

# Friday Times

ISSUE NO: 17997

RABIA ALTHANI 2, 1441 AH | FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2019

**8** Prime Minister visits Supreme Judicial Council

**10** Scores killed in Iraq crackdown after Iran mission torched

**45** Davis leads Lakers in New Orleans return



## Arab Women Foundation honors Kuwaiti Minister Maryam Al-Aqeel



Kuwait's Minister of Economic Affairs and Acting Minister of Finance Maryam Al-Aqeel poses with her award.



LONDON: The Arab Women's Foundation in Britain honors Kuwait's Minister of Economic Affairs and Acting Minister of Finance Maryam Al-Aqeel. — KUNA photos

**LONDON:** The Arab Women's Foundation in Britain honored Kuwait's Minister of Economic Affairs and Acting Minister of Finance Maryam Al-Aqeel, in recognition of her outstanding role in the development of the government sectors. In a statement to the press, Aqeel expressed her happiness with this honor that she shares with a group of distinguished Arab women in a number of fields, pointing out that Arab women have become an important and influential element in all aspects of life.

She praised the encouragement of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and his keenness to empower Kuwaiti women. In this context, Minister Aqeel pointed to her personal experience in government work through holding several senior management positions and responsibilities in Kuwait,

praising the confidence given by the political leadership, which enables her to serve her country.

Meanwhile, vice president and chief executive officer of Regent University in London Professor Aldwin Cooper said it was important to recognize the pioneering role played by Minister Aqeel at a time when the influence of Arab women is greater than ever. In the meantime, Kuwaiti Ambassador to the UK Khaled Al-Duwaisan said that he is proud to participate in honoring Minister Maryam Al-Aqeel, describing her as "diligent and persevering," who has been able to attain the highest leadership positions in the country. He added that Kuwait is one of the first countries that focused on empowering women and enhancing their role in all fields. — KUNA

## Local

## School guards



Local Spotlight

By Muna Al-Fuzai

muna@kuwaittimes.net

**W**hat is going on in public schools in Kuwait? Various reports, images and videos about verbal disputes between parents and teachers have appeared on social media, along with others warning the public about drugs in schools in the form of colored candy, and no one knows for sure if this is true or false.

I won't take social media as the most reliable source for information, but things are really entering a new phase now with the issue of school guards. School guards are supposed to secure school facilities, but this is not possible for them because they have not been paid for months! They are human beings with families and kids who are waiting eagerly for the little money they get from abroad.

Minor cases start in school but end up in newspapers and sometimes in court. This week, a news channel published an interview with a school guard, who said few words, but they were painful and shameful. He said and I quote: "I have been 'locked up' in school for five months without salary." This is not the first time these poor workers have faced such a problem, as in 2017, expatriate security guards complained of delayed salaries of more than three months, and spoke about wanting their wages in order to fulfill their needs and those of their families too.

The reasons for delays usually go back to routine paperwork of the contracting company and the ministry of education, with the long documentary cycle and approvals required by government regulators. I believe the ministry of education can intervene to stop the sufferings of these workers as a matter of urgency and oblige the company to pay their salaries.

First of all, as a citizen and journalist, I see this from a humanitarian perspective. It does not matter who is causing this delay, whether the company that brought these workers from their country without guarantees to receive their wages on time, or the ministry of education, which is supposed to have a decisive attitude towards these companies and not allow them to delay wages even for a month. Also, why not reveal the name of these companies and their owners, as this is not a problem of labor, but a problem of a country and schools that are supposed to have guards working actively and faithfully!

We often repeat that we are a state of law. So why are such companies allowed to manipulate people's rights? The ministry of education should bear the responsibility of supervision and implementation. Some may see this issue of school guards as a minor one, but how would you feel if you didn't get paid your salary for months?

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



KUWAIT: Kuwait City skyline as seen from Kuwait Bay. — Photo by Baqer Al-Bassam (KUNA)

## Deflate car tires for wrong parking?

IN MY VIEW

By Ben Garcia

ben@kuwaittimes.com

**S**ome people in Kuwait believe deflating a car's tires sends a strong message that you are occupying their parking spot. In the past two years, the tires of my car have been deflated on several occasions. I don't know the exact reasons, but obviously they did it to let me know that I was occupying their parking space. There could be other reasons too - perhaps the perpetrator was mentally ill and could not control his desire to deflate tires. Perhaps they deliberately did so over a dare from a friend. Or maybe aliens invaded Farwaniya and Khaitan and happened to see my car to deflate it.

Imagine waking up one day and finding your car in a horrible state as all four tires are deflated. The hassle is real, especially if you have an appointment scheduled that day. When I was evicted recently from a family apartment in Farwaniya, I had no choice but to immediately transfer to another location, so I rented an apartment in Khaitan. During the first month, I parked my car near a mosque, since few parking spaces were available. When there's no space available, many park on the side streets, including me.

To my disappointment however, three of my car's tires were deflated one morning. That day, I had an important appointment to attend. So I left my car there and took a taxi. I came back to my car a few hours later to fix it. I

don't know the suspect, and even if I knew, what could I do to face a coward bully? The incident in Khaitan was my fourth - the first three were in Farwaniya. This nightmare is all about a lack of parking places! Since I do not have my own personal parking spot, I park my car on the side street by the mosque. These spaces are owned by the state and not by anyone else.

The question is why deflate the tires when you can easily leave a message to vacate that place. The next day you will never find my car in that specific spot since you are claiming it. To deflate my car's tires is a very challenging way to make friends. That space is obviously not mine, but it isn't yours too. So why deflate three tires at once?

Until Kuwait solves the problem of the lack of parking spaces, such cases will continue in the coming years. The lack of parking spots in many areas is also related to the heavy traffic in Kuwait near schools, government complexes, private commercial establishments, and most importantly, in residential areas. Traffic is chaotic during rush hours between 6 am and 10 am and 5 pm and 9 pm. Visit the areas of Farwaniya governorate at night, and you will see how people park their cars - literally piled up. In case of emergency, you will have to disturb everyone in your neighborhood!



Haward Technology Middle East

Urgently requires the following:

Marketing Representative

Who is fluent in English. No previous Experience required.

Salary: KD 300 per month +

Commission/Bonus

Email your CV in confidence to:  
applykuwait@haward.org

Ready for the Beach ??



**Kuwait Times**  
Established 1961

Subscribe or renew your subscription  
& get K.D 50

**1** Coupon  
**FREE**



P.O. Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait | Tel: 24833199 - 24833358 - 24835616/7  
Fax: 24835620 - 24835621 | E: info@kuwaittimes.net

Friday, November 29, 2019

# PALESTINIAN EMBROIDERIES

## at Kuwait expo highlight deep-rooted heritage

**P**alestinian embroideries are one of the most recognizable forms of artwork in the Palestinian heritage. This week, the Kuwaiti Women's Cultural and Social Society in Khaldiya hosted the Palestinian Cultural Heritage Expo, which showcased various artistic, awe-inspiring embroidery designs that

gave visitors a glimpse of the splendid culture of Palestine. This year's event marked the silver jubilee anniversary of the expo, reflecting the strong bonds that the Kuwaiti and Palestinian people have shared for generations.

— Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat





## Local



# Kuwaiti faithful support national team

**T**he 24th Arabian Gulf Cup is in full swing, and as usual, Kuwaiti fans showed up to support their national team. In turn, the Kuwaiti players returned the favor to their faithful fan base by securing a huge victory in their first match of the tournament. Thousands of Kuwaiti fans of all ages traveled to Doha, Qatar to watch Kuwait beat Saudi Arabia 3-1 Wednesday evening in their opening match of the prestigious regional competition.



— AFP photos



# Kuwait Times

ESTABLISHED 1961  
THE FIRST DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

STAY CONNECTED



- Read Kuwait Times now on your phone for **FREE**
- Send Subscribe to **+965 944 88888**
- Enjoy the first daily paper in Kuwait on your phone

P.O. Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait

Tel: 24833199 - 24833358 - 24835616/7 | Fax: 24835620 - 24835621

E: [info@kuwaittimes.net](mailto:info@kuwaittimes.net)

## Local

# Judicial Council visit in manifestation of Kuwait Amir directives: Prime Minister



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with the Supreme Judicial Council's Chairman Justice Youssef Al-Mutawaa. — KUNA photos



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah speaks to reporters during his visit to the Supreme Judicial Council.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah said yesterday that his visit to the Supreme Judicial Council came to translate directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. This came in a statement to KUNA and Kuwait TV on the sidelines of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled's visit, where he was received by Council Chairman Justice Youssef Al-Mu-

tawaa, who is also Chair of the Cassation Court and President of the Constitutional Court. The visit came to translate His Highness the Amir's directives during a meeting a few days ago with the heads of the three branches; legislative, executive and judicial, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled noted. The directives of His Highness came to "abide by the implementation of the Constitution, especially Article 50 of separation of pow-

ers," His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled added. "We discussed in [yesterday's] meeting how to implement this directive in cooperation among the three authorities for the betterment and interest of the country," he said. His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled also pointed out that he will visit National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem within the same vein and purpose. — KUNA

## Amir extends condolences to US, Albania presidents

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable yesterday to US President Donald Trump, offering condolences over casualties of a chemical plant explosion in the State of Texas. His Highness the

Amir prayed to Allah Almighty to bestow mercy upon the dead and wished a speedy recovery for the injured. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar letters to President Trump.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir also sent a cable of condolences to President of Albania Ilir Meta over victims and injuries of a devastating earthquake that ripped through the country. In the cable, His Highness prayed to Allah Almighty to bestow mercy upon the dead and a speedy recovery for the wounded, voicing trust in local authorities to overcome aftermath of such natural disaster. His Highness the Crown Prince and His Highness the Prime Minister also sent similar cables. — KUNA

## KFAED, Uzbekistan sign \$30.5 million loan deal

KUWAIT: Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) and Uzbekistan inked on Wednesday a KD 9 million (\$30.5 million) loan agreement to contribute to financing an infrastructure project for rural dwellings. The deal, signed in Uzbekistan capital Tashkent, aims at improving living conditions of people in six provinces through setting up houses complex

and providing basic services like water, gas, electricity, roads and others in these areas, KFAED said in a statement. The project seeks also to create jobs for residents of these rural areas through backing construction work and industries related to this field in the rural areas, it added. It aims to construct 13,312 housing units in six provinces, it said, noting that the scheme will provide commercial and commercial services as well as public utilities for these units. This is the 10th loan provided by the fund to Uzbekistan which also obtained two technical grants worth KD 528,800 (\$1.7 million). The previous nine grants were estimated at KD 53.9 million (\$177.33 million). The deal was signed by KFAED's Deputy Director-General Ghanem Al-Ghunaiman and Uzbekistan deputy finance minister. — KUNA

## Kuwait warns against children recruitment in wars

NEW YORK: The State of Kuwait on Wednesday highlighted the need to protect children against manipulation in armed conflicts. Delivering her country's statement to a UN Security Council meeting, Kuwait's diplomatic attache Sara Al-Zoman appreciated the efforts of the international community to better support children once they have been separated from armed forces and armed groups.

The Arria-Formula Meeting on "Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups," focused on how bridging the "humanitarian-development-peace" (HDP) nexus can lead to more sustainable and successful reintegration of children associated with armed forces and armed groups. Zoman said the year 2018 saw 13,600 former child soldiers quitting armed groups, which constitutes a remarkable achievement in the joint efforts of the UN member states and civil society organizations. "The separation of children from armed groups should be viewed as only a first step which should be followed by their reintegration into their respective communities," she reminded.

The recruitment of children in armed groups constitutes a big crime which could



NEW YORK: Kuwait's diplomatic attache Sara Al-Zoman speaks during a UN Security Council meeting on Wednesday. — KUNA

put them liable to further violations, Zoman said. Calling for a comprehensive approach to addressing the problem of former child soldiers, she said those children need psychological support to be better able to resume their childhood in familiar atmospheres. She also urged incorporating children's views into the strategies for reintegration and post-conflict recovery and rehabilitation. The meeting, co-hosted by Belgium, Peru, Poland and the United Kingdom, was opened by Ambassador Marc Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Belgium) - the chair the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict. — KUNA



## Local

# Interior Ministry sues MP for helping juvenile son escape arrest



KUWAIT: A vehicle heavily damaged in an accident reported on Ghouss street.



Firemen participate in a drill at Kuwait Flour Mills and Bakeries Company's headquarters.

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** The Interior Ministry filed a case against a sitting lawmaker for obstructing justice, insulting a public servant on duty, taking his juvenile son out of a police patrol by force in Egailah, Mubarak Al-Kabeer and helping him escape arrest. Further investigations are still in progress in the case, the ministry announced in a statement yesterday.

#### Unlicensed drone

The Amiri Guards recently arrested a Kuwaiti citizen for using a drone without a license and flying it near the Dasman Palace, the Interior Ministry's Relations and Security Media Department said yesterday. Notably, security forces had received a report about the citizen's activity near the palace. Coordination was made with the palace's Amiri Guards and the suspect was arrested red-handed.

#### Ghouss street crash

A Kuwaiti citizen was severely injured when his sports utility vehicle crashed into a half lorry along the Ghouss street, said security sources,

noting that the man was rushed to hospital for immediate medical care. An investigation was opened into the accident.

#### Smuggling foiled

Air cargo customs inspectors recently foiled an attempt to smuggle 1.5 kilograms of marijuana, said security sources, noting that both the recipient and the drugs were referred to relevant authorities pending further investigations.

#### Fire drill

Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) yesterday held a fire drill at Kuwait Flour Mills and Bakeries Company's headquarters as part of its ongoing training courses and activities. The drill included dealing with post-rain flooding dangerously affecting the company's strategic reservoir. Separately, KFSD took part in the second safety awareness campaign organized by EQUATE Petrochemicals, said security sources, noting that a lecture was presented by officer Ali Al-Dagher about surviving fires through a review of the 'Young Fireman' book explaining basic steps to protect children from fires.

new Al-Sabah Hospital, the infectious diseases hospital and some new clinics in various areas.

#### Private companies

Further, the sources explained that the nurses had been contracted through private companies while some of them were directly contracted by MOH. "Hiring nurses through companies will help avoid violating labor rights as MOH will be responsible to make sure accommodation is provided and monthly salaries are regularly paid without delay," the sources explained. The sources also stressed that MOH would immediately deduct any delayed or unpaid salaries from the concerned companies' deposit with the ministry in order to pay the nurses.

#### Banknote forgery

In other news, well-informed security sources said that Hawally, criminal investigators recently arrested an African gang who had forged millions of Kuwaiti dinars along with the machines, tools, paper and ink they had been using in the process.

## Sheraton Kuwait Restaurants - Delightful Cuisines and A Multitude of Choices

**S**heraton Kuwait, a Luxury Collection Hotel invites you to an unforgettable culinary journey at its exquisite cuisines at the Avenues, the largest shopping mall in Kuwait and the Middle East. Internationally inspired with passionate services and an ideal ambience for an authentic and joyous dining experience to cherish unique moments with your loved ones.



Straight from Lebanon, Le Tarbouche Restaurant presents you its Traditional Lebanese food, the aroma of freshly baked saj bread with the best hot and cold mezzas delicately flavored to sooth every taste. Buidhara Restaurant offers you its authentic Indian spices and ingredients prepared by our world class chefs to bring to life the traditional Indian dishes including the famous flavors of tandoori.

The majestic Shahrayar Restaurant invites you to experience a different kind of indulgence of its traditional Persian dishes with a charm of idyllic surroundings. Presenting you with alluring dishes including the traditional Persian grills and bread sizzled to perfection.

For more choices, Al Hambra Restaurant at the Avenues invites you to a rich selection of your favorite Kuwaiti and International flavors with its diverse range of exceptional buffet during the Weekends and a la carte menu for breakfast, lunch, and dinner for a remarkable dining experience.

In addition, The English Tea Lounge located at the 2nd phase of the Avenues, provides you with the most pleasant ambience to experience the finest English tea and delectable scones, mini sandwiches, chocolate fondue, and fresh fruits in a relaxing atmosphere of sophistication and



## Ministry hires large number of nurses from India, Philippines

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Health (MOH) is hiring a 'huge batch of nurses' from India and the Philippines who are due to join service in various public hospitals and clinics by January after their arrival by the end of next month, well-informed health sources said. Speaking on the condition of anonymity, the sources added that MOH would need over 700 nurses to operate the new hospitals due to be launched soon including the



Turkey signs military deal with Libya govt

Pak court strikes down 3-year extension for army chief

Page 18

Page 12



NAJAF: Iraqi demonstrators gesture as flames start consuming Iran's consulate in this southern Iraqi Shiite holy city late Wednesday. — AFP

# Iraqi forces kill 25 after Iran mission torched

## PM deploys military chiefs to 'impose security and restore order'

**NASIRIYAH, Iraq:** Iraq's southern hotspot of Nasiriyah was in bloody upheaval yesterday after a government crackdown killed 25 protesters and thousands defied a curfew to march in their funerals, following the dramatic torching of an Iranian consulate. Iraq's capital and south have been torn by the worst street unrest since the 2003 US-led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein, as a protest movement has vented their fury at their government and its backers in neighboring Iran.

Late Wednesday, protesters outraged at Tehran's political influence in Iraq burned down the Iranian consulate in the shrine city of Najaf, yelling "Victory to Iraq!" and "Iran out!" In response, Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi early yesterday ordered military chiefs to deploy in several restive provinces to "impose security and restore order", the army said. But by the afternoon, after the protesters' deaths, the premier had already removed one of the commanders, General Jamil Shummary. Shummary had been dispatched to the premier's birthplace of Nasiriyah, a southern city that has been a protest hotspot for weeks.

The ensuing crackdown was particularly bloody, with at least 25 protesters killed and more than 200 wounded as security forces cleared sit-ins with live fire, medics and security sources said. The provincial governor in Nasiriyah, Adel Al-

Dakhili, blamed the crackdown on Shummary, who was the military commander of the southern port city of Basra when demonstrations there were brutally suppressed in 2018. Dakhili demanded the premier sack him, and hours later, state television announced Abdel Mahdi had ordered Shummary removed from the post.

### Tribes deploy

The latest violence brought the death toll since early October to over 370, with more than 15,000 wounded according to an AFP tally, as authorities are not releasing updated or precise figures. Thousands of Nasiriyah's residents took to the streets to mourn the city's dead in funeral processions, defying a curfew announced there earlier in the day. "We're staying until the regime falls and our demand are met!" they chanted.

Demonstrators who had been dispersed by security forces regrouped at Nasiriyah's police station, setting it on fire. They then encircled its main military headquarters as armed members of the area's influential tribes deployed along main highways to blockade military reinforcements trying to reach the city. Events in southern Iraq have unfolded dramatically since late Wednesday, when protesters stormed the Iranian consulate in the Shiite holy city of Najaf.

They set tyres and other items ablaze around the consulate, sending tall flames and thick clouds of smoke into the night sky, an AFP correspondent witnessed. They also broke into the building itself, which had been apparently evacuated by its Iranian staff. Demonstrators across Iraq have blamed powerful eastern neighbor Iran for propping up the Baghdad government which

they are seeking to topple.

Tehran demanded Iraq take decisive action against the protesters, with foreign ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi condemning the attack. "Iran has officially communicated its disgust to the Iraq ambassador in Tehran," he said in comments carried by Iran's state news agency IRNA. —AFP

## Houthi prisoners freed in Saudi, flown to Yemen

**SANAA:** Some 128 Houthi rebels detained in Saudi Arabia were flown to the Yemeni city of Sanaa and released yesterday, as efforts to end the five-year conflict gain momentum. The prisoners arrived on three International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) planes and were met inside the airport by rebel commanders and some family members, an AFP correspondent saw. The Saudi-led military coalition in Yemen said earlier this week that

it would release 200 Houthi prisoners and also allow patients needing medical care to be flown out of Sanaa airport, which has been closed to commercial flights since 2016.

