti, one of scores of politicians in detention to prevent large protests from breaking out, said the federal government must engage with Kashmiris before they become even more alienated. "GOI (government of India) has left Kashmiris in the lurch & shown disregard for their rights. But if you consider them as your own, reach out & engage with them before it's too late," she said in a Twitter post which is being handled by her daughter Iltija. — Reuters



## International

# North Korea fires unidentified projectiles, South's army says

## Nuclear talks between Pyongyang and Washington at a deadlock

**SEOUL:** North Korea fired two projectiles yesterday, the South's military said, with nuclear talks between Pyongyang and Washington at a deadlock. The weapons were launched from South Pyongan province in an easterly direction over the sea, Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement, without specifying the type of device involved. "We are maintaining readiness and monitoring in case of additional launches," they added.

It is the latest in a series of launches by the North but the first since October 2, when it fired a sea-launched missile in a provocative move - a submarine-based missile capability would change the military balance. The North then walked away from working-level nuclear talks with the US in Sweden, saying it was disappointed at the lack of "new and creative" solutions offered by Washington. Pyongyang is under multiple sets of international sanctions over its banned nuclear weapon and ballistic missile programs, which it says it needs to defend against a possible US invasion.

It is demanding the easing of the measures and has repeatedly urged Washington to come forward with a new offer by the end of this year. On Sunday, the North's state media carried a statement from Kim Yong Chol - previously the North's counterpart to US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo - accusing Wash-

ington of seeking to "isolate and stifle the DPRK in a more crafty and vicious way than before". He lauded the "close personal relations" between leader Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump, but warned: "There is a limit to everything."

### 'Inexplicable'

Talks between Pyongyang and Washington have stalled since the two men's Hanoi summit broke down without an agreement in February. The meeting had been intended to build on their high-profile first summit in Singapore last year, when Kim signed a vague pledge to work towards "denuclearization of the Korean peninsula". The latest launch displayed Pyongyang's frustration over the lack of progress in nuclear talks, analysts say.

"The launch is a display of its warning to both Seoul and Washington that it can carry out more military activities unless the US comes up with a 'new method'," said Lim Eul-chul, professor of North Korean studies at Kyungnam University. Yesterday's launch came despite Kim sending a message of condolences to the South's President Moon Jae-in on Wednesday for the death of his mother, who was born in the North. "From our perspective, the North's behavior is not rational that it does something like this during the mourning period," Lim said. "But the



**SEOUL:** People watch a television news screen showing file footage of a North Korean missile launch, at a railway station in Seoul. North Korea fired two projectiles yesterday, the South's military said. — AFP

launch today shows that the true nature of North Korea is inexplicable in our value system."

Contacts between the North and South have stalled since Hanoi and Pyongyang has repeatedly excoriated Seoul for joint military drills with Washington and not following through on inter-Korean agreements signed

last year. Kim last week inspected the Mount Kumgang complex which once hosted Southern tourists visiting the North - a symbol of inter-Korean cooperation — and ordered the demolition of Southern-built facilities. Pyongyang this week refused Seoul's request for face-to-face meetings to discuss the issue. — AFP

## N Korea's Kim sends Moon condolences for mother's death

**SEOUL:** North Korean leader Kim Jong Un sent a message of sympathy to the South's President Moon Jae-in over the death of his mother, officials said yesterday, the pair's first contact in months with inter-Korean ties at a standstill. Kang Han-ok, who was born and grew up in the North but was evacuated by US forces during the Korean War, died from a chronic illness on Tuesday. She was 92.

An unidentified North Korean official delivered Kim's written message at the Demilitarized Zone on Wednesday afternoon, presidential office spokeswoman Ko Min-jung said. Kim expressed "his deep condolences... and consolation to President Moon", she said, adding the document was sent on to Moon at a Catholic church in Busan, where mourners had gathered.

The missive comes with relations between North and South at a standstill, with Pyongyang repeatedly excoriating Seoul following the collapse of Kim's nuclear summit with US President Donald Trump in Hanoi in February. Moon's parents were North Korean refugees who fled on board a US troopship in the December 1950 Hungnam evacuation, a giant rescue of US soldiers and Korean civilians from advancing Chinese and North Korean forces.

Moon was born in 1953 and the family later settled in Busan. Moon - who was instrumental in brokering talks between Kim and Trump last year - accompanied his mother to a family reunion in the North in 2004, when she met her younger sister for the first time in over half a century.—Agencies

## Cages, pods, containers: 8 homes highlighting cities' housing strains

**TBILISI:** A critical shortage of affordable housing in cities across the world has forced many people to tap such unexpected resources as shipping containers and concrete pipes just to put a roof over their head. At least 150 million people, about 2% of the global population, are homeless according to United Nations data while more than 20% of the population lack adequate housing. Many live in cities. As the UN marks World Cities Day on Thursday, here are eight dwelling types which highlight how cities are coping with housing crises:

### Cage homes

Hong Kong's property prices have rocketed over 200% in the past decade driven by limited housing supply and large capital flows from mainland Chinese buyers, forcing some of the city's poorest to live in often squalid conditions. Tens of thousands are crammed into rooftop shanties, so-called cage homes with plywood bunk beds, or into tiny partitioned flats averaging just 62 sq ft (6 sq m).

### Sleeping PODS

As rising prices push city workers to live further from the centre and endure long commutes, sleep pods which allow for a power nap near the office have popped up from Madrid and London to New York. In the British capital, start-up Pop & Rest offers busy travelers, flagging party-goers and restless new parents a

bed in a tiny dark room scented with lavender and outfitted with ear plugs and eye masks for less than 20 pounds (\$26) an hour.

### Garden homes

As part of a project to help refugees find homes in France, local non-profit Quatorze has installed tiny wooden houses insulated with cardboard in some Paris backyards. The first was set up in a family's garden in the eastern suburb of Montreuil in 2017, with an Afghan refugee as its tenant. A second was installed at the back of an art gallery in the same district earlier this year.

### Granny flats

A growing number of homeowners in the US capital of Washington - among the country's most expensive cities - have turned town-house basements or garages into small living units to rent out, often to help cover mortgage costs. Known as granny flats, mother-in-law suites or English basements, these conversions are gaining in popularity across the US as a way to boost affordable housing, according to property experts.

### Live-in guardians

Up to 7,000 people are serving as guardians in empty properties across Britain, mainly in London, according to a 2018 report by the London Assembly, an elected body that scrutinizes the activities of the mayor. Guardians pay low rents in exchange for securing buildings from squatters

and vandals, but sometimes live in poorly maintained mouldy homes with few legal protections, the report said.

### Shipping containers

Thousands of homeless children in Britain are being forced to sleep in often overcrowded converted shipping containers that are "blisteringly hot" in summer and "freezing" in winter, a report by Children's Commissioner for England said in August.

### Egg house

A Chinese man named Dai Haifei made international headlines in 2010 when, unable to afford Beijing's high rental prices, he lived for a few months in an homemade egg-shaped mobile house near his office in the city. The house was made of bamboo strips, steel bars, heat prevention and waterproof materials, sacks filled with fermented wood chips and grass seeds, as well as one solar panel, local media reported.

### Water pipes

To ease Hong Kong's housing crisis, a local architectural firm created micro homes in concrete water pipes that can be stacked under elevated roadways or between highrises. Measuring 2.5 metres (8 feet) in diameter, the pipes have been remade into 100 sq ft (9 sq m) apartments for two, with a living and kitchen space, a shower and a toilet. —Reuters



# Lifestyle

Friday Times

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www.kuwaittimes.net

This photo shows a model displaying a creation from the 'Heaven Gaia' collection by Xiong Ying during the China Fashion Week in Beijing. — AFP

Zimbabwe's women-only rangers fight poaching

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Kabul soap factory helps former addicts stay clean

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## CHINA FASHION WEEK

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## Lifestyle | Movies



In this file photo (left to right) Actresses Reese Witherspoon, Zoe Kravitz, Laura Dern, Shailene Woodley, Nicole Kidman and Meryl Streep attend HBO's 'Big Little Lies' Season 2 premiere at Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York City. — AFP photos

## Small screen holds big appeal for **Hollywood A-listers**

From Julia Roberts and Meryl Streep to Reese Witherspoon and Michael Douglas, Hollywood movie stars are being lured to television by higher production values, wider opportunities... and massive paydays. Once the vastly poorer cousin of film, the small screen has enjoyed a stunning renaissance as members of the binge-watching generation swap trips to the multiplex for nights on the couch streaming the latest "premium" hit show.

Hollywood's top A-listers are increasingly making the same switch. Michael Mann, the acclaimed director of films "Heat" and "The Last of the Mohicans," said the quality of TV in the US has now overtaken that of movies in many cases—something that was not common when he produced television's "Miami Vice" in the 1980s. "The perception here was quite parochial—you were categorized as one thing or another," he told AFP. "It was cinema looking down on TV, for good reason, because TV was pretty abysmal."

Today, "some of the best writing is going on in television," Mann added, pointing to Netflix's dark crime thriller "Ozark" and Showtime mini-series "Patrick Melrose," starring Jason Bateman and Benedict Cumberbatch, respectively. Elsewhere, Jim Carrey has starred in Showtime TV comedy "Kidding," Roberts fronted Amazon drama "Homecoming," and Douglas signed up for an Emmy-nominated turn in Netflix's "The Kominsky Method."

### Paydays

The staggering financial incentives of crossing over to television are also clear. The new "Big Five" TV streaming networks—Netflix, Amazon, Hulu, Disney and Apple—are expected to spend \$27 billion

this year on content, according to a recent FilmLA report. That is approximately the combined budget of the top 130 most expensive feature films ever made—meaning colossal fees are possible for established marquee stars who make the switch.

Witherspoon and Jennifer Aniston are reportedly earning \$2 million each per episode for Apple TV+ flagship program "The Morning Show." It has already been granted a second 10-episode season. "The impact that digital streaming services are having on the television and entertainment industry cannot be overstated," the FilmLA report said. Witherspoon had already converted to television, appearing in an unprecedented ensemble cast for HBO's "Big Little Lies" opposite Streep, Nicole Kidman, Laura Dern and Zoe Kravitz.



In this file photo Director Michael Mann poses during the opening night of the 2018 COLCOA French Film Festival, at the Directors Guild of America Theater in Los Angeles, California.

### Changed my entire career

At the Los Angeles launch for "The Morning Show," Witherspoon said she was also drawn to television because it offered more diverse opportunities, particularly for older actresses and minorities, than traditionally white, male-dominated Hollywood studios. "The idea that streaming services actually have empirical data that audiences want to see people of different ages, different backgrounds ... creates an opportunity for new voices to emerge and new storytellers to emerge," she said.

"So I'm enormously grateful to the streaming services—it's changed my entire career." Directors too are eyeing up television for new opportunities. Mann is working on a television series set during the Vietnam War. Steven Spielberg is writing a horror series for short-form streaming service Quibi, and bringing "Masters of the Air"—his second follow-up to "Band of Brothers"—to Apple's new platform.

Ben Stiller—who has shot hit movies including "Tropic Thunder," "Zoolander" and "The Cable Guy"—returned to his television roots this year behind the camera, directing Showtime's prison break drama "Escape at Dannemora." "I'd never done anything quite like this," he told journalists at a Los Angeles TV summit. "I knew I always wanted to do more serious stuff and work in different areas as a director." "Television has changed," he added. — AFP

## Actor **Gooding Jr** charged with unlawfully touching woman

Actor Cuba Gooding Jr, already facing a criminal case over accusations he touched a woman's breasts in a bar and pinched another's buttocks in a nightclub, has been charged in connection with a third woman, his lawyer said on Wednesday. Gooding is expected to appear in court yesterday and plead not guilty to the charges, according to his lawyer, Mark Heller.

The charges are not yet public, and a spokeswoman for Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance declined to provide details. Heller said the charges stemming from the third accuser were "similar" to those involving the other two women, and that all are misdemeanors. "Each accuser is totally fraudulent," Heller said, adding that there was video of all three alleged incidents exonerating his client.

Gooding, 51, won a best supporting actor Oscar in 1997 for the film "Jerry Maguire" and is known for roles in movies including "A Few Good Men" and "The Butler" and in the television miniseries "The People v. O.J. Simpson." He was previously charged with one count of forcible touching and one count of sexual abuse in connection with each of the first two accusers. He pleaded not guilty on Oct. 15.

Prosecutors said at the time that they hoped to establish a pattern of behavior at Gooding's trial using testimony from 12 additional women who have said they were subjected to unwanted touching and advances by the actor in bars and clubs. It was not clear whether the accuser behind the new charges is one of the 12.

Gooding, who is divorced, is one of dozens of men in politics, entertainment, sports and the business world who have been accused of sexual misconduct since allegations against movie producer Harvey Weinstein triggered the #MeToo movement. Weinstein is scheduled to stand trial in New York in January on charges of rape and assault involving two women. He has denied any non-consensual sex. — Reuters

## Teens defend Monty Python 'silly walk' at anti-fascism parade

A Monty Python-inspired "silly walk" during Greece's solemn remembrance of anti-fascist resistance in World War II has sparked anger, with the teens responsible saying it was a stand against militarism. The 10 girls said they were pretending to be subordinate soldiers at an October 28 parade in Athens, in a stunt inspired by the cult British comedy troupe. In a statement published Wednesday in daily newspaper Efsyn, they said it was inspired by "the great field-marshal of English comedy John Cleese and by all that is taught by Monty Python".

"The Ministry of Silly Walks" is a 1970 classic skit by Monty Python, including Cleese, skewering stiff-necked bureaucracy and self-important inefficiency. The local mayor had earlier termed the girls' move "pathetic". He said it "insulted the memory of those slain" in October 1940 when Greece repulsed an invasion by fascist Italy against overwhelming odds.

Events commemorating Greece's wartime resistance to Axis powers Italy and Germany are a solemn affair, and public statements on the issue are closely scrutinized every year for errors. Among those criticized this year was Education Minister Niki Kerameus, who hailed Greece's struggle "on the eve of World War II". The conflict in Europe actually began in September 1939. — AFP



## Lifestyle | Music

Dig if you will the picture... of **Prince**, in his own words

Master of funk, musical genius, radical visionary—praise for the legendary artist Prince flies off the tongue, but for the co-author of his new memoir, no words can truly encapsulate working with the late artist. “Prince would be able to just make one up. I really wish that he were here to help me talk about how it felt to meet him,” Dan Piepenbring said with a laugh.

Mere months before his shock death in April 2016, Prince chose the then 29-year-old Piepenbring to help pen a memoir that would “break the mold of memoirs.” “If I want this book to be about one overarching thing, it’s freedom. And the freedom to create autonomously,” Prince writes in the tome “The Beautiful Ones,” released this week. “I want to tell people to create. Just start by creating your day.” “Then create your life.”

The blow of Prince’s death at 57 of an opioid overdose waylaid plans for the book, which sought to pierce through the persona crafted during an illustrious decades-long career in which the mercurial performer shaped—and reshaped—pop’s future. “He tried to just sort of Hoover up everything out there on him, and he felt that a lot of it was wrong or misguided,” Piepenbring told AFP.

The book was a way to “correct the record,” the writer said, but “it didn’t take long, I think, for him to realize that the book could be so much more than that—that it didn’t just have to be corrective, but that there was a lot of power in this medium.” “I think the form really excited him; it could be an extension of his song-writing.”

**First kiss**

The book includes Piepenbring’s moving reflections on his brief collaboration with the enigmatic Prince, a catalogue of images including photos and pages from early notebooks featuring handwritten lyrics, and Prince’s synopsis of what would become his signature film “Purple Rain.” But it’s a section of handwritten pages in the artist’s serpentine script that comprise the book’s foundation.

In his unique lexicon that replaces words with single letters and numbers—Prince was an early adopter of internet slang—the superstar waxes poetic on growing up in the Midwestern city of Minneapolis. In particular, he excavates memories and thoughts about his parents, and their profound influence on his sense of self.

His droll, candid prose describes bouts of childhood epilepsy, puberty, his first R-rated movie, and his awe-inspiring first kiss as a young child playing house with his friend Laura, who “looked like Elizabeth Taylor, but little.” “Laura kissed me three times that day. Each time was my 1st. The obligatory husband on the way 2 work kiss, one when U returned, & one b4 U went 2 sleep that night.” “Those kisses... were everything 2 me.”

**Second intellect**

While grappling with the pain of Prince’s death, Piepenbring and others in his orbit decided those pages deserved a place in the artist’s public legacy. “He was such a cogent, funny, lively storyteller,” Piepenbring said. “He would talk about the book to people and how excited he was to do it.” Working with the artist beloved for his music but also his eccentricities proved a riveting challenge, Piepenbring said, describing Prince’s “stream of consciousness” approach as a welcome escape from the “linear confines of a conversation.”

“Occasionally he would bring something up and I’d be like, ‘Wow, really did not see that coming. Now we’re talking about, like, an obelisk that he once saw from a taxicab in Paris,’” the writer said. “But he was always very lucid, and there was never not an explanation for why he would swerve in something.” Piepenbring remembers Prince as particularly hilarious, possessing a comic timing and “second intellect.” “He was just so animated and thoughtful,” the writer said. “His mind was really always moving, it seemed like, 12 paces ahead of everyone else’s.”—AFP



In this file photo US musician Prince performs during half-time at Super Bowl XLI at Dolphin Stadium in Miami between the Chicago Bears and the Indianapolis Colts. — AFP

**Quibi:** The new mobile-centric short-form streaming service

Quibi, the Hollywood-backed streaming service set to launch next April, will offer people on the go short-form content that can be viewed in 10-minute increments only on mobile phones. Created by Jeffrey Katzenberg, the longtime Disney executive and co-founder of DreamWorks Animation, the new app drew inspiration from Dan Brown’s “The Da Vinci Code,” which has more than 100 chapters averaging five pages each.

The idea behind the innovative service that has the entertainment world abuzz is to attract younger viewers who are always on the move and who may not have long stretches of time to watch a series episode or a movie in one shot. “We created a new platform for on-the-go viewing able to (attract) a hard-to-reach audience,” Quibi CEO Meg Whitman explained at a recent conference in Los Angeles. “Millennials, that’s our target audience.”

Major studios have pledged \$1 billion in funding for the service, which has already attracted big Hollywood names such as Steven Spielberg, Guillermo Del Toro and Jennifer Lopez. Whitman said Quibi, which stands for “quick bites,” will offer Hollywood-quality videos in short form designed exclusively for mobile. “Everything is being optimized for mobile, whether it’s how the content is shot, how we render it,” she said.

“We’re telling stories in chapters,” she said, adding that one of the core features of the streaming service will be 90-minute to two-hour movies told in 10-minute increments. “The best analogy I have for you in another medium is ‘The Da Vinci Code,’” she said, referring to Brown’s blockbuster. “The book is 464 pages and every chapter is five pages long because Dan Brown said people didn’t want to read for 40 minutes at a time anymore.”

Such a format is key to luring the target audience of younger viewers during their daily activities from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, she said. One exception will be a horror series in the works by Spielberg that users will only be able to see come nightfall. Quibi will initially only be available in the United States and Canada and will cost five dollars monthly with ads and eight dollars ad-free.

Six months before its launch, the service has already sold out the entire \$150 million advertising inventory for its first year. The big question now is whether subscriptions will follow. “Candidly, I think there’s already proof with YouTube Red that that business model doesn’t work,” said Tom Nunan, lecturer at UCLA’s School of Theater, Film and Television, referring to YouTube’s paid service. —AFP

## Ringo Starr ‘emotional’ as Beatles come together in new recording

When Ringo Starr decided to record a cover of one of the last songs written by John Lennon, the Beatles drummer knew he wanted former bandmate Paul McCartney to play bass. Then, his record producer found a way to bring in a bit of the late George Harrison. The producer, Jack Douglas, inserted strings from “Here Comes the Sun” — one of the few Beatles hits written by Harrison — into the Starr’s recording of the song “Grow Old with Me.”

“We’re all on it now,” Starr, in an interview with Reuters, said of the musical reunion. “I had nothing to do with that.” “Grow Old with Me” is a single on Starr’s new album called “What’s My Name.” Lennon had recorded a demo of “Grow Old with Me” for his 1980 release “Double Fantasy,” but the song never made it onto that album. Starr, 79, said Lennon’s voice can be heard on the demo saying “this’ll be great for you, Ringo.”