Riyadh and its allies intervened in the Yemen war in March 2015 to back the internationally recognized government, shortly after the Iran-backed Houthi rebels seized Sanaa. "The ICRC sees the release as a positive step and hopes that it will spur further releases and repatriations of conflict-related detainees," it said in a statement. It said the Yemen Red Crescent transferred some of the released prisoners to a medical facility for check-ups. As they alighted from the plane, some of the detainees had to be helped down the steps and put in wheelchairs. —AFP

## International

Friday, November 29, 2019

# Israel drone industry becomes global force

## UAVs tested and fine-tuned against neighbors

**AIRPORT CITY:** In a fierce battle for market share against world superpowers China and the United States, Israel's drone industry likes to say it has a secret weapon - military experience. Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) are used daily by Israel's military in and around its borders, whether dropping tear-gas canisters on Palestinian demonstrators, monitoring Hezbollah positions in Lebanon or striking Islamic Jihad bases in Gaza. The senior echelons of the country's industry are populated by former military and intelligence officials, many of whom became founders or engineers in local startups.

Israel's first rudimentary drone dates back to 1969: It was a remote-controlled plane with an attached camera to spy on neighboring rival Egypt. Drones became more common, though not much more technically advanced, during the war in Lebanon from 1978. But half a century later, tiny Israel is now a global force in the multibillion-dollar UAV industry, competing against China and the US. It trades on its unique selling point: Enemies at its borders and therefore plenty of opportunities to test and fine-tune its UAVs.

Ronen Nadir was a military commander specializing in missile development before establishing his company, BlueBird Aero Systems. It sells combat drones across the globe, including the WanderB VTol that takes off and lands vertically like a helicopter, but has wings to improve speed. These drones can take off and land in a town, a jungle or the deck of a boat. "You will not believe it, but it took only four and a half months" from the first

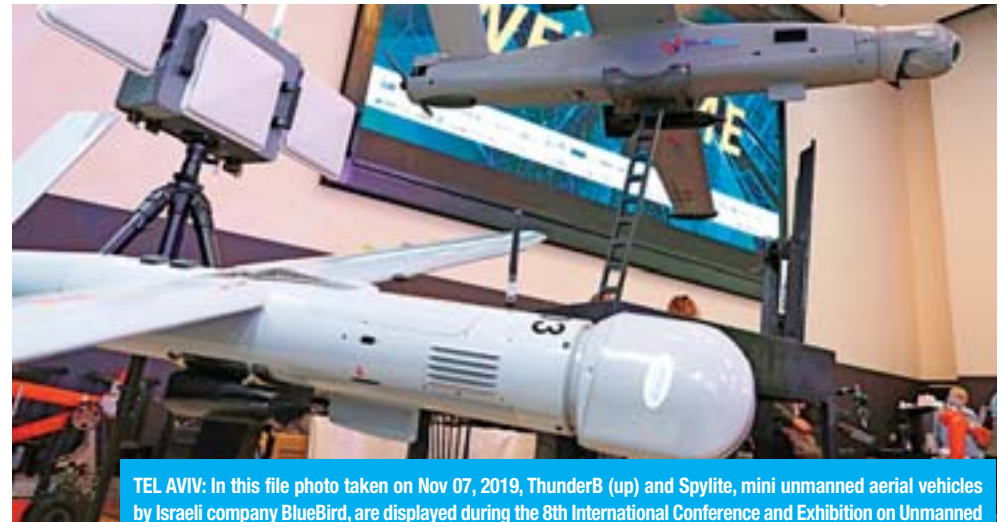
concept, scribbled on paper, "until this UAV was demonstrated to the first customer", Nadir said. Hundreds have been sold since Oct 2018, he added.

### Real-time feedback

"When an American company develops a mini-UAV and then it is used by the Marines in Iraq or Afghanistan, it takes a few years from the development of the system until it is used on the battlefield," Nadir said. "In Israel all the people (in the industry) are ex-army soldiers, officers. The engineers who work on the development of the systems are actually operating the UAVs in the (military) reserves, in actual service. Then they come back to the office with actual and real-time feedback."

Development cycles are therefore short, he said, ensuring that Israel is at the "cutting edge" of the industry. One study often cited by local authorities put Israel as the world's largest exporter of drones, but it dates to 2013. Since then, the US has vastly increased exports of its Global Hawk, a higher cost and performance drone, as well as the Predator. These have sold particularly in European markets, pushing the country ahead of its ally Israel.

China, which offers cheaper, lower-quality solutions, is perhaps also ahead of Israel now, often selling to countries the Jewish state has no relations with, said Philip Finnegan, director of corporate analysis at the American firm Teal Group. "The difficulty with ranking Israeli companies in the market is that they are very secretive over what they are selling and to who, as are the Chinese," he said. Teal estimates the global drone market to be worth



TEL AVIV: In this file photo taken on Nov 07, 2019, ThunderB (up) and Spylite, mini unmanned aerial vehicles by Israeli company BlueBird, are displayed during the 8th International Conference and Exhibition on Unmanned Systems at Airport City. —AFP

around \$12 billion in 2019, with that expected number to double in a decade. "They (Israel) are certainly in the top three, if not the top two."

### 'A stage ahead'

At a recent conference for Israeli drones at Airport City, an industrial zone close to the airport in Tel Aviv, a discreet guest sneaked in: Nadav Argaman, head of the Shin Bet internal intelligence services. His message was clear: "We buy Israeli technologies before anything else." The technology,

he said, helped allow Israeli civilians to live "comfortable daily lives, without knowing what happens under the surface" - or in this case above it.

"In order to be alive we have always to be a stage ahead, including in drones," said Zohar Dvir, the former deputy police chief reported to have inspired the Adam Sandler film "You Don't Mess with the Zohan". Today Dvir is a board member at Gold Drone, which specializes in agricultural drones. Even here, military expertise comes in handy. —AFP

## Israel demolishes Palestinian homes

**HEBRON:** Israel yesterday demolished the West Bank homes of four Palestinians accused of a deadly attack, sparking clashes with stone-throwing protesters, the army and an AFP journalist said. The houses in the village of Beit Kahil near Hebron in the occupied West Bank were home to men who were "part of the squad that carried out the stabbing attack" which killed an off-duty soldier in August, the army said. Clashes broke out during the demolitions, the army said, with Palestinians hurling "rocks and burnt tyres at troops". "In response, troops used riot dispersal means."

Residents stared at piles of concrete after bulldozers reduced one house to rubble, an AFP photographer said. After the demolitions one Palestinian died in a car accident at a junction near Hebron. Palestinian official news agency Wafa said his car was hit by an Israeli military bulldozer, but the army said he drove into the stationary vehicle. "A Palestinian vehicle deviated off the road and



HEBRON: Palestinians check the house of a man after it was demolished by Israeli authorities yesterday in the village of Beit Kahel. —AFP

hit the (Israeli military) vehicle, which had stopped on the side of the road," an army spokeswoman told AFP, without confirming the death.

Wafa named the dead man as Mohammed Al-Nawajaa, saying his son was also injured in the incident. In August, off-duty soldier Israeli Dvir Sorek was ambushed and killed, and his body was dumped near a settlement in the West Bank. He had been studying at a Jewish seminary in the settlement. Israel routinely demolishes the homes of those accused of carrying out attacks. It argues that such measures act as a deterrent, but critics say it amounts to collective punishment. —AFP

## Iran arrests eight 'linked to CIA' in street unrest

**TEHRAN:** Iran has arrested eight people it accused of CIA links and sending abroad information on recent urban unrest, days after the United States said it had received thousands of messages on a protest crackdown in the Islamic republic. New York-based Human Rights Watch has accused Tehran of "deliberately covering up" more than 140 deaths that it said came when security forces suppressed demonstrations against a sharp fuel price hike.

Iran said that among the more than 500 people arrested were eight who were "linked to the CIA", state news agency IRNA said late Wednesday, citing the head of the intelligence ministry's counter-espionage department. "Some elements who tried to collect information about the recent riots and send them out of the country... were identified and arrested," the director-general was quoted as saying. Six of them were alleged to have been at "the riots and carrying out orders," IRNA reported, without naming the official.

Two others were arrested before they could leave the country, the news agency said, and all

had been "trained in different countries on how to collect information... as citizen-journalists". Iran's arch-foe the United States has said it received thousands of messages from the Islamic republic about the protests, including photos and videos, after issuing an appeal for people to defy sweeping Internet restrictions. "We've received to date nearly 20,000 messages, videos, pictures, notes of the regime's abuses through Telegram messaging services," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Tuesday, referring to the encrypted app.

The unrest came after a year and a half of biting sanctions reimposed by US President Donald Trump that aim to heap "maximum pressure" on Iran and contain its regional influence. The sanctions followed Trump's decision in May 2018 to unilaterally withdraw the United States from an international agreement on Iran's nuclear program.

Iran has also come under pressure in neighboring Iraq, where protesters infuriated by Tehran's influence on the government in Baghdad torched its consulate in the city of Najaf late Wednesday. Tehran, which sees the nearly two months of protests in Iraq as a "conspiracy", on Thursday demanded decisive action against the Iraqi "aggressors" behind the consulate attack. Iran has also blamed the unrest within its own borders on "thugs" backed by its foreign enemies, including the United States, Israel and the People's Mujahedeen of Iran, an exiled armed opposition group it considers a "terrorist" cult. —AFP

## International

# Turkey signs military deal with UN-backed Libya govt

## Maritime accord may complicate energy exploration row

**ISTANBUL:** Turkey signed a military deal late Wednesday with Libya's UN-recognized government following a meeting with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Istanbul, his office said. Erdogan met with the head of the Tripoli-based Government of National Accord (GNA), Prime Minister Fayed Al-Sarraj, to sign agreements on security and military cooperation, as well as maritime jurisdictions.

"We are confident that we will improve the security situation for the Libyan people together," Fahrettin Altun, communications director at the Turkish presidency, wrote on Twitter. He called on other countries to support the GNA. "Stability of Libya is critically important for the safety of Libyans, regional stability, and prevention of international terrorism," Altun tweeted.

The deal comes despite calls from the Arab League - which includes Libya - to end cooperation with Turkey in protest at its military offensive against Kurdish forces in Syria last month. Libya has been mired in chaos since a NATO-backed uprising that toppled and killed dictator Muammar Gaddafi in 2011. Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the UAE back Khalifa Haftar, a military strongman in eastern Libya who launched an offensive in April in a bid to seize Tripoli from fight-

ers loyal to the GNA. Turkey and Qatar openly support his rival Sarraj.

The Turkish government did not say where the Turkish and Libyan maritime boundaries met but Turkish drilling in the eastern Mediterranean has angered Greek Cypriots, Athens and the European Union. EU foreign ministers agreed economic sanctions against Turkey two weeks ago to punish it for drilling near the coast of Cyprus in violation of a maritime economic zone established off the divided island. The dispute pits Turkey against Greece, Cyprus and other eastern Mediterranean states that have agreed maritime and economic zones, leaving Ankara searching for allies in the region.

"This means protecting Turkey's rights deriving from international law," Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said of the memorandum of understanding on the "delimitation of maritime jurisdictions". He said that such accords could be agreed with other countries if differences could be overcome and that Ankara was in favor of "fair sharing" of resources, including off Cyprus. "We are ready to do this working together with everyone, but if countries do not favor this that is their own preference." The internationally recognized government in Tripoli confirmed the new



**ISTANBUL:** Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (right) shakes hands with Fayed Al-Sarraj, the head of the Tripoli-based Government of National Accord (GNA), during their meeting on Wednesday. — AFP

agreements but gave no details. The government in eastern Libya, where rival political factions have been based since 2014, said the maritime accord was "illegitimate". The foreign affairs

committee of the eastern-based parliament called it "a flagrant violation of Libya's security and sovereignty" and a threat to "peace and security in the Mediterranean sea". — Agencies

## Crisis puts Mali political class under pressure

**BAMAKO:** As Mali's gruelling jihadist conflict grinds on, many say military forces cannot be expected to do all the heavy lifting, and the country's fractured political class has to help. The country's problems are as much about poverty, ethnic divisions and weak institutions - which require political solutions - as they are about Islamist violence, they argue. Jihadists, capitalizing on underlying grievances, seized much of northern Mali in 2012, triggering a security crisis that some say now poses an existential threat.

Despite a peace agreement reached in 2015 and an attempt at a so-called national dialogue, violence has spread from the north to the centre of Mali, claiming thousands of lives. The 2015 Algiers accords, meant to disarm rebel groups and integrate them into the national army, are mostly gathering dust. Talks on implementing the agreement ended three months ago. The stagnation is irking France, which on Tuesday lost 13 troops in a force that it deployed to Mali to shore up the fragile country.

"What seems the most important thing now is more political action," French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said in Paris. "More political action in Mali to ensure that commitments are upheld, so that so-called DDR (for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of rebels) is truly carried out, that the Algiers agreements, including the decentralization part, be truly carried out, and that there be a show of common will to fight terrorism."

### 'Political' conflict

Some politicians in Mali agree that talks are the way forward. "The war is first and foremost political," Boulan Barro, an opposition MP, told AFP. Cheickna Camara, from the presidential majority, said that "dialogue is necessary and the political class needs to play its part". He added that talks would "allow us to leave this infernal cycle of killings". But there is also an uncomfortable truth: Mali's battered army remains chronically underfunded and poorly



**French sailors stand during a minute of silence on board a ship in the Black Sea early yesterday as they remember the 13 French soldiers killed in Mali. — AFP**

equipped. Soldiers have paid a heavy price - more than 140 Malian troops have died since September. Questioned by MPs on Thursday about the state of the army, Malian Defence Minister Dahirou Dembele agreed it was a problem. "You're right to be afraid, I'm afraid," he said. "When I see my army, I'm afraid." Dembele said he wanted to see Mali's army "reach the level of other armies, so that they are no longer saying there's such and such a (foreign) force (in Mali), but that Mali is taking charge of its own defense."

France intervened in Mali in 2013 to stop the jihadist advance and has some 4,500 troops deployed across the region to help local forces. A new unit of European special forces is also due to deploy in Mali in 2020. On Tuesday, 13 French soldiers died in a mid-air helicopter collision while pursuing jihadists in Mali. It was France's worst single-day military loss of life in 36 years.

Appeals to national unity, a recurring government refrain, have largely fallen on deaf ears. The main opposition party has declined an invitation to join talks meant to bring diverse sections of society around the table, complaining that they are not really inclusive. The government is nonetheless undertaking country-wide consultations. — AFP

## Cyprus appoints investigator over 'Israeli spy van'

**NICOSIA:** Cyprus appointed an independent criminal law expert yesterday to help police investigate an alleged "spy van" reportedly owned by an Israeli and equipped with sophisticated surveillance technology. Attorney General Costas Clerides said that because of the "seriousness of the case and the different legal aspects", the expert, Elias Stephanou, had been asked to help police. The multi-million-dollar vehicle was showcased in a Forbes video broadcast several months ago that only recently went viral online in Cyprus.

The van is owned by Cyprus-registered company WiS-pear whose founder and CEO is an Israeli former intelligence officer, Tal Dilian, the report said. Forbes said the van's \$9 million state-of-the-art equipment can monitor devices within a 500-m radius, hack any phone and listen in on encrypted conversations. The probe began after the opposition communist party AKEL asked what the government was doing about alleged activities undertaken in the van.

Earlier this month, police searched the company's premises in the southern coastal resort of Larnaca. The van was seized on Nov 17 and is still in police possession. Clerides said in a statement Stephanou would help investigate whether any offences had been committed that might violate the rights to privacy and confidential communication. WiS-pear denies any wrongdoing and says the vehicle was not used to spy on anybody in Cyprus, nor was it hired to do so.

"We would like to restate that the car has not been active within Cypriot territory other than for demo and field tests purposes only, solely on company-owned devices," a WiS-pear statement last week said. — AFP

## International

# 40 dead as families pulled from Albania quake rubble

## Rescuers hoping for more survival stories

**DURRES, Albania:** The death toll from the most powerful earthquake to strike Albania in decades rose to 40 yesterday after more bodies were pulled from the wreckage overnight in a tragedy that has wiped out whole families. The 6.4 magnitude earthquake rocked the Balkan state while people were sleeping just before 4:00 am (0300 GMT) on Tuesday, razing buildings and trapping victims beneath the debris in towns near the Adriatic coast.

Rescue teams were still shovelling away massive chunks of collapsed apartments and hotels in the coastal city of Durres, where nearly 30 buildings were badly damaged. Teams from around Europe have flown in to help with the effort, bringing dogs and specialized cameras to hunt for survivors, around 50 of whom have been pulled out alive, mostly on Tuesday.

As the operation stretched into day three, rescuers insisted there was still reason to hope for more survival stories. "There may be hope for up to eight or ten days" for victims to live after an earthquake, Captain Joel Leroy, a French rescuer, told AFP. His team of around 50 was searching for two people believed to be buried at the site of seven-story building in Durres, where two or three floors toppled over and sunk into the ground. Victims may still be in "survival pockets" of air that allow them to breathe under the rubble, he explained. "That's why we are working so hard, we believe in it," he added.

Search efforts ceased yesterday in the other hard-hit town of Thumane, where the defense ministry said there were no more missing after

more than 20 bodies were pulled out in recent days. During the night, emergency workers uncovered the corpses of a mother and son from the Recic family, found in an embrace. They were crushed by the weight of a collapsed six-storey building in Durres. The whole family has now perished in the quake, with the bodies of a father and daughter pulled out the day before, according to Ilir Duka, an Albanian rescuer at the scene.

Similar tragedies have befallen other families as the pre-dawn quake shattered their homes. Loved ones have watched on in horror as rescuers pulled out bodies covered in a grey film of dust, many in their pyjamas. On Tuesday a woman was heard crying out from inside a wrecked building, where she was stuck inside with a dead child. She was eventually rescued but later died in hospital.

### 'Hope dies last'

Around 50 survivors have been hospitalized and are "in a state of shock and worried about their loved ones", defense ministry spokeswoman Albana Qehajaj told AFP. The number of people who may still be buried in the rubble is unknown. Rescuers, helped by teams from across Europe, have been working in perilous conditions as hundreds of aftershocks rattle buildings, interrupting search efforts.

"It's a heavy operation, but that's why we're here, we've been doing this for a long time," said an Italian rescue worker who didn't give his name. "Hope dies last," he said, adding that survivors have been found up to four days after an earthquake in some instances. The Italian team was



DURRES, Albania: Rescue teams and firefighters carry a victim found under the rubble of a collapsed building yesterday. —AFP

working with dogs to search on a flattened four-storey house that belonged to the Lala family and their relatives. Two toddlers and their mother were among those who have not yet been found in the debris, their neighbor Fatmira, dressed in black and whispering through tears, told AFP.

### Moved to hotels

Thousands of people have been displaced, either because their homes were severely damaged or were still unsafe because of the continuing af-

tershocks. On Wednesday night authorities in Durres moved those who had been sleeping in tents to hotels and a sports centre. Prime Minister Edi Rama has promised to rehouse the newly homeless by next year. Illegal construction is rife in Albania, where chaotic development exploded after the fall of communism in 1990. Many buildings lack proper permits and do not adhere to safety codes. The earthquake was the deadliest in several decades in Albania, which lies near a tectonic fault line. —AFP

## The mysterious reappearance of Turkey's missing

**ANKARA:** News that a loved one was in custody would be unwelcome in most circumstances - but when the police called Sumeyye Yilmaz, she felt her prayers had been answered. Her husband Mustafa Yilmaz had been missing for eight months. At last, she knew he was alive and she would see him again. But she could not take in the news, asking the officer on the phone if he was sure. "There are many Mustafa Yilmazes, I didn't want to be disappointed," she told AFP. The next day, he was finally back in her arms.

Police told Sumeyye that her husband was "found" on Oct 21 and was in good health, but she could see he had lost weight and his hands and face were "ice cold". Sumeyye feared her husband, a 33-year-old physiotherapist, had been tortured and said he looked anemic, but he gave no account of his missing months and told her only that he had been "hiding". She knew this was untrue: He had just started a new job when he vanished on Feb 19 and had no reason to disappear.

### 'Enforced disappearances'

Ozturk Turkdogan of campaign group Human Rights Association told AFP a unit within the security services was likely to be behind 28 disap-



ANKARA: Wife and daughter of Mustafa Yilmaz, who was missing for eight months, Sumeyye Yilmaz and her two-and-a-half-year-old daughter, look at a family picture on Nov 21, 2019. —AFP

pearances recorded since a failed coup in 2016. Similar techniques were used by agents against suspected political dissidents in the 1990s. Turkdogan said the 28 were probably abducted to obtain information, though it was unclear why they would have been singled out - tens of thousands were arrested in a post-coup crackdown. The interior ministry and police did not respond to requests for comment on the cases.

Mustafa had already been sentenced to six years in prison over links to the Gulen movement - a religious organization that Turkey blamed for the failed coup - but he had been released at the start of the year pending an appeal. He was one of six men who disappeared within a few days of each other around the country in February - all with alleged ties to the Gulenists. Four of the six reappeared in July in police custody. —AFP

## Dutchman in cult case 'sexually abused children'

**THE HAGUE:** A Dutch man accused of sequestering his family in a farmhouse for nearly a decade is suspected of sexually abusing two of his children, prosecutors said yesterday. The two children were not among the six living on the farm in the village of Ruinerwold at the time and had previously left home, the Dutch prosecution service said. Prosecutors also confirmed that the suspect was the father of all six of the children who were being kept on the farm at the time of his arrest in October.

"In addition to money laundering and deprivation of liberty and mistreatment of his nine children, the 67-year-old man is also suspected of sexually abusing two of his three oldest children," the prosecution service said in a statement. "DNA kinship research has

shown that the six children from the farm in Ruinerwold have the same father and mother and that the 67-year-old suspect is the father," it said, adding that the mother died in 2004.

The Dutch suspect and an Austrian man were both arrested in October and remain in custody. The family was first discovered when the oldest son still living on the farm walked into a local bar in a confused state and raised concern about the welfare of his other siblings. Police then went to the farmhouse and found the other five children locked in a small room.

In a further twist to the case, the prosecutors added that the Dutchman and the Austrian had held another Austrian man, aged 69, captive "for several months" in 2009. "More details will not be shared about the case. The investigation is still in full swing," the prosecutors said. Both suspects and the family were all part of South Korea's controversial Unification Church, dubbed "Moonies" after their late founder Sun Myung Moon, Dutch media have said. The Universal Peace Federation, the name the church now goes by, has confirmed that the father of the family was a member in the 1980s before leaving for Germany where "we lost sight of him". —AFP

## International

# Scientists spot black hole so huge it 'shouldn't even exist'

## LB-1 has mass 70 times greater than the Sun

**BEIJING:** Astronomers have discovered a black hole in the Milky Way so huge that it challenges existing models of how stars evolve, researchers said yesterday. LB-1 is 15,000 light years from Earth and has a mass 70 times greater than the Sun, according to the journal *Nature*. The Milky Way is estimated to contain 100 million stellar black holes but LB-1 is twice as massive as anything scientists thought possible, said Liu Jifeng, a National Astronomical Observatory of China professor who led the research. "Black holes of such mass should not even exist in our galaxy, according to most of the current models of stellar evolution," he added.

Scientists generally believe that there are two types of black holes. The more common stellar black holes - up to 20 times more massive than the Sun - form when the centre of a very big star collapses in on itself. Supermassive black holes are at least a million times bigger than the Sun and their origins are uncertain. But researchers believed that typical stars in the Milky Way shed most of their gas through stellar winds, preventing the emergence of a black hole the size of LB-1, Liu said. "Now theorists will have to take up the challenge of explaining its formation," he said in a statement.

### 'New kind' of black hole

Astronomers are still only beginning to grasp "the abundance of black holes and the mechanisms by which they form," David Reitze, a physicist at the California Institute of Technol-

ogy (Caltech) who was not involved in the discovery, told AFP. The Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory at Caltech, overseen by Reitze, had previously detected ripples in spacetime that suggested the possibility of black holes in distant galaxies that were much bigger than what was thought possible.

Stellar black holes are usually formed in the aftermath of supernova explosions, a phenomenon that occurs when extremely large stars burn out at the end of their lives. LB-1's large mass falls into a range "known as the 'pair instability gap' where supernovae should not have produced it", Reitze said. "That means that this is a new kind a black hole, formed by another physical mechanism!"

### 100 million black holes

LB-1 was discovered by an international team of scientists using China's sophisticated LAMOST telescope. Additional images from two of the world's largest optical telescopes - Spain's Gran Telescopio Canarias and the Keck I telescope in the United States - confirmed the size of LB-1, which the National Astronomical Observatory of China said was "nothing short of fantastic". Scientists have tended to find black holes by detecting the X-rays they emit.

But this method has limited usefulness because only a small number of black hole systems where the companion star orbits very close to the black hole would emit detectable X-rays, Liu said at a press conference. Instead, the team that



This handout picture received on Nov 26, 2019 shows a rendering of the accretion of gas onto a stellar black hole from its blue companion star through a truncated accretion disk. —AFP

discovered LB-1 tracked the movements of "huge numbers of stars over a long period of time", before identifying LB-1 based on the motion of its companion star, Liu said. This method has been used for decades without much success due to the limitations of the available equipment, Liu added.

But LAMOST, constructed between 2001 and 2008 in north China's Hebei province, allows

researchers to detect up to 4,000 stars simultaneously with each exposure, making it one of the world's most powerful ground-based telescopes. Liu told AFP the method used to discover LB-1 could help scientists identify many more black holes in the future. Out of the 100 million black holes believed to exist in our galaxy, Liu said, only 4,000 "can give you X-rays that can be detected by us". —AFP

## Climate summit host Spain struggles on environment

**MADRID:** Spain wanted to make a splash on the international scene by agreeing to host next month's COP25 climate summit at the last minute after Chile pulled out. But experts say green issues have not been a priority in the country, which has a poor environmental track record. Only 2.3 percent of all Spaniards consider the environment as one of the country's main problems, according to the latest survey by the state-run Centre for Sociological Studies (CIS). That compares to 56.9 percent who listed unemployment and 21.2 percent who said corruption were major concerns.

Like other southern European nations, Spain does not have a significant green party and environmental issues were not in focus during the campaign for the Nov 10 general election. They were not even among the themes addressed during the only TV debate held before the polls. "Environmental problems are not a priority in the political agenda," said Claudio Cattaneo, an environmental sciences

professor at the Autonomously University of Barcelona. "Social inequalities are very high in Spain so the political demands (of the left) are more oriented towards the right to housing than to ecology."

The environment accounted for just 0.44 percent of the debate in parliament between 2011 and 2016, according to a tally kept by the Spanish Society of Ornithology, an NGO dedicated to protecting birds and their habitats. While ecological issues became a key political theme in Europe, Spain "redesigned its political party system" after democracy was re-established following the death of long-time dictator Francisco Franco in 1975 without making room for green parties.

### Infractions

At the same time European authorities routinely call out Spain for its environmental shortcomings. According to the European Commission, Spain racked up more infringements of European Union (EU) environmental law between 2015 and 2018 than any other member state - and nearly three times as many as the average for members of the bloc. In July Brussels asked the EU's Court of Justice to take action against Spain over its "systemic violations" of rules limiting nitrogen dioxide emissions, a poisonous gas in car exhaust. —AFP

## Kiev slams Apple for calling Crimea part of Russia

**KIEV:** Ukraine has lashed out at Apple for showing the annexed Crimea peninsula as part of Russia, saying the US tech giant did not "give a damn" about the pain of the Ukrainian people. Russian lawmakers said on Wednesday that Apple had complied with a demand from Moscow for Crimea to appear as Russian territory on its maps and weather apps.

"Let me explain in your terms, @Apple," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Vadym Prystaiko wrote on Twitter in response to the news. "Imagine you're crying out that your design & ideas, years of work & piece of your heart are stolen by your worst enemy but then smb ignorant doesn't give a damn about your pain. That's how it feels when you call #Crimea a (Russian) land," he said. "@Apple, please, please, stick to high-tech and entertainment. Global politics is not your strong side."

The Ukrainian Embassy in the United States tweeted: "We guess Ukrainians (are) not giving any thanks to @Apple this #Thanksgiving!" As of Wednesday, the Black Sea peninsula and its largest cities of Sevastopol and Simferopol were being displayed as Russian territory on Apple's apps when



MOSCOW: An illustration picture taken yesterday shows an Apple map with the Crimea peninsula on a smartphone screen. —AFP

used in Russia. Moscow has put pressure on foreign companies to recognize the peninsula as an integral part of its territory.

### 'Let's boycott Apple!'

Some Ukrainians responded by calling for a boycott of Apple devices. "Let's take our gadgets onto the square, pile them up and burn them," wrote Igor Kravchuk from Kharkiv on Facebook. Another, Yevgen Petrov from Zhytomyr, said: "Let's boycott Apple and support Android, a creator of gadgets that don't cave in to the Kremlin!" Google does not identify Crimea as belonging to either Russia or Ukraine on its maps. However, when used in Russia, it writes Crimean place-names in Russian and shows a line along the de facto border with Ukraine. —AFP

## International

# Thousands march in Colombia to maintain pressure on Duque

## Public transport shut down, shops and offices closed

**BOGOTA:** Colombian unions marked their second general strike in a week on Wednesday as tens of thousands poured onto the streets in protest against the government of right-wing President Ivan Duque. Public transport was largely shut down and shops and offices closed in the center of the capital as a series of protests that began with a 250,000-strong march last Thursday continued for a seventh consecutive day.

Some protesters banged pots and pans as they made their way through the streets. Large demonstrations were also held in Cali and Medellin. "We are outraged by so much mistreatment and so much corruption," said David Martinez, a 50-year-old public employee who joined a march in Bogota dressed as a clown. "I'm dressed as a clown because that's how the government sees us. People have risen up in Ecuador, Chile, in Bolivia, now it's our turn to say: No More!" Martinez told AFP.

The protests have been largely peaceful but sporadic violence has left four dead - including a young man who died Monday after being wounded in clashes with riot police on Saturday. Some 500 people have been injured. Police said 184 people had been detained in the protests since last week. "They have turned Colombia into a democracy where they favor a minority of businessmen and bureaucrats, while the vast majority must try to hang on to their privileges,"

teachers union Fecode said in a statement.

Duque, under fire over his economic policies and corruption, launched a "national dialogue" Sunday with mayors and other officials in a bid to assuage popular anger. However, protest leaders reacted angrily when they were initially omitted from direct talks.

### US support

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo voiced "steadfast support" for Duque's government in a phone call to the beleaguered president on Wednesday, the State Department said. Pompeo "welcomed the national conversation that President Duque has convened in Colombia in response to recent demonstrations," it said. A Gallup poll published on Nov 7 showed Duque's approval ratings at 26 percent in October, the lowest since he took office in Aug 2018, while 70 percent of respondents believe the country is heading in the wrong direction.

The National Strike Committee - which groups unions, students, university lecturers and indigenous groups - presented a list of 13 demands to the government, including the withdrawal of Duque's proposed tax reforms, and full compliance with the 2016 peace deal with FARC guerrillas. But perhaps the most controversial is the call to dismantle the feared ESMAD riot police, after the death Monday of 18-year-old pro-



**BOGOTA:** People shout slogans during a demonstration against the government of Colombian President Ivan Duque during a national strike on Wednesday. — AFP

tester Dilan Cruz, who was hit in the head by a tear gas canister.

Duque has yielded to some of the demands on tax reform, announcing the return of value added tax to the poorest 20 percent of the population and benefits for companies that hire

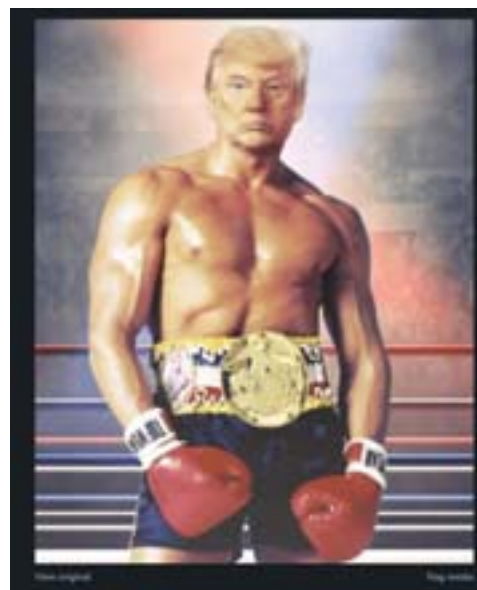
young people. "This government is open building towards the future, but it must be done with the whole of society," Duque said in an interview with Colombia's W Radio, insisting that many of the protesters claims were based on disinformation or "false premises". — AFP

## Trump strips away truth with hunky topless photo tweet

**WASHINGTON:** Days after causing alarm with an unscheduled trip to the hospital, US President Donald Trump tweeted a photo-shopped image of himself Wednesday as a rippling, bare-chested boxer. The president is furious over media speculation following his sudden trip to a government hospital outside Washington last Saturday and the startling tweet was his latest attempt to put talk of ill health to rest. In the picture, Trump's head is superimposed on the hulking body of a boxer - an image taken from the publicity poster for the Sylvester Stallone movie "Rocky III".

The montage, in which a distinctly airbrushed version of the 73-year-old president's face is used, comes without comment. Not that the Republican real estate tycoon is shy on the subject. He rarely misses a chance to talk up his own physical prowess and often makes unscripted comments - flattering or derogatory - about the physique of other men, often to their face during official events.

On Tuesday, while giving a reelection campaign speech in Florida, Trump fumed at length in a bizarre rant about his recent hospital visit. He claimed, wrongly, that major media outlets were reporting he'd had a "massive" heart attack when he was taken, without prior notice, to the Walter Reed military hospital.



**WASHINGTON:** This image shows a screen grab of the Twitter account of US President Donald Trump with his face superimposed on a picture of Sylvester Stallone's Rocky III boxing movie on Wednesday. — AFP

In fact, most media questioned the unusual circumstances of the visit, which would usually have been flagged in advance. The White House said afterward that Trump had simply decided to do part of his annual physical exam early, in order to save time later. According to his last medical exam, in February, Trump is technically obese but in good health. He rarely exercises, other than playing golf - as he did at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida on Wednesday. — AFP

## Envoy key in Trump impeachment accused of sexual misconduct

**WASHINGTON:** A US ambassador nominated by President Donald Trump who provided key testimony in his impeachment hearings was accused Wednesday of sexual misconduct by three women. Gordon Sondland, the US envoy to the European Union, denied the allegations, with his lawyer alleging that the accusers were trying to taint his credibility in the inquiry. The Portland Monthly published named accounts by three women who said that Sondland, a wealthy hotel owner from Seattle, retaliated against them professionally after they rejected him sexually.

One of the women, Jana Solis, said she met Sondland in 2008 when she was seeking work in her position as a safety expert for hotels. She said Sondland met her for lunch and offered her a job as "my new hotel chick" before slapping her rear. She said Sondland later invited her to his Portland home to evaluate his personal art collection - which included a picture of himself with then president George W Bush - and that he exposed himself in the pool house. She said Sondland at a later meeting also forcibly kissed her.

Another woman, Nicole Vogel, said she met Sondland in 2003 over dinner to seek investment in a new magazine. He then took her to a hotel he owned and invited her to see a room, where he requested a hug and then "grabs my face and goes to kiss me", she said. Vogel said she refused and left. She pointed to an email afterward in which Sondland declined funding for her project.

Sondland in a statement rejected all the accu-



**Gordon Sondland**

sations and accused Vogel of "underhanded journalism" out of anger that he did not invest in the magazine. "These untrue claims of unwanted touching and kissing are concocted and, I believe, coordinated for political purposes," he said. "They have no basis in fact and I categorically deny them," he said.

Vogel owns the Portland Monthly, which published the article. The magazine said that, due to her implication in the story, it teamed up with ProPublica, a respected non-profit news group known for investigations. A lawyer for Sondland told the magazine the article was timed to damage the ambassador's credibility in the impeachment inquiry. Sondland donated \$1 million to Trump's inauguration and was afterward named ambassador to the European Union. — AFP

## International

# Scientists spot black hole so huge it 'shouldn't even exist'

## LB-1 has mass 70 times greater than the Sun

**BEIJING:** Astronomers have discovered a black hole in the Milky Way so huge that it challenges existing models of how stars evolve, researchers said yesterday. LB-1 is 15,000 light years from Earth and has a mass 70 times greater than the Sun, according to the journal *Nature*. The Milky Way is estimated to contain 100 million stellar black holes but LB-1 is twice as massive as anything scientists thought possible, said Liu Jifeng, a National Astronomical Observatory of China professor who led the research. "Black holes of such mass should not even exist in our galaxy, according to most of the current models of stellar evolution," he added.

Scientists generally believe that there are two types of black holes. The more common stellar black holes - up to 20 times more massive than the Sun - form when the centre of a very big star collapses in on itself. Supermassive black holes are at least a million times bigger than the Sun and their origins are uncertain. But researchers believed that typical stars in the Milky Way shed most of their gas through stellar winds, preventing the emergence of a black hole the size of LB-1, Liu said. "Now theorists will have to take up the challenge of explaining its formation," he said in a statement.

### 'New kind' of black hole

Astronomers are still only beginning to grasp "the abundance of black holes and the mechanisms by which they form," David Reitze, a physicist at the California Institute of Technol-

ogy (Caltech) who was not involved in the discovery, told AFP. The Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory at Caltech, overseen by Reitze, had previously detected ripples in spacetime that suggested the possibility of black holes in distant galaxies that were much bigger than what was thought possible.

Stellar black holes are usually formed in the aftermath of supernova explosions, a phenomenon that occurs when extremely large stars burn out at the end of their lives. LB-1's large mass falls into a range "known as the 'pair instability gap' where supernovae should not have produced it", Reitze said. "That means that this is a new kind a black hole, formed by another physical mechanism!"

### 100 million black holes

LB-1 was discovered by an international team of scientists using China's sophisticated LAMOST telescope. Additional images from two of the world's largest optical telescopes - Spain's Gran Telescopio Canarias and the Keck I telescope in the United States - confirmed the size of LB-1, which the National Astronomical Observatory of China said was "nothing short of fantastic". Scientists have tended to find black holes by detecting the X-rays they emit.

But this method has limited usefulness because only a small number of black hole systems where the companion star orbits very close to the black hole would emit detectable X-rays, Liu said at a press conference. Instead, the team that



This handout picture received on Nov 26, 2019 shows a rendering of the accretion of gas onto a stellar black hole from its blue companion star through a truncated accretion disk. —AFP

discovered LB-1 tracked the movements of "huge numbers of stars over a long period of time", before identifying LB-1 based on the motion of its companion star, Liu said. This method has been used for decades without much success due to the limitations of the available equipment, Liu added.

But LAMOST, constructed between 2001 and 2008 in north China's Hebei province, allows

researchers to detect up to 4,000 stars simultaneously with each exposure, making it one of the world's most powerful ground-based telescopes. Liu told AFP the method used to discover LB-1 could help scientists identify many more black holes in the future. Out of the 100 million black holes believed to exist in our galaxy, Liu said, only 4,000 "can give you X-rays that can be detected by us". —AFP

## Climate summit host Spain struggles on environment

**MADRID:** Spain wanted to make a splash on the international scene by agreeing to host next month's COP25 climate summit at the last minute after Chile pulled out. But experts say green issues have not been a priority in the country, which has a poor environmental track record. Only 2.3 percent of all Spaniards consider the environment as one of the country's main problems, according to the latest survey by the state-run Centre for Sociological Studies (CIS). That compares to 56.9 percent who listed unemployment and 21.2 percent who said corruption were major concerns.

Like other southern European nations, Spain does not have a significant green party and environmental issues were not in focus during the campaign for the Nov 10 general election. They were not even among the themes addressed during the only TV debate held before the polls. "Environmental problems are not a priority in the political agenda," said Claudio Cattaneo, an environmental sciences

professor at the Autonomons University of Barcelona. "Social inequalities are very high in Spain so the political demands (of the left) are more oriented towards the right to housing than to ecology."

The environment accounted for just 0.44 percent of the debate in parliament between 2011 and 2016, according to a tally kept by the Spanish Society of Ornithology, an NGO dedicated to protecting birds and their habitats. While ecological issues became a key political theme in Europe, Spain "redesigned its political party system" after democracy was re-established following the death of long-time dictator Francisco Franco in 1975 without making room for green parties.