“It was emotional listening to John’s version, cause he’d written other songs for me,” Starr said. “So I thought no, I’m going to do this one.” “I love the song, and the emotion of him speaking to me,” Starr added. “He’s been gone quite awhile, but it’s emotional to me. He was one of my greatest friends.”

Starr, who also has just released a new photography book called “Another Day in the Life,” said he was thrilled that the Beatles’ “Abbey Road” album returned to the top of music charts this month amid renewed interest because of its 50th anniversary. “How far out is that?,” he said. “I think it impresses people that it was made 50 years ago, and we did our best and we mixed it the best way we could.”—Reuters



## Lifestyle | Music



In a photo, a fan of South Korea's BTS K-pop group poses for photos against a backdrop featuring an image of the band members, as they arrive for the final concert of their world tour at the Olympic stadium in Seoul.



Fans of South Korea's BTS K-pop group arrive for the final concert of their world tour at the Olympic stadium in Seoul.— AFP photos

# K-POP'S BTS FINISH TOUR WITH MILLIONS GENERATED

**T**earful and screaming by turn, tens of thousands of BTS fans gathered in Seoul for the finale of the boyband's lucrative world tour, some flying thousands of kilometers to pay homage to their idols and swell their backers' bulging coffers. The septet's global prominence reached unprecedented heights this year, becoming the first K-pop group to top charts in the US and Britain and performing a string of sold-out shows in Los Angeles, Paris, and London's Wembley Stadium.

The floppy-haired musicians, all in their 20s and often sport-

ing earrings and lipstick, appeal to a generation comfortable with gender fluidity. They connect with their largely female fans—collectively known as ARMY—by opening up about their struggles through their music and on social media, which they flood with selfies and personal messages. “I love them so much and they are one of the most important things in my life,” said Milena Marunova, 20, who travelled from Russia to Seoul for this week's concert, her voice trembling with excitement.

That depth of engagement is key to their appeal enduring,

according to CedarBough Saeji, a specialist in Asian languages and cultures at Indiana University Bloomington, contrasting it to rapper Psy's 2012 megahit Gangnam Style. “Psy didn't have a fanbase, he had one viral hit song,” she said. So when the follow-ups “weren't quite what the audience was looking for, they moved on. But BTS has many very loyal fans.” She added BTS' music was well produced with excellent videos, “and performed by incredibly handsome and charismatic young people”.





Lifestyle | Music



**BTS dolls**

That popularity has enabled a hugely profitable variety of spin-off products and activities. Their merchandise ranges from pens and notebooks to pillows and blankets, and they collaborated with Barbie manufacturer Mattel for BTS dolls, which the US toymaker said lifted its international sales by 10 percent. They are starring in a TV drama slated to air next year, their agency Big Hit Entertainment said, and South Korea's largest gamemaker Netmarble launched the first mobile game featuring the band in June, with a sequel already in the works.

The group are also brand ambassadors for companies like Coca Cola, FILA and Hyundai Motor. Their world tour—which ran from August last year—drew a total audience of more than two million at 62 shows in 23 cities, according to Big Hit Entertainment. The entertainment company said it posted record revenues of more than 200 billion won in the first half of 2019, and with only a handful of other artists on its books, the vast majority is likely to have been generated by BTS.

But the band's wider economic impact is far larger. BTS are worth 4.1 trillion won to the South Korean economy annually, the Hyundai Research Institute said in a 2018 December report, boosting the image of South Korean products abroad and driving tourism. The country has long relied heavily on China and Japan for visitors, and was hit hard in March 2017 when Beijing banned group tours in a row over the installation of a US missile defence system.

Recently, an intensifying dispute between Seoul and Tokyo over wartime history has also slowed growth of Japanese visitors, government figures show. But nearly 90 percent of overseas K-pop fans in 111 countries said they would like to visit South Korea in future, according to a study published this week by the Korea Tourism Organization. Incoming K-pop fans "expanded the age groups and diversified the nationalities of visitors that were likely to return to South Korea", said Kim Sung-eun, who led the KTO study.



Hours before Tuesday's concert fans crowded into the 44,000-capacity Olympic Stadium, laughing and posing in front of giant BTS photo walls. Many of the foreigners attending were making their first pilgrimage to South Korea. Nurul Nadiah, 28, a financial analyst from Malaysia, said as well as historic palaces, she had visited fan hotspots—including the House of BTS, a multi-storey pop-up store in the posh Gangnam district that sells more than 200 types of BTS goods. "I think I'm already broke," she said.

Big Hit Entertainment declined to specify how much of its turnover was generated by BTS, nor the band's own earnings. K-pop is notorious for the power of its management companies. They often create their bands, control almost every aspect of their lives, and retain comprehensive rights to their output.

However, BTS members' benefited from songwriting and producing royalties, said Saeji, and would receive greater shares of modeling and endorsement contracts—and their "phenomenal" merchandise sales—than for music alone. "They are certainly very rich at this point," she said. "Keeping such a very successful group happy is hugely important for Big Hit."—AFP







In this photo Afghan entrepreneur Marghuba Safi, center, sits with female workers arranging bars of soap at her organic skin care company in Kabul. — AFP photos



Afghan female workers arrange bars of soap at an organic skin care company in Kabul.



## Kabul soap factory helps former addicts stay clean



Afghan entrepreneur Marghuba Safi holds an information card about aloe vera after an interview with AFP.

A young Afghan mother of seven sits on a red woolen rug alongside four other women who are slicing huge slabs of handmade, flowery soap into smaller bars. She is one of about 20 female employees—many of them recovering drug addicts—working part time on an organic farm in Kabul, where they grow sweet flowers and plants to turn into sweet-smelling soaps and creams.

The venture can be a lifeline in a patriarchal country that grows roughly 90 percent of the world's illicit opium. Millions of Afghans struggle with drug addiction, and women addicts face particular discrimination. "I am happy that I am working here because it's all

women. There are no men here," said the mother, who requested anonymity, as she sat on the mini production line, tying ribbons around newly bagged soaps made from a type of charcoal that supposedly has special health benefits.

The business is the creation of local entrepreneur Marghuba Safi, who started making soaps and creams in her kitchen in 2016. Friends and family reacted so well to the products that she launched a full-time business with the help of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The agency paid for Safi to visit India, where women-owned ventures are commonplace, to seek inspiration from small businesses.

"A lot of women over there are working from their homes, and I visited women making their own businesses," said Safi, 40. "When I came back I decided to make my business a little wider," she added. Her large farm—which grows corn, peppers, aloe, marigolds and other plants—is hidden behind a non-descript metal gate on the outskirts of Kabul. The only condition for UNODC's support was that Safi hired recovering women drug addicts. "When I became sad, I went to my neighbour's home and then we ate something," explains the young mother on how she got hooked.

"I did not know what it was but it made me relaxed. After that they took me to the hospital then Marghuba (Safi) came and taught us how to make soaps and helped us." According to data from 2015 — the last year a comprehensive national survey was carried out—Afghanistan had about three million drug addicts, a huge proportion of the country's estimated 35 million people. About 20 percent are women, and the rate of addiction has only gone up over the past four years, said Anubha Sood, a senior

officer with UNODC's "Alternative Livelihoods and Counter Narcotics" programme. "The rate (of addiction) is increasing much, much more among women and children in the past few years," Sood said.

### A big moral boost

The go-to drug is opium—whether in smoked or in tablet form—and women are sometimes kicked out of the home as a punishment for seeking help. "A lot of women who we work with, once they undergo treatment in the drug treatment centre there is stigma attached and a lot of families do not accept them back," Sood said. If a woman "is able to stand on her own feet and is able to support herself and her children, this is a big moral boost for herself and she can earn a living in a very dignified manner".

The mother on the production line, aged 30, said she was paid about about \$2 for a half day's work—a small but meaningful sum in a country where more than half the population lives below the poverty line of \$1.90 a day. "When I am bringing money to the house, I feel proud that I am also taking part in the economy of my family," she said.

Sood said the UNODC was helping other Afghan women in the provinces through "alternative development" projects such as small-scale vegetable or poultry farms that are easy to manage in a country where women were systematically denied an education under the Taliban and where girls' access to schooling is still limited. Such projects are "simpler and easier for women to handle. They don't have to venture out that much, it can be run from the household itself and they can sell the product at the (local) market," Sood said. — AFP



Afghan entrepreneur Marghuba Safi walks outside her organic skin care company in Kabul.





These pictures show new recruits, coming from disadvantaged and abusive backgrounds, and going through a selection process to join the Akashinga Ranger training program, are tested on their physical fitness, during their selection process in Phundundu, Zimbabwe. — AFP photos



# The 'Brave Ones': Zimbabwe's women-only rangers fighting poaching

Chiyevdedzo Mutero was one of dozens competing in the remote Zimbabwean bush to join the all-female anti-poaching Akashinga rangers when she broke her finger. She didn't consider quitting—she even smiled as her finger was bandaged, before returning to the brutal military-style training. "I'm happy, that's why I am not crying. I'm trying to be an Akashinga girl," the 22-year-old said.

The rangers, armed and dressed in khaki combat gear, track and arrest poachers in five reserves, all former trophy hunting areas, encompassing 4,000 square kilometers near the Zambian border in northern Zimbabwe. If recruited, Mutero would become one of an elite few—out of 500 applicants, only 80 will make it into the ranks of the Akashinga, or "brave ones" in local dialect.

Being brave will certainly count in her job of helping to protect the wildlife against poachers who are often heavily armed. But all the women are also "survivors", selected for the ranger recruitment program for having overcome adversity, often abuse, in their past. Mutero married young and moved to South Africa with her husband and daughter, where she was physically abused by her mother-in-law.

She returned to rural Zimbabwe to raise her daughter alone and broke as her husband refused to send money. "But now I am here to empower myself to take care of my child," she said, proudly talking of the importance of the country's wildlife and its conservation. Mutero made it into the last 160 potential recruits, who faced a series of grueling tests of their physical and mental strength in the Phundundu Wildlife Area. Over several days, the women raced under the beating sun, wrestled each other and a dozen even lifted a giant tree trunk over their heads. Only the toughest make the cut.

## The toughest

Damien Mander, 39, a former military sniper in the Australian army who also worked in the private security sector in Iraq, started the program in 2017 as part of the non-profit International Anti-Poaching Foundation that he founded. "We were trying to create an opportunity for the most marginalized

women in some of the toughest regions, in one of the poorest countries on the continent," he said.

"They are all survivors of serious sexual assault, domestic violence, AIDS orphans, single mothers, abandoned wives." "We didn't want great CVs, actually we wanted scrappers. People that knew what it was like to have to fight to survive, and that's exactly what we got," he told AFP. "What we didn't realise is we were getting the toughest."

Hardships faced by the women in rural Zimbabwe also steel them for life on the frontline against poaching, says one of the trainers Paul Wilson, also a former soldier. "These guys are used to walking a long way with a 20-litre bucket of water on their head, spending all day digging or hoeing in the field, carrying large amounts of firewood... these girls know how to work," he said.

## More than biceps and bullets

Mander said that his time in Iraq had helped him understand that "law enforcement isn't about biceps and bullets". It is more about establishing relationships and longterm ties with communities, he said, adding the women also had the ability "to naturally de-escalate tension". All Akashinga rangers come from villages near the area they patrol, so they can work with the locals and have a



International Anti Poaching Foundation rangers stage a patrol to show their operational skills at The Akashinga Project Base Camp in Phundundu, Zimbabwe.



Zimbabwean Ranger Instructor from the International Anti Poaching Foundation Petronella Chigumbura waits for new recruits, women from disadvantaged and abusive backgrounds, to be given uniforms, during their selection process.

vested interest.

"We have gone from having anti-poaching units fighting against the community, to having a community fight for what we believe in," Mander said. The women rangers plough up to 90 percent of their earnings into their families and local community, compared to 30 to 40 percent for men, he added. "The biggest thing that we've seen is we

haven't had a single incidence of corruption with women," he said.

## Increasingly militarized

It has been working. Before the Akashinga started patrolling the area, around 8,000 elephants were killed there over 16 years. Since they arrived two years ago, elephant poaching has dropped 80 percent, according to the International Anti-Poaching Foundation. The women have made 115 arrests—without them firing a single shot. But it is dangerous work.

"Conservation is becoming increasingly militarized," Mander said. "More and more poachers are coming in here with weapons and they are willing to kill elephants and the people that are protecting them." Mander said that he hopes to have "a small army of 1,000 women" protecting 20 reserves by 2025.

## Lives transformed

Ranger Juliana Murumbi, a member of the first Akashinga class, said that she had held her own against men during specialized training to become an instructor earlier this year. "I managed to challenge the men in physical training, in the long run, the push-ups, the sit-ups, the drags," she said. "So I think we are just the same because what they can do, I can do."

Nyaradzo Auxilia, another ranger, said that the program was "totally transforming the standard of life of all women" involved, including herself. "My husband used to abuse me. I can just simply say he was an abusive man. He was very violent to me," the 27-year-old said. She fled with her child, and is now one of many Akashinga able to support themselves. The rangers earn between \$300 and \$1,200 a month, depending on their role.

"They can now stand on their own. They can now not depend on someone else—they can move on without being abused or facing that cruelty from the men," she said. That's a future that Mutero can now look forward to—despite the broken finger, she passed the test and next year will start the final six-month training program to become an Akashinga ranger. — AFP



## Lifestyle | Features

# Getty Center museum: A 'beautiful fortress' against Los Angeles fires

Nestled in the mountains above Los Angeles, the Getty Center is located in an area prone to wildfires—but museum officials say its priceless collection is safe within the walls of a fireproof “beautiful fortress.” On Monday morning, security guards listened in to alarming calls between firefighters. A fire had broken out extremely close to the building. The “Getty Fire” grew quickly within a few hours, forcing stars such as LeBron James and Arnold Schwarzenegger to evacuate their homes in nearby, exclusive residential areas.

Despite the flames—which spread over 300 hectares—and the smoke, authorities said they never considered moving any of the 125,000 artworks and 1.4 million documents that comprise the museum’s unique collection. “Our art

is incredibly secure,” communications vice-president Lisa Lapin told AFP. “The Getty was constructed to house valuable art and keep it very safe from fires, from earthquakes, from any type of damage.” “We are really built like a beautiful fortress and everything inside is quite safe,” she added.

Architect Richard Meier built the center two decades ago, at a cost of \$1 billion. As well as the museum, it houses a research hub and a foundation with around 1,000 employees. The building is constructed of fire-resistant travertine stone, as well as cement and steel. Its roofs are covered with crushed stone to prevent embers igniting, and even in the gardens, resilient plants were chosen. Inside, the galleries can be separated off with a vault-like double door that is practically impenetrable.

## Ventilation system

With the Getty empty at dawn on Monday, protection measures kicked in with the activation of the center’s irrigation system, drawing on a million-gallon water tank. The building’s ventilation system switched to an internal recycling system, similar to those found in cars, preventing smoke from entering rooms from the outside. The Getty is currently hosting a special exhibition of works by Edouard Manet.

Lapin said some art owners had contacted the museum expressing concern about the fire, but were quickly informed about the building’s fireproof structure, made up of 300,000 travertine blocks and 12,500 tons of steel bars. Monday’s blaze is not the first to skirt the building. Two years ago, the “Skirball Fire”-

named for its proximity to another nearby cultural center—triggered the same safety measures, although it only affected the far side of an adjacent freeway.

“It was not as close as this one, and it didn’t come onto our own land... But in both cases, we’ve been very confident that the center is fine,” said Lapin. Officials from museums around the world have visited the Getty to observe its safety system, she added. The museum, which has served as a base for firefighters this week, will be closed until at least Friday. The Getty Fire—now 27 percent contained—was caused by a tree branch that fell on power lines. Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti on Tuesday called it “an act of God,” expressing hope it would be fully controlled very soon.—AFP



A picture shows Italian architect Renzo Piano and Russia’s privately owned gas producer Novatek CEO and V-A-C Foundation founder Leonid Mikhelson inspecting construction works transforming a historical power station on the banks of the Moskva river into a new contemporary art space, GES 2.—AFP

## Russia’s richest man unveils new Moscow arts centre

Gas tycoon Leonid Mikhelson is normally seen inking deals and meeting President Vladimir Putin, but on Tuesday Russia’s richest man rubbed elbows with the cultural crowd as he showcased a new Moscow arts centre. The GES-2 venue in central Moscow, financed by Mikhelson’s VAC foundation, is located in a century-old power-plant that is being redesigned with great pomp by Italian ‘starchitect’ Renzo Piano.

The enormous space is set to house galleries, cafes and art residencies, and is to open its doors in September 2020, Mikhelson told a press-conference. The billionaire toured the cathedral-like site Monday, accompanied by daughter Victoria and the frail-looking, 82-year-old Piano. At the press conference, Piano recounted that when the two first saw the power plant, he told Mikhelson “he had to buy all the buildings around to demolish them and let light flood the place,” a major

task in a neighbourhood just across the river from the Kremlin.

“And he did it,” Piano said. “The owner is a good guy.” Sitting on the Moscow river, the venue keeps the original 1907 structure of the power plant which had supplied the Kremlin with electricity, but which will now have solar panels on the roof to consume less energy, and a birch grove. Mikhelson’s fortune is valued at \$27.3 billion, the largest in Russia, according to the 2019 Forbes ranking. He is the founder and chief of Novatek, the largest private gas group in Russia, which is currently under US sanctions, and a shareholder of the Sibur petrochemical company. “I’ve built many things in my life... but this project is the most important to me,” Mikhelson told journalists. Asked about the cost of the arts venue, which is being built by the same construction companies as Mikhelson’s Arctic natural gas facilities, he said he had to “double what he initially planned,” without elaborating.—AFP

## Is it Machiavelli? By Leonardo? Mystery artwork causes buzz

A n unsigned painting of an unidentified bald man with a beard has aroused excitement among historians and art buffs after lying largely unnoticed in the collection of a historic chateau in central France for decades. A letter written 145 years ago and discovered last year suggests the work could be the likeness of 15th-16th century Italian philosopher Niccolo Machiavelli, painted by none other than Renaissance master Leonardo da Vinci.

Several months of tests lie ahead to establish the painting’s subject and provenance, but Sylvie Giroux, director of the Chateau de Valencay in central France, says it is “not impossible” that it will prove to be a link between two of history’s most famous men. The castle housing the artwork once belonged to Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Perigord, a pre-eminent diplomat known simply as Talleyrand who died in 1838.

Last year, a document dated 1874 and signed by Talleyrand’s chamberlain was unearthed in an archive, mentioning a Machiavelli portrait on wood measuring 55 by 42 centimeters painted by Leonardo. The discovery unleashed a treasure hunt among Talleyrand’s vast art collection, leading to a possible match hidden away in a castle store-room. The somber portrait is of an unsmiling man with a long, thin face, sharp nose and pointed beard, dressed in a black coat, white shirt and necktie.

“Just because it says so in the archives does not mean it’s true” that this is a likeness of Machiavelli painted by Leonardo, cautioned Anne Gerardot of the local archives office. Gerardot, who has been researching the matter for more than a year, said the painting’s attribution to Leonardo may well be the result of “a gradual shift from supposition to affirmation”. Several months of high-tech tests will seek to determine whether the work is by Leonardo’s hand, virtually stripping it back layer by layer.

Gerardot believes the person in the portrait bears a much closer resemblance to 16th-century French philosopher Michel de Montaigne than to Machiavelli. —AFP



## On Halloween cemetery tours, the dead come to life

Keith Bottum blames his inner child when asked why a grown man was spending a recent pre-Halloween evening wandering among the tombs of New York's Woodlawn Cemetery, the final resting place of famous American celebrities, from jazz great Duke Ellington to one of the most infamous spirits of the silent film era. "It puts a little thrill in you when you're walking around at night to see the spooky mausoleums and the headstones," said Bottum as he toured the ornate burial ground in New York's Bronx borough. "I'm 35 going on 12."

Guided excursions through historic graveyards such as Woodlawn, home of the Moonlight Illuminated Mausoleum Tour, have become a hot ticket across the United States around Halloween, celebrated on Oct. 31. The tours are a small slice of what has grown into a multi-billion dollar holiday industry - ranging from food and drinks to costumes and entertainment - designed to excite and amuse adults as much as their children.

On the cemetery circuit, celebrity spirits are the big draw. Beer baron Frederick Pabst lies in Milwaukee's Forest Home Cemetery, and "Gone With The Wind" author Margaret Mitchell is a highlight of Atlanta's Oakland Cemetery. Rich in history and stunning in architectural detail, all three cemeteries are listed on the US National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places.

Woman's rights activist Elizabeth Cady Stanton is among the many famous people interred at Woodlawn. But tour guide Nestor Danyluk says perhaps the most intriguing soul who inhabits the graveyard is Olive Thomas - hardly a household name today but a silent film starlet in the early 1900s who was known as "Everybody's Sweetheart." Thomas was a one-time Ziegfeld Follies chorus girl whose ghost is said to haunt the New Amsterdam Theatre, current home of the Broadway musical "Aladdin."

Thomas was married to actor Jack Pickford and died at age 25 in 1920 after drinking poison at a Paris hotel. It was never

determined whether her death was an accident, suicide or murder, said cemetery historian Susan Olsen. "She's a very flirtatious ghost," Danyluk told his audience of 20 at Thomas' granite mausoleum, adding that her spirit is said to appear at the Broadway theater, where she once danced in shows. "She loves to sneak up behind men and tug on their shirts or put her hand up their pants legs. If you're feeling an odd sensation on your calves, it could be Olive," he said.

### 'Enlighten, not frighten'

Despite the Halloween trappings, tour organizers say their aim is to share local history and cultivate pride in the community. "Our tours are designed to enlighten, not frighten," said marketing manager Angie Wynne in Atlanta, where tickets for "Capturing the Spirit of Oakland Halloween Tours" sold out months ahead, in July. Julia Griffith, program director at Historic Milwaukee, said volunteer guides wear Victorian-era clothing on evening tours at the 1850 cemetery where beer mogul Joseph Schlitz is interred.

"It's not a spooky theme but they act as the various movers and shakers of Milwaukee who are buried there," Griffith said. Woodlawn, a 400-acre cemetery in the Bronx that opened during the American Civil War in 1863, is the final resting place for such American legends as Ellington, trumpeter Miles Davis, bandleader Lionel Hampton, songster Irving Berlin and "Moby Dick" author Herman Melville. It also houses the stately tombs of department store moguls Frank Winfield Woolworth, James Cash Penney Jr. and Macy's co-owner Isidor Straus. His wife's refusal to leave his side for a rescue boat during the sinking of the Titanic was a memorable scene in films about the 1912 tragedy.

The Woodlawn tour, which invites guests to bring their own flashlights, has sold out annually since it was first offered in 2016, with more than 250 tickets snapped up this year at about \$25 each, said Barbara Selesky, Woodlawn's marketing director. On a recent tour, Eugene Zongrone, 75, a retired banker, and

his wife Theresa, 71, a retired bookkeeper, gazed at the Tiffany glass windows inside one of many marble and granite crypts that were opened for the tour. The ornate architecture notwithstanding, the real draw for most people is to celebrate ghosts and goblins in the spirit of Halloween. "It's a little on the mysterious side," said Eugene Zongrone. "It's fun."—Reuters



Tourists look at the Webb family mausoleum during the Moonlight Mausoleum tour at Woodlawn Cemetery in Bronx in New York City.—Reuters photos





This picture shows Indonesian children taking part in a coloring contest of pigs during the Pig and Pork Lake Toba Festival in Muara, located near Lake Toba, a popular crater lake in Sumatra.—AFP photos



This picture shows Indonesians taking part in a pig catching contest during the Pig and Pork Lake Toba Festival in Muara, located near Lake Toba, a popular crater lake in Sumatra.

# Indonesia's halal tourism bid faces pig pushback

Indonesia's bid to lure more visitors by spreading halal tourism across the archipelago is facing a backlash, with a Christian celebration of pigs—forbidden for Muslims—the latest act of dissent. The weekend festival—cum-protest in Sumatra, featuring pig racing, chubby hog contests and a porcine fashion show, comes as holiday hotspot Bali pushes back against rolling out more Muslim-friendly services on the Hindu island.

Critics say a government plan to cash in on halal tourism—part of a broader campaign to replicate Bali's success nationwide—is another threat to minority rights in the world's most populous Muslim-majority nation. And critics have warned that the sprawling nation of 260 million—where nearly 90 percent of the population follows Islam—is taking hard-right turn with a conservative cleric now installed as vice-president and hardliners growing increasingly vocal in public life.

Indonesia's reputation for tolerant Islam has been under fire for years. Pushing halal tourism in areas with religious minorities—including Christians, Buddhists and Hindus—may do more harm than good, warned Ali Munhanif, an expert on political Islam at Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University Jakarta. "The phenomenon sig-

nals an effort to institutionalize conservatism," he said. "Bali successfully manages its tourism sector without using a 'Hindu' label. But advocates say halal tourism is misunderstood. "There is a public misperception that halal tourism is Islamisation. That is wrong and it's why some people overreact to the concept," said Zainut Tauhid, Indonesia's deputy minister of religious affairs. "It is about providing necessary facilities for Muslim visitors such as prayer rooms. So it is facilitation rather than Islamisation."

## Divide people

That view isn't shared by some around Lake Toba, a scenic crater lake in Sumatra where the weekend pig festival was held. Most locals are Batak, a Christian ethnic group that puts pigs at the centre of its traditional cuisine, with hog farming a key source of income. Last month, provincial governor Edy Rahmayadi raised eyebrows when said he wanted to boost tourism with Islam-friendly facilities and services.

That included opening more halal restaurants and mosques, as well as banning the public slaughter of hogs, with the governor saying the practice could turn off Muslim visitors. "This idea to bring in halal tourism is going to divide people," festival organiser Togu Simorangkir

told AFP "It's a step back for tourism here," he added. About 1,000 people dropped by the event, including children who scribbled in pig-themed colouring books and adults watching as hogs were judged on their plump proportions.

"Batak culture is particularly known for its pigs," said higher schooler Edo Sianturi. "We've been raising them and earning a living from them for generations." Visitor Sabrina Singarimbun, a Muslim student in a head-covering hijab, was keen to see which best-dressed pig would win the festival's fashion contest. "I disagree with the (halal tourism) idea because it's Batak culture here and most people aren't Muslim," she said.

## Tourism is about happiness

Elsewhere, halal tourism is often seen as a lucrative business opportunity. Thailand and Taiwan are among regional destinations tapping the halal tourism sector, which a 2017 study found will be worth some \$300 billion annually. This month, Indonesia ushered in new halal labeling rules for consumer products and services, as the

government eyes travelers from other Islamic nations to rev up its much-touted "10 New Balis" tourism push, which includes Lake Toba.

But efforts to cater to Muslim visitors has drawn controversy. This summer, officials in Lombok—an island next to Bali that has many Muslim-friendly services—quickly rolled back plans to set up separate camping areas for male and female hikers in Mount Rinjani National Park after a public backlash. Two restaurants in Makassar on Sulawesi island, meanwhile, were forced to close after a Muslim group in July complained that the smell of their pork dishes was wafting over to nearby mosques and halal restaurants.

Back in North Sumatra, the governor's spokesman Muhammad Ikhsan said his boss was misunderstood. "He just wants to make Lake Toba a friendly place for Muslim visitors," Ikhsan said, adding that he hoped it would also curtail the environmental impact of pig farming. "What we want is just to make things organized, not to make it a halal place."—AFP





## Far from the bombs: Somalis relax on floating restaurant



La Lanterna owner Abdulkadir Mohamed Ibrahim serves customers on board his floating restaurant.—AFP

Tucking into fresh seafood on a boat anchored in clear turquoise waters, which serves as a floating restaurant, Ahmed Yusuf can hardly believe he is in Mogadishu. Nearby, on the pristine white shores of Lido beach, children scamper in pursuit of a football while locals stroll along or take a dip in the shallows of a notoriously shark-infested stretch of ocean. In a city plagued by regular bombings by the Islamist group Al-Shabaab, leisure-seeking residents through the beach which has seen a boom in construction of restaurants, prompting some business owners to get creative.

In January this year Abdulkadir Mohamed Ibrahim, a 48-year-old Somali entrepreneur who returned to his country from Italy, built and fitted out a double-decker boat with plush chairs and tables where diners can enjoy fresh seafood, a fresh breeze, and a sense of normalcy. "Sometimes I don't feel I'm in Mogadishu," said customer Yusuf, who works for a non-governmental organization. "There is the sound of the waves and I watch the beautiful ocean while enjoying fresh seafood on the boat. I hope that we will have more of these kinds of businesses."

Ibrahim had previously tried to launch several businesses in Mogadishu, such as a travel agency, which were ultimately unsuccessful, before stumbling upon the idea for the restaurant "La Lanterna". "When we saw developed countries that have floating

restaurant boats which carry tourists, we came up with the idea of a restaurant where people can have a splendid time—and now we have a floating restaurant in Mogadishu," he said.

Ibrahim said customers would place their orders two days before their booking, so food can be prepared onshore and brought aboard, as the boat does not have space for a kitchen. However it does have fridges for cold beverages.

The sea can be choppy sometimes, but customers happily grip their plates as they dine, and sometimes enjoy a long ride out to sea when it is calm. "I built this boat with the help of friends and it has got a capacity of 40 people at the moment, but I am planning to expand the capacity to 50 in the future," Ibrahim said. "The sea is dark at night and there are no boats here at Lido beach except ours, so that is why I called it 'the Lantern', in Italian."

### People need entertainment

Several restaurants began popping up along Lido beach after Al-Shabaab was chased out of the devastated capital by African Union peacekeepers fighting alongside government troops in 2011. Improved security also saw a return of Somalis from the diaspora after the 1991 overthrow of president Siad Barre's military regime ushered in decades of chaos and civil war. The beach—a rare public space in the city—became a popular spot.

This made it a target for the Al-Qaeda-affiliated Shabaab, which continues to stage regular strikes on the city and in 2013 and 2016 launched deadly attacks on beachfront restaurants with suicide bombers, grenades and gunmen. "Security of customers is the main concern... we try to ensure that people are searched properly before they board the boat. It is not as easy as coming to the beach where everybody has access," said Ibrahim.

"We started this business and I hope others will follow suit. People need entertainment after days of work and stress and we are making reservations for more clients every day. Our aim is also to attract investors and tourists." Fadumo Ahmed Mohamud is visiting the restaurant for the first time on a visit home from the United Kingdom.

"This place is very beautiful, and the country is making relative improvement. Today we had our lunch on board the big boat on our beautiful ocean. This is an amazing experience which I never imagined these days, in this place," she said. The NGO worker Yusuf said he spends most weekends at Lido Beach and often dines at La Lanterna. "It kills your stress as soon as you are boarded, I don't fear blasts and suicide bombs because you distance yourself from the big buildings and enjoy the ocean," he said.—AFP

## Thai chef aims to turn insect eating into fine dining

Thai chef Surasit Buttama spent almost a decade cooking international food at upscale restaurants and hotels in the United States and Thailand, but he found his passion a few months ago at a Bangkok restaurant serving edible insects. His latest recipe consists of almond cream pear tart served with silk worm vanilla icecream. While the icecream has two silk worms lying on top, you wouldn't realize that the icecream itself is made of powdered silk worms.

The same goes with pasta made of crickets and giant water beetles or crickets mixed into brownies. A dish consisting of grilled seabass is served with crispy ants and ant eggs mixed with beurre blanc sauce. "One of the challenges that I enjoy is how to make people not feel scared of the food," Buttama told the Thomson Reuters Foundation at Insects in the Backyard, Thailand's first edible insect fine dining restaurant, where he is chef de cuisine.

"I don't think I'll ever get bored (with cooking insects), which is something I won't be able to learn anywhere else."

Nutritionists and scientists have been touting insects as sustainable and cheap source of protein to feed a growing world because they are high in protein, vitamins, fibre and minerals. Insects emit fewer greenhouse gases and less ammonia than cattle or pigs and require significantly less land and water than cattle, according to the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization.

While eating insects is already part of a normal diet for Thai people in rural areas, 35-year-old Buttama says it is often looked down upon. This account of only 20 percent of the restaurant's customers. "Thais associate eating insects with poor people, which is a misunderstanding. (People who live in rural areas) are actually lucky to have different sources of food," he said. "The taste (of insects) is unique and tasty, similar to crab and shrimp. For instance, giant water beetles taste like crab, while grasshoppers taste like shrimp."

Buttama joined Insects in the Backyard about six months ago, which was founded by Somchai Songwattana, chief ex-

ecutive of Flynow, one of Thailand's pioneering fashion brands. "What we are trying to do is to let Thais know that insects are edible and have value, but they are often overlooked," said Buttama. The chef is often seen hanging around in the dining room talking to customers and recommending dishes - his favourite is nachos with cherry tomato salsa, dukkha sour cream, grand padano cheese and your choice of organic insects.

He also likes to give tips to customers on how to cook their own meals at home, and plans to write a book on insect cuisine. Edible insects are slowly gaining popularity in Thailand, with packaged snacks sold in 7-Eleven convenience stores and insects sold in bulk at Makro, a local wholesale supermarket. "I like to encourage people to cook their own dishes because it helps farmers and it's doing good for the world," said Buttama. "In the future, it might even be common for us to see chefs cooking insects in restaurants." —Reuters





# China Fashion Week

Models display creations from the 'Heaven Gaia' collection by Xiong Ying during the China Fashion Week in Beijing.—AFP photos





## Comic

### Word Search

#### More 1950's Songs

Find and circle all of the 1950's song titles that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the title of an additional 1950's song.

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

- |                |                 |               |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| ALL SHOOK UP   | FLAMINGO        | LUCILLE       | SOUL ON FIRE    |
| ALMOST GROWN   | GET A JOB       | MAYBE         | STAGGER LEE     |
| AT THE HOP     | GOODNIGHT IRENE | MONEY HONEY   | THE BELLS       |
| BIRD DOG       | I'M A MAN       | MR SANDMAN    | THE WIND        |
| BLUE MONDAY    | I'M WALKIN'     | PERSONALITY   | TIPITINA        |
| CHANCES ARE    | JIM DANDY       | REBEL ROUSER  | TOM DOOLEY      |
| CHANTILLY LACE | JUKE            | ROLLIN' STONE | TRY ME          |
| CRY            | LITTLE DARLIN'  | SEA CRUISE    | WHITE LIGHTNING |
| DON'T BE CRUEL | LONELY AVENUE   | SINCERELY     | YOUNG BLOOD     |
| EL PASO        | LOUIE LOUIE     | SO WHAT       |                 |

### Yesterday's Solution

#### Moods & Emotions 3

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

- |              |           |             |          |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|----------|
| ANGER        | EDGY      | GRUMPY      | OUTRAGE  |
| APPRECIATIVE | ENVIIOUS  | HAPPY       | PUZZLED  |
| ARROGANT     | EXUBERANT | HOPE        | REGRET   |
| BITTER       | FEAR      | INDIFFERENT | SADNESS  |
| CALM         | FRANTIC   | JEALOUS     | SCARED   |
| CHEERFUL     | FRETFUL   | JOLLY       | SCORNFUL |
| CONFIDENT    | GLAD      | JOYFUL      | SORRY    |
| CURIOUS      | GLEEFUL   | MOROSE      | SURPRISE |
| DISGUST      | GRATEFUL  | MOURNFUL    | TRANQUIL |
| DUBIOUS      | GRIEF     | NERVOUS     | WORRY    |

The hidden word is: EMBARRASSMENT

### Crossword 2348



#### ACROSS

- A run that is the result of the batter's performance.
- Coextensive with the family Palmae.
- A benevolent aspect of Devi.
- Electrical conduction through a gas in an applied electric field.
- A person who escapes into a world of fantasy.
- Any of various dark heavy viscid substances obtained as a residue.
- Submerged aquatic plant having narrow leaves and small flowers.
- Small wild or domesticated web-footed broad-billed swimming bird usually having a depressed body and short legs.
- Make amendments to.
- A technician who is highly proficient and enthusiastic about some technical field (especially computing).
- A Spanish river.
- A Mid-Atlantic state.
- Resinlike substance secreted by certain lac insects.
- A metric unit of volume or capacity equal to 100 liters.
- Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
- Fleshy spore-bearing inner mass of e.g. a puffball or stinkhorn.
- An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
- Any of a class of organic compounds that contain the divalent radical -CON-HCO-.
- United States writer noted for his droll epigrams (1902-1971).
- Type genus of the Anatidae.

- (astronomy) The angular distance of a celestial point measured westward along the celestial equator from the zenith crossing.
- Lacking self-confidence.
- Of or relating to or designating narcotics.
- At a steady rate or pace.
- The ninth month of the Moslem calendar.
- English actor noted for his portrayals of Shakespeare's great tragic characters (1789-1833).
- Characterized by disconcerting directness in manner or speech.
- A member of the Pueblo people living in northern New Mexico.
- Dark purple edible seaweed of the Atlantic coasts of Europe and North America.
- The wife or widow of a czar.
- A rectangular block of hewn stone used for building purposes.
- A mark used by an author or editor to indicate where something is to be inserted into a text.
- A castrated tomat.
- A statement that deviates from or perverts the truth.
- Reproduce someone's behavior or looks.
- The executive agency that advises the President on the federal budget.
- A plant hormone promoting elongation of stems and roots.
- The person who steers a ship.
- Of or relating to or characteristic of Thailand of its people.

#### DOWN

- A loud bombastic declamation expressed with strong emotion.
- (Scotland) A slope or hillside.
- A pendent spear of ice formed by the freezing of dripping water.
- A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
- A very poisonous metallic element that has three allotropic forms.
- A digital display that uses liquid crystal cells that change reflectivity in an applied electric field.
- English writer (born in France) of novels and short stories (1874-1965).
- A drug combination found in some over-the-counter headache remedies (Aspirin and Phenacetin and Caffeine).
- Resembling or similar.
- A radioactive transuranic element produced by bombarding plutonium with neutrons.
- Indicating the most important performer or role.
- A member of the Shoshonean people of Utah and Colorado and New Mexico.
- A Dravidian language spoken in south central India.
- A unit of dry measure used in Egypt.
- According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
- A family of Amerindian languages spoken in Washington and British Columbia.
- These words are used to express a low opinion of someone's intelligence.
- Being seven more than fifty.
- Member of a Jewish sect that observes a form of strict Orthodox Judaism.
- Covered with dense cottony hairs or hairlike filaments.
- Pronounce with an initial sibilant.
- A public promotion of some product or service.
- Any branch of Shinto other than Kokka.
- A song of praise (to God or to a saint or to a nation).
- A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
- Disgraceful gossip about the private lives of other people.
- Of or relating to near the ear.
- A human limb.
- A doctor's degree in optometry.
- Any of various mostly giant tropical lianas of Africa and Madagascar having greenish or purple flowers and long smooth pods.
- (medieval legends) The nephew of King Mark of Cornwall who fell in love with his uncle's bride (Iseult) after they mistakenly drank a love potion that left them eternally in love with each other.
- (Norse mythology) God of light and peace and noted for his beauty and sweet nature.
- An uproarious party.
- Having been taken into the mouth for consumption.
- Lamb leg suitable for roasting.
- (Jungian psychology) The inner self (not the external persona) that is in touch with the unconscious.
- Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation.
- The largest continent with 60% of the earth's population.
- Fertility goddess in ancient Greek mythology.
- A wound made by cutting.
- A member of an Iroquoian people formerly living on the south shore of Lake Erie in northern Ohio and northwest Pennsylvania and western New York.
- Stalk of a moss capsule.
- Thickening of tissue in the motor tracts of the lateral columns and anterior horns of the spinal cord.
- A metric unit of volume equal to one thousandth of a liter.