### Infractions

At the same time European authorities routinely call out Spain for its environmental shortcomings. According to the European Commission, Spain racked up more infringements of European Union (EU) environmental law between 2015 and 2018 than any other member state - and nearly three times as many as the average for members of the bloc. In July Brussels asked the EU's Court of Justice to take action against Spain over its "systemic violations" of rules limiting nitrogen dioxide emissions, a poisonous gas in car exhaust. —AFP

## Kiev slams Apple for calling Crimea part of Russia

**KIEV:** Ukraine has lashed out at Apple for showing the annexed Crimea peninsula as part of Russia, saying the US tech giant did not "give a damn" about the pain of the Ukrainian people. Russian lawmakers said on Wednesday that Apple had complied with a demand from Moscow for Crimea to appear as Russian territory on its maps and weather apps.

"Let me explain in your terms, @Apple," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Vadym Prystaiko wrote on Twitter in response to the news. "Imagine you're crying out that your design & ideas, years of work & piece of your heart are stolen by your worst enemy but then smb ignorant doesn't give a damn about your pain. That's how it feels when you call #Crimea a (Russian) land," he said. "@Apple, please, please, stick to high-tech and entertainment. Global politics is not your strong side."

The Ukrainian Embassy in the United States tweeted: "We guess Ukrainians (are) not giving any thanks to @Apple this #Thanksgiving!" As of Wednesday, the Black Sea peninsula and its largest cities of Sevastopol and Simferopol were being displayed as Russian territory on Apple's apps when



MOSCOW: An illustration picture taken yesterday shows an Apple map with the Crimea peninsula on a smartphone screen. —AFP

used in Russia. Moscow has put pressure on foreign companies to recognize the peninsula as an integral part of its territory.

### 'Let's boycott Apple!'

Some Ukrainians responded by calling for a boycott of Apple devices. "Let's take our gadgets onto the square, pile them up and burn them," wrote Igor Kravchuk from Kharkiv on Facebook. Another, Yevgen Petrov from Zhytomyr, said: "Let's boycott Apple and support Android, a creator of gadgets that don't cave in to the Kremlin!" Google does not identify Crimea as belonging to either Russia or Ukraine on its maps. However, when used in Russia, it writes Crimean place-names in Russian and shows a line along the de facto border with Ukraine. —AFP



# Vietnamese families bury first victims of UK truck tragedy

## Families have waited weeks for bodies to come back

**DIEN CHAU, Vietnam:** Throngs of weeping relatives yesterday buried the first of 39 Vietnamese people found dead in a truck in Britain last month, in emotional ceremonies for the young victims whose deaths have rattled their rural towns. The first of the remains arrived in Vietnam from London on a commercial flight Wednesday, closing a weeks-long, agonizing wait by families eager to have their children back home. All 31 men and eight women found dead in a refrigerated trailer in Essex last month were Vietnamese, many from small towns in central Vietnam.

Yesterday, several families laid their loved ones to rest after long nights of emotional vigils. Under rainy skies in central Nghe An province, scores of relatives and villagers gathered for a final farewell for Hoang Van Tiep, 18, Nguyen Van Hung, 33, two cousins who died on the truck. "I've never attended a funeral as big as this. It's a sad day for all of us," said a neighbor Hoang Thi Mai, her eyes wet with tears.

"I hope they are happy in heaven," she added, as their flower-flanked caskets were transported by a long procession to a cemetery in Dien Chau district. The parents of Hung were carried away from the burial on a motorbike, overcome with emotion and unable to watch. Those who stayed wailed as the coffins were lowered into the ground. Their families have waited weeks for their bodies to come back, and took loans from the government to cover the cost of repatriation - \$1,800 for ashes, or \$2,900 for bodies. Many families opted to pay more for the bodies so they could give their children traditional burials, since cremation is rare in rural Vietnam.

## North Korea fires two projectiles on Thanksgiving

**SEOUL:** North Korea fired two "unidentified projectiles" yesterday - the Thanksgiving holiday in the US - Seoul said, as nuclear talks between Pyongyang and Washington remain deadlocked. The projectiles were fired eastwards from South Hamgyong province and came down in the Sea of Japan, also known as the East Sea, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said. They added that the launch, the latest in a series by Pyongyang, was carried out at 16:59 pm local time (0859 GMT) - or the early hours on the east coast of the United States, during one of the country's biggest annual holidays.

It was also one day short of the two-year anniversary of the North's first test of its Hwasong-15 intercontinental ballistic missile, which analysts say is capable of reaching the entire US mainland. Pyongyang is banned from firing ballistic missiles under UN Security Council resolutions, and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said that Thursday's launch was the latest in a series of violations. "North Korea's repeated launches of ballistic missiles

### Warning sign

The tragedy has shone a grim light on the dangers of illegal migration into Britain, a top spot for many young Vietnamese hoping for better lives. The majority of the victims discovered in the truck on Oct 23 were from central Vietnam, driven by a perceived lack of opportunity at home and helped by a sophisticated network of brokers. Some families told AFP they borrowed tens of thousands of dollars to send their children to Europe. They spent several thousand more to secure a spot on the truck, promised by brokers as the safer route into Britain, where many Vietnamese end up working illegally in nail salons or on cannabis farms. Speaking at a packed memorial service for Hung and Tiep on Thursday, priest Phan Sy Phuong said the tragedy was a lesson. "Your death may be a warning to young people, to our children, who because of poverty think they have to leave their homeland," he told the crowd, some of whom fainted as the caskets were carried in. "The death of 39 people may save many others... your deaths will not be meaningless," he said.

### 'Bury my son'

Most of the victims came from just a handful of central provinces in Vietnam, where incomes sag beneath the national average and many people work as fishermen, farmers or factory workers. Ten of the victims came from Ha Tinh province, where a massive toxic dump in 2016 killed tons of fish, decimating livelihoods and sparking an uptick in illegal migration, according to experts. "I'm very sad to have to bury my own son," Vo Van Binh told AFP from his



**NGHE AN, Vietnam:** A priest officiates final rites during the burial of coffins bearing the remains of Nguyen Van Hung (left) and Hoang Van Tiep (right) at a cemetery in Dien Chau district yesterday. —AFP

bare home in Ha Tinh, surrounded by mourning relatives. "I wanted to bring him back in full so I could see his face one last time," he said of his 25-year-old son Vo Van Linh, who was sent abroad in search of a good job. He was among 16 victims whose bodies arrived in Vietnam on Wednesday. The rest of the remains are expected later this week. Vietnam has ar-

rested at least 10 people in connection with the tragedy for people smuggling, though none have been formally charged. Several people have also been arrested in Britain, including the 25-year-old driver of the truck Maurice Robinson, who pleaded guilty to conspiring to assist illegal immigration in court this week. —AFP



**SEOUL:** South Korean Army Major General Jeon Dong-jin of the Joint Chiefs of Staff speaks during a press briefing on North Korea's projectiles at the Defense Ministry yesterday. —AFP

are a serious defiance to not only our country but also the international community," he told reporters in Tokyo.

Yesterday's launch came after Pyongyang fired what it called a "super-large multiple rocket launcher" system last month, and the JCS said the latest devices were presumed to be of a similar type. They flew 380 km and reached a maximum altitude of 97 km, the JCS added. Nuclear negotiations between the US and the North have been at a standstill since the Hanoi summit between President Donald Trump and leader Kim Jong Un broke up in February, and Pyongyang has since demanded Washington change its approach by the end of the year. —AFP

## New Zealand PM apologizes over 1979 air disaster

**WELLINGTON:** Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern offered an official apology yesterday on the 40th anniversary of New Zealand's worst peacetime disaster, the Mount Erebus air crash in which 257 people died. An Air New Zealand DC-10 on a sight-seeing flight over Antarctica slammed into remote Mount Erebus during "whiteout" conditions on the frozen continent on November 28, 1979, killing all on board.

"That loss, in and of itself, was huge. It sent ripples across the country... but that loss and grief was compounded. It was undeniably worsened by the events that followed," Ardern told a commemoration service in Auckland. An initial inquiry blamed pilot error but a royal commission, the most powerful judicial inquiry under New Zealand law, subsequently cleared the crew. It found the airline reset the plane's navigation systems without telling the pilots, inadvertently

setting the aircraft on a collision course with the side of the mountain.

The report's author, judge Peter Mahon, also accused Air New Zealand officials of telling "an orchestrated litany of lies" to cover up the mistake and keep the blame on the pilots. The then prime minister Robert Muldoon attacked Mahon's report, viewing the findings against the state-owned carrier as a blow to national prestige, and it was not formally tabled until 1999, 18 years after its completion.

Ardern said the government's handling of the disaster's aftermath was wrong. "It caused trauma on top of grief. And persecution on top of pain," said the prime minister, who at 38 was not born when the crash occurred. She also said put it on record that both the government and Air New Zealand now accepted there was an error with navigation systems and the pilots were totally blameless for the crash. "The time has come to end the piecemeal acknowledgements," Ardern said. "After 40 years, on behalf of today's government, the time has come to apologize for the actions of an airline then in full state ownership; which ultimately caused the loss of the aircraft and the loss of those you loved." —AFP

## International

# Pak court suspends 3-year extension for army chief

## Top general granted six months in power

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistan's top court yesterday gave the government six months to justify why it granted a controversial extension to the country's army chief, in a rare case that pits the judiciary against the government and the military. The cabinet of prime minister Imran Khan approved a three-year extension for General Qamar Javed Bajwa in August, citing a worsening national security situation in the region over its rivalry with India. But in a surprise ruling on Tuesday, the Supreme Court suspended the extension, citing a series of irregularities and ordering the government and the army to produce legal provisions and detailed arguments on the reasoning behind the move. On Thursday the court granted a temporary six-month extension to Bajwa's tenure, due to end at midnight, but said the government must pass legislation through parliament in that time to clarify the section of Pakistan's constitution governing the armed forces. "We are showing judicial restraint although there is no provision in law to grant an extension," Chief Justice Asif Saeed Khosa told the court. "We leave this matter to parliament to make law regarding this."

Khan welcomed the verdict yesterday. "Today must be a great disappointment to those who expected the country to be destabilized by a clash of institutions," he said in a tweet. But despite giving a temporary reprieve over its handling of the extension, the episode could weaken the authority

of the coalition government, led by Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, that now has to pass what is likely to be complex legislation on the military through parliament.

The civilian government has enjoyed good relations with the armed forces, in contrast to the previous government of Khan's main rival Nawaz Sharif. It has also led to questions about the future of Bajwa, who has led the military through a period of escalating tensions with India and western neighbor Afghanistan. The abrupt decision of the court to suspend Bajwa's extension, and the government's reaction, has been branded "a comedy of errors" by Pakistan's media, which is rarely critical of the military.

"This is without a doubt the most shambolic episode in the PTI government's tenure so far," said an editorial in Dawn, the country's leading English-language newspaper yesterday. "Surely there are other officers more than capable of leading the army. General Bajwa's next step will determine whether he is thinking of himself or his institution."

Bajwa was commissioned as an army officer in 1980. As a general, he has served as a field commander of units stationed in the contested Kashmir region, where nuclear powers India and Pakistan have fought two wars since both won independence from colonial power Britain in 1947. Upon his appointment by Sharif in 2016, a gov-



**ISLAMABAD:** A Pakistani lawyer records video messages on his cellphone in front of the Supreme Court building yesterday. — AFP

ernment minister told Reuters the then-prime minister had picked Bajwa because of his low-key style, and felt the incoming general would be more willing to cede control of key areas to the civilian government.

But during his tenure, the military has been accused by opposition politicians of electoral ma-

nipulation, meddling in politics, suspension of civil liberties and muzzling the media to help Khan win power last year. The military has always denied interfering in politics. The army chief usually serves a three-year term. Since the role was established in 1972, only one general has had his term extended by a civilian government.— Reuters

## Former Maldives leader jailed for money laundering

**MALE:** Disgraced Maldives ex-president Abdulla Yameen was sentenced to five years in prison for money laundering yesterday after a corruption probe into the former strongman's rule of the luxury tourist destination. Yameen, who ran the Indian Ocean archipelago with an iron fist before his shock election loss in 2018, was accused of illegally transferring one million dollars from one of his bank accounts during an ongoing graft investigation.

The 60-year-old was arrested in February on charges of bribing witnesses in the ensuing money laundering trial. Authorities also froze bank accounts belonging to Yameen that held around \$6.5 million at the end of last year following accusations he had taken illicit payments. Investigators believe Yameen could have millions more stashed abroad and are working to repatriate the cash.

Yameen's government regularly jailed opponents or forced them into exile during its five years in power, and the former president relied heavily on China for political and financial support as his human rights record faced criticism. Current leader Ibrahim Mohamed Solih's won an unexpected landslide victory last year on a pledge to end corruption, and dissidents have since returned to the country.— AFP

## Men who exposed Afghan pedophile ring released

**KABUL:** Afghan security officials have released two rights activists detained by the country's powerful intelligence agency for exposing an alleged pedophile ring operating in the country's schools. Musa Mahmudi - a youth social worker - told Britain's Guardian newspaper earlier this month that teachers and local officials were involved in the ring based in Logar province, sparking outrage across the country. Mahmudi and activist Ehsanullah Hamidi were later detained by the National Directorate of Security (NDS) on their way to meet with the European Union ambassador in Kabul last week.

"They are in Kabul now and reunited with members of their families. There is no restriction to their movement," Naeem Nazari, deputy head of Afghanistan's Independent Human Rights Commis-

sion (AIHRC), told AFP. At least 546 boys from six schools were allegedly abused, the Guardian reported. Some victims went on to be murdered, the newspaper said, adding that rights campaigners had uncovered more than 100 videos of the abuse. Authorities have not confirmed the allegations.

The two were released Wednesday just a day after the NDS released a video of Mahmudi appearing to retract his account, which sparked harsh condemnation of the spy agency's conduct by Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and the US envoy in Kabul - who blasted the agency over its "Soviet-style tactics". Amnesty International had also called for the pair's immediate release and warned that Mahmudi had been receiving death threats accusing him of "dishonoring the people of Logar".

Hamidi's role in revealing the scandal was not immediately clear, and he was not referenced in the Guardian story. Sexual abuse is widespread in Afghanistan despite efforts to clamp down on the crime, and boys are often reluctant to come forward in a culture that still shames victims rather than going after perpetrators. Parts of Afghanistan still tolerate the practice of bacha bazi, or "boy play", where older men force boys to dress up as women and then force them to have sex.—AFP

## Cuba allows police to snoop electronically

**HAVANA:** Cuba has authorized state security agencies to use electronic surveillance without prior approval from a court, prompting criticism from the United States which accuses Havana of spying on opponents and tourists. Havana said the new laws would make the police more effective "in preventing and confronting money laundering and terrorist financing." The measures were introduced in a change to the Communist-run country's penal code last week.

Investigators must first request surveillance authorization from the attorney general. "This is the case everywhere in the world.

The difference is that elsewhere you need authorization from a judge whereas in Cuba it is between police and the prosecutor's office," constitutional analyst Julio Fernandez Estrada told AFP. Fernandez said electronic surveillance would allow investigators to "listen to and record conversations," locate and track suspects, take picture and videos and tap into all types of communications technology. The United States - involved in a mass surveillance scandal in 2013 reported by ex-Central Intelligence Agency whistleblower Edward Snowden - slammed what it called "a sweeping new law that enables surveillance in Cuba".—AFP

# Lifestyle

Friday Times

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2019

www.kuwaittimes.net

**Turtles and tourists  
share the same beach  
on a Tunisian island**

Page 26

**'Insurrection in the blood': Brazil's  
theater legend Ze Celso at 82**

See Page 20

## Lifestyle | Feature



Brazilian actor and director Jose Celso Martinez Correa, aka Ze Celso, 82, gets ready to perform in the 'Roda Viva' play in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.—AFP photos



Brazilian actor and director Jose Celso Martinez Correa, aka Ze Celso, 82, performs in the 'Roda Viva' play.



## 'Insurrection in the blood': Brazil's theater legend Ze Celso at 82

Dressed in white and with hands raised in the air, Ze Celso crosses the stage, already reveling in the boisterous performance his troupe is about to deliver: at 82, this legend of the Brazilian stage still believes in the virtue of insurrection. He founded his theater company Teatro Oficina 61 years ago and it became an icon in the years of Brazil's military dictatorship between 1964 and 1985. Despite the years, both Ze Celso and the company are still going strong.

To stage their performance of "Roda Viva" ("Living Circle"), written by singer-songwriter and playwright Chico Buarque in 1968 and mixing dance, song, theatre and video, the 60-strong troupe had to rustle up buses to transport them for free from Sao Paulo to Rio, where they bunked up at friends' places and paid the costs of putting on the show through crowdfunding donations. From the outset, "there were a thousand problems, but the thing is to resist," says Jose Celso Martinez Correa, better known as Ze Celso, in an interview with AFP. "I have insurrection in the blood."

In 1968, "militiamen from the commando group hunting down communists launched a police operation" against the performance of "Roda Viva," says Ze Celso. "They stormed the theater, and even ran into the dressing rooms to beat up the performers," he recalls. These days, "we have no support from the government, our financial situation is precarious and we have been fighting for 40 years" against a real-estate development that threatens to suffocate their theater.

Silvio Santos, a business tycoon and head of SBT television, wants to surround the Teatro Oficina—designed by renowned architect Lina Bo Bardi—with apartment blocks that would block off all natural light to the open-plan, modernist building. "I'm 82, I was tortured and then exiled by the military dictatorship," says Ze. "But what we are living through now is actually worse: I have

never seen so much ignorance and hate."

Yet the experimental theater has managed to escape the censorship and pressure on cultural centers by the far-right administration of President Jair Bolsonaro, and "Roda Viva" has been running for nearly a year now in Sao Paulo.

### Hitler moustache

"In reaction (to Bolsonaro), our culture is very strong", says Ze Celso. "The theaters are full, the artists are vibrant. All of Brazil's culture is rising up!" That is certainly the case with "Roda Viva," which is by turns burlesque, comic and sarcastic, and which Ze Celso describes as a "tragi-comedy" performed at a frenetic pace. It follows the antics of popular singer Benedito Silva and his "guardian angel," who asks for 20 percent of the singer's earnings.

Benedito becomes pop hero Ben Silver, who morphs into Benedito Lampiao, the name of a mythical insurgent in Brazilian culture, under the diktat of show business. The "Roda Viva" of 2019 is deeply anchored in contemporary Brazilian politics, featuring a Bolsonaro with Hitler moustache and hair, and who declares his love for US President Donald Trump. The Brazilian president's image appears on the video screen to boos and jeers from the audience.

By contrast, the audience is urged by the ensemble—sometimes in pressing tones—to join them in applauding former president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, the leftist who was in jail on corruption charges during the last election. As the dancers climb the rows of theater seats, Ze Celso stretches out on the laps of three audience members, and at the end of the show, performers and audience all dance together on the stage. For Ze, "everything is sexual" and the scenes of rape or orgy are raw. Occasionally, naked actors run through the rows of seats.



Actors perform in the 'Roda Viva' play.

### Bitter Farce

The show touches on every aspects of contemporary Brazil: the fires in the Amazon, the corruption allegations swirling around Bolsonaro's son Flavio, the mantras of the president's "guru" Olavo de Carvalho, the invasion of indigenous lands and the hysterical sermons of Evangelical leaders, as well as the easing of gun controls and the mass use of pesticides in agriculture.

Meanwhile, the onscreen projections mock the official line on events: "120 percent of the world has a good opinion of Brazil," and "the Amazon fires are part of our culture." "It's a very politically charged play," says Ze Celso. "I have faith in the force of humanity which is going to mobilize and take to the streets. I think it'll happen soon," he says, as the interview winds up and he stands up and without warning booms, "Shit!" The play is about to begin.—AFP



A screen displays an image of Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro during a performance of the 'Roda Viva' play.



A screen displays an image of the release of Brazil's former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva during a performance of the 'Roda Viva' play.

# Australian broadcaster Clive James dies at 80

Clive James, the Australian broadcaster, writer, critic and poet who charmed generations of Britons with his humor and wit, has died at the age of 80, his agents said Wednesday. James died “peacefully and at home, surrounded by his family and his books” in Cambridge, eastern England, on Sunday, United Agents said in a statement. A private funeral attended by family and close friends took place on Wednesday in the chapel at Pembroke College in Cambridge University, where he read English literature as a student in the 1960s.

The charismatic and erudite broadcaster, who left Sydney for England in late 1961 and made his career in Britain, had fought a long battle with leukemia. “Clive died almost 10 years after his first terminal diagnosis and one month after he laid down his pen for the last time,” UA said. “He endured his ever-multiplying illnesses with patience and good humor, knowing until the last moment that he had experienced more than his fair share of this ‘great, good world.’” He first made his name as The Observer newspaper’s television critic for a decade from 1972, where he turned the TV review into somewhat of an art form. His own hit TV show, “Clive James on Television”, fronted with his wise-cracking presenting style, put some of the world’s most bizarre programs under the spotlight—notably clips of the Japanese game show “Endurance”. Another regular guest was the Cuban singer Margarita Pracatan, who paid tribute on Wednesday to James’ intelligence, talent “and beautiful way of living”. James pioneered the ‘postcard’ format of travel documentaries. He retired from mainstream television in 2000.

## Penned his own obituary

The British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA), pre-

sented him with a special lifetime achievement award in 2015. BBC director-general Tony Hall said: “Clive James was a clever, witty and thought-provoking broadcaster.” “He had a huge range of talents and everything he did was essential listening or viewing. He is irreplaceable.” James wrote several novels and poetry books and received the Philip Hodgins Memorial Medal, a major Australian literature award, in 2003.

He published several volumes of his memoirs, including “The Blaze of Obscurity” about his years in television. After an unsuccessful operation to remove a cancer on his cheek in February this year, James set about compiling an autobiographical anthology of poems called “The Fire Of Joy”, which was finished a month ago. During his long illness, James penned his own obituary, regularly updating it on his website. He said it would “serve as a cheaper obituary than anything most newspapers are likely to have in the freezer”. “I will keep updating it until they carry me to the slab, during which journey I will try to give details of my final medication,” he wrote.

## Jonathan Miller dies, 85

James’ death was announced after the family of theatre director Jonathan Miller said he died on Wednesday at the age of 85. Miller once appeared as a guest on James’ chat show “The Late Clive James” in 1988, in which he discussed his love of stationery. The polymath first found fame in the early 1960s in the revue “Beyond The Fringe” with Peter Cook, Dudley Moore and Alan Bennett. Miller directed theatre and television plays, including “The Merchant Of Venice” at the National Theatre and six of BBC television’s Shakespeare plays.

His started directing opera in the 1970s. “Our father died



this morning peacefully at home with his family around him following a long battle with Alzheimer’s,” Miller’s family said in a statement. “He was 85 and leaves his wife Rachel and children Tom, William and Kate. His death is a great loss to our family and to his friends and will leave a huge hole in our lives.” Britain’s National Theatre called Miller a “legendary figure across theatre and opera”, while the English National Opera said “his contribution to comedy, theatre and ENO in particular was immeasurable. “For over four decades Jonathan created some of ENO’s most celebrated and popular opera productions.”—AFP

## ‘Rise of Skywalker’ actor John Boyega: ‘I left the script under my bed’

British actor John Boyega said on Wednesday that he left his copy of the closely-guarded script for the new “Star Wars” movie under his bed, and that it ended up for sale on eBay. Boyega, who plays Stormtrooper turned resistance fighter Finn in “Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker,” told US television show “Good Morning America” that a cleaner had found the script and put it on the eBay auction site. Director JJ Abrams said earlier this week that the team behind the film spotted the eBay listing and was able to get it back before it was sold, meaning the secrets in the plot are still safe.

“I was moving apartments and I left the script under my bed. I was just like, you know what, I’ll leave it under my bed,” Boyega said on Wednesday. “When I wake up in the morning I’ll take it and move, but my boys came over and, you know, we started partying a little bit and then the script just, it just stayed there.” “Then a few weeks after a cleaner comes in, finds the script and then puts it on eBay for, like, 65 (British) pounds. So the person didn’t know the true value,” he added.

Scripts for “Star Wars” movies are among the most closely guarded in the film world. Many actors only get the parts of the script for their specific scenes and critics do not get to see the film in advance. Boyega said that even he did not know the ending of the film, which concludes the Skywalker saga first brought to life in the 1977 original. “I don’t actually don’t know because we shot several different things,” he said. “I’m curious. I think I watch the movie next week for the first time.”

Disney’s “The Rise of Skywalker” starts its worldwide rollout on Dec. 18 and could take up to \$200 million at the North American box office on its opening weekend, according to Variety. Its stars include original “Star Wars” actors Mark Hamill and the late Carrie Fisher, whose role as Princess Leia was pieced together after her sudden death in 2016 using unused footage from her last film, “Star Wars: The Last Jedi.”—Reuters

## Tristan Thompson hails Khloe Kardashian as ‘perfection’

The 28-year-old basketball player may have split from the ‘Revenge Body’ host earlier this year amid claims he had shared a kiss with family friend Jordyn Woods, but he is still leaving flirty comments on her Instagram posts. Khloe - who has 19-month-old daughter True with Tristan - shared a photo of herself in a white long-sleeved body suit and high heels to promote her Good American clothing brand and her former partner wrote: “[heart eye emoji] WOW! PERFECTION! WOW [princess and heart emojis] (sic)” Tristan regularly likes or comments on the ‘Keeping Up With the Kardashians’ star’s posts.

## Melissa Benoist opens up on her experiences with domestic abuse

The ‘Supergirl’ actress posted a lengthy video on Wednesday, in which she spoke about her experience with abuse, as she alleged that a former partner - whom she did not name - abused her both physically and emotionally for the duration of their relationship. And now her friends and co-stars have publicly rushed to support her.

‘Riverdale’ actress Lili Reinhart wrote: “Please take the time to visit @melissabenoist’s IGTV. I am so moved by her bravery and strength in coming forward about her experience. Share this message, talk to your family about this, do not shy away from this subject. (sic)” Whilst actress Rachel Zegler took to Twitter to share: i adore you, melissa benoist. you are strong and beautiful and loved. (sic)” Her co-star Jeremy Jordan called her a superhero, adding: “This is what a superhero

In September, Khloe shared a selfie in which the sun was behind her and captioned her Instagram post: “May you have the courage to explore every dream you dream.” In a now-deleted comment, Tristan wrote: “The sun is shining bright on a beautiful [diamond].(sic)” And a few days before, the NBA star had left another compliment on one of his ex-girlfriend’s posts. In a photo of Khloe “channeling Anna Nicole Smith from her Guess campaign”, Tristan called it “perfection” and added a heart-eyes emoji but later deleted his comment.

The 35-year-old reality star recently admitted she was tired of receiving “countless” attention from Tristan in the wake of his kiss with Jordyn, so decided to get a therapist involved to stop any interaction between them turning sour. In scenes aired on ‘Keeping Up With the Kardashians’, she said: “All Tristan does is sent countless amounts of flowers, calls, texts, and I just haven’t been ready to talk to him because I feel like it’s going to turn into a screaming match and I don’t care to scream. But I said that I would be willing for the first time to speak to him if there’s a therapist involved.”—Bang Showbiz

looks like. Love u so, @melissabenoist. (sic)”

Whilst another co-star, Elizabeth Tulloch, wrote: “Very proud of & impressed by @MelissaBenoist for sharing something so indescribably painful & personal in order to maybe help someone else who’s suffering from IPV (Intimate Partner Violence). Please watch her video/share it (sic)” In the lengthy video, Melissa admitted she was initially charmed by the man.

She shared: “So I don’t normally do things like this but I’ve written something that I want to share, and I wanted it to stay my words and not have to edit it down for publishing. I’m gonna read it out loud, and I’m quite nervous so bear with me. I am a survivor of domestic violence or IPV (intimate partner violence), which is something I never in my life expected I would say, let alone be broadcasting into the ether. “He was a magnanimous person, who didn’t really give you a choice not to be drawn to him. He could be charming, funny, manipulative, devious. He was younger than me, his maturity obvious. For a period of time, I wasn’t interested. I was newly single, gaining my bearing in a change in my life.” Since she shared her story, the hashtag #IStandWithMelissa has been posted all over Twitter as fans and friends alike show their support.—Bang Showbiz

## Lifestyle | Gossip

## Vanessa Hudgens fascinated by her style evolution

**T**he 'Spring Breakers' star has sported a number of looks throughout the years and she is always amazed by how her style has changed. She said: "I think the message is that women don't have to be one thing. We're so multifaceted; the more we embrace our duality, the stronger we are ... My style, and the evolution of it, is something that's fascinating to me. Where I was ten years ago is so different from where I am now. It was a very Bohemian time for me. I would always be in maxi dresses with feather earrings and my long hair. I just felt so feminine and flowy. Now, I love an iconic look." And the 30-year-old actress thinks people struggle to tell her age because of her breakout role in 'High School Musical'. She added to Women's Wear Daily: "No one ever gets my age right, I used to want to be older when I was younger. Now that I'm 30, if you tell me I look underage, I actually greatly appreciate it. Most people are acquainted with me via 'High School Musical', so I think in their eyes, I'll be forever 15. "People 100 percent still look at me as Gabriella but it's really sweet that I get to be a part of people's childhood and take them back to a time for them when things were simpler. That's a beautiful thing. I've played so many different kinds of people, I don't think that you can put me into a box." — Bang Showbiz



## Beyoncé's new merchandise drop is holiday-themed

**T**he 'Crazy in Love' hitmaker has unveiled her new collection, which includes clothes like crewneck sweatshirts and graphic tees as well as accessories like eye masks. Items include a white unisex tee featuring a holiday graphic of Beyoncé and the words 'Your Favorite Wrapper', a white unisex tee featuring a black and white photo of Beyoncé at 37, a black unisex crewneck pullover featuring 'Holiday Party Energy' in multicolor embroidery on the front and a heather grey hooded pullover featuring an image of Beyoncé on the front in disco shades, 'Gon' Be Litty' on the back in black puff ink, and Beyoncé logo on the bottom left sleeve.

Other items are a holiday ornament set, which "includes red shatterproof ball ornament featuring an image of Beyoncé when she was young and a black shatterproof ball ornament featuring an image of Beyoncé in green", as well as the Three B's Collage tee, a "white crewneck tee featuring a collage of three Beyoncé images on front and 'Santa, Get Me a Bag' on back". The prices range from £12 for Beyoncé themed wrapping paper, which is available in blue and white, to £66 for the Gon' Be Litty Woven Blanket. — Bang Showbiz

## Miley Cyrus shows off new platinum mullet

**T**he 'Wrecking Ball' hitmaker has transformed her look with the edgy new hairstyle after her mother Tish gave her a trim over the weekend, but the uneven cut meant she turned to celebrity hairstylist Sally Hershberger to tweak the 'do. The pair both shared the updated version of the shoulder length haircut on Instagram, and Sally revealed the "punk vibe" was Miley's own influence. She told InStyle.com: "Miley wanted to go more punk... We went with a modern mullet that she can wear sleek, but also wavy and messy."

Some fans took to social media to voice their disapproval of the new look, with some claiming it wasn't "even". One cruel commenter described it as the "worst haircut I've ever laid my eyes on". Sally issued a defiant response and explained the angle made it look a certain way. She responded on Instagram: "First of all, if you knew anything about hair, it's the position she's in. "That's why it looks that way, it's 100% even, and she also had it straightened, so it's more severe, which I actually like. "That being said chill out and know it's a modern mullet which is very cool, but it's something you probably aren't even well-versed in sorry but not sorry." — Bang Showbiz



## Shooting stars: TikTok's explosive and rocky ride to fame

He's no Bollywood star, but school dropout Israil Ansari has found fast fame on TikTok with two million followers glued to his oddball dancing and rainbow hairstyles in India, the app's biggest international market. Thanks to the addictive and controversial Chinese-made platform, the gangly 20-year-old can now barely walk down the street without teenagers flocking to him for autographs. "I get extremely excited watching people react to my videos on TikTok," Ansari told AFP in Mumbai, saying he tries to produce clips that make people happy, "be it with a peppy song or comedy videos".

"In a land of 1.3 billion people, grabbing popularity is not easy." Launched by Chinese company ByteDance in September 2017, TikTok's playfulness and off-the-cuff humor—users post short clips of themselves performing skits, lip-syncing and dancing—has turned out to be its trump card. Last week the app hit 1.5 billion downloads worldwide, outperforming Instagram, which is better known for polished selfies than goofy memes.

Anyone armed with a smartphone—whether a suburban US teen or an Indian slum-dweller—can use TikTok to tell their own story in under 60 seconds, experts say, winning viewers, likes,

shares and eventually, the elusive goal of stardom. "TikTok videos work because they are raw, making them more relatable for youngsters, who love receiving feedback and sometimes earn money from the app, depending on their popularity," Meenakshi Tiwari, an analyst at the US firm Forrester Research, told AFP. A sophisticated AI system enables the app to detect its users' tastes and point them to videos that keep them hooked for hours on end.

### Pornography and politics

"India is the main market for TikTok followed by China, the United States, Indonesia, and Vietnam," Craig Chapple from San Francisco-based research agency Sensor Tower told AFP. The South Asian nation accounts for 40 percent of TikTok's 800 million users worldwide and 11 of the top 25 stars on the app are based in India. That includes Ansari, who earns commissions for partnering with brands to promote their products, earning anywhere between 20,000 rupees (\$280) to 50,000 rupees in a month.

In China, where the app is called Douyin, viewers can purchase everything from face cream to clothing by tapping on videos created by influencers. But it hasn't been all fun and

games—the app has come under fire around the world over claims that it was encouraging the spread of child pornography. Bangladesh has banned it as part of a clampdown on porn, while Indonesia briefly blocked access over blasphemy concerns.

TikTok has also been hit with an enormous fine in the United States for illegally collecting information from children. The app is wildly popular among teenagers and two-thirds of all TikTok users are aged under 30, according to Sensor Tower. In India, the app has often run into controversy, hitting the headlines in April after a teenager was accidentally shot dead by his friend in Delhi as they filmed a video featuring a pistol. Days later, an Indian court momentarily cut access to TikTok over pedophilia concerns.

### Privacy fears

In addition to fears that the app could be used to promote pornographic content, political sensitivities have also surfaced as a flashpoint.

Its Chinese origins have sparked concerns about the app serving as a soft power arm of Beijing, with TikTok facing a national security investigation in the United States to probe whether it is sending data to China.

In July, the app suspended the accounts of some of its biggest Indian stars after the four men—all Muslims—posted videos criticizing the lynching of a Muslim youth by a Hindu mob. The restrictions were later lifted but many believed the app's creators had succumbed to pressure from Hindu nationalists after a right-wing lawmaker from a regional party filed a case against the four TikTok influencers. Despite the scandals, the appetite for TikTok shows no sign of easing.

"From morning to late in the night, I only watch TikTok videos," 22-year-old Azeem Ahmed Siddiqui told AFP. "My family thrashes me for not having a job and wasting my time on TikTok. But I really want to become a star," he said. With 3,500 followers, the road to TikTok superstardom seems a difficult one but the Mumbai-based Siddiqui is unfazed. "I know a lot of people who had no careers and now are famous because of TikTok. 'If they can achieve this, then why can't I?'" — AFP



The portrait of late K-pop star Goo Hara is seen surrounded by flowers at a memorial altar at a hospital in Seoul. — AFP

## CYBER BULLYING, STARSUICIDES: THE DARK SIDE OF SOUTH KOREA'S K-POP WORLD

The apparent suicide of a second K-pop artist in a month has cast renewed focus in South Korea on vicious personal attacks and cyber bullying of vulnerable young stars, and how it mostly goes unpunished. The police consider cyber violence a serious crime and have an active program educating the public how not to fall prey to online attacks, or to become the perpetrator.

Charges laid are steadily on the rise with nearly 150,000 cases last year, but they form just a minuscule portion of what goes on and there is no good recourse for the victims in a country once touted as one of the most wired on earth, police say. "It's rather simple with physical violence, as the victim can go see a doctor, but with cyber violence, there is no cure," says Jeon Min-su, a cyber crime investigator with the Seoul Metropolitan Police Agency.

K-pop singer Koo Hara was found dead in her home on Sunday and the police found a handwritten note despairing about her life. She

had been subjected to vicious attacks online about her relationships with men, local media said. Koo had spoken out against cyber bullying. She was found unconscious at her home in May and hospitalized, and a month after the incident she said she was suffering from depression and vowed to fight malicious online comment.

Koo was friends with the K-pop star Sulli, who was found dead in October, who was also outspoken against cyber bullying. The Korean pop music world is popular across Asia but has a dark underbelly. Earlier this year, several male K-pop stars and one of the industry's biggest producers were questioned by police in connection with illegal gambling and prostitution.

Kwon Young-chan, comedian-turned-counselor who has himself been a victim of online violence, said stars have little recourse when they come under attack and it is almost impossible to avoid rumors and personal attacks. "When the perpetrators write vicious comments, they first begin with a 'light tap' and the scale of cyber

bullying then intensifies to a 'punch'", he said in an interview.

The rumors and personal attacks online make their way into the stars' personal lives, Kwon said. Both Sulli and Koo had been with girl bands and later broke out on their own, which made them more vulnerable, Kwon said. "After the artists began performing solo, they had to deal with depression and attacks against them all on their own."

Member of parliament Park Sun-sook, a former presidential spokeswoman who first addressed the issue of online attacks in 1998, wants to make it possible for anyone to ask web portals to take down malicious or blatantly false comments. "Young stars are exposed with no defense to cyber violence. It's time for the law and the society to protect them," she said. — Reuters

## Naked Dutch model's death plunge was murder, says Malaysian police

The death of a teenage Dutch model who fell naked from an up-market apartment, allegedly after drug-fuelled group sex, is being treated as murder, Malaysian police said. Ivana Smit tumbled from the 20th floor of a Kuala Lumpur condominium and landed on a sixth floor balcony in December 2017. Her death made headlines after claims emerged that 18-year-old Smit, the American living there and his Kazakh wife consumed large quantities of drugs and alcohol and had group sex.

Police at first dismissed suggestions of foul play and a coroner ruled earlier this year that no one was criminally involved, while conceding there was likely a struggle before she fell. But Smit's family lodged a legal challenge and the High Court last week overturned the coroner's decision, ruling that "persons known or unknown" were involved and ordered a new probe.

Police announced Wednesday that the death of Smit, who reportedly lived in Malaysia since childhood, had been reclassified as murder and they were re-opening investigations. A task force will be formed for the case, said Huzir Mohamed, head of the police's criminal investigation department. "We will recall witnesses from whom we have taken statements, and call witnesses who were not previously interviewed," he said. Police did not say who they planned to question. The couple linked to the case are reported to have left the country. — AFP

## Lifestyle | Feature



In this picture, transgender beautician Bebo Haider (behind) attends to a customer in her beauty parlor in Karachi. — AFP photos



In this picture, transgender beautician Bebo Haider, right, speaks with a neighboring shopkeeper Mohammad Akram, left, in Karachi.

## The hair salon changing how transgenders are seen in Pakistan

Bebo Haider's beauty parlor is bright, small, and decorated sparsely with three large photographs: transgender models who became her clients because the Karachi salon is one of the few in Pakistan which caters to them without judgment. Tarawah, in a middle-class neighborhood of the sprawling southern port city, is owned and run by Haider, herself a transgender person who came to Karachi in 2003 from a small rural town in southern Sindh province with dreams of becoming a beautician. It was not easy.

Even when the owner of one salon in a posh Karachi neighborhood finally decided to take a chance on her, the clients refused her services—or to return her greetings, she told AFP. It took two years before one salon regular finally returned her hello, she said—but the thaw, for that customer at least, was complete. “After that day she would not get her hair and make up done by anybody else at the parlour,” Haider told AFP jubilantly, sitting in her hairdressing chair.

“Good manners win the world.” Transgenders—also known in Pakistan as “khawajasiras”,

an umbrella term denoting a third sex that includes transvestites and eunuchs—have long fought for their rights in the deeply patriarchal and conservative country. Organized and politically active, in many respects they have made impressive gains. In 2009 Pakistan became one of the first countries in the world to legally recognize a third sex.