### Yesterday's Solution

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

### Daily SuDoku

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

### Yesterday's Solution

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



## TV Listings



00:05 Crank  
01:40 Leatherface  
03:15 Painted Skin: The Resurrection  
05:35 Kung Fu Yoga  
07:35 The Monkey King  
09:40 The Taking Of Pelham 123  
11:40 Stargate  
13:45 Tai Chi 2: The Hero Rises  
15:40 American Ninja III  
17:25 Transformers: The Last Knight  
20:00 The Recruit  
22:00 Commando  
23:40 Waist Deep



00:45 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet  
01:40 Intruders  
02:35 Saba And The Rhino's Secret  
03:25 Wolves And Warriors  
04:15 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet  
05:02 Wildest Indochina  
05:49 Pit Bulls & Parolees  
06:36 Vet On The Loose  
07:00 Vet On The Loose  
07:25 Untamed China With Nigel Marven  
08:15 Untamed China With Nigel Marven  
09:10 Untamed China With Nigel Marven  
10:05 Untamed China With Nigel Marven  
11:00 Untamed China With Nigel Marven  
11:55 Wild Dubai  
12:50 Crikey! It's The Irwins  
13:45 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet  
14:40 Animal Cribbs  
15:35 Intruders  
16:30 Everest: Beyond The Limit  
17:25 Animal Cops Philadelphia  
18:20 Saving A Species: Gorillas On The Brink With...  
19:15 The Vet Life  
20:10 Vet Gone Wild  
21:05 Wildest Indochina  
22:00 Intruders  
22:55 Pit Bulls & Parolees  
23:50 The Vet Life



00:10 EastEnders  
00:40 The Woman In White  
01:35 Holby City  
02:30 Hold The Sunset  
02:55 Bad Move  
03:20 Death In Paradise  
04:15 Father Brown  
05:00 Doctors  
05:30 Doctors  
06:00 Doctors  
06:30 EastEnders  
07:00 Holby City  
07:55 Father Brown  
08:40 Death In Paradise  
09:35 Casualty  
10:25 Hold The Sunset  
10:50 Bad Move  
11:15 Holby City  
12:10 Father Brown  
12:55 Death In Paradise  
13:50 Hold The Sunset  
14:15 Bad Move  
14:40 Casualty  
15:30 Doctors  
18:30 The Coroner  
19:20 The Coroner  
20:10 The Woman In White  
21:05 Line Of Duty  
21:50 The Good Karma Hospital  
22:40 Blood  
23:30 Doctors



00:00 Homicide Hunter  
01:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos  
01:55 Psychic Kids  
02:50 It Takes A Killer  
03:20 It Takes A Killer

03:45 Live PD: Police Patrol  
04:10 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  
08:05 The First 48  
08:50 Homicide Hunter  
09:35 Homicide Hunter  
10:30 Homicide: Hours To Kill  
11:25 What The Killer Did Next  
12:20 Crimes That Shook Britain  
13:15 Live PD: Police Patrol  
13:45 Live PD: Police Patrol  
14:10 It Takes A Killer  
14:40 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 It Takes A Killer  
19:30 It Takes A Killer  
20:00 The First 48  
21:00 Homicide Hunter  
22:00 60 Days In: Narcoland  
23:00 Hero Ink  
23:30 Hero Ink



00:25 Real Husbands Of Hollywood  
00:50 Impractical Jokers  
01:15 Broad City  
01:40 Friends  
02:02 Friends  
02:27 South Park (Repeats)  
02:52 Takeshis Castle Thailand  
03:17 Broad City  
03:42 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
04:10 South Park (Repeats)  
04:35 Impractical Jokers  
05:00 Friends  
07:10 Punk'd (Bet)  
07:35 Punk'd (Bet)  
08:00 Takeshis Castle Thailand  
10:10 Friends  
10:35 Friends  
11:00 Friends  
11:25 Friends  
11:50 Friends  
12:20 Ridiculousness  
14:30 Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders: Making The Team  
15:25 Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders: Making The Team  
16:15 Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders: Making The Team  
17:10 Friends  
19:30 Ridiculousness  
21:30 Comedy Central Presents: Menna W FINA  
22:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
22:27 Comedy Central Roast Of Charlie Sheen  
23:30 Most Ridiculous



00:30 Bizarre Foods With Andrew Zimmern  
01:20 Must Love Cats  
02:10 My Cat From Hell  
03:00 Dirty Jobs  
03:50 Cliptastic  
04:15 Cliptastic  
04:40 Tanked  
05:30 Must Love Cats  
06:15 My Cat From Hell  
07:00 Dirty Jobs  
07:50 Cliptastic  
08:15 Cliptastic  
08:40 Weather Gone Viral  
09:30 Secret Space Escapes  
10:20 You Have Been Warned  
11:10 Tanked  
12:00 Salvage Hunters  
12:50 Storm Chasers  
13:40 Invent It Rich  
14:30 UFOs: The Lost Evidence  
15:20 Dirty Jobs  
16:10 Tanked  
17:00 Must Love Cats  
17:50 My Cat From Hell  
18:40 Dirty Jobs  
19:30 The Carbonaro Effect  
19:55 The Carbonaro Effect  
20:20 Dirty Tricks  
21:10 Breaking Magic

21:35 Breaking Magic  
22:00 Tricks On The Streets  
22:25 Tricks On The Streets  
22:50 Keeping Up With The Kruger  
23:40 Tanked



00:00 True Nightmares  
01:00 The Real Story With Maria Elena Salinas  
02:00 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall  
03:00 Dead Of Night  
03:45 True Nightmares  
04:30 Murder Chose Me  
05:20 Southern Fried Homicide  
06:10 Swamp Murders  
07:00 Evil Online  
07:55 Evil Online  
08:50 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones  
09:45 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones  
10:40 Southern Fried Homicide  
11:35 Murder Chose Me  
12:30 Murder Chose Me  
13:25 Swamp Murders  
14:20 Nightmare Next Door  
15:15 Nightmare Next Door  
16:10 Southern Fried Homicide  
17:05 The Perfect Murder  
18:00 The Perfect Murder  
19:00 Disappeared  
20:00 Disappeared  
21:00 Love Kills  
22:00 Til Death Do Us Part  
23:00 Heart Of Darkness



00:00 Alex & Co.  
00:50 Evermoor Chronicles  
01:40 Alex & Co.  
02:05 Binny And The Ghost  
02:55 Evermoor Chronicles  
03:45 Alex & Co.  
04:10 Alex & Co.  
04:35 Violetta  
05:25 Binny And The Ghost  
05:45 Rolling With The Ronks  
05:50 Rolling With The Ronks  
06:00 Shake It Up  
06:25 Raven's Home S3  
06:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts  
06:55 Sydney To The Max  
07:20 Penny On M.A.R.S  
07:45 K.C. Undercover  
08:10 Bizaardvark  
08:35 Jessie  
09:00 Jessie  
09:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
09:50 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
10:15 Bizaardvark  
10:40 Bizaardvark  
11:05 Liv And Maddie  
11:30 Liv And Maddie  
11:55 K.C. Undercover  
12:20 K.C. Undercover  
12:45 Bunk'd  
13:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
13:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
14:00 Disney Cookabout  
14:25 Shake It Up  
14:50 A.N.T. Farm  
15:15 A.N.T. Farm  
15:40 Penny On M.A.R.S  
16:05 Disney Mickey Mouse  
16:10 Amphibia S1  
16:35 Zapped  
18:15 Stuck In The Middle  
18:40 Stuck In The Middle  
19:05 K.C. Undercover  
19:30 Shake It Up  
19:55 Shake It Up  
20:20 Liv And Maddie  
20:45 Liv And Maddie  
21:10 Jessie  
21:35 Jessie  
22:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
22:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
22:50 Lolirock  
23:10 Evermoor Chronicles  
23:35 Binny And The Ghost



00:00 Sofia The First  
00:25 Disney Junior Music Nursery Rhymes  
00:30 Gigantosaurus  
01:00 PJ Masks  
01:25 PJ Masks  
01:50 Paprika  
02:00 Zou  
02:15 Zou  
02:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster  
03:20 Paprika  
03:30 Paprika  
03:40 Zou  
04:25 Paprika  
04:35 Paprika  
04:45 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:10 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:35 The Hive  
05:45 PJ Masks  
06:30 Gigantosaurus  
06:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons  
07:00 The Lion Guard  
07:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers  
08:00 PJ Masks  
08:20 Bluey  
08:30 Vampirina  
08:45 Vampirina  
09:00 Sofia The First  
09:30 Elena Of Avalor  
10:00 Fancy Nancy Clancy  
10:30 PJ Masks  
11:00 Vampirina  
11:30 Vampirina  
12:00 Doc McStuffins  
12:30 Gigantosaurus  
13:00 Puppy Dog Pals  
13:30 Puppy Dog Pals  
14:00 PJ Masks  
14:30 T.O.T.S.  
15:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers  
15:30 Vampirina  
16:00 Bluey  
16:10 Vampirina  
16:30 Sofia The First  
16:55 PJ Masks Music Videos  
17:00 PJ Masks  
17:30 T.O.T.S.  
18:00 Vampirina  
18:15 Muppet Babies  
18:30 Vampirina  
18:45 Vampirina  
19:00 PJ Masks  
19:30 The Lion Guard  
20:00 Sofia The First  
20:25 PJ Masks Music Videos  
20:30 Elena Of Avalor  
21:00 Fancy Nancy Clancy  
21:30 T.O.T.S.  
22:00 Vampirina  
22:15 Muppet Babies  
22:30 Vampirina  
22:45 Vampirina  
23:00 PJ Masks  
23:30 The Lion Guard



01:05 Masters Of Disaster  
01:50 Mythbusters  
02:35 Salvage Hunters: The Restorers  
03:20 Wheeler Dealers  
04:05 Wheeler Dealers  
04:50 How Do They Do It?  
05:15 How Do They Do It?  
05:35 Garage Gold  
06:00 Storage Wars Canada  
06:20 Garage Gold  
06:45 Dual Survival  
07:35 Deadliest Catch  
09:10 Alaska: The Last Frontier  
09:55 Salvage Hunters  
10:45 How Do They Do It?  
11:10 How Do They Do It?  
11:30 Wheeler Dealers  
12:20 Wheeler Dealers  
13:05 Storage Wars Canada  
13:30 Garage Gold  
13:55 Salvage Hunters  
14:40 Alaska: The Last Frontier  
15:30 Dual Survival  
16:15 Aaron Needs A Job  
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 Wheeler Dealers

20:15 Wheeler Dealers  
21:00 Salvage Hunters: Classic Cars  
21:50 Aaron Needs A Job  
22:40 Dirty Mudder Truckers  
23:30 Deadliest Catch



00:10 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
01:00 Booster  
01:45 Counterfeit Cat  
02:30 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
02:55 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
03:20 Booster  
03:40 Booster  
04:05 Counterfeit Cat  
04:50 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
05:15 Supa Strikas  
05:35 Supa Strikas  
06:00 Lab Rats Elite Force  
06:50 Phineas And Ferb  
07:40 Gravity Falls  
08:05 Gravity Falls  
08:30 Phineas And Ferb  
09:20 Big City Greens  
10:05 Phineas And Ferb  
10:50 Lab Rats Elite Force  
11:35 Phineas And Ferb  
12:20 Gravity Falls  
13:10 DuckTales Shorts  
13:15 Phineas And Ferb  
14:05 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
14:30 Phineas And Ferb  
15:20 Big City Greens  
16:10 Supa Strikas  
17:00 Marvel Spider-Man: Vexed By Venom  
17:25 Marvel's Spider-Man  
17:50 Phineas And Ferb  
18:40 Supa Strikas  
19:05 Lab Rats  
19:30 Lab Rats  
19:55 Disney 11 Recap  
20:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
20:25 Marvel's Spider-Man  
20:50 Phineas And Ferb  
21:15 Phineas And Ferb  
21:40 DuckTales  
22:05 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
22:55 DuckTales Shorts  
23:00 Furki Wheels  
23:25 Dude That's My Ghost  
23:50 Dude That's My Ghost



00:00 Very Cavallari  
01:00 Very Cavallari  
02:00 E! News  
03:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
04:00 Botched  
08:00 E! News: Daily Pop  
08:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
09:50 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
10:45 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
11:40 E! News  
12:35 Very Cavallari  
15:20 E! News: Daily Pop  
16:15 Botched  
19:00 E! News  
20:00 Very Cavallari  
23:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians



00:15 Clash Of Warriors  
01:00 America's Book Of Secrets  
01:45 Modern Marvels  
02:30 Serial Killer Earth  
03:15 Clash Of The Gods  
04:00 Ancient Aliens  
04:45 Deep Sea Salvage  
05:30 UFO Hunters  
06:15 Battles BC  
07:00 America's Book Of Secrets  
07:45 Modern Marvels  
08:30 Serial Killer Earth  
09:15 Clash Of The Gods  
10:00 Ancient Aliens  
10:45 Deep Sea Salvage

11:30 UFO Hunters  
12:15 Battles BC  
13:00 Modern Marvels  
13:45 Serial Killer Earth  
14:30 Clash Of The Gods  
15:15 Ancient Aliens  
16:00 Deep Sea Salvage  
16:45 UFO Hunters  
17:30 Battles BC  
18:15 America's Book Of Secrets  
19:00 Search For The Lost Giants  
19:45 Serial Killer Earth  
20:30 Clash Of The Gods  
21:15 Ancient Aliens  
22:00 MysteryQuest  
22:45 UFO Hunters  
23:30 Battles BC



00:20 The Curse Of Oak Island  
01:05 Storage Wars  
01:25 Storage Wars  
01:50 American Pickers  
02:35 Pawn Stars  
03:00 Pawn Stars  
03:25 The Lost Evidence  
04:15 The Zodiac Killer: Case Closed?  
05:05 Forged In Fire  
06:00 Fifth Gear  
06:45 The Curse Of Oak Island  
07:30 Storage Wars  
07:50 Storage Wars  
08:15 American Pickers  
09:00 Pawn Stars  
09:20 Pawn Stars  
09:45 The Lost Evidence  
10:30 Forged In Fire  
11:15 WW2 Treasure Hunters  
12:00 American Pickers  
15:00 Fifth Gear  
18:45 Mountain Men  
21:00 Lost Gold Of World War II  
21:50 Lost Gold Of World War II  
22:40 American Pickers  
23:30 American Pickers



00:00 Fish Tank Kings  
01:00 48 Hrs Destination  
02:00 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea  
02:55 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces  
03:50 Andy And Ben Eat Australia  
04:45 Confucius Was A Foodie  
05:40 Access 360 World Heritage  
06:35 Chef On The Road  
07:30 Confucius Was A Foodie  
08:25 Sara's Australia Unveiled  
09:20 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen  
09:45 Fish Of The Day  
10:15 Late Nite Eats  
10:40 United Plates Of America  
11:10 Access 360 World Heritage  
12:05 Chef On The Road  
13:00 Confucius Was A Foodie  
13:55 Sara's Australia Unveiled  
14:50 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen  
15:15 Fish Of The Day  
15:45 Late Nite Eats  
16:10 United Plates Of America  
16:40 Access 360 World Heritage  
17:35 David Rocco's Dolce Italia  
18:30 Confucius Was A Foodie  
19:25 Sara's Australia Unveiled  
20:20 Around The World In 80 Dishes  
21:15 Late Nite Eats  
21:40 United Plates Of America  
22:10 Walking Home From Mongolia  
23:05 Access 360 World Heritage



00:00 Nazi Megastructures: Battle Ready  
00:50 Primal Survivor  
01:40 Border Wars  
02:30 The Big Picture With Kal Penn  
03:20 Route Awakening  
04:10 Nazi Megastructures: Battle Ready  
05:00 Primal Survivor  
06:00 Border Wars  
07:00 The Big Picture With Kal Penn



## Stars



### Aries (March 21-April 19)

Your inner resources and emotions are accented now. Expect a sense of support and goodwill from those around you. Perhaps you feel this is really you. You are at your mental best with sharp ideas and clear thoughts. A conservative streak sets you against anything that is not realistic. This is a good time to practice any new techniques of problem-solving rather than reverting to the past. Also, it is an excellent time to learn how to take better care of your own development. You tend to be radical when it comes to self-analysis and this is good. Serving and caring for yourself and others are primary sources of inner growth. Careful-you may be ultrasensitive to criticism today. Forget your worries and whistle a happy tune this evening.



### Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Your enthusiasm for the mind, the intellect and the world of ideas makes it easy for you to communicate to others as you educate yourself. You have no trouble in expressing yourself with meaning and understanding. You would make a fine entertainer or speaker. You are driven to manage and control projects. You have an urge to be practical. Your career motivation is constant and relentless. This evening, group or community work seems to hold your attention. Anything that is altruistic or serves the common good-is where you can be found. You would be a perfect group leader, where your love for humanity could blossom. You strive to make your dreams real. A fun pastime activity is available this evening.



### Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You are born to love and care for others and may tend to worry overmuch. Your fear of not making a difference in this lifetime can be alleviated by your hard work and by jumping in with both feet and putting your thoughts into action. You must have done some real thinking and planning over the last few days because today is one of emotional beginnings, a fresh start or perhaps the establishment of new habit patterns. A new attitude! Everything conspires to value and bring out your unique and unusual qualities. This is a very lucky day for finding your way through just about any problem you may discover. You feel that you are able to solve problems easily. Teachers come in all sorts of shapes and forms-today a teacher will impart good advice.



### Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You tend to be creative and original in your work and career-managing to bring new ideas and spontaneity to bear. You have high ideals and an ability to enchant others with your words and images. Your presence has a way of easing things, helping those around you let go of any differences and stand behind what unites us all. You may be drawn to spiritual authorities, teachers and older persons at this time. All that is mystical and transcendental is your appointed territory. You will probably relate this to others in the work field through your attitude more than through your words. Your attitude of acceptance from the past has changed to a more positive one and it is catching to all that are around you.



### Leo (July 23-August 22)

You find that you can really use your mind to make clear choices and think things through. You eagerly work through problems that come to your attention. Career decisions are straightforward and easy to make. You make your way through ideas and concepts with the ability to communicate and express them to others. This is a time of sudden insights into some of the most sensitive and vulnerable areas of your inner self and psychology. There are possibilities of emotional beginnings, a fresh start, perhaps the establishment of new habit patterns. You might like to ignore responsibilities and do some socializing, but realities demand that you tend to business and forget your friends for the moment. Later there will be time for play.



### Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You may appear to be very easygoing today. Everything seems to be working together for you. Your organizational abilities and sense of responsibility will be what guides you and proves successful. Your career could assume a much more determined and solid form-a firm foundation. Everyone wants a piece of you and this can result in your needing more space, a chance to be alone. You can be the immovable object that others find irresistible and sometimes selfish. You radiate energy and information and have to just accept the fact that people like to feel your warmth. Your ability to bring people together could result in a community effort that brings about good communication as well as pleasant opportunities to have an open forum.



### Libra (September 23-October 22)

You are at your mental best and should find yourself making decisions and taking care of business with a great deal of ease. Your sense of responsibility is so well developed that you may end up managing whatever situation you become involved with today. This is not because you are controlling, but because you are good at your job. You are good at getting others to work with and for you. There could be a bit more serious air to this day. You may want to make a conscious effort to see the lighter side of the projects you are working on now in order to relieve any stressful situations. You can really psych up a group in order to sway the attitude from negative to positive or to motivate. An older member of your family could use your help tonight.



### Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

This is a time when you can expect a little boost, some sort of extra support or recognition from those around you. You may feel that you are in touch and in harmony with others-the support and cooperation you need is available. When it comes down to taking care of business, you can really shine. Others may think you are older than you are, for you tend to assume an authoritarian stance. You may even enjoy the thought of being older and probably treat authority, the elderly and your teachers with great respect, if not reverence. You may be asked to help a newcomer or take a young person under your guidance this afternoon. There is time this evening to look at cars-if you are in the market for one. Now may be the time to test run a hybrid car.



### Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You may feel left out or passed over just now. Your own requirements may appear to limit and separate you from where the rest of the gang is headed. This is a short-term situation but needs your attention. Close relationships will take on more emotional depth, power and importance at this time. An important event is near. This is a time during which you can have the experience of taking a greater role in the creation of life itself. You become one with the creative force to a marked extent-powerfully positive thinking. This could just be the time to break the mold and try what is unconventional, but with real passion. A much more independent and adventurous you will emerge. Relax this evening, perhaps a good video movie.



### Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You enjoy working with your mind and enjoy looking for solutions to the worst problems. You like to solve puzzles and dilemmas, yours or others'. Your skills in this regard make you an expert at counseling and guiding others. You could be guiding others in finding solutions to business problems today-the energies are available. Your fine verbal skills and a natural sense of justice make legal work a distinct possibility. Speaking and writing are naturals. You have a need for lots of variety, a change of pace. Perhaps this evening is a time to think and study-you have a real appreciation for ideas and thoughts. Be prepared for company-you could soon be spending time with a friend from long ago. Good memories, pictures and laughter fill the air.



### Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You are a stimulating influence. Others learn from your insights. With regard to politics, some may even change their voting opinions after conversing with you. Your high degree of mental concentration makes you an excellent student, able to excel in speaking, writing and all types of communication skills. You may be involved with some form of continued education, teaching or studying economic reports today. Your ambitions go in perfect sync with the way your plans are unfolding. You seem to shine when it comes to practical matters or those involving career. Ideas, words, books, etc., are pursued with great gusto. You are very motivated, with a strong drive to do and accomplish. Tonight you can retire early to the sounds of music.



### Pisces (February 19-March 20)

This is a great time to make any plans that will require decisive action to accomplish. Joint planning sessions move along at a good pace and any differences of opinion can be worked out. Business and recreational travel is favored at this time, as are outdoor sports. A yearning for the stimulation of new ideas and ideals is emphasized now. New friends and an involvement in idealistic groups take on greater importance; the old is suspect and the new seems to hold all the answers. Sexual needs are among the life issues emphasized for you at this time. There is an instinctive imperative to be powerful and in control. This could lead to a greater interest or experience in healing and investing and in the great mysteries of life and death.

## 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 Faso	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	Niger	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, November 1, 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.

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**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.

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**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

**Know your Doctor**  
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

**daralshifa**  
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**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).

**daralshifa**  
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**IC**  
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
- Diagnosis, treatment and follow up of all surgical emergencies
- Surgery for morbid obesity ( sleeve, gastric bypass)
- Hernia repair
- Surgery for reflux disease
- Minor surgeries (pilonis, sebaceous cyst, ingrowing nail)
- Hemorrhoids, fistula & anal fissure surgeries
- Breast surgeries
- Thyroid & adrenal surgeries
- Cholecystectomy & laparoscopic appendectomy
- Liver, pancreas & bile ducts surgeries

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### REHABILITATION & PHYSIOTHERAPY

These services include, but are not limited to, the below:

- Musculoskeletal disorders
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## CHANGE OF NAME

**I Farooq** Mohammed S/o Mohammed Khaja R/o Farwaniyah Block No. 3, street No. 30, Avenue No. 4621, first floor, room No. 3. Henceforth I change my son name from Husain to Husain Farooq Mohammed. (C 5468)

Yousuf holder of Indian Passport No. R8275312 having permanent address "LIG Colony 36/4, Kurla (W), Pipe Road, Mumbai - 400070, Maharashtra." Residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as Given name: Mohammed Yousuf Mohammed Ishaq. (C 5467) 28-10-2019

## MATRIMONIAL

**I Merl** Elizebeth Mathew (Mathilunkal House Kuttapuzha Tiruvalla Pathanamthitta Kerala) holder of Indian Passport No. Z5184743 issued at Kuwait on 30-01-2019 presently residing at Kuwait do hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as given name: Meryl Elizabeth Mathew. Objections if and may be forwarded to Embassy of India, Diplomatic Enclave, Safat, Arabian Gulf St, Kuwait city, 13015. (C 5469) 30-10-2019

32 year old Goan Catholic boy looking for suitable Goan Catholic life partner. He has graduated in industrial engineering from a reputed university in the US. He is currently employed in Kuwait and looking forward to settle down very soon. He is 5'10" tall, fair and good looking. If you think you are the right match please contact at 96765696 ASAP. Email: [if8016037@gmail.com](mailto:if8016037@gmail.com) (C 5454) 10-10-2019

**I Mohammed** Ishaq Mohammed

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Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
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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
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## Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

**BY DAY:** Relatively hot with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 10 - 35 km/h .

**BY NIGHT:** Fair with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 32 km/h .

WEATHER WARNING	No Current Warnings	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	31 °C	23 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	32 °C	23 °C
ABDALY	32 °C	18 °C
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C
JAHRA	33 °C	22 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	- °C	- °C
SALMIYAH	30 °C	24 °C
AHMADI	29 °C	24 °C
NUWAISIB	32 °C	22 °C
WAFRA	32 °C	21 °C
SALMY	31 °C	17 °C

SFC. CHART	31/10/2019 0000 UTC

## 4 DAYS FORECAST

DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Friday	11/01	Relatively hot	30 °C	20 °C	NW	10 - 32 km/h
Saturday	11/02	Relatively hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas	31 °C	20 °C	NW-VRB	06 - 26 km/h
Sunday	11/03	Relatively hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas and some scattered clouds will appear	32 °C	21 °C	VRB-NE	06 - 26 km/h
Monday	11/04	Relatively hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas and some scattered clouds will appear	32 °C	22 °C	NE-VRB	06 - 26 km/h

## PRAYER TIMES

Fajr	04:40
Sunrise	06:01
Zuhr	11:32
Asr	14:40
Sunset	17:03
Isha	18:21

## RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT

MAX. Temp.	32 °C
MIN. Temp.	24 °C
MAX. RH	69 %
MIN. RH	24 %
MAX. Wind	NE 57 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm



# Business

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2019

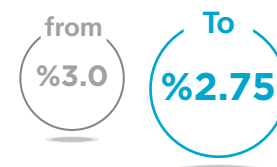
**38** US consumer spending rises moderately; inflation muted

**40** Boeing says up to 50 planes grounded globally over cracks

**41** US monetary policy in 'a good place', says Fed chief Powell



The Central Bank of Kuwait decided  
**To cut its Discount Rate**



In light of CBK's thorough analysis of:



Local and international economic and financial developments



Interest rate trajectories of major currencies

Objectives:



Improve growth enabling environment



Ensure continued attractiveness of the national currency as a reliable store of domestic savings

Drivers:



KD exchange rate regime



Interest rates on major currencies



KD interest rate



Overall economic performance



Banks' deposits and credit



Domestic liquidity

## CBK cuts discount rate to 2.75%

CBK policy decisions driven by overall economic performance ratios: Dr Hashel



Dr Mohammad Y Al-Hashel

**KUWAIT:** In light of the Central Bank of Kuwait's (CBK) mandate to maintain monetary and financial stability, the Board of Directors decided yesterday to lower the discount rate from 3.0 percent to 2.75 percent. The decision fulfils the dual objectives of promoting non-inflationary economic growth conditions in non-oil sectors, and ensuring the continued attractiveness and the competitiveness of the national currency as a reliable store of domestic savings, both of which are mainstays of monetary policy.

Governor Dr Mohammad Y Al-Hashel, announced that the decision is based on a thorough analysis of economic, financial and banking developments, in addition to the interest rate trajectories of major currencies and The Fed's decision on Wednesday to cut the interest rate for the third time this year.

A healthy margin in favor of the KWD against the USD allowed for a discount rate cut that maintains the attractiveness of the national currency. Meanwhile, the lower lending cost shall drive credit off-take by productive economic sectors and provide an enabling invest-

ment environment that motivates aggregate demand and supports non-oil GDP growth.

Dr Al-Hashel stated that CBK monetary policy decisions are driven by overall economic performance ratios, domestic liquidity indicators, developments in Banks' deposits and credit, and interest rates on the Kuwaiti dinar and on major currencies lead by the US dollar. This data indicates whether a change to the local interest rates is indeed required, as well the direction and magnitude of this change and the suitable instruments to effect it. The CBK Governor concluded his statement by stressing the Bank's unwavering policy of vigilant follow up on economic, monetary and banking developments and of sustained readiness to act when necessary to enhance the attractiveness and competitiveness of the national currency and to foster an atmosphere conducive to sustainable economic growth.

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia lowered its repo rate by a quarter-point to 2.25 per cent, and its reverse repo rate by the same amount to 1.75 per cent. The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain also cut benchmark rates by 25 points.





## Business

# US consumer spending rises moderately; inflation muted

## Weekly jobless claims increase 5,000 to 218,000

WASHINGTON: US consumer spending increased marginally in September while wages were unchanged, which could cast doubts on consumers' ability to continue driving the economy amid a deepening slump in business investment. The report from the Commerce Department yesterday also showed inflation was muted last month. The data came a day after the Federal Reserve cut interest rates for the third time this year, but signaled a pause in the easing cycle that started in July when it reduced borrowing costs for the first time since 2008.

Fed Chair Jerome Powell said he expected the economy to continue on a moderate growth path, driven by "solid household spending and supportive financial conditions."

Consumer spending, which accounts for more than two-thirds of US economic activity, gained 0.2 percent last month as households stepped up purchases of motor vehicles and spent more on healthcare, the government said.

Data for August was revised up to show consumer spending climbing 0.2 percent instead of the previously reported 0.1 percent rise. Last month's increase in consumer spending was in line with economists' expectations. Consumer spending has slowed since jumping 0.5 percent in July. The data was included in the gross domestic product report for the third quarter, which was published on Wednesday. The government reported that growth in consumer spending slowed to a still-healthy 2.9 percent annualized rate last quarter after surging at a 4.6 percent pace in the second quarter, the fastest since the fourth quarter of 2017.

That softened some of the blow on the econ-

omy from the second straight quarterly contraction in business investment. The economy grew at a 1.9 percent rate in the third quarter after expanding at a 2.0 percent pace in the April-June period. US stock index futures were trading slightly lower yesterday while prices of US Treasuries were higher. The dollar was weaker against a basket of currencies.

### Jobless claims rise

Inflation was tame in September. Consumer prices as measured by the personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index were unchanged for a second straight month in September as the cost of energy goods and services dropped 1.3 percent. In the 12 months through September, the PCE price index increased 1.3 percent after rising 1.4 percent in the 12 months through August. Excluding the volatile food and energy components, the PCE price index was also unchanged last month after gaining 0.1 percent in August. That lowered the annual increase in the so-called core PCE price index to 1.7 percent in September from 1.8 percent in August. The core PCE index is the Fed's preferred inflation measure. It has undershot the US central bank's 2 percent target this year.

Low inflation and the lowest unemployment rate in nearly 50 years are supporting consumer spending. In a separate report yesterday, the Labor Department said initial claims for state unemployment benefits increased 5,000 to a seasonally adjusted 218,000 for the week ended Oct. 26. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast claims would rise to 215,000 in the latest week. The four-week moving average of initial



WASHINGTON: Consumer spending gained 0.2 percent last month as households stepped up purchases of motor vehicles and spent more on healthcare, the government said. — AFP

claims, considered a better measure of labor market trends as it irons out week-to-week volatility, slipped 500 to 214,750 last week. While the low levels of claims suggest solid labor market conditions, job growth is expected to have slowed sharply in October because of a 40-day strike by workers at General Motors. Government data last Friday showed 46,000 GM employees were idle at the automaker's plants in

Michigan and Kentucky during the October nonfarm payrolls count. Striking workers who do not receive a paycheck during the payrolls survey period are treated as unemployed. The strike by members of the United Auto Workers union, which ended last Friday, had ripple effects on the auto industry. Economists estimated the work stoppage cut between 75,000 and 80,000 jobs from October payrolls. — Reuters

## Cheaper solar power gains ground in southeast Asia

SINGAPORE: Southeast Asia is accelerating plans to harness energy from the sun in coming years as the cost of generating electricity from some solar power projects has become more affordable than gas-fired plants, officials and analysts said. The region, where power demand is expected to double by 2040, is striving to expand the share of renewable sources as developing nations seek affordable electricity while battling climate change.

Southeast Asia's cumulative solar photovoltaic (PV) capacity could nearly triple to 35.8 gigawatt (GW) in 2024 from an estimated 12.6 GW this year, consultancy Wood Mackenzie says.

Vietnam leads the pack with a cumulative solar PV installation of 5.5 GW by this year, or 44% of the total capacity in

the region, said Rishab Shrestha, Woodmac's power and renewables analyst. This compares with 134 MW last year. Among the encouraging signs for the solar industry was a recent auction for a 500 megawatt (MW) solar project in Malaysia of which 365 MW were bid at a price lower than the country's average gas-powered electricity, said Yeo Bee Yin, minister of energy, science, technology, environment and climate change. "For the first time in the history of Malaysia we have a large-scale solar energy costs that is less than gas," Yeo said at the Singapore International Energy Week.

"We now finally have an alternative energy that is cheaper than gas to replace our peak energy demand at midday." Malaysia has set a target to increase its renewable energy in electricity generation from current 6 percent to 20 percent by 2025, and a majority of this would be driven by solar. The country also plans to open at least another 500 MW tender in the second quarter next year, Yeo said. Singapore has also targeted at least 2 gigawatt (GW) peak of solar power capacity by 2030, or more than 10 percent of current peak electricity demand, potentially replacing natural gas which generates 95 percent of the country's power now. — Reuters

## Samsung Electronics Q3 net profit slumps 52%

SEOUL: The world's largest smartphone and memory chip maker Samsung Electronics saw net profits slump by more than half in the third quarter, it said yesterday, hit by an enduring downturn in the global chip market. Net profits in the three months to September were 6.29 trillion won (\$5.40 billion), it said in a statement—down 52 percent year-on-year. "Earnings from the memory business slumped significantly year-on-year as memory chip prices continued its downward trend," the company said.

The firm is the flagship subsidiary of the giant Samsung Group, by far the largest of the family-controlled conglomerates known as "chaebols" that dominate business in the world's 11th-largest economy. But in recent months it has been battered by falling chip prices as global supply increases.

Samsung also faces challenges from the US-China trade war and tough export restrictions imposed by Tokyo on key supplies as part of a dispute with Seoul over wartime forced labor.

The South Korean tech titan leads the global smartphone market with a 23 percent share, trailed by Chinese competitors Huawei and Oppo, with Apple in fourth place, according to sales tracker IHS Markit. The premium smartphone market has grown fiercely competitive and overall sales have cooled as a lack of major innovation has seen buyers waiting longer before upgrading to new models. But Samsung



SEOUL: A man walks past the logo of Samsung Electronics at the company's Secho building in Seoul yesterday. — AFP

said profits in its mobile division had been boosted by strong sales of the Galaxy Note 10 and its A series devices, along with bigger margins for mass-market models. "The business also expanded its 5G product offerings and launched the Galaxy Fold, demonstrating Samsung's technology leadership," it added. Samsung released its top-end S10 5G smartphone earlier this year after South Korea won the global race to commercially launch the world's first nationwide 5G network. But in April it was embarrassingly forced to delay the release of the hotly anticipated Galaxy Fold after reviewers provided with early devices reported screen problems within days of use. — AFP



## Business

# PSA, Fiat Chrysler unveil merger of equals

## 50-50 merger to create world's fourth largest car manufacturer



PARIS: French Finance and Economy Minister Bruno Le Maire talks during a press conference the economy ministry in Paris yesterday after PSA and Fiat Chrysler announced they aim for a merger of equals. — AFP

PARIS: Peugeot-maker PSA and Fiat Chrysler unveiled yesterday a plan for a 50-50 merger of their operations they said would generate billions in savings without factory closures as it creates the world's fourth-largest car manufacturer. In a joint statement the French and US-Italian carmakers said their boards of directors "have each unanimously agreed to work towards a full combination of their respective businesses by way of a 50/50 merger".

The merger, which the firms said will result in a company with combined sales of nearly 170 billion euros (\$190 billion) per year and 11 billion euros of operating profits, would help produce the scale needed in an industry facing slowing demand and which must invest billions to develop electric vehicles. The merger would be achieved via the creation of a parent company in the Netherlands in which the shareholders of each current group would own half. The Dutch-based parent company would have balanced representation and a majority of independent directors with FCA's John Elkann as chairman and PSA's Carlos Tavares as CEO and member of the board.

### 'Compelling logic', cost sharing

The boards of both carmakers "both share the conviction that there is compelling logic for a bold and decisive move that would create an industry leader with the scale, capabilities and resources to capture successfully the opportunities and manage effectively the challenges of the new era in mobility," said the statement. A merger would create significant savings as both firms share the costs of developing electric vehicles that are expected to dominate personal transportation in the future as the world strives to reduce carbon emissions to limit climate change.

"The significant value accretion resulting from the transaction is estimated to be approximately 3.7 billion euros in annual run-rate synergies derived principally from a more efficient allocation of resources for large-scale investments in vehicle platforms, powertrain and tech-

nology and from the enhanced purchasing capability inherent in the combined group's new scale," it said.

"These synergy estimates are not based on any plant closures," it added.

France, which owns a stake in PSA and earlier this year opposed a mooted tie-up between Renault and Fiat Chrysler, signalled it favors the project. French Economy Minister Bruno Le Maire "favorably greets the entry into negotiations" of the two carmakers, said a statement from his office.

However, it warned the French government "will remain particularly vigilant on the industrial footprint in France, where decision making will be located, and promises by the new group to create in Europe the infrastructure to build electric batteries" needed for the shift to new vehicles. While investors cheered when the automakers first confirmed their talks on Wednesday, with Fiat Chrysler shares in Milan rising nine percent and PSA shares adding four percent in Paris, the reception to Thursday's details was quite different. PSA shares fell nearly nine percent as trading got under way in Paris while those in Fiat Chrysler jumped 10.6 percent in Milan.

### Size matters

The tie-up would make the new automaker the fourth largest in terms of sales behind Volkswagen, Renault-Nissan-Mitsubishi and Toyota, and would combine a host of well-known brands from Alfa Romeo, Jeep and Dodge to Citroen, Opel and Peugeot. The merger plan comes as the auto manufacturing sector—which accounts for 5.7 percent of global GDP and eight percent of goods trade—shrank by 1.7 percent last year by volume of vehicles produced, according to the IMF. It makes business sense for both automakers beyond just sharing costs. PSA relies heavily on the European market, exposing it to risks of a protracted slowdown there. Joining Fiat Chrysler would mean it is an automaker with a big presence in the key US market thanks to the Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge and Ram brands. — AFP

## CONDOLENCES

The Chairman, Board Members,  
Management and Staff of

**NATIONAL INVESTMENTS COMPANY**

Wish to extend their  
heartfelt condolences to

**Mr. Jacob Kulamadayil Abraham**

Assistant Vice President – Software Development &  
Application Support Dept.

*On the sad demise of*

**His Grand Mother**

*"May her soul rest in peace, and may the Almighty  
grant solace and strength to the bereaved family  
members during this time of grief"*



## Business

# Boeing says up to 50 planes grounded globally over cracks

## Qantas the latest airline to take one of the planes out of the air

**SYDNEY:** Boeing announced yesterday up to 50 of its popular 737NG planes had been grounded after cracks in them were detected, in another blow to the US aircraft maker following two deadly crashes. Australian national carrier Qantas became the latest airline to take one of the planes out of the air, as it said it would urgently inspect 32 others but insisted passengers had nothing to fear. The announcement by Qantas came after authorities in Seoul said nine of the planes were grounded in South Korea in early October, including five operated by Korean Air.

Boeing had previously reported a problem with the model's "pickle fork"—a part which helps bind the wing to the fuselage. This prompted US regulators to early this month order immediate inspections of aircraft that had seen heavy use.

Following the Qantas announcement, a Boeing spokesperson on Thursday told AFP in Sydney that less than five percent of 1,000 planes had cracks detected and were grounded for repair. The spokesperson did not give an exact figure, though five percent equates to 50 planes of 1,000 inspected. Boeing and Qantas stressed travellers should not be concerned.

"We would never operate an aircraft unless it was completely safe to do so," Qantas head of engineering Chris Snook said. But the discovery has heightened fears that the scale of the 737NGs' problem may have been underestimated. The US

Federal Aviation Administration had initially ordered immediate checks of Boeing 737NG planes that had flown more than 30,000 times. But Qantas said it had found the fault in a more lightly used aircraft than those singled out for early checks: one that had recorded fewer than 27,000 flights. "This aircraft has been removed from service for repair," Qantas said in a statement, adding it had hastened its inspections of 32 other 737NG planes to be completed by Friday. The airline said it generally used the aircraft on domestic routes, flying primarily between major cities as well as shorter-haul trips to New Zealand.

### Safety problem

A spokesman for Australia's aviation regulator said the industry response was about "nipping a potential safety problem in the bud by taking proactive action now". Australia's Virgin Airways also conducted checks on its 17 Boeing 737NG planes and did not find any issues, the regulator spokesman added. But there were calls for Qantas to ground its entire 737 fleet until checks were complete.

"These aircraft should be kept safe on the ground until urgent inspections are completed", an engineers' union representative, Steve Purvinas, said in a statement. Qantas described the call to ground its 737 fleet as "completely irresponsible". "Even when a crack is present, it



The Boeing logo is seen at Washington Convention Center in Washington, DC. — AFP

does not immediately compromise the safety of the aircraft," said Snook. Stephen Fankhauser, an aviation expert at Australia's Swinburne Uni-

versity of Technology, said that the parts were designed so the "structure can tolerate some level of damage or degradation". — AFP

## BA-owner IAG says Q3 profits hit by strikes

**LONDON:** London-listed airline giant IAG admitted yesterday that recent historic strikes by British Airways pilots had hurt its performance in the third quarter. Net profit sank nine percent to 1.0 billion euros (\$1.1 billion) in the three months to the end of September from a year earlier, said IAG, which also owns Spanish carrier Iberia and Ireland's Aer Lingus.