Last year, Pakistan's parliament passed a historic bill providing transgender people with the right to determine their own gender identity in all official documents, including choosing a blend of both genders. A Pakistani TV channel put the country's first transgender news anchor on air in 2018, while several have also run in elections. But—despite these gains—many still live daily as pariahs, often reduced to begging and prostitution, subjected to extortion and discrimination or targeted for violence. Haider fought hard to avoid that fate.

Once she gained a foothold with her first job, she began to grow politically active, joining transgender rights organizations and eventually becoming the president of Sabrang, one community group. When a Dutch organization said it wanted to finance a project to empower the transgender community, she and a partner jumped on the chance to open their own salon—which, they say, is the first transgender owned and run beauty salon in Pakistan. “I never looked back,” Haider told AFP.

### Symbol of empowerment

Transgenders are often judged, harassed or even denied entry at other salons, she and her customers told AFP. “When we would sit along the ladies at the parlour, they would feel nervous, confused and even feel repulsive of us. (But) we are also human beings,” said Mahi Doll, a 21-year client of Tarawah. Haider's salon, Doll says, is more than just a safe space for her customers to get their hair and make-up done. “This is a symbol of transgender empowerment,” she told AFP.



In this picture, transgender beautician Bebo Haider gets ready in her home to go to work in Karachi.

The salon is inside a crowded market, surrounded by grocery and milk shops. When Haider first opened it, she said, neighbors were so hostile that she felt afraid. “I would wear tough looks when I came to the shop so that people would not dare to mess with me,” she said. She warned her clients to dress conservatively, and deployed the strategy which had worked so well before: good manners. It worked.

“Whenever she sees us, she greets us with a good heart and she meets with everybody pleasantly,” said Mohammad Akram, the 40-year-old owner of a milk shop next to the salon. “We are not concerned with what their gender is,” he added.

### ‘Do I look good?’

Many modern-day transgender people in Pakistan claim to be cultural heirs of the eunuchs who thrived at the courts of the Mughal emperors that ruled the Indian subcontinent for two centuries, until the British arrived in the 19th century and banned them. Today, people who

identify as transgender number at least half a million in Pakistan, according to several studies—possibly up to two million, say TransAction, a rights organization.

Haider and other activists helping her hope the salon is just the first step on the road to economic empowerment for their community. “Awareness has started to spread now among the people that we can do (respectable) works also,” Haider said, describing initiatives such as her salon as a “practical way” of normalizing transgenders in Pakistan. During AFP's visit to Tarawah, client Mahi Doll perched in a black reclining chair to have her hair shampooed and treated, then a manicure.

Haider then began doing Doll's make-up, lining her eyes darkly to match Haider's own. “The eye makeup is the essence,” she explained. After finishing Doll's eyes, Haider turned back to her own reflection, reviewing herself in the mirror. “Do I look good?” she said softly, apparently to herself. “I am beautiful. Am I not?” — AFP



In this picture, transgender beautician Bebo Haider cleans dishes in her home in Karachi.



# Love your clothes and pass them on, says Vogue supremo Wintour

Clothes should be cherished, re-worn and even passed on to the next generation, Anna Wintour, the influential editor of Vogue magazine said, calling for more sustainability in the fashion world and less of a throwaway culture. In an interview with Reuters, Wintour, considered one of the most powerful people in fashion, also said the industry was “a little bit late in the game” in pursuing diversity and inclusivity and that, despite the meteoric rise of social media influencers, Vogue would remain a benchmark for fashionistas.

Many brands are trying to bolster their green credentials and entice young environmentally-savvy consumers as the sector comes under scrutiny for fuelling a throwaway culture. But in good news for second-hand bargain hunters, Wintour, who has been at the helm of American Vogue for more than 30 years, said fashionistas should care for their clothes and even pass them on. “I think for all of us it means an attention more on craft, on creativity, and less on the idea of clothes that are instantly disposable, things that you will throw away just after one reading,” she said.

“(It’s all about) talking to our audiences, our readers, about keeping the clothes that you own, and valuing the clothes that you own and wearing them again and again, and maybe giving them on to your daughter, or son, whatever the case may be.” A 2016 report by management consultancy McKinsey & Company said global clothing output doubled between 2000 and 2014, with the number of garments bought each year per person surging 60 percent.

## Diversity on the runway

Instantly recognizable with her short fringed bob haircut and sunglasses, British-born Wintour has long been a front row staple at catwalk shows. The 2006 movie “The Devil Wears Prada” starring Meryl Streep as a no-nonsense editor of the fictional Runway fashion magazine is widely believed to be based on her. Thanks in part to social media, who and what should be in fashion had radically changed in the past decade, Wintour said.

Fashion weeks across the globe, where designers present their latest



Editor-in-chief of Vogue Anna Wintour delivers a speech during the Vogue ‘Change Makers’ event in Athens, Greece. — Reuters

creations, are seeing a more diverse mix of people, though Wintour said the industry had been slow on the uptake. “We are seeing a far more diverse and inclusive representation on the runway, on our social media channels and also in the pages of our different magazines,” she said. “I think a lot of that has to do with the fact that we have so many designers of color in the United States. Until there is truly a voice at the table things will not change the way that they should. I feel we have long way to go.”

Wintour, who is also artistic director at parent company Conde Nast, was speaking to Reuters in Athens on the sidelines of the Vogue Greece ‘ChangeMakers’ event on Wednesday. Vogue Greece hit the newsstands earlier this year following a seven-year absence as publishers bet the county’s economic recovery after a debt crisis will revive an appetite for glossy fashion and lifestyle prints. Asked about the growing influencers’ effect, Wintour said they had “fun and varied” views but could never match the reach of Vogue. “Globally Vogue has 127 million followers ... I think that Vogue is the biggest influencer of them all on a global scale.” — Reuters

## Yves Saint Laurent jacket fetches record sum

A richly embroidered jacket by Yves Saint Laurent inspired by Vincent van Gogh’s “Sunflowers” was sold at auction Wednesday for 382,000 euros (\$420,000), a record for a garment from the celebrated French designer. The jacket, which was once modeled on the catwalk by supermodel Naomi Campbell, had been expected to fetch between 80,000-120,000 euros at the Christie’s sale.

It was bought by the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne, Australia. The bright yellow and orange jacket took haute couture embroiderers Maison Lesage more than 600 hours to stitch by hand, according to the Yves Saint Laurent museum’s website. It was part of Saint Laurent’s 1988 spring/summer collection. Only four of the sequined jackets, which are lined with silk, were ever made.

Saint Laurent’s 1988 collection also featured an equally detailed jacket honoring another flower-themed van Gogh canvas, “Irises”. The blue and purple garment was auctioned for 175,500 euros—four times the guide price—in January out of the closet of Lebanese-born entrepreneur Mouna Ayoub, one of the world’s richest women. “I have always been fascinated by painting, so it was only natural that it should inspire my creations,” the designer wrote in a catalogue for a 2004 Paris exhibition. Yves Saint Laurent died in 2008, aged 71. — AFP

## Sarah Burton honored with Trailblazer Award



The creative director at Alexander McQueen will be handed the gong at this year’s Fashion Awards for her “empowering and narrative approach to shows”. Caroline Rush, British Fashion Council executive, said: “Sarah’s empowering and narrative approach to shows and her focus on community and appreciation of craft, technology and English heritage is what has made her one of the most respected designers of our time. Her commitment to sharing her vision and expertise with the future generations of fashion designers has been remarkable. She’s an incredible source of inspiration for many generations to come and we look forward to celebrating with her in London in December.”

Sarah has worked with a number of celebrities, but one of her most iconic pieces was the wedding dress that Duchess Catherine wore when she married Prince William, Duke of Cambridge in April 2011. And Sarah previously revealed she absolutely “loves” what she does and is grateful she can go to work every day doing what she enjoys. She said last year: “What everyone always wants to ask about are the three things I won’t talk about: the wedding dress, Lee and my family. But I always say, it’s so amazing to be able to go to work every day and love what you do, and I personally want that to be how I’m judged. The work - that’s the narrative, not what I do on the weekend.” — Bang Showbiz

## H&M-backed startup puts bacteria to work in green dyeing process

A British biotech startup is developing a method of textile dyeing that taps into the bright colors of birds and butterflies and has micro-organisms recreate them on fabric, slashing the use of water and heavy chemicals in the process. Based in the English city of Norwich, Colorifix has attracted backing from the venture capital arm of Swedish fashion giant H&M.

“We’re harnessing the ability of microbes in this case to be able to deposit and fix a pigment on to fabric,” Colorifix Chief Scientific Officer Jim Ajioka told Reuters. Common dyeing, with synthetic pigments, involves large concentrations of hazardous chemicals such as chromium and other heavy metal salts and consumes vast amounts of energy and water, with contaminated wastewater a big source of pollution.

Colorifix said its method uses no hazardous chemicals and cuts water use by up to 90% depending on equipment, pigment and fabric, and is carried out at lower temperatures than common dyeing. Shoppers’ growing awareness that apparel is one of the top-polluting industries is pushing image-conscious retailers to address the environmental impact of their clothes’ full life cycle. The dyeing stage has one of the biggest.

Colorifix, like French rival PILLI, harvests a color gene in nature and inserts it into a bacterial cell, tricking it to fill up with the color as well as duplicate. In Colorifix’s dyeing process, cells jump onto the fabric and release the dye on it, after which the solution is briefly heated up to kill them. Chief Executive Orr Yarkoni said Colorifix is about to launch industrial-scale trials in partnerships with fashion groups, including H&M, and textile manufacturers such as Switzerland’s Forster Rohner and India’s Arvind. The tests will be conducted at dye houses already supplying those brands.

“For the first pilots, I hope we have everything up and running by Christmas. We are starting on multiple sites simultaneously in Portugal, Italy and India,” Yarkoni said. If these are successful, Colorifix expects to launch commercially its 5-ml batches of microbes bulging with color, in 2020. Challenges include creating new hues on demand, maintaining standards of current processes and keeping costs down.

“The H&M group and Colorifix were in India this summer to, together with our production organization, see how we can develop the technique so that it can be applied to our production,” H&M spokeswoman Jeanette Mattsson said. “Given our size it takes more work to enable a scalable solution.” Colorifix’s other backers include Swiss investment firm Challenger 88 and Cambridge University. —Reuters



Marine turtle hatchlings are seen at a beach on Tunisia's Kuriat Island.—AFP photos

## Turtles and tourists share the same beach on a Tunisian island

Between plastic chairs on a crowded Tunisian tourist beach, a sign indicates where another species shares the sand: a nest is buried below. On this paradisaical island off the coast of Monastir—a resort town south of the capital Tunis—tourists co-exist with loggerhead turtles thanks to a novel initiative. Since 2017, the Tunisian government and a local NGO have jointly run a turtle conservation program under the noses of bathing-suited beach-goers, who are offered an environmental education along with their holiday.

The Kuriat islands are the westernmost permanent logger-

head turtle breeding site on the Mediterranean's south coast, and are in the process of being listed as a protected nature reserve. But while the islands are an important turtle sanctuary, the white sand beaches and crystal waters of little Kuriat are irresistible to holidaymakers. During turtle hatching season from July to October, day-trippers arrive daily in their hundreds, transported on pirate-themed boats for barbecues and swimming.

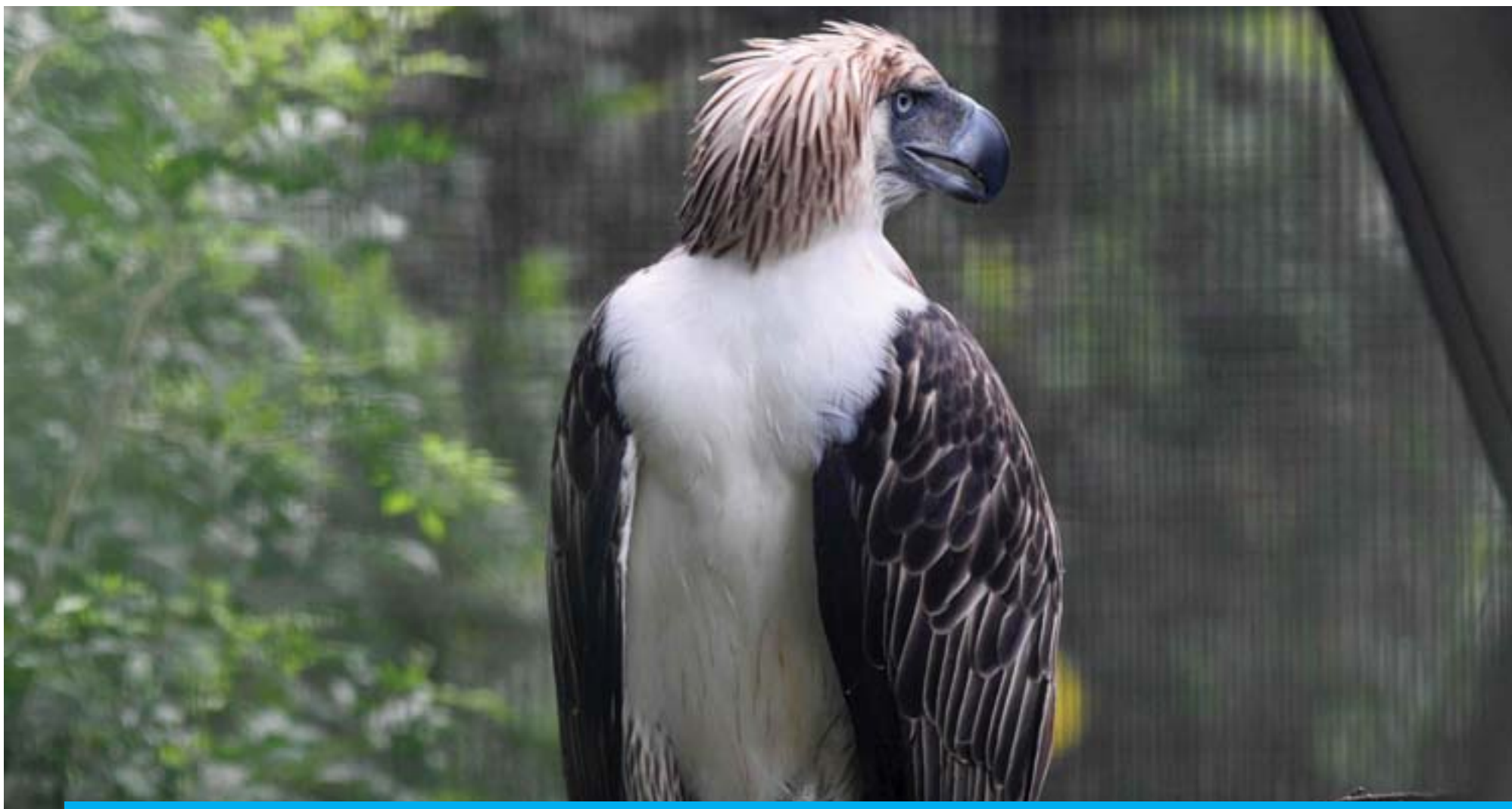
"I thought that this was just an island where I'd go to swim, eat and return," said holidaymaker Souad Khachnaoui. "I'd never imagined that this site was so important for turtles, birds and other species." Rather than ban visitors, the authorities work with local volunteers to brief arriving tourists on the local fauna, including the jellyfish-eating turtles, which can live for a century. "Many people are stunned on arrival, they didn't think that we had these kinds of animals in our country," said Manel Ben Ismail, co-founder of the environmental NGO Notre Grand Bleu, which means "Our great blue (ocean)".

And if they are lucky, tourists can watch as volunteers help defenseless hatchling turtles—measuring just five centimeters across—on their journey from the nest to the sea. Loggerheads are classified as vulnerable by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. They do not become fertile until about 20 years old and breed only every two to three years. Female loggerheads return to the same beach where they were born to lay their clutch of about 100 eggs. But it is a perilous life cycle and only one in a thousand juveniles lives to reproductive age.

The Kuriat islands—the largest of which is a military zone and the smaller is not permanently settled—offer young turtles slightly better survival odds. Both are far from the light pollution of the mainland, which can disorientate hatchlings. This year 42 nests were recorded on the islands. Layings have increased since monitoring started in 1997. If managed correctly, tourism can be a boon for the islands as visitors learn about conservation, the government believes.

"We try to strike a balance between ecological activities and the economic activities of people on this site," said Ahmed Ben Hamida, head of the Kuriat Marine Protected Area for the government agency for coastal protection.—AFP





A male Philippine eagle named Geothermica is seen in an enclosure at Jurong Bird Park in Singapore.—AFP photos

# The eagles have landed: Singapore shows off rare Philippine raptors

Singapore showed off two critically-endangered eagles Wednesday that were loaned from the Philippines as part of a breeding program to reverse the dwindling numbers of the feathered giants. Destruction of tropical rainforest and relentless hunting have decimated the population of the Philippine Eagle—one of the world's biggest and most powerful birds whose wingspan can reach 2 meters — with only around 800 believed left in the wild, conservationists say.

The birds, Geothermica and Sambisig, are the first breeding pair ever to be sent outside the Philippines and arrived in Singapore in June on a 10-year loan from Manila. The creatures are being cared for at the city-state's main aviary and were shown to the media Wednesday, as part of events marking 50 years of diplomatic relations between the countries. "Any future offspring of the eagles will be returned to the Philippines to contribute to the sustainability of the species' population," said Wildlife Reserves Singapore, which runs the aviary.

The scheme has echoes of China's "panda diplomacy", which sees the Asian giant send the black and white bears to countries as gifts. A breeding program is also being carried out in the Philippines by a small band of conservationists at a sanctuary outside the southern city of Davao, close to the eagles' main forest habitat. The bird of prey, which has white and brown plumage and an enormous wingspan, is classified as "critically endangered" by protection group the International Union for Conservation of Nature.—AFP



# Nun-chucks: Kung fu sisters battle stereotypes



Members of the Kung Fu Nuns group demonstrate their skills in New Delhi.—AFP photos

**T**hey train with swords and fighting fans after their prayers and morning chants. Meet the Himalayan kung fu nuns using their martial arts skills to challenge stereotypes about women's roles in the region's patriarchal societies. "In the Himalayas, girls are never treated equally and girls are not given equal chances—that's why we want to push the girls up," practitioner Jigme Konchok Lhamo, 25, told AFP. "Kung fu has helped us in taking a stand on gender equality as we feel more confident, we feel strong physically and mentally.

"We are doing kung fu as an example for other girls." The nuns are from the 800-strong Druk Amitabha Mountain Nunnery in Nepal and belong to the centuries-old Drukpa school of Tibetan Buddhism. In 2008 as part of his mission to bring about gender equality in Buddhism, spiritual leader His Holi-

ness Gyalwang Drukpa encouraged them to learn kung fu and take on traditional norms that forbid women and girls from leaving the confines of the nunneries, leading prayers or being fully ordained.

Emboldened by their fighting prowess, the nuns travel across South Asia to teach self-defense classes and promote awareness about human trafficking in a region where violence against women is rarely reported. They also embark on grueling mountain walks and cycling campaigns to reach out to remote communities. Most recently, they completed a three-month, 5,200-mile "bicycle yatra (journey) for peace" from Nepal to the mountains of Ladakh in northern India, where they passed through villages and spread their messages of gender equality and empowerment.

Lhamo—who was in New Delhi in early November after picking up an international award in New York for the nunnery's efforts to inspire young girls—became a nun at just 12 despite strong disapproval from her family. "There was a lot of criticism in the beginning. People didn't really like it because we were breaking rules," Lhamo said, after she and her fellow nuns put on a demonstration of their prowess.