The London-listed company added in a results statement that it took a 155-million-euro charge from the cost of major disruption including industrial action by BA pilots in September.

The group's fuel bill also rose significantly in the reporting period. "These are good underlying results. As we said in September, our performance has been affected by industrial action by pilots' union BALPA and other disruption including threatened strikes by Heathrow airport employees," said IAG Chief Executive Willie Walsh.

"In addition, our fuel bill increased by 136 million euros during the quarter." BA grounded its entire UK fleet over two days, on September 9 and 10, when for the first time in its 100-year history pilots employed by the airline went on strike in a long-running dispute over pay. Even though pilots represented by the BALPA union cancelled a third 24-hour stoppage that was due on September 27, BA was only able to revert to only a half-service that day having initially cancelled all scheduled UK flights. — AFP

## Nintendo H1 sales leap on strong demand for Switch games

**TOKYO:** Japanese gaming giant Nintendo said yesterday its first-half sales were boosted by demand for its a smaller, cheaper version of its popular Switch console. Sales for April-September gained 14.2 percent from a year earlier to 444.0 billion yen (\$4.1 billion) while operating profit surged 53.4 percent to 94.2 billion yen.

The firm unveiled the Switch Lite, a pocket-sized, strictly handheld device costing \$200, in September.

"Sales of Switch consoles remain steady as the launch of Switch Lite gave an extra boost," said Hideki Yasuda, an analyst at Ace Research Institute in Tokyo. Brisk demand for its popular software also contributed to its overall sales. "Super Mario Maker 2," "The Legend of Zelda: Link's Awakening" and "Fire Emblem: Three Houses"—all released during the first half—became multi-million-unit sellers.

"Powerful titles of Nintendo's popular characters, including Mario, are helping sustain overall sales," Yasuda told AFP. But net profit for the period fell 4.0 percent to 62 billion yen "as a result of foreign exchange losses of 20.5 billion yen and other factors", Nintendo said in a statement.

The Kyoto-based firm kept full-year forecasts unchanged. It still forecasts a 7.2 percent decline in bottom-line profit with a 4.1 percent gain in sales for the fiscal year to March.

"A real battle for Nintendo is set for the third quarter," Yasuda said. "The prospect for Nintendo's annual figures will heavily depend on results of its Christmas sales." The Switch



In this file photo, the logo of Japan's Nintendo Co is displayed at a presentation in Tokyo. — AFP

has become a huge global seller, helped by innovative, family-friendly titles that have wowed critics and gamers alike.

Rival Sony on Wednesday reported half-year net profit fell nearly 15 percent, but it upgraded its annual forecast on solid growth in its image-sensor and music sectors. The PlayStation manufacturer has seen a slowdown in its games and network businesses, expecting revenue from the core sector to sag owing to a continued fall in game hardware sales, and the cost of developing a next-generation console. The firm has said its next-generation PlayStation 5 console, which will be equipped with new immersive features, would launch for the 2020 holiday season. — AFP



## Business

# US monetary policy in 'a good place', says Fed chief Powell

## Fed cuts interest rates, signals it is on hold

**WASHINGTON:** The Federal Reserve on Wednesday cut interest rates for the third time this year to help sustain US growth despite a slowdown in other parts of the world, but signaled there would be no further reductions unless the economy takes a turn for the worse.

"We believe that monetary policy is in a good place," Fed Chair Jerome Powell said in a news conference after the U.S. central bank announced its decision to cut its key overnight lending rate by a quarter of a percentage point to a target range of between 1.50 percent and 1.75 percent.

"We took this step to help keep the economy strong in the face of global developments and to provide some insurance against ongoing risks," he said. "We see the current stance of monetary policy as likely to remain appropriate as long as incoming information about the economy remains broadly consistent with our outlook."

Powell's comments clash with President Donald Trump's demands that the Fed cut rates even deeper to boost economic growth that ebbed to a 1.9 percent annual rate in the third quarter, well below the 3 percent level Trump pledged would flow from a round of tax cuts and other actions nearly two years ago. But the Fed's new stance also vouched for both the seeming durability of a US economic expansion that is now the longest on record. In his news conference, Powell ticked off an extensive list of reasons why he feels the economy is doing well, and likely to continue to do so under the current stance of monetary policy - from robust consumer spending, strengthening home sales, and asset prices he considered healthy but not to a level of excess.

The S&P 500 index closed at another record

high on Wednesday. As well, Powell said, some of the risks that had most unnerved Fed officials, and convinced them lower rates were needed if only as "insurance," have seemed to abate in recent weeks.

The US-China trade war was "a step closer" to resolution, Powell said, and it looked less likely that Britain would crash out of the European Union. The outlook for the US economy continues to be for "moderate" growth, a strong labor market and inflation rising back to the Fed's 2 percent annual goal, he said, and only "a material reassessment" of that outlook could drive the central bank to cut rates further from here.

### Dissents

In the statement accompanying its decision to cut rates, the Fed dropped a previous reference that it "will act as appropriate" to sustain the economic expansion - language that was considered a sign for future rate cuts. Instead, the central bank said it will "monitor the implications of incoming information for the economic outlook as it assesses the appropriate path" of its target interest rate, a less decisive phrase. Kansas City Fed President Esther George and Boston Fed President Eric Rosengren dissented from the decision. They have opposed all three Fed rate cuts this year as unnecessary.

St. Louis Fed President James Bullard, who had dissented in September because he supported a bigger rate cut then, voted with the majority on Wednesday, an indication that views within the Fed may be coalescing around standing pat for now. The rate cut was widely anticipated by financial markets, but expectations for



WASHINGTON, DC: Federal Reserve Board Chairman Jerome Powell speaks during a news conference in Washington, DC on Wednesday. — AFP

additional cuts after October have diminished significantly in recent weeks. Contracts tied to the Federal Funds rate indicate an expectation of perhaps one rate cut next year.

While yields on longer-dated bonds showed little reaction, those on shorter-dated maturities that are more closely influenced by Fed policy expectations initially moved higher. The yield on the 2-year note rose to the highest since Oct. 1 at about 1.67 percent before settling back to earlier

levels as Powell spoke. "It's pretty much what was expected," said Jim Powers, director of investment research at Delegate Advisors.

"The more important outcome is they removed the phrase 'act as appropriate.' It looks like the market is taking that to mean that there will be a pause in the declining rate path they were on beforehand. That's what was expected, and that's generally a good thing," Powers said. — Reuters

## BoJ holds rates but hints at future cuts

**TOKYO:** The Bank of Japan held fire on monetary policy yesterday but hinted at possible interest rate cuts in the future, reflecting its fears that global risks could weigh on the country's fragile recovery.

The announcement came just hours after the US Federal Reserve cut its benchmark interest rate for the third straight time as it looks to shore up the world's top economy.

After its latest policy meeting the BoJ said it expected borrowing costs "to remain at their present or lower levels", marking a slight change of tack. Previously it had not made reference to the possibility of lower levels, saying instead it expected to keep "current ultra-low rates for an extended period of time, at least until the spring of 2020". Yesterday's announcement dropped reference to that timeframe, hinting that a change could come sooner.

Policymakers warned that a pick-up in the global economy is likely to be delayed "mainly due to the intensified US-China trade friction as well as slowdowns" in emerging economies including China.

"Japan's economy is expected to grow temporarily at a somewhat slower pace than its potential", reflecting weak exports and a sales tax hike that came into effect on October 1, it said. "With changes in the forward guidance, we made clear that our policy stance is we will carry out policies giving more consideration to the direction of easing," bank governor Haruhiko Kuroda told reporters.

But he also said the BoJ kept its current policy unchanged because it expects prices will continue rising, though at a slow pace. The change in the forward guidance "will be helpful to stem worries over the negative impact from the October 1 sales tax hike", Hideo Kuman, chief economist at Dai-ichi Life Research Institute, told AFP.

But he said the overall picture was one of little change, adding "there is optimism over global risks" such as US-China trade friction and Brexit. The bank revised down its inflation forecasts, say-

ing it expects prices to rise 0.7 percent in the year to March 2020, from a previous forecast of 1.0 percent, and well short of its years-long target of two percent.

It also revised down its forecast for the following year to 1.1 percent from 1.3 percent, and downgraded its projection for the year to March 2022 from 1.6 percent to 1.5 percent.

The BoJ has consistently fallen short of hitting the two-percent target it considers key to turbocharging the stuttering economy, despite a barrage of stimulus and monetary easing packages. It has argued that prolonged periods of low growth and inflation have created a "deflation mindset" that continues to weigh on the national economy. In a statement, it said there had been "no further increase in the possibility that the momentum towards achieving the price stability would be lost".

But it warned at the same time that "it was necessary to continue to pay close attention to the possibility". Economic growth forecasts were also cut, with expansion of 0.6 percent tipped for the year to March, 0.7 percent for the following year and 1.0 percent for the year to March 22. — AFP

## ANZ bottom-line profits down

**SYDNEY:** Australia's ANZ announced a drop in bottom-line profits yesterday following misconduct charges and lower interest rates in what the bank said was a "challenging" 12 months. Statutory profit after tax was down seven percent to Aus\$5.95 billion (\$4.1 billion) in the full year to September 30, the bank said. Cash profits stayed steady at Aus\$6.47 billion over the same period.

"This has been a challenging year of slow economic growth, increased competition, regulatory change and global uncertainty," ANZ CEO Shayne Elliot said. ANZ, along with Australia's other main banks, is still counting the costs of a scathing royal commission into the industry that unearthed widespread misconduct, including mortgage fraud and unethical financial and life insurance advice.

The bank said it had returned more than Aus\$100 million to affected customers this financial year.

Record low interest rates around the world had also hit margins, said ANZ, which has about \$110 billion in deposits worldwide. "We've seen this trend to much lower interest rates everywhere in the world and now including here in Australia - that has an impact on bank profitability," Elliot added.

Elliot said the bank had invested in simplifying operations in order to confront the challenges. — AFP



## Sports

# Sole survivor Steyn primed for second W Cup final against England

**TOKYO:** Frans Steyn is South Africa's cool and collected super-sub, according to coach Rassie Erasmus, and also the sole survivor of the Springbok team that last won the World Cup in 2007. Steyn, now 32, came into the World Cup in Japan as one of only 15 players who had also played in the 2007 tournament in France.

Twelve years ago, Steyn, then just 20, started the final at inside centre and kicked one 49-metre penalty as the Boks ran out 15-6 winners at the Stade de France against England — their opponents in Yokohama on Saturday.

"I'm just enjoying the week," Steyn said when asked about the build-up to the final, after Erasmus named him on the bench.

"The last time it wasn't so serious for me. I was a little bit young and I just thought there would be another opportunity.

"Now it's a little bit more serious because I know there won't be another opportunity. It doesn't come along every day to play in a final and we have to make it count."

Steyn had played just 10 matches, at fly-half, for the Sharks in the 2006 Currie Cup Premier Division when he was picked for the Springboks' autumn tour by then-coach Jake White.

At 19, he made a try-scoring debut on the wing against Ireland, before moving to fullback for his second game, against England, scoring a memorable long-range drop-goal from inside his own half.

His ease at playing anywhere in the backline did not go unnoticed, Steyn signing a lucrative,

three-year contract with Racing-Metro in the Top 14 in 2009. He played for the Boks again at the 2011 World Cup, where they were knocked out in the quarter-finals by Australia. Steyn went to sign for two seasons for Toshiba Brave Lupus in Japan before joining Montpellier in 2016, where White was again his coach.

### 'Calming factor'

His move to Japan saw him take a three-year absence from the national team, but he was recalled in 2017 after injuries to Pat Lambie and current fly-half Handre Pollard.

"Frans is a difficult guy to tap into!" Erasmus joked of his taciturn utility back. "He is definitely a calming factor in the team because he doesn't stress out a lot. That is why it is wonderful to have him on the bench, covering so many positions.

"It doesn't matter if you are ahead on the scoreboard or behind — he just enjoys the game, no matter what the situation is. It does have a good calming influence on and off the field." Erasmus has been opting for a replacements bench of six forwards and two backs. Herschel Jantjies provides scrum-half cover, while Steyn can slot in anywhere else.

"No, I've just been making jokes and being myself," was Steyn's response to queries on whether he was handing advice out to younger team-mates.

"I have just been trying not to stress. Everyone is prepared and we just need everyone to do well on Saturday."



**URAYASU:** South Africa's scrum-half Hershel Jantjies (front L) takes part in a training session at Arcs Urayasu Park in Urayasu, ahead of their Japan 2019 Rugby World Cup final against England. — AFP

England, he said, were "a very good team". "We just need to win. We don't need to score 10 tries. If we win 3-0 then the World Cup is still going back to South Africa."

Steyn did admit, however, that long-range penalty goals worry him more now than when he

was younger. "When I was younger I didn't worry about it," he said. "I am stressing a bit more these days. But Handre can kick very well and he kicks the ball a mile. I'm just there if they need me to come on, I'm there and just trying to do my best." — AFP



## Malaysia clinch top spot in Asian Bowling Championships

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** Malaysia was finally able to put an end to a monopoly by South Korea over the top places in the Asian Bowling Championships since 2008, by holding first place during the 25th Asian Bowling Championship which concluded on Wednesday, 10 days after its start at Kuwait Bowling Center in Salmiya.

Malaysia collected six gold, one silver and four bronze medals, followed by South Korea which took 3 gold, 4 silver and 4 bronze, China won 2 gold, 1 silver and 1 bronze, Hong Kong one gold, Taipei two silver, one bronze, Indonesia two silver, Kuwait and India one silver each and Japan 2 bronze medals.

South Korea dominated the last five Asian Championships, as Malaysia returned to its familiar place after a long absence.

China's Du Jianchao won the Masters gold medal on the last day of competition beating Taipei's Lin Pai-Feng by (491-455) in the decisive round.

Meanwhile, Japan's Asato Shusaku took the bronze after losing to Chao by the score of 256-234.

In the women's category Malaysia's Esther Cheah took gold medal by defeating South Korea's Jung Dawun with the score of (452-445), while Baek Seungia defeated Dawun with the score of (245-244) to take the bronze. President of the International and Asian Bowling Federations, Chairman of Kuwait Bowling

Club Sheikh Talal Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah honored the top three players in the best player category in Asia for the year 2016/17. They were Michael Mak from Hong Kong, Rafiq Ismael from Malaysia, and Kim from Thailand.

Sheikh Talal Al-Mohammad said competition in the 25th Championship was of high standard in all of the competitions as the scores indicate. He said the championship gave Kuwaiti and Arab players an excellent opportunity to improve through competition with Asia's Champions.

Sheikh Talal congratulated the winners and lauded the efforts of all committees for their role in ensuring its success, and thanked the Asian countries for participating.





## Sports

# Oman, Scotland grab last two places at T20 WCup

**DUBAI:** Oman defeated Hong Kong by just 12 runs in a do-or-die T20 World Cup qualifier to reach the finals in Australia along with Scotland who thrashed United Arab Emirates by 90 runs.

Oman and Scotland join Namibia, Netherlands, Papua New Guinea and Ireland, who had already booked their places in the 2020 show-piece but are still competing for the winner's trophy in UAE.

Chasing just 135 to win, Hong Kong collapsed to 18-5 with left-arm seamer Bilal Khan taking three of the wickets to fall on his way to match figures of 4-23.

Scott McKechnie, who top scored with 44 off 46 balls, helped steady the ship with a partnership of 52 for the sixth wicket with Haroon Arshad (20) but Hong Kong struggled to get the ball away in the tough, heavy conditions and finished on 122-9.

Oman had also found it hard going, slipping to 42-6 by the end of the ninth over.

However, they were indebted to opener Jatinder Singh, who carried his bat for 67 with seven boundaries and a six, as well as tail-enders Aamir Kaleem (17) and Naseem Khushi (26 off just nine balls) to take them to a defendable target. "We've had early mornings, we've sweated a lot, and this is our reward," said Jatinder.

"Bilal was lethal today, he was unplayable, getting the yorkers right, bang on target. He was marvellous." Earlier, George Munsey belted 65 as Scotland made 198 before UAE were all out for 108, with nine balls left.

Mark Watt and Safyaan Sharif took three wickets for the Scots.

Scotland had struggled in group play and finished only fourth in their seven-team group.

"Not gone our way on this trip but nice to get over the line in the must-win game," said opening batsman Munsey.

Hosts UAE, whose squad had been diminished by the suspension of four players after corruption investigations, only narrowly missed an automatic World Cup berth when they finished third in their group on net run rate.

"We turned up when we were pushed into a corner," said captain Ahmed Raza. Scotland won the toss, batted first and quickly went on the attack. Skipper Kyle Coetzer hit two fours in the second over. Munsey struck two reverse sweep sixes and a four in the third.

By the time Coetzer was out for 34 in the 12th over, Scotland were on 87. The assault continued as the new batsman, Michael Leask smashed a six off the second ball he faced.

Munsey made 65, hitting five of Scotland's



**DUBAI:** Omani cricketers celebrate in T20 World Cup qualifier match against Hong Kong in Dubai.

Zealand. "I don't want to let anyone down. I want to drive through the World Cup in Australia and then make a call after that. "We have a special group of players at the moment. I feel very lucky to lead that group and I think we can do something even more special down the line."

England have rested Ben Stokes, Jofra Archer, Jos Buttler and Jason Roy for the Twenty20 series against a side they edged out on boundary count in the final of the ODI World Cup at Lord's.

England have included five uncapped players in their Twenty20 mix though Morgan felt it may not be easy for them to break into the World Cup squad. "There aren't a lot of places up for grabs in our best XI and probably our final 15 for 12 months down the line."

"But we're not only building for 12 months down the line but the following World Cup as well. "I think we're in a reasonably strong position. We'll look to build our best XI and 15 for every series leading in to fine-tune roles and have absolute clarity in what we're trying to do as a team." — Reuters

Marquez insisted he was not going to ease off even after his stellar season. "Not it's time to keep going.... fight again for another victory," he told reporters at a pre-race press conference Thursday.

He also said he was focused on winning, not topping Lorenzo's points record: "I'll keep the same strategy, target to try finish on the podium but of course today my target is to win. "My opponents will give an answer whether that will be possible over the weekend." With the Spaniard so dominant, Italy's Dovizioso conceded the champion's rivals were focused on "thinking about how we can stop Marc. This season (he's) even better than in the past". Marquez triumphed at last week's Australian MotoGP, his fifth win in a row and 11th this season, which saw fellow Spaniard Maverick Vinales crash out on the last lap.

The Monster Energy Yamaha rider had dominated all weekend at Phillip Island and was leading for much of the race until Marquez darted past in the dying stages. Racing in tropical Malaysia is particularly challenging due to the heat and humidity, with conditions often changing rapidly from bright sunshine to intense downpours.

At last year's MotoGP, qualifying was delayed due to rain and organisers then brought forward the start of the main race by two hours to avoid a potential downpour. In the Moto2 class, Marc Marquez's younger brother, Alex Marquez, sits atop the leaderboard and will be seeking to seal the world title in Malaysia after missing out in Australia. — AFP

UAE lost their first wicket with the score on four in the first over. Their best hope went in the

eight over when top scorer Rameez Shazhad went for a brisk 34 in the ninth over, caught by Munsey off Watt. The T20 World Cup takes place in Australia from October 18 to November 15 next year. — AFP

## Morgan to decide England future after T20 World Cup

**CHRISTCHURCH:** England's limited-overs captain Eoin Morgan will take a call on his future after next year's Twenty20 World Cup in England, the 33-year-old said. Morgan led England to their maiden ODI World Cup victory in July on home soil but has battled back injuries in recent years.

"I won't say I'll be finished after the next World Cup as I'd be afraid I'll only creep over the line and maybe fall off," Morgan told reporters on the eve of the five-match Twenty20 series against New

## Marquez seeks to seal triple crown in Malaysia

**SEPANG:** World champion Marc Marquez will seek to cap a stellar season at this weekend's Malaysian MotoGP by winning the team title to seal the Triple Crown for Repsol Honda. The 26-year-old Spaniard clinched his sixth rider's title in Thailand this month and has sealed the constructors' championship for Honda.