They wielded tasseled swords and open, Chinese-style fighting fans—which are used for signaling commands during combat—emblazoned with dragons and phoenixes. "But now when we go back to the same places we get a lot of good response. "They call us to schools. They put the girls in front and the boys at the back. They give girls equal chances to ask questions and talk to us."—AFP







Models present creations by Hungarian designer Anita Pasztor during the Marie Claire Fashion Days of Budapest in the 'Millenaris' cultural centre. —AFP photos

# Fashion Days of Budapest



## Comic

### Word Search

#### Pet Dog

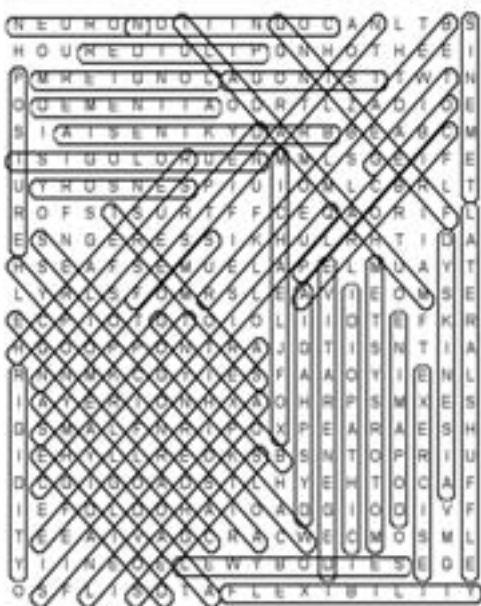
Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 26 letters spell a secret message.

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

- |           |         |        |            |
|-----------|---------|--------|------------|
| BARK      | FEED    | ID TAG | PUPPY      |
| BATH      | FETCH   | JUMP   | ROLL OVER  |
| BONE      | FOOD    | KENNEL | SHAMPOO    |
| BOWLS     | FRIEND  | LEASH  | SLEEP      |
| CANINE    | GROOM   | LICK   | TRAIN      |
| CHASE     | GROWL   | LOYAL  | TREATS     |
| CHEW TOY  | GUARD   | OWNER  | TRIM NAILS |
| COLLAR    | HAIR    | PANT   | WAG TAIL   |
| COMPANION | HARNESS | PAWS   | WALK       |
| FAITHFUL  | HOUSE   | PLAY   | WATER      |

### Yesterday's Solution

#### Parkinson's Disease



- |              |             |                 |                 |
|--------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| AEROBIC      | DOIDGE      | LATERAL SHUFFLE | QUALITY OF LIFE |
| AGONIST      | DOPAMINE    | LEVODOPA        | RED TULIP       |
| AMYGDALA     | DYSKINESIA  | LEWY BODIES     | RESEARCH        |
| BETA BLOCKER | DYSPHAGIA   | LONG TERM       | RIGIDITY        |
| BOXING       | EXERCISE    | MICHAEL J FOX   | SENSORY         |
| BRADYKINESIA | FESTINATION | MOTOR SYSTEM    | SIALORRHEA      |
| CHALLENGE    | FLEXIBILITY | MUHAMMAD ALI    | SINEMET         |
| CHACCOF      | FREEZING    | NEUROLOGIST     | STAGES          |
| COGNITION    | GAIT        | NEURON          | SYMPTOMS        |
| DEGENERATIVE | HYPOKINESIA | PLACEBO         | TREMORS         |
| DEMENZA      | IDOPATHIC   | POSTURE         | WALKING POLES   |
| DEPRESSION   |             |                 |                 |

The hidden message is: ALTHOUGH THE WORLD IS FULL OF SUFFERING, IT IS FULL ALSO OF THE OVERCOMING OF IT

Copyright © 2018 Puzzles.it

### Crossword 2372



#### ACROSS

- The bill in a restaurant.
- The brightest star in Auriga.
- A piece of information about circumstances that exist or events that have occurred.
- A unit of surface area equal to 100 square meters.
- Not easily borne.
- A Loloish language.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- (computer science) The code that identifies where a piece of information is stored.
- Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
- A siren of German legend who lured boatmen in the Rhine to destruction.
- (computer science) A data transmission rate (bits/second) for modems.
- An undergarment worn by women to support their breasts.
- Mar or spoil the appearance of.
- Long-tailed arboreal mustelid of Central and South America.
- A class of proteins produced in lymph tissue in vertebrates and that function as antibodies in the immune response.
- Type genus of the Ranidae.
- An Eskimo hut.
- Of or relating to or characteristic of ancient Carthage or its people or their language.
- A small hole (usually round and finished around the edges) in cloth or leather for the passage of a cord.

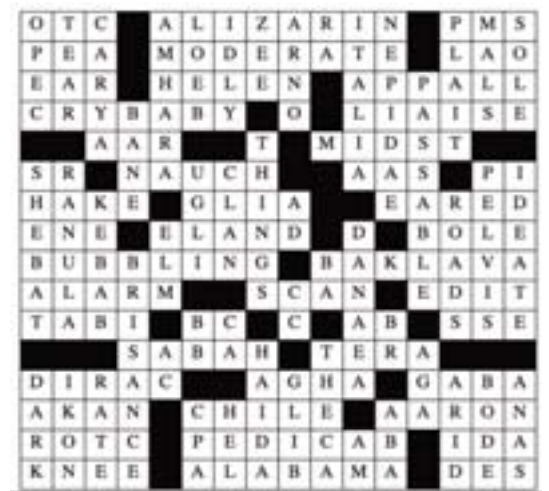
- A daughter of your brother or sister.
- Showing self-interest and shrewdness in dealing with others.
- (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
- Group of people related by blood or marriage.
- Used of a single unit or thing.
- Dwell (archaic).
- (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
- Salted roe of sturgeon or other large fish.
- God of love and erotic desire.
- Small shrubby African tree having compound leaves and racemes of small fragrant green flowers.
- The chief solid component of mammalian urine.
- A motley assortment of things.
- A line drawn on a map connecting points having the same numerical value of some variable.
- The wife or widow of a czar.
- (photography) "color film".
- The function or position properly or customarily occupied or served by another.
- European bison having a smaller and higher head than the North American bison.
- 100 fen equal 1 yuan.
- An account describing incidents or events.
- A nobleman of highest rank in Spain or Portugal.
- A federal agency established to regulate the release of new foods and health-related products.

#### DOWN

- An official language of the Republic of South Africa.
- Formerly a large constellation in the southern hemisphere between Canis Major and the Southern Cross.
- The hair growing on the lower part of a man's face.
- The part of a coal seam that is being cut.
- Relating to the Andes and their inhabitants.
- A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
- To make a mistake or be incorrect.
- United States physiologist (born in Germany) who did research on parthenogenesis (1859-1924).
- Aa slavic language spoken in rural area of southeastern Germany.
- Cause to be more favorably inclined.
- Extremely pleasing.
- Jordan's port.
- A human female who does housework.
- The basic unit of money in Western Samoa.
- In an unnatural eery manner.
- United States songwriter noted for his protest songs (born in 1941).
- Relating to or consisting of runes.
- A republic in northeastern South America.
- Requiring secret or mysterious knowledge.
- An unnaturally frenzied or distraught woman.
- A desert in southern Israel.
- Genus of sticky herbs with yellow flowers open in morning or evening but closed in bright light.

- Time during which some action is awaited.
- A hard gray lustrous metallic element that is highly corrosion-resistant.
- A coffee cake flavored with orange rind and raisins and almonds.
- A river of southwestern Africa that rises in central Angola and flows east and then north (forming part of the border between Angola and Congo) and continuing northwest through Congo to empty into the Congo River on the border between Congo and Republic of the Congo.
- A doctor's degree in music.
- An ache localized in the middle or inner ear.
- Permeate or impregnate.
- Disparaging terms for the common people.
- The lower house of the parliament of the Republic of Ireland.
- Having an irregularly notched or toothed margin as though gnawed.
- The largest continent with 60% of the earth's population.
- A Gaelic-speaking Celt in Ireland or Scotland or the Isle of Man.
- An elegantly dressed man (often with affected manners).
- Used in combination.
- The template for protein synthesis.
- A port in southern Lebanon on the Mediterranean Sea.
- A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
- In operation or operational.
- Being one hundred more than three hundred.

### Yesterday's Solution



### Daily SuDoku



### Yesterday's Solution



## TV Listings



01:10 Ultimate Justice  
02:50 Deja Vu  
04:55 Faster  
06:50 The Drowning  
08:30 Faster  
10:20 Jack Reacher: Never Go Back  
12:20 Last Action Hero  
14:30 Deja Vu  
16:35 Chasing Gold  
18:10 12 Rounds  
20:00 Bad Boys  
22:00 Child's Play 2  
23:45 Saw III

12:20 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence  
13:15 Live PD: Police Patrol  
14:10 It Takes A Killer  
15:05 Homicide Hunter  
16:00 The First 48  
17:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill  
18:00 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence  
19:00 The First 48  
20:00 Homicide Hunter  
21:00 Live PD: Police Patrol  
22:00 The Jail: 60 Days In  
23:00 Live PD: Police Patrol  
23:30 Live PD: Police Patrol



00:45 North Woods Law  
01:40 Intruders  
02:35 Wolves And Warriors  
03:25 Lone Star Law  
04:15 North Woods Law  
05:02 Wildest Indochina  
05:49 Pit Bulls & Parolees  
06:36 Vet On The Loose  
07:00 Animal Battlegrounds  
07:25 Evan Goes Wild  
08:15 Evan Goes Wild  
09:10 The Bronx Zoo  
12:50 Wolves And Warriors  
13:45 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet  
14:40 Nature's Strangest Mysteries: Solved  
15:05 Nature's Strangest Mysteries: Solved  
15:35 Intruders  
16:30 Flying Wild Alaska  
17:25 Animal Cops Houston  
18:20 Cats 101  
19:15 The Vet Life  
20:10 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet  
21:05 Wildest Indochina  
22:00 Intruders  
22:55 Pit Bulls & Parolees  
23:50 The Vet Life

00:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
00:30 Broad City  
00:55 Takeshis Castle Thailand  
01:20 Tosh.0  
01:45 Friends  
02:07 Friends  
02:30 Kroll Show  
02:55 Takeshis Castle Thailand  
03:20 Tosh.0  
03:45 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
04:15 Broad City  
04:40 Impractical Jokers  
05:00 Real Husbands Of Hollywood  
07:05 Lip Sync Battle  
07:30 Lip Sync Battle  
07:55 Comedy Central Presents: Menna W FINA  
08:30 Takeshis Castle Thailand  
08:55 Ridiculousness Arabia  
09:25 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagef  
09:55 Takeshis Castle Thailand  
10:20 Friends  
12:25 Key And Peele  
14:30 Lip Sync Battle  
14:55 Lip Sync Battle  
15:20 Tattoo Disasters  
16:15 Tattoo Disasters  
17:10 Friends  
19:30 Martha And Snoop Potluck Dinner Party  
21:30 Teachers  
22:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
22:30 Daniel Tosh: Happy Thoughts  
23:30 Broad City



00:20 The Witness For The Prosecution  
01:25 Holby City  
02:20 Inside No. 9  
02:50 The Detectorists  
03:20 EastEnders  
03:50 EastEnders  
04:20 Father Brown  
05:05 Death In Paradise  
06:00 EastEnders  
06:30 EastEnders  
07:00 Last Tango In Halifax  
07:55 Carters Get Rich  
08:20 The Detectorists  
08:50 The Detectorists  
09:20 Holby City  
10:15 Death In Paradise  
11:10 Father Brown  
11:55 Inside No. 9  
12:30 Holby City  
13:25 The Musketeers  
14:20 The Detectorists  
15:20 Casualty  
17:05 Holby City  
18:00 The Detectorists  
18:30 Agatha Raisin  
20:10 Ordeal By Innocence  
21:05 Line Of Duty  
22:10 Cold Feet  
23:00 The Detectorists  
23:30 Ordeal By Innocence

00:05 Kids vs Film  
00:30 Insane Coaster Wars: World Domination  
00:55 Insane Coaster Wars: World Domination  
01:20 My Cat From Hell  
02:10 America's Cutest Pets  
03:00 Breaking Magic  
03:25 Breaking Magic  
03:50 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman  
04:40 Kids vs Film  
05:05 Kids vs Film  
05:30 My Cat From Hell  
06:15 America's Cutest Pets  
07:00 Breaking Magic  
07:25 Breaking Magic  
07:50 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman  
08:40 Weather Top Tens  
09:30 How We Invented The World  
10:20 How The Earth Works  
11:10 Kids vs Film  
11:35 Kids vs Film  
12:00 Xtreme Waterparks  
12:25 Xtreme Waterparks  
12:50 The Big Brain Theory  
13:40 Did I Mention Invention?  
14:05 Did I Mention Invention?  
14:30 Strange Evidence  
15:20 The Carbonaro Effect  
15:45 The Carbonaro Effect  
16:10 Kids vs Film  
16:35 Kids vs Film  
17:00 My Cat From Hell  
17:50 America's Cutest Pets  
18:40 Breaking Magic  
19:05 Breaking Magic  
19:30 Guy's Grocery Games  
20:20 Sci-Jinks  
20:45 Sci-Jinks

21:10 Penn & Teller Tell A Lie  
22:00 Outrageous Acts Of Psych  
22:25 Outrageous Acts Of Psych  
22:50 Wild Africa: Rivers Of Life  
23:40 Kids vs Film



00:00 Home Alone  
01:00 Evil Stepmothers  
02:00 The Real Story With Maria Elena Salinas  
03:00 Body Cam  
03:45 Home Alone  
04:30 Who Killed Jane Doe?  
05:20 Border Control: Spain  
05:45 Border Control: Spain  
06:10 Blood Relatives  
07:00 Murder Decoded  
07:55 Murder Decoded  
08:50 Reasonable Doubt  
09:45 Reasonable Doubt  
10:40 Border Control: Spain  
11:10 Border Control: Spain  
11:35 Who Killed Jane Doe?  
12:30 Family Man, Family Murderer: An ID Murder Mystery  
13:25 Blood Relatives  
14:20 Nightmare Next Door  
16:10 Border Control: Spain  
17:05 The Perfect Murder  
19:00 Disappeared  
21:00 Obsession: Dark Desires  
22:00 Forbidden: Dying For Love  
23:00 Diabolical: Deadly Love



00:00 Alex & Co.  
00:25 Alex & Co.  
00:50 Evermoor Chronicles  
01:15 Evermoor Chronicles  
01:40 Alex & Co.  
02:05 Binny And The Ghost  
02:30 Binny And The Ghost  
02:55 Hank Zipzer  
03:20 Hank Zipzer  
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 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
06:25 Coop And Cami Ask The World  
06:50 Disney Mickey Mouse  
06:55 Bug Juice: My Adventures At Camp  
07:20 Penny On M.A.R.S  
07:45 K.C. Undercover  
08:10 Bizaardvark  
08:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
09:25 Rapunzel's Tangled Adventure  
09:50 Rapunzel's Tangled Adventure  
10:15 Bizaardvark  
10:40 Bizaardvark  
11:05 Liv And Maddie  
11:30 Liv And Maddie  
11:55 K.C. Undercover  
12:15 K.C. Undercover  
12:40 Rapunzel's Tangled Adventure  
13:05 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
13:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
13:50 101 Dalmatian Street  
14:15 Shake It Up  
14:40 K.C. Undercover  
15:05 Disney Mickey Mouse  
15:10 Fast Layne  
15:35 Penny On M.A.R.S  
16:00 Bug Juice: My Adventures At Camp  
16:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
17:40 Bizaardvark  
18:05 K.C. Undercover  
18:30 Bunk'd  
18:55 Descendants Wicked World  
19:00 Raven's Home  
19:25 Liv And Maddie  
19:50 K.C. Undercover

20:15 Disney Mickey Mouse  
20:20 A.N.T. Farm  
20:45 Bizaardvark  
21:10 Coop And Cami Ask The World  
21:35 Bug Juice: My Adventures At Camp  
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 The Lion Guard  
00:25 Disney Junior Music Nursery Rhymes  
00:30 Trulli Tales S1  
01:00 PJ Masks  
01:25 PJ Masks  
01:50 The Hive S2  
02:00 Zou  
02:15 Zou  
02:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster  
03:20 The Hive  
03:30 The Hive  
03:40 Zou  
03:55 Zou  
04:10 Zou  
04:25 The Hive  
04:35 The Hive S2  
04:45 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:10 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:35 The Hive  
05:45 PJ Masks  
06:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons S2  
07:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse Y3  
07:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2  
08:00 PJ Masks  
08:30 Vampirina  
09:00 Sofia The First S1  
09:30 Elena Of Avalor S2  
10:00 Fancy Nancy Splits S1  
10:20 Fancy Nancy Splits S1  
10:40 Disney Muppet Babies S1 Splits  
11:00 Connect And Protect  
12:00 PJ Masks  
13:30 Vampirina S1  
14:30 Vampirina  
15:00 Puppy Dog Pals S2 Splits  
15:20 Puppy Dog Pals S2 Splits  
15:40 Puppy Dog Pals S2 Splits  
16:00 The Lion Guard  
16:30 Elena Of Avalor S2  
17:00 Gigantosaurus S1  
17:25 Paprika S1 Shorts  
17:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2  
18:00 Fancy Nancy S1  
18:30 Vampirina  
19:00 PJ Masks  
19:30 Puppy Dog Pals S2  
20:00 The Lion Guard  
20:25 Paprika S1 Shorts  
20:30 Doc McStuffins  
21:00 Gigantosaurus S1  
21:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2  
22:00 Fancy Nancy S1  
22:30 Vampirina  
23:00 PJ Masks  
23:30 Puppy Dog Pals S2



00:15 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor  
01:05 Savage Builds  
01:50 How Do They Do It?  
02:15 How Do They Do It?  
02:35 What On Earth?  
03:20 Wheeler Dealers  
04:05 Fast N' Loud  
04:50 Diesel Brothers  
05:35 Garage Gold  
06:00 Shed And Buried  
06:20 Garage Gold  
06:45 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor  
07:35 Deadliest Catch  
08:20 Garage Rehab  
09:10 Kindig Customs  
09:55 Salvage Hunters  
10:45 Diesel Brothers  
11:30 Wheeler Dealers  
12:20 Fast N' Loud

13:05 Shed And Buried  
13:30 Garage Gold  
13:55 Salvage Hunters  
14:40 Into Alaska  
15:30 Wildest Indochina  
16:15 American Chopper  
17:05 Kindig Customs  
17:50 Garage Rehab  
18:40 Diesel Brothers  
19:25 Wheeler Dealers  
20:15 Fast N' Loud  
21:00 Unique Rides  
21:50 American Chopper  
22:40 Shifting Gears With Aaron Kaufman  
23:30 Deadliest Catch



00:15 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
00:35 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
01:00 Boyster  
01:25 Boyster  
01:45 Counterfeit Cat  
02:10 Counterfeit Cat  
02:35 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
03:00 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
03:20 Boyster  
03:45 Boyster  
04:10 Counterfeit Cat  
04:35 Counterfeit Cat  
05:00 Furiki Wheels  
05:29 Furiki Wheels  
06:00 Marvel's Spider-Man  
06:25 Space Chickens In Space  
06:35 Marvel's Avengers: Black Panther's Quest  
07:00 Phineas And Ferb  
07:25 Phineas And Ferb  
07:35 Phineas And Ferb  
08:00 Big Hero 6 The Series  
08:25 Mech-X4  
08:50 Milo Murphy's Law  
09:15 Milo Murphy's Law  
09:40 Big City Greens  
10:00 Big City Greens  
10:25 Kick Buttowski  
10:50 Phineas And Ferb  
11:00 Gravity Falls  
11:25 Gravity Falls  
11:50 Milo Murphy's Law  
12:05 Furiki Wheels  
12:30 DuckTales  
12:55 Big Hero 6 The Series  
13:20 Lab Rats  
13:45 Lab Rats  
14:10 Phineas And Ferb  
14:35 Phineas And Ferb  
15:00 Marvel's Spider-Man  
15:25 Phineas And Ferb  
15:35 Space Chickens In Space  
16:00 Big City Greens  
16:25 Big Hero 6 The Series  
16:50 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
17:15 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
17:40 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
18:05 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
18:29 Mech-X4  
19:00 Marvel's Spider-Man  
19:25 Marvel's Spider-Man  
19:50 Marvel's Avengers: Black Panther's Quest  
20:15 Gravity Falls  
20:40 Gravity Falls  
21:05 Kick Buttowski  
21:30 Big City Greens  
21:55 Disney Mickey Mouse  
22:00 Milo Murphy's Law  
22:29 Milo Murphy's Law  
23:00 Furiki Wheels  
23:25 Dude That's My Ghost  
23:50 Dude That's My Ghost



00:00 Botched  
01:00 Botched  
02:00 E! News  
03:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
04:00 WAGs LA  
08:00 E! News: Daily Pop  
08:55 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian

09:50 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian  
10:45 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian  
11:40 E! News  
12:35 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
15:20 E! News: Daily Pop  
16:15 Very Cavallari  
19:00 E! News  
20:00 Botched  
23:00 Very Cavallari



00:10 The Jonathan Ross Show  
01:00 Emmerdale  
01:30 Coronation Street  
02:30 The Chase  
03:25 Martin Clunes: Islands Of America  
04:20 Rich House Poor House  
05:15 The Jonathan Ross Show  
06:15 Royal Recipes  
07:10 The Chase  
08:05 Martin Clunes: Islands Of America  
09:00 Rich House Poor House  
09:55 The Jonathan Ross Show  
10:55 Royal Recipes  
11:50 The Chase  
12:45 Emmerdale  
13:15 Coronation Street  
14:15 Royal Recipes  
15:10 The Chase  
16:00 This Time Next Year  
17:50 The Jonathan Ross Show  
18:50 Emmerdale  
19:15 Coronation Street  
20:10 The Chase  
21:00 This Time Next Year  
22:50 Emmerdale  
23:15 Coronation Street



00:15 Clash Of Warriors  
01:00 UFO Hunters  
01:45 Ancient Impossible  
02:30 The Universe  
03:15 Brad Meltzer's Decoded  
04:00 Ancient Aliens  
04:45 Mummy Forensics  
05:30 Lost Worlds  
06:15 Million Dollar Genius  
07:00 UFO Hunters  
07:45 Ancient Impossible  
08:30 The Universe  
09:15 Brad Meltzer's Decoded  
10:00 Ancient Aliens  
10:45 Mummy Forensics  
11:30 Lost Worlds  
12:15 Million Dollar Genius  
13:00 Ancient Impossible  
13:45 The Universe  
14:30 Brad Meltzer's Decoded  
15:15 Ancient Aliens  
16:00 Mummy Forensics  
16:45 Lost Worlds  
17:30 Million Dollar Genius  
18:15 UFO Hunters  
19:00 Ancient Impossible  
19:45 The Universe  
20:30 Brad Meltzer's Decoded  
21:15 Ancient Aliens  
22:00 MysteryQuest  
22:45 Lost Worlds  
23:30 Million Dollar Genius



00:20 Cities Of The Underworld  
01:05 Pawn Stars UK  
01:50 American Pickers  
02:35 Storage Wars  
03:25 Ax Men  
04:15 Custer: The Final Mystery  
05:05 Forged In Fire  
06:00 Fifth Gear  
06:45 Cities Of The Underworld  
07:30 Pawn Stars UK  
08:15 American Pickers  
09:00 Storage Wars  
09:45 Ax Men  
10:30 Custer: The Final Mystery  
11:15 Forged In Fire  
12:00 American Pickers  
15:00 Road Hawks  
15:45 Detroit Steel  
18:45 The Universe



## Stars



### Aries (March 21-April 19)

Your attitude about your work is commendable. If there is a job, you can do it. As a strong worker, you pour yourself into any task with absolute determination. You may find that your co-workers seek you out to ask for your psychological insight and understanding. Sometimes they complain and sometimes they make comments about others or their work. Your insight is helpful in turning the negative situations into a positive. This afternoon you may take a notion to paint a wall or create your own decorative art display for this time of the year. It may be that the leaves or nature's other ornaments are ripe for the picking. . . . A few pine cones here or there and a few colorful pieces of fruit or a colorful plant would work nicely. This is a great time to decorate.



### Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You have an inner urge for order and organization and a great sense of responsibility. You are competent, ambitious and cool. This marks the coming of a good time as far as career and social life are concerned. If you have not discovered this already, it seems your time of paying dues is over; real accomplishment and focus are possible now. You are a very hard worker and are driven to accomplish whatever is set out for you. You like to manipulate a situation for its own benefit and would make a natural supervisor. You can demonstrate great understanding and sensitivity to the needs of others just now and may find yourself as a representative or possibly a politician when it comes to your community. A hobby keeps you busy and laughing tonight.



### Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You have an inner urge for order and organization and a great sense of responsibility. You are competent, ambitious and cool. This marks the coming of a good time as far as career and social life are concerned. If you have not discovered this already, it seems your time of paying dues is over; real accomplishment and focus are possible now. You are a very hard worker and are driven to accomplish whatever is set out for you. You like to manipulate a situation for its own benefit and would make a natural supervisor. You can demonstrate great understanding and sensitivity to the needs of others just now and may find yourself as a representative or possibly a politician when it comes to your community. A hobby keeps you busy and laughing tonight.



### Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Big changes affecting your career, status and reputation are likely at this time. Daring to be different gets you noticed and could get you ahead in ways you never expected. Today is a time of reaping the rewards for your hard work. Regardless of how differently you may have attempted to accomplish some project, the end results of your work have successful vibrations. A high tech or idealistic approach sets you apart. You are at your mental best with sharp ideas and clear thoughts. You seem to have developed a knack for being in the right place at the right time—and that can win you the admiration of others. A drive to probe and penetrate may find you examining and working through many changes. Look through a telescope tonight; it's cool.



### Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your ambition is strong. Things seem to fall in place and progress is good. Following the trends of business and investments in the world, you may have some interesting ideas for your own business. You are wise to save a bit of time to follow up on facts and confirm costs. You will prosper through an independent point of view. Ridding yourself of excess and what is nonessential may also be a key move to better working opportunities. Some interest in a subject that is fascinating to you may have you doing a bit of shopping at your favorite bookstore as well as study through the internet. You may even stay up for a bit this evening to read and learn about this new subject. Your work and your private life are becoming increasingly stimulating.



### Virgo (August 23-September 22)

The power of organization on a social scale, such as business or political affairs, seems to take on a larger-than-life feeling now. It's as if ambition and authority are answers in themselves, rather than means to an objective. This can lead to ambitious schemes that tend to become lost along the way. Real power is always hidden; finding it means delving into a few secret places, and that's where you are bound to look now. Look around and check out the people you admire that have reached the success you are looking for and ask yourself how they made it to their success. Perhaps you can use one of those people as a mentor. You can demonstrate great understanding to family members this evening. You also may find yourself dealing with community affairs.



### Libra (September 23-October 22)

Concentrated effort is important with your work just now—staying away from emotional issues is a very wise plan. Practice diplomacy when dealing with the public. Do not let feelings get in the way of clear judgment. Later today there will be time to do a little research, perhaps at the local library. This research will either help you in making a decision or in completing some project. You are learning that education wasn't as dull as you thought and the fun of discovery may point you in the direction of more education. . . . Or at the least, a few classes. Look beyond surface meanings for the insights you seek. Loved ones may give you support and, in some way, help you gain a focus this afternoon. Involve yourself with a relaxing activity this evening.



### Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

This is a beneficial time that will accommodate your efforts to achieve a balance between the physical and the emotional parts of your life. If you find it too difficult to initiate the changes that are needed for this balance, find some counseling or a business advisor for yourself. Compromise is the order of the day in the workplace. Instead of deciding you are not going to do something, think it through and try to find a beneficial end result. You may find that both your personal growth and your career may depend upon how you can handle the challenges that may be coming up. The power of organization on a social scale—business, politics and such—seems to take on an importance to you in making your day run smoothly. Obstacles are short-lived.



### Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Work, achievement and ambition are your idea of having fun—you feel productive. You may take on a leadership role at this time. You look for new opportunities to grow and to help others grow. The spirit of cooperation and sharp mental activity makes it easy for you to move forward in your career. You may find yourself serving to guide someone younger than you in matters of importance this afternoon—perhaps through tutoring school subjects or in activity such as junior achievement. This evening you give yourself time to think through some future plans. You may reason and analyze and think about the next project. Take some time out and exercise your body through some form of dancing or other type of exercise. Perhaps a friend will join you.



### Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may find yourself working closely with someone that you always thought you would like to mirror. Your work growth seems to take on the same route that this person has set out for his or her own progress—you are happy to follow. Concentrating on pleasing this person is not your goal but learning and asking questions is bringing you forward. You may wonder if you will ever learn enough to set the example for someone else and you most certainly will. Getting down to the essential work process is most important now. Much can be accomplished now. Your thoughts are brought to a sharp focus. This evening you and a friend may decide to work on the making of a movie. Progress around this project or some similar project is good.



### Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

This is a good day—one where much progress is gained. You do a professional job for the customer and the customer recommends you to another customer. This is a perfect time to move forward in whatever you want to accomplish. Respect is earned for your way of handling new ideas or practical solutions. Your career could assume a much more determined and solid form. Wonderful results are possible from your positive choices. The sound of children fills the air this afternoon. You may be responsible for their evening meal or for making sure they do their assignment from school. You may even decide to teach them a recipe they could cook for their snack or dessert as a reward for studying.



### Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may have to abandon your own ideas today but it is a commendable move that you take. Do not worry—your actions have not gone unnoticed. Your self-confidence gets a boost today. Use this cycle to get ahead professionally. Have no fear of the future challenges you see ahead. Your appreciation for hard work and discipline is natural and lifelong. Your professional standing improves. You actually love responsibility and tend to pile on the work. A positive change in financial status is possible soon. A part-time job or second job may be what you and many other people do at this time of year in order to enjoy the upcoming holidays. A cultural event involving friends and associates is quite helpful this evening. There is new information to absorb.

## 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	Togo	00228
Japan	0081	Tonga	00676

# CLINIC PAGE



**Kuwait Times**  
248 33 199

Friday, November 29, 2019

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

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

Salmiya, Belajaf Street, Tel: 1881122

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

**ACADEMIC CERTIFICATES:**

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

**SPECIALIZED IN:**

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

SHARL, Ahmad Alshar of., Building 16, Floor 11.  
Tel: (+965) 22060777  
@DrFahadS, @DrFahadS, @DrFahadS  
Email: drfahadmed@beautybeyond.com.kw  
www.beautybeyond.com.kw

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

**Specialized in:**

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

**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**  
Email: aahaddad@daralshifa.com

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

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

**daralshifa**  
Tele:1802 555

**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 (lipoma, sebaceous cyst, ingrowing nail)
- Hemorrhoids, fistula & anal fissure surgeries
- Breast surgeries
- Thyroid & adrenal surgeries
- Cholecystectomy & laparoscopic appendectomy
- Liver, pancreas & bile ducts surgeries

**Dr. Hani Haider**  
General Surgery Consultant  
http://www.international-clinic.com  
Tel: 1886677

**Call: 24833199 ext:101,102 or Direct line: 24835616 / 24835617 or email: ads@kuwaittimes.com**

### CARDIOLOGY

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

- Acute coronary syndrome
- Pulmonary embolism
- Chronic Ischemic heart disease
- Cardiac arrhythmias
- Hypertension
- Atrial fibrillation
- Cardiomyopathy
- Heart ultrasound (Echocardiogram)
- Dobutamine Echo
- Coronary angiography and PCI
- 24-Hour ambulatory blood pressure monitoring
- 24-Hour Holter monitoring
- Electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG)

1888885 talbahospital.com @talbahospital

### CARDIOLOGY

- Dr. Ashraf Al Khudhri, Consultant of Cardiology
- Dr. Fouad Al Shamsi, Consultant of Interventional Cardiology
- Dr. Mohammed Al Hashim, Consultant of Cardiology & Echocardiography
- Dr. Abdullahi Kadi, Consultant of Internal Medicine, Adult Cardiology & Interventional Cardiology
- Dr. Agni Al, Cardiologist
- Dr. Ashraf Al Shamsi, Cardiologist
- Dr. Mohammed Alhashim, Cardiologist
- Dr. Mohammed Al Shamsi, Consultant Cardiac Surgeon

1888885 talbahospital.com @talbahospital

### Ophthalmology Services

Dr. Rany Essam Mitwally, Senior Registrar

Dr. Ahmed Hosni Abd Elhamid, Consultant

Dr. Abeer Khattab, Specialist

- Cataract Surgery
- Glaucoma
- Retina
- General Ophthalmology
- Follow-Up All Treatments

1888882 WhatsApp Us +965-6000 2184

### Our Doctors Provide care For the entire Family

Book your appointments today!

- Dr. Kiran Toraka, Ophthalmologist
- Dr. Zareena Zahir, Ophthalmologist
- Dr. Maszar Khan, Senior Cardiologist
- Dr. P. Sashendra Kall, Orthopedic Consultant (MS/FRCS), Specialist in Hand, Shoulder, Hip and Knee

50721507 / 24551555

EXIR MEDICAL SUBSPECIALITIES CENTER, Block No.4 Jahra - Kuwait

Tel: 24568857 / 24568858 info@exircenterku.com www.exircenterku.com

### WELCOME

Dr. Tammam Abu Ali, Consultant ENT, Head Neck, Facial Plastic Surgery

- Endoscopic Sinus Surgery
- Septoplasty and turbinate reduction surgery by laser or RF
- Snoring and OSAP Surgery
- Rhinoplasty with open and closed techniques
- Microscopic Middle Ear Surgery and Tympanoplasty
- Salivary gland and parotid surgery
- Thyroid and parathyroid surgery
- Micro laryngeal surgery

1 888 883 www.qmckuwait.com

### To advertise on this Page

Call: 24833199 ext:101,102  
or Direct line: 24835616 / 24835617  
or email: ads@kuwaittimes.com

### DR. FAHAD AL-MUKHAIZEEM

Consultant Pediatrician

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

Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368

Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St.1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B

### DR. WALEED S BUHAIMED

Consultant of General Surgery, Laproscopic and Bariatric Surgery

Academic Certificates – Training

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

Scope of clinical Practice.

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

email: wbuhaimed@gmail.com Tel.: 965 22269411/ Mob.: 965 99212228

Jabriya, 4th Ring Road, Block 1A Floor 9 - Qawa Center Mazaya Building

# Classifieds

## CHANGE OF NAME

**(Old name)** Ramachandrolla Bramahaiah S/o R. Ramachandra Res. 16/44 Thimmasamudram T Sundupalli Kadapa Dt. AP. Change my name (new name) Ramachandram Brahmaiah S/o R. Ramachandra Old PP. No K4656763. **(C 5691)**

**I Isaac** Jebaraj (F/o Master Joel Harrison Isaac PP No. M6714468) holding Indian Passport No. S2388598 residing in Kuwait at present in Block 2, Street 17, Building No. 22, new Riggae, hereby declare that henceforth my son's name will be read as: given name: Joel Harrison and surname: Isaac Jebaraj. **(C 5689) 29-11-2019**

**I Aravind** Sethu Kurakunnel holder of Indian Passport No. S2395793 issued at Kuwait on 03/02/2018. Hereby declare that my given name is Aravind and Surname is Sethu Kurakunnel.

**We, BUSIREDDY MALLESHVAR REDDY and BUSIREDDY VIJAYA KUMARI**, parents of BUSIREDDY KARTHIKA, Passport No. M4250149 issued on 29-12-2014, who are residents at # 67/95-3-1, SBI Colony, Mariyapuram, Akkayapalli, Kadapa, Y.S.R. District, changed our daughter's name as BUSIREDDY KARTHIKA (new name) previously called KANTHIJA BUSIREDDY (old name). **(C 5690) 28-11-2019**

**I Kurakunnel Chellappan** Sethu holder of Indian Passport No. P7113495 issued at Kuwait on 19/12/2016. Hereby declare that my given name is Sethu and surname is Kurakunnel Chellappan. **(C 5693)**

## Hospitals

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

## Clinics

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

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



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



## Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

**BY DAY:** Clouds will increase gradually with light to moderate freshening at times south easterly wind, with speed of 10 - 40 km/h with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times.

**BY NIGHT:** Cloudy to partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times south easterly wind, with speed of 15 - 45 km/h with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times.

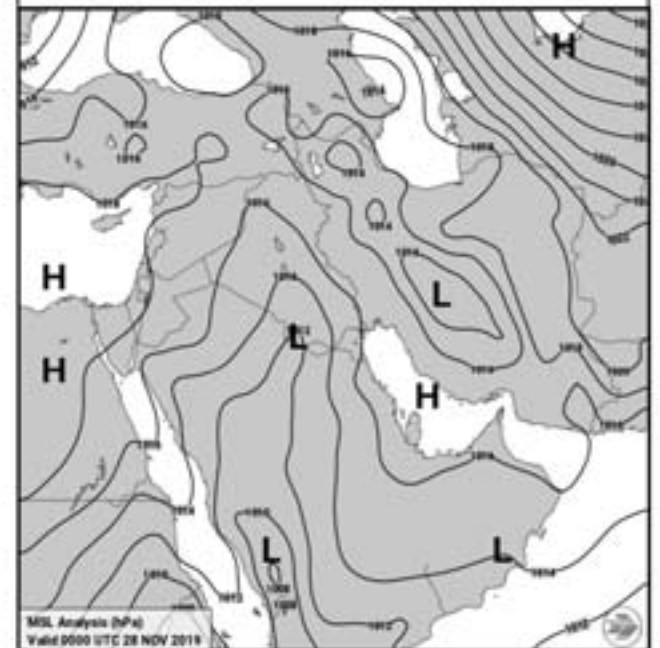
### WEATHER WARNING

No Current Warnings

STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	26 °C	19 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	27 °C	15 °C
ABDALY	27 °C	13 °C
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C
JAHRA	27 °C	17 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	- °C	- °C
SALMIYAH	26 °C	21 °C
AHMADI	26 °C	22 °C
NUWAISIB	26 °C	17 °C
WAFRA	27 °C	14 °C
SALMY	25 °C	14 °C

### SFC. CHART

28/11/2019 0000 UTC



### 4 DAYS FORECAST

DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Friday	11/29	Partly cloudy with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times	28 °C	16 °C	SE	15 - 38 km/h
Saturday	11/30	Warm and some high clouds will appear	27 °C	14 °C	NW-VRB	08 - 30 km/h
Sunday	12/01	Warm and some scattered clouds will appear	27 °C	13 °C	VRB-SE	06 - 26 km/h
Monday	12/02	Cloudy to partly cloudy with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times	27 °C	15 °C	SE	15 - 42 km/h

### PRAYER TIMES

Fajr	04:59
Sunrise	06:23
Zuhr	11:36
Asr	14:30
Sunset	16:49
Isha	18:11

### RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT

MAX. Temp.	27 °C
MIN. Temp.	14 °C
MAX. RH	100 %
MIN. RH	45 %
MAX. Wind	SE 28 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

# Business

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2019

**39** World stocks stall as US and China tensions flare



**40** Oil trader sues a Lebanese bank BankMed in US court



**41** Herbs and hotels: Businesses helping revive rural Portugal



RAS AL-KHAIMAH: Emirati Abdullah Al-Suwaidi opens oysters to look for pearls at the Suwaidi's pearl farm, off the coast of Al-Rams in the northern emirate of Ras Al-Khaimah. — AFP

## On Emirates' coast, pearl trade lives on

### Pearl industry once underpinned UAE economy

**RAS AL-KHAIMAH:** Before the discovery of oil transformed the Gulf into one of the world's wealthiest regions, the fortunes of its people depended on pearling - a tradition that Abdullah Al-Suwaidi hopes to revive. Many Emirati families can trace their ancestry to a time when they were involved in the pearl trade, which served as the foundation of their modern-day wealth.

Although diving for the treasures is no longer necessary in an era where they can be cultured, Suwaidi said that after the death of his grandfather he felt "socially, culturally and historically" responsible for passing the knowledge on. "I lived and grew up around my grandfather," the 45-year-old said. "He taught me a lot about pearl diving... because of my continuous stream of questions and requests for more information and stories of adventure."

Suwaidi Pearls is the only commercial pearl farm in the United Arab Emirates, at a time of increasing awareness of cultural traditions,

such as falconry and camel racing, and efforts to promote and preserve them. Last month, Abu Dhabi authorities announced that the world's oldest natural pearl had been discovered two years ago