Now the Repsol Honda outfit — Marquez and teammate Jorge Lorenzo — sit just behind Ducati in the race for the team title, as Marquez aims for his second consecutive win at the challenging Sepang circuit.

He also needs to score just nine points in Malaysia — a seventh-placed finish or above — to top three-time world champion Lorenzo's highest ever tally of 383 across 18 races. But victory may be tough against Ducati's Andrea Dovizioso, who has already been confirmed as this year's runner-up in motorcycling's premier class, and was the winner at Sepang in 2016 and 2017.

## Sangakkara to lead MCC against Essex

**LONDON:** Sri Lankan cricket legend Kumar Sangakkara, the first overseas president of the Marylebone Cricket Club, will captain the MCC against English county champions Essex in Sri Lanka next March, it was announced yesterday.

The 42-year-old batting great — whose 15 year international career encompassed 134 Test appearances and over 400 one day internationals — will lead out his side in the English domestic season's traditional curtain-raiser at the Galle International Stadium from March 24-27.

The clash between the MCC and the champions dates back to 1970 and has been played abroad since 2011 — the last edition in Dubai suffered from that most English of interruptions... rain.

Sri Lanka has been selected for several reasons: the MCC's World Cricket committee will meet there in March, and the match is timed to coincide with England's World Test Championship matches in the country.

Sangakkara, who became MCC President on October 1r, said the game would be of huge benefit to the sport in Sri Lanka. "It is hugely important to support cricket in countries such as Sri Lanka and taking the Champion County match to Galle is a fantastic way for the Club to provide its backing for the game on a global level," he said in a statement.

"I am looking forward to playing for and indeed captaining the MCC team, which will be full of exciting young talent ready to challenge the county champions." Shammie Silva, president of Sri Lanka Cricket, said it was an honour and privilege to have been chosen as the hosts.

"We are happy to be the host of this historic encounter, which marks the curtain-raiser to the new English domestic season," he said. — AFP



## Sports

# Tampa Bay rally for wild overtime win over Devils

**NEW JERSEY:** Lightning center Tyler Johnson scored 1:16 into overtime Wednesday night, and Tampa Bay overcame a two-goal, third-period deficit to outlast the host New Jersey Devils 7-6 in a back-and-forth game. Johnson's third shot was the charm in a flurry that opened with point-blank shots by Ondrej Palat and Ryan McDonagh. The result snapped a two-game losing streak for the Lightning. Palat scored twice while Alex Killorn, Brayden Point, Anthony Cirelli and Mathieu Joseph all scored once for the Lightning. Goalie Curtis McElhinney recorded 36 saves. New Jersey's Kyle Palmieri collected a hat trick, including the goal that forced overtime with 7.4 seconds left in regulation. However, the Devils still lost for the eighth time in 10 games to open the season. Jesper Bratt scored twice, Sami Vatanen had one goal, and Cory Schneider made 16 saves.

## CANADIENS 4, COYOTES 1

Shea Weber had a goal and assist, and Carey Price stopped 32 shots, leading Montreal past Arizona in Glendale, Ariz. Brendan Gallagher, Jonathan Drouin and former Coyote Nick Cousins also scored for Montreal, which has won four of six. Price improved to 12-1-0 in 13 career starts versus Arizona. Jakob Chychrun scored the Coyotes' lone goal, which came in the third period. Arizona lost for just the second time in eight games and the second time in five home games this season. Antti Raanta made 32 saves.

## CANUCKS 5, KINGS 3

Brock Boeser delivered his third career hat trick, and Vancouver scored four power-play

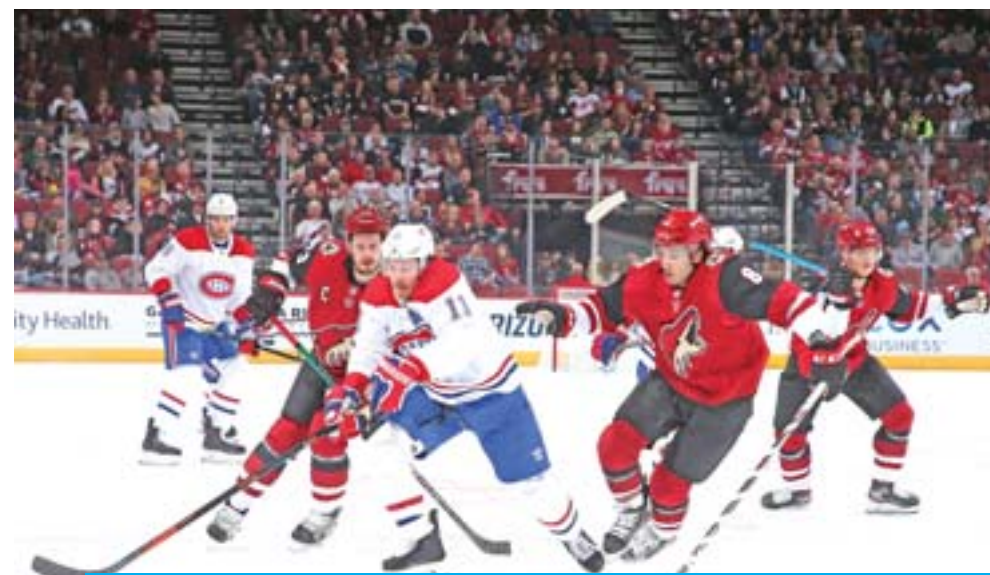
goals to win for the eighth time in its past 10 games by beating host Los Angeles. Elias Pettersson had a goal and three assists, while Bo Horvat had a goal and an assist for the Canucks, who extended a winning run that started with a victory over the Kings in the third game of the season. Vancouver goalie Jacob Markstrom had 21 saves. Jeff Carter scored two goals and Adrian Kempe added one for the Kings, who saw their losing streak extend to four games, having given up five goals in all four of those games. Jonathan Quick made 44 saves for Los Angeles.

## OILERS 4, BLUE JACKETS 1

Leon Draisaitl posted two goals and an assist, James Neal scored his NHL-leading eighth power-play tally, and Edmonton won at Columbus. Playing their third game in four days, the Oilers jumped out to a 4-0 lead in the second period. Jujhar Khaira also netted a goal, and Ryan Nugent-Hopkins added two assists as Edmonton broke a two-game losing skid. Edmonton goalie Mike Smith stopped 23 of 24 shots. The Blue Jackets received a goal from Zach Werenski while falling to 2-2-2 in their past six games.

## BLUES 2, WILD 1

Jordan Binnington stopped 35 of the 36 shots he faced as host St. Louis edged Minnesota. Binnington delivered a nice bounce-back performance after allowing four goals Sunday at Detroit. His teammates bailed him out with a 5-4 overtime victory over the Red Wings in that game, but Binnington proved to be the difference Wednesday. Alex Pietrangelo and Sammy Blais



**GLENDAL:** Brendan Gallagher #11 of the Montreal Canadiens controls the puck ahead of Oliver Ekman-Larsson #23 and Nick Schmaltz #8 of the Arizona Coyotes during the first period of the NHL game at Gila River Arena in Glendale, Arizona. — AFP

scored for the Blues, who won for the fourth time in five games. Mats Zuccarello scored for the Wild, who lost for the eighth time in nine road games. Devan Dubnyk made 24 saves before departing for an extra attacker.

## PANTHERS 4, AVALANCHE 3 (OT)

Jonathan Huberdeau scored the tying goal with 90 seconds left in regulation and the winner 29 seconds into overtime as Florida beat Col-

orado in Denver. Aleksander Barkov had a goal and an assist, Colton Sceviour also scored, Aaron Ekblad had two assists and Sergei Bobrovsky stopped 27 shots for the Panthers, who overcame a 3-1, third-period deficit. Nathan MacKinnon had a goal and an assist, Matt Nieto and Joonas Donskoi also scored, and Philipp Grubauer had 34 saves for the Avalanche. MacKinnon has posted a point in all 12 games this season (seven goals, 10 assists). — Reuters

## Barty clinches pole position in Shenzhen

**SHENZHEN:** World number one Ashleigh Barty clinched pole position in the Red Group after defeating Petra Kvitova in straight-sets at the WTA Finals in China yesterday.

The French Open champion stormed into the semi-finals with a crushing 6-4, 6-2 win in one hour and 28 minutes at the Shenzhen Bay Sports Centre. The result knocked out the winless Czech from the round-robin tournament.

Belinda Bencic and Kiki Bertens clash in the later match with the winner joining Barty out of the Red Group.

Barty, who had already sealed the year-end No.1 ranking, rebounded after a three-set loss to late replacement Bertens on Tuesday.

"I felt like I executed really well," she said after the match.

"I knew I had to play aggressively. I'm really excited to still have another chance to play here." Kvitova had a scare in the third game of the first set but saved two break points to hold her serve, which was being targeted by an aggressive Barty.

But the Australian's consistency wore down an error-strewn Kvitova and she grabbed a de-



**SHENZHEN:** Ashleigh Barty of Australia hits a return against Petra Kvitova of the Czech Republic during their women's singles match at the WTA Finals tennis tournament in Shenzhen yesterday. — AFP

cisive break in the fifth game. Barty had break points against her serve in the sixth and eighth games but withstood Kvitova's attempts to get back into the first set.

Kvitova, the oldest player in the draw, changed tactics early in the second set and attacked the net but Barty had the answers to reach the semi-finals on her WTA Finals debut.

For Kvitova, the 2011 WTA Finals champion, the loss marks a second straight winless campaign in her seventh appearance at the lucrative year-ender. — AFP

## Djokovic survives scare in Paris opener, Nadal also through

**PARIS:** Novak Djokovic defied illness to survive a scare against French lucky loser Corentin Moutet and reach the third round of the Paris Masters on Wednesday, while Rafael Nadal saw off a plucky challenge from Adrian Mannarino. Top seed Djokovic, locked in a battle with Nadal for the year-end world number one spot, had to save two set points in the first set before beating the 97th-ranked Moutet 7-6 (7/2), 6-4. The 32-year-old will play Britain's Kyle Edmund on Thursday in the last 16 as he continues his bid for a record-extending fifth Bercy title.

"I don't feel health-wise 100 percent in the last couple of days, but it is what it is," said Djokovic, who was struggling with a sore throat. "It affects your energy, your vitality on the court. Obviously it's not ideal, but in these kind of circumstances you just have to accept it and do everything that you can to recover."

Nadal, who is guaranteed to usurp

Djokovic at the rankings summit next week ahead of the ATP Tour Finals in London, beat home wildcard Mannarino 7-5, 6-4 to set up a clash with three-time Grand Slam title-winner Stan Wawrinka. Djokovic, who was beaten by Karen Khachanov in last year's final, found himself in a spot of bother when Moutet broke his serve in the seventh game before saving four break points to seize a 5-3 lead.

But the home hope saw two set points come and go in the following game, with Djokovic quickly taking advantage to break back and level the set. The Serbian took control as the opener entered a tie-break and Moutet smashed a ball into the crowd in anger as his opportunity for an upset looked to have disappeared, with his opponent cruising through the breaker.

Moutet delighted the crowd with an outrageous 'hotdog' lob over Djokovic early in the second set, but the 16-time Grand Slam champion belatedly found his form. Djokovic did let one break slip after leading 4-1, but closed out victory on his first match point with a forehand winner. Nadal was not at his imperious best against world number 43 Mannarino, but did enough to win with relative comfort. The 19-time Grand Slam champion, who has never won the tournament but does hold a record 35 Masters titles, will hope to improve in the third round against Wawrinka after the Swiss beat Marin Cilic 7-6 (7/3), 7-6 (7/5). — AFP



# Stephen Curry breaks hand in Warriors' 121-110 loss

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Ricky Rubio hit two of Phoenix's five 3-pointers in a 21-0, first-quarter run Wednesday as the Suns ran away from Golden State 121-110 in San Francisco on a night when the Warriors lost Stephen Curry to a broken left hand. With the Warriors already down 83-54 in the fourth minute of the third period, Curry collided with Suns center Aron Baynes on a drive to the hoop and fell hard on his left arm. The two-time NBA Most Valuable Player was taken immediately to the locker room, and the Warriors later announced he had broken his hand in the incident. The Warriors have now endured major injuries to Kevin Durant (ruptured Achilles tendon), Klay Thompson (torn ACL) and Curry in their past six non-exhibition games, dating back to last spring's NBA Finals. Durant left in the summer as a free agent, signing with the Brooklyn Nets. Baynes totaled 24 points and 13 rebounds while Saric (16 points), Rubio (14), Cameron Johnson (12) and Kelly Oubre Jr. (11) also scored in double figures for the Suns. Rookie Eric Paschall had 20 points to lead the Warriors, who fell to 0-2 at their new home, the Chase Center.

## ROCKETS 159, WIZARDS 158

James Harden scored 59 points and hit a free throw with 2.4 seconds left to lift Houston to a wild win over host Washington. After Bradley Beal sank three free throws to tie it with 7.7 seconds left, Harden drove, got the foul call and made the first free throw. He missed the second, and Washington was unable to get off a shot. Harden was 18 of 32 from the field. Russell Westbrook had 17 points, 10 rebounds and 12 assists, and Clint Capela added 21 points for the Rockets, who shot 53.4 percent from the field. Beal led the Wizards with 46 points on 14-of-20 shooting. Rookie Rui Hachimura had 23 points and Davis Bertans 21. Washington shot 62.6 percent from the field.

## CELTICS 116, BUCKS 105

Jayson Tatum had 25 points, including 11 during a third-quarter comeback, as host Boston overcame a 19-point deficit to beat Milwaukee and win its third game in four tries to open the season. Kemba Walker led all scorers with 32 points, Gordon Hayward had 21 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists, and Marcus Smart hit five 3-pointers and scored 19 for the Celtics, who played without swingman Jaylen Brown, scratched hours before the game with an illness. Giannis Antetokounmpo had 22 points and 14 rebounds, and Khris Middleton scored 26 for the Bucks, who have dropped two of four. Milwaukee hit just 15 of 24 at the free-throw line.

## PACERS 118, NETS 108

Domantas Sabonis scored 29 points, Jeremy Lamb added 25 points and Indiana picked up its first win of the season by pulling away in the fourth quarter to defeat host Brooklyn. The Pacers avoided their first 0-4 start since the 1988-89 season and did so on a night in which they lost center Myles Turner to a sprained right ankle late in the first quarter. Sabonis constantly dominated inside and finished a point shy of his career high set Oct. 31, 2018, against the New York Knicks. He shot 11 of 18 and scored 10 of his points in the fourth quarter when the Pacers outscored the Nets 28-25.

## TRAIL BLAZERS 102, THUNDER 99

Damian Lillard scored 23 points, including three consecutive 3-pointers in a fourth-quarter stretch, to lead visiting Portland past Oklahoma City. The Trail Blazers never led by more than nine points in a competitive game, but Lillard's hot fourth quarter provided them just enough breathing room to hold off the Thunder. Portland closed its three-game road swing through Texas and Oklahoma 2-1, bookending a loss at San Antonio with victories over the Dallas Mavericks and Thunder. CJ McCollum capped a high-scoring road trip with his lowest output of the three games, 22 points. Chris Paul led the Thunder with 21 points.

## JAZZ 110, CLIPPERS 96

Mike Conley scored 29 points and Donovan Mitchell added 24 to lead Utah past Los Angeles, which played without Kawhi Leonard and Paul George in Salt Lake City. Bojan Bogdanovic added 14 points and Rudy Gobert chipped in 13 to help the Jazz improve to 3-0 at home. Utah shot 11-for-24 (45.8 percent) from 3-point range. Thrust into the starting lineup instead of his usual sixth man role, Lou Williams scored 24 points to lead the Clippers. JaMychal Green added 23 points and Montrezl Harrell chipped in 10 off the bench. Los Angeles shot 47.6 percent from the field but ended up with 20 turnovers.

## MAGIC 95, KNICKS 83

Nikola Vucevic scored 21 points as host Orlando overcame squandering a 13-point lead to record its fifth win in its last six meetings against New York. Vucevic shot 8 of 17 from the field and added 13 rebounds, two days removed from a nightmarish 1-for-13 performance in Orlando's 104-95 setback to Toronto. Aaron Gordon collected 15 points and 11 rebounds, and Evan Fournier added 14 points for Orlando. Julius Randle had 16 points and 10 rebounds to pace the Knicks, who failed in their bid to win two in a row for the first time this season after managing the feat just three times in all of 2018-19.

## RAPTORS 125, PISTONS 113

Pascal Siakam scored 30 points, grabbed five rebounds and added five assists as Toronto defeated visiting Detroit. It was the third 30-point game in five games this season for Siakam. Kyle Lowry added 20 points and eight assists for Toronto, Norman Powell and Serge Ibaka had 19 each, Fred VanVleet contributed 13 points and 11 assists, and OG Anunoby scored 13 points with eight rebounds. Andre Drummond had 21 points and 22 rebounds for the Pistons. Derrick Rose had 16 points and 10 assists, Langston Galloway added 17 points, and Markieff Morris had 16 points.

## 76ERS 117, TIMBERWOLVES 95

Joel Embiid scored 19 points in 20 minutes before being ejected for a third-quarter brawl with Karl-Anthony Towns as host Philadelphia beat Minnesota. Embiid led six Philadelphia players in double figures. Tobias Harris scored 18 points, Furkan Korkmaz had 17 and Ben Simmons added 16. Al Horford scored 12 points and grabbed 16 rebounds and the Sixers improved to 4-0, joining only the San Antonio Spurs as the league's undefeated teams. James Ennis had 11



**SAN FRANCISCO:** Jordan Poole #3 of the Golden State Warriors shoots the ball against the Phoenix Suns at Chase Center in San Francisco, California. — AFP

rebounds off the bench for the Sixers, who last won their first four games during the 2000-01 season. Alan Wiggins led the Timberwolves with 19 points.

## CAVALIERS 117, BULLS 111

Tristan Thompson scored a game-high 23 points and grabbed 10 rebounds, and Kevin Love finished with 17 points and 20 rebounds to lift host Cleveland past Chicago. Collin Sexton added 18 points and Jordan Clarkson 17 for the Cavaliers, who had six players score in double figures. Cleveland has alternated losses and wins through its first four games of the season. Lauri Markkanen and Zach LaVine scored 16 points to pace Chicago, which lost its third straight game.

## HORNETS 118, KINGS 111

Rookie PJ Washington recorded 23 points and eight rebounds, and Terry Rozier added 22 points as Charlotte won at Sacramento. Malik Monk added 18 points off the bench and Miles Bridges scored 17 as Charlotte snapped a three-game losing streak. Cody Zeller contributed 12 points and 15 rebounds, and Devonte' Graham added 12 points and nine assists. Buddy Hield scored 23 points and Harrison Barnes added 22 for the Kings, who dropped to 0-5 for their worst start since dropping the first seven games of the 1990-91 season. Richaun Holmes recorded 17 points and nine rebounds, and De'Aaron Fox had 16 points and 10 assists. — Reuters

## Brandt's quick-fire double gives Dortmund German Cup win

**BERLIN:** Julian Brandt scored two goals in three minutes to propel Borussia Dortmund into the German Cup last 16 with a 2-1 comeback victory over Borussia Moenchengladbach on Wednesday. After a dour opening, the game came to life in the 71st minute when Gladbach's Marcus Thuram headed home from close range to put the visitors 1-0 up.

Discovering a sudden urgency, Dortmund went on the attack, equalising in the 77th minute after a shot from Brandt was deflected past Gladbach keeper Yann Sommer. The home side scored the winner just three minutes later, with Brandt heading a cross from Thorgan Hazard into the bottom left of the net.

RB Leipzig demolished Wolfsburg 6-1 after a second-half exhibition featuring four goals in 13 minutes from the visiting side. Leipzig trail Wolfsburg by two points in the Bundesliga but grabbed the lead on 13 minutes in their last-32 tie courtesy of an own goal by

Dutch defender Jeffrey Bruma.

Marcel Sabitzer scored Leipzig's second in the 55th minute and opened the floodgates, with goals from Emil Forsberg, Konrad Laimer and Timo Werner padding the score out to 5-0. Germany forward Werner struck again in the 88th minute before Wolfsburg got a consolation goal from Wout Weghorst.

Elsewhere, Werder Bremen dominated second division side Heidenheim, winning 4-1. Milot Rashica scored after just six minutes, with Leonardo Bittencourt and Davy Klaassen adding two more before the game had reached 20 minutes. Austrian defender Marco Friedl added a fourth in the 41st minute, before Heidenheim's Marc Schnatterer converted a penalty in first-half injury time. Amateur side SC Verl continued their miraculous German Cup run, advancing to the last 16 after defeating second-division Holsten Kiel 8-7 in a penalty shootout. — AFP



## Sports

# Liverpool reach League Cup quarters after 10-goal thriller against Arsenal

**LONDON:** Liverpool reached the League Cup quarter-finals in thrilling style as their incredible 5-5 draw against Arsenal was followed by a 5-4 penalty shoot-out triumph, while Manchester United won 2-1 at Chelsea on Wednesday. Both Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp and Arsenal boss Unai Emery made 11 changes for the fourth round tie, but the understudies served up one of the most entertaining games of the season at Anfield as the Gunners squandered multiple leads.

In the shoot-out, Dani Ceballos' penalty was saved by 20-year-old Irish keeper Caoimhin Kelleher before Liverpool-born 18-year-old Curtis Jones converted the winning kick. Liverpool have won the League Cup a record eight times and they remain on course to lift the trophy for the first time since 2012.

"We were too open at times. We can talk about tactics but who cares on a night like this? I hoped for the boys they would have a game to remember," Klopp said. "It's like a dream for them to play for the first time at Anfield. All our goals were wonderful."

After Granit Xhaka's astonishing outburst at Arsenal fans during Sunday's traumatic Premier League draw with Crystal Palace, this was another body blow for Arsenal, who lost despite leading 3-1, 4-2 and then 5-4 with seconds to go. "A crazy match. At the end we were winning until the last action. Penalties are 50-50 and we lost. We are sad but we deserve more," Emery said. With an average age of 23 years and 122 days, it was Liverpool's youngest starting eleven in any competition since January 2017 as teenagers Neco Williams, Harvey Elliott, Rhian Brewster and Sepp van den Berg all featured.

Liverpool's rookies went ahead after just six

minutes as Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain sent over a low cross and Arsenal defender Shkodran Mustafi, sliding in to clear, accidentally deflected it onto his knee and into the back of his own net.

Arsenal drew level in the 19th minute via an assist from the rarely used Mesut Ozil, who was making his only his third appearance of the season and his first since September 24. Ozil picked out Bukayo Saka in space and when his shot was saved, the unmarked Lucas Torreira slotted home. Emery's team took the lead in the 26th minute through Gabriel Martinelli. Martinelli struck again 10 minutes later with his seventh goal in seven appearances this season. James Milner reduced Liverpool's deficit with a 43rd-minute penalty, before Ainsley Maitland-Niles got Arsenal's fourth goal in the 54th minute.

Oxlade-Chamberlain got one back for Liverpool with a thunderous long-range drive four minutes later. And Divock Origi equalised with an even better strike in the 62nd minute as the Belgian spun sharply before blasting into the top corner from the edge of the area.

But Willock restored Arsenal's lead in the 70th minute with another contender for goal of the night, the midfielder sprinting away before unleashing a 25-yard rocket. Remarkably, Origi acrobatically volleyed Liverpool's equaliser in stoppage time, setting the stage for their shoot-out success.

At Stamford Bridge, Ole Gunnar Solskjaer was rewarded for naming a strong team as United beat Chelsea to continue their recent revival. Solskjaer made just four changes, while Chelsea boss Frank Lampard made six and it was five-time League Cup winners United who came out on top as they enjoyed a third succes-



**LIVERPOOL:** Liverpool's Belgium striker Divock Origi (C) scores his team's fifth goal during the English League Cup fourth round football match between Liverpool and Arsenal at Anfield in Liverpool, north west England. — AFP

sive victory. After Marcus Rashford and Anthony Martial both missed penalties in United's win at Norwich on Sunday, Solskjaer's team went in front thanks to a successful spot-kick in the 26th minute at the Bridge.

Daniel James was fouled by Marcos Alonso and Rashford stepped up to send Willy Caballero the wrong way from the spot for his sixth goal of the season. Michy Batshuayi equalised

from long range in the 61st minute, but Rashford's superb 30-yard free-kick won it for United in the 73rd minute.

"We've got a good team spirit. Today we were excellent, with fast flowing football. That's Manchester United. We're trying to get back to that," Solskjaer said. Aston Villa moved into the last eight with a 2-1 win over local rivals Wolves. — AFP

## Ronaldo hits late Juventus winner

**MILAN:** Cristiano Ronaldo converted a 96th-minute penalty as Juventus defeated Thiago Motta's Genoa 2-1 to reclaim top spot in Serie A on Wednesday, while Napoli were left seething after conceding a disputed late equaliser against Atalanta.

Ronaldo sat out the 1-1 draw at Lecce over the weekend but Juve looked set to drop more points on his return in Turin as Christian Kouame's fluke equaliser cancelled out a header from Leonardo Bonucci.

The Portuguese forward saw a stoppage-time strike ruled out by VAR for offside before he won a last-gasp penalty after he was fouled by Toni Sanabria. Ronaldo drilled the spot-kick low beyond Ionut Radu for his fifth league goal of the season to send Maurizio Sarri's Juve back above Inter Milan at the summit. "It was a difficult game against a well organised team but Juve must keep going until the end," Ronaldo told Sky Sport. "We suffered a lot tonight but we created a lot and deserved this win." Genoa, in their second game under Motta, played most of the second half with 10 men after Francesco Cassata was sent off, while Juve substitute Adrien Rabiot was dismissed late on for two bookable offences.

Atalanta twice fought back from a goal behind to hold Napoli to a 2-2 draw at the San Paolo, where a fiery ending resulted in red cards for Carlo Ancelotti and his assistant. Josip Ilicic struck a contentious 86th-minute equaliser that was upheld following a lengthy VAR review, as Napoli appealed for a penalty. — AFP

## Benzema stars as Madrid put five past limp Leganes

**MADRID:** Real Madrid registered their biggest win since Zinedine Zidane's return as coach on Wednesday as they demolished struggling Leganes 5-0 to move up to second in La Liga. Karim Benzema was the star of the show, the Frenchman rounding off a superb attacking display with a goal from the penalty spot after Rodrygo, Toni Kroos and another spot-kick from Sergio Ramos had already put Leganes out of sight. Luka Jovic added a fifth in injury-time.

"We have not scored five goals for a long time," said Zidane. "We needed a victory like that. When you start scoring goals, it makes everything easier." Gareth Bale was absent as he continues to recover from a calf injury but Madrid hardly missed the Welshman, whose future has again been up for discussion this week after he was pictured returning to London.

Zidane said he has spoken to Bale and saw him in the changing room at the Santiago Bernabeu. He was also asked if Bale had permission to leave the game five minutes before full-time. "I think so," Zidane said. "If he leaves five minutes before the game finishes, he can get home more easily."

Zidane had struck a conciliatory tone on Tuesday too but Bale's team-mates flourished in his absence, albeit against a limp Leganes side, who remain rooted to the bottom of the table after sacking their coach Mauricio Pellegrino last week.

This was not a performance to recommend caretaker manager Luis Cembranos for the job long-term. Yet there were some im-

pressive Madrid showings nonetheless, not least from Benzema, who has been Zidane's most consistent performer by far in recent months and now has seven goals already in all competitions.

"It's not just the goal, it's what he does for the team," Zidane said. "He doesn't surprise me." Rodrygo, the 18-year-old making only his fourth senior appearance, came into Bale's position on the right and, particularly in the first half, he shone, grabbing an early goal and providing the frightening turn of pace that Bale once offered before injuries took their toll.

"He is 18 but you don't have to be old to score here," Zidane said. "He has character and he is getting better and better." Perhaps the only question mark was Eden Hazard, who still appears short of his best in a Madrid shirt.

There were glimpses of the Belgian's undeniable brilliance but moments of indecision too, that suggest he is finding his feet, and fitness, at his new club. Madrid's victory keeps them just a point behind Barcelona, who thrashed Real Valladolid on Tuesday, and pushes them one ahead of Atletico, with a game in hand over their city rivals. Two goals arrived in the seventh and eight minutes and Benzema provided each of them, first keeping alive Hazard's cross for Rodrygo to poke home before teeing up Kroos to flick in at the near post. Leganes looked jaded, without belief or direction, and they fell three down before the interval as Hazard was fouled by Juan Soriano after a superb through ball from Casemiro.

Ramos missed the penalty but was given a second attempt, VAR prompting a re-take for the first time in La Liga after Soriano sprung off his line too early. This time, Ramos made no mistake.

Benzema had hit the post after a smart dummy from Hazard before finally he got the goal he deserved after Luka Modric earned a spot-kick with a slick turn around Kenneth Omeruo. Benzema converted and then departed to a standing ovation.

Jovic was his replacement and after having one goal ruled out for offside the Serbian also made his mark. Dani Carvajal's cross offered up a simple header to make it five. — AFP



## Sports

# Nationals rally to beat Astros, capture World Series crown

**HOUSTON:** In one of Major League Baseball's most shocking and historic championship runs, the Washington Nationals brought the US capital its first World Series crown since 1924 by defeating Houston 6-2 on Wednesday.

Howie Kendrick and Anthony Rendon blasted seventh-inning home runs to rally the Nationals from two runs down in a winner-take-all showdown to claim the best-of-seven final 4-3. "Those guys, in the big moment, you want them up there," said Nationals manager Dave Martinez. "They came through all year big in key wins for us. They have the knack to do big stuff. You saw that tonight." It was the first seven-game playoff series in North American sports where road teams won every contest. The Nationals won the first title in the club's half-century history, which began as the Montreal Expos and saw a move to Washington for the 2005 season. The only other World Series win by a Washington team came 95 years ago when the Senators won a seventh-game thriller. The US capital has seen two clubs move away and went 33 years without a team.

"To win it, what an unbelievable feeling," Martinez said. "It still hasn't hit me yet but I can tell you tomorrow I will wake up feeling a whole lot different." The Astros won an MLB-best 107 games and were heavy favorites over a Nationals team that had only clinched their ticket to the playoffs in the last days of the season and had never won a playoff series.

Instead, the World Series turned into a classic as the Nats denied Houston a second title in three seasons. "I've got a group of heartbroken men in there who did everything they could to bring a championship to this city and fell one win shy," Astros manager A.J. Hinch said. Washington went won all five of their playoff elimination games and trailed in all five before rallying every time. Wednesday's clincher proved sweetest of all. "We won one. We finally won one," tearful Nats pitcher Anibal Sanchez said.

Astros starting pitcher Zack Greinke, who hasn't won a playoff game since 2015, mystified the Nationals for 6 1/3 innings, allowing only one hit while Yuli Gurriel hit a solo homer in the second inning and scored on a Carlos Correa single in the fifth to give Houston a 2-0 lead. Houston native Rendon, however, smashed a solo homer over the left-field wall off a Greinke changeup in the seventh, sending him to the showers after walking Juan Soto. Kendrick followed by smacking a fastball from Astros reliever Will Harris off the right-field foul pole for a two-run homer that put the Nats ahead to stay. Washington added an insurance run in the eighth when Adam Eaton walked, stole second and scored on a Soto single. Eaton's



**HOUSTON:** Max Scherzer #31 of the Washington Nationals celebrates in the locker room after defeating the Houston Astros in Game Seven to win the 2019 World Series at Minute Maid Park in Houston, Texas. — AFP

bases-loaded single in the ninth added two final runs to seal Houston's fate. Nationals pitcher Stephen Strasburg was named the World Series Most Valuable Player after winning games two and six in Houston and going 5-0 overall in the playoffs.

"It's just surreal," Strasburg said. "To do it with this group of guys is something special. We didn't quit and it took all of us to do it." Patrick Corbin threw three shutout innings in relief of Max Scherzer and Daniel Hudson shut down the Astros in order in the ninth to complete the victory. When the final moment came, first baseman Ryan Zimmerman raised his hands, screamed "Oh my God" and ran into a group embrace with his teammates.

The Nationals, written off by many in May after a 19-31 start, joined the 1914 Boston Braves as the only World Series champions who were 12 games below .500 during the regular season.

In Washington, hundreds of supporters shared the excitement,

when they tore sorry Southampton to shreds. They are a point better off at the same stage compared to their miraculous title-winning season of 2015-16 and playing a more sophisticated brand of football.

Leicester have scored more goals than Liverpool and share the best defensive record in the Premier League.

Jamie Vardy, as he did in 2015-16, is terrorising defences and leads the scoring charts with nine, one more than City's Sergio Aguero and Chelsea's Tammy Abraham.

Only three teams have completed more passes than Leicester — Liverpool, City and Chelsea — while Ricardo Pereira and Wilfred Ndidi top the tackling charts.

In terms of attacking depth too, Leicester appear ready for the long haul with the likes of Demarai Gray and Kelechi Iheanacho given rare starts in the midweek League Cup win over Burton Albion which put the Foxes into the quarter-finals.

"There's a lot of belief at the moment. The confidence is really high," assistant manager Chris Davies said on Tuesday. Palace are also impressive and came back from a two-goal deficit to draw 2-2 with Arsenal last weekend.

Hodgson, as is his wont, is keeping things low-key though. "I think you have to be very careful about getting too excited when you find yourselves a bit higher in the table, or too depressed when you find yourselves a bit lower down," Hodgson said last week. "Until such time when it's really going to count, and that's going to take us into the spring of next year." Things are not looking so rosy for Everton and Tottenham. Everton have lost five of

celebrating at a huge outdoor viewing party near the Nationals ballpark. Nats fans made their trademark "Baby Shark" clap motion ahead of the final out, which set off screaming, yelling, tearful hugs and joyful dancing. "How do you think I feel right now? We just won the World Series," said James Forrest, 32, waving a Nats flag. The first World Series game seven with two Cy Young Award-winning starters, Greinke and Scherzer, was a pitchers' duel early. Scherzer, who missed a planned game-five start with neck spasms, struggled in surrendering two runs on seven hits and three walks over five innings. "Max is a bulldog," Martinez said. "His location wasn't as exact as he wanted it to be. He kept us in the ball game. What a fantastic job he did." The Astros stranded nine base runners during Scherzer's stay, squandering precious opportunities. "We had our opportunities," Hinch said. "The Nationals are really good." — AFP

their last six Premier League games leaving manager Marco Silva under scrutiny while Tottenham, without an away league win since January, are 11th and defeat at Goodison would see them slip below Everton.

Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino is facing his first real crisis since taking over in 2014, but he is not the only north London manager under pressure. Arsenal appear relatively well-placed in fifth spot but there is an air of discontent hanging over the Emirates with fans divided over manager Unai Emery's methods. Having lost a stupendous League Cup tie at Liverpool on Wednesday, they face Wolverhampton Wanderers tomorrow. Manchester United will hope to continue their upturn in form as they go to Bournemouth tomorrow. — AFP

## Leicester host Palace with ambitions soaring

**LONDON:** Juergen Klopp is earning weekly plaudits for Liverpool's stunning start to the Premier League season but two of the club's former managers, Brendan Rodgers and Roy Hodgson, are busy polishing their reputations.

Under Rodgers, Leicester City are looking serious contenders for a top-four spot after taking 20 points from their first 10 games, culminating in a 9-0 victory away to Southampton last week — matching the Premier League record winning margin.

Third-placed Leicester go to Hodgson's sixth-placed Crystal Palace on Sunday in a clash between two clubs appearing capable of taking advantage of cracks in the established order.

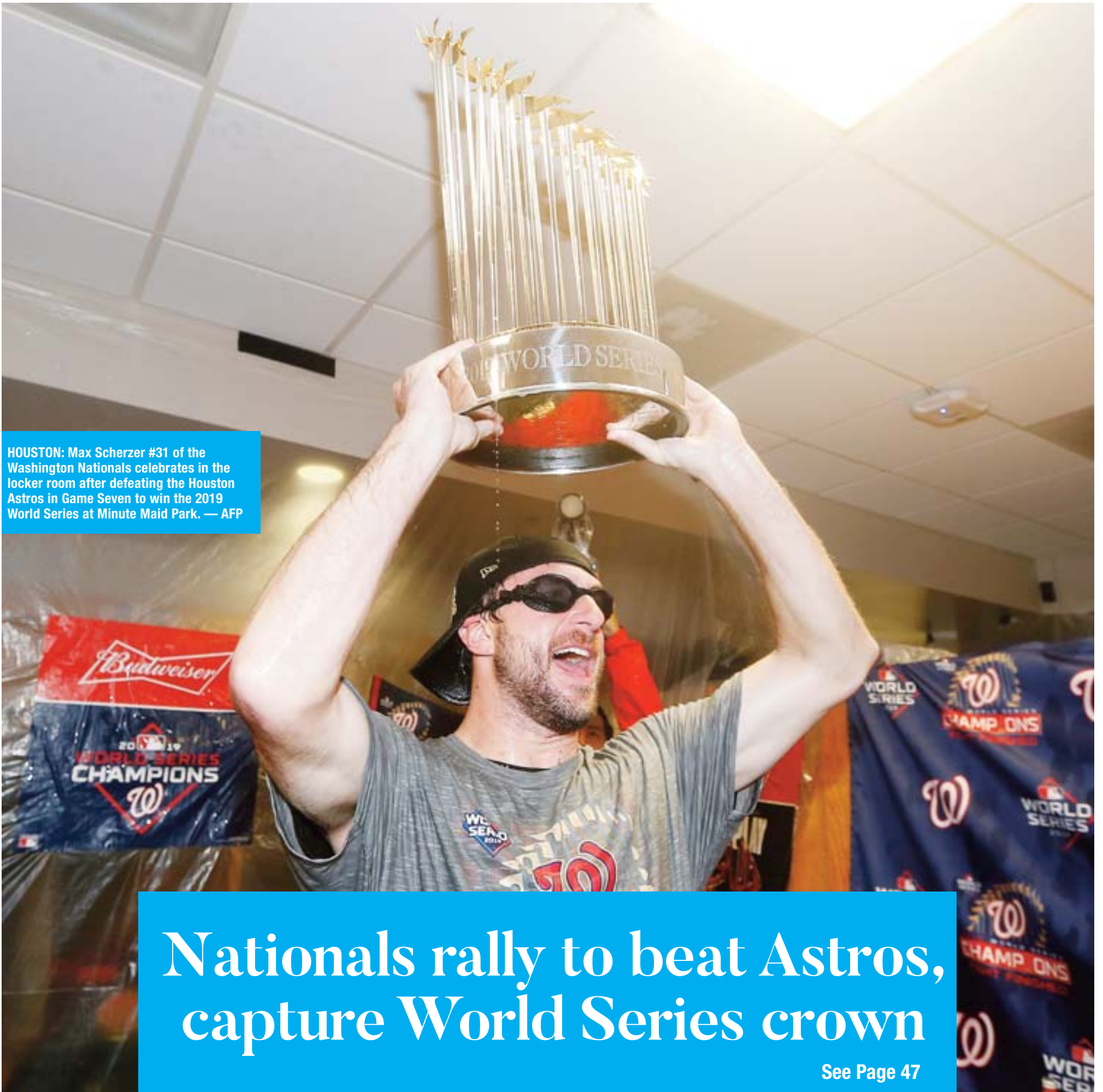
Leaders Liverpool will be odds-on to continue their title charge away to Aston Villa on Saturday while champions Manchester City, six points adrift, face troubled Southampton at home having beaten them in the League Cup on Tuesday.

Fourth-placed Chelsea seek a fifth successive Premier League win as they take on bottom club Watford while on Sunday, two teams expected to be challenging for the top four but way off the pace, Everton and Tottenham Hotspur, meet at Goodison Park.

If any more proof were required that Leicester City should be taken seriously this season it was provided in spades last Friday

Live		MATCHES ON TV	LOCAL TIMING
<b>GERMAN BUNDESLIGA</b>			
TSG 1899 Hoffenheim v SC Paderborn 07	22:30	beIN SPORTS	
<b>FRENCH LEAGUE</b>			
Dijon v Paris Saint-Germain	22:45	beIN SPORTS	





HOUSTON: Max Scherzer #31 of the Washington Nationals celebrates in the locker room after defeating the Houston Astros in Game Seven to win the 2019 World Series at Minute Maid Park. — AFP

## Nationals rally to beat Astros, capture World Series crown

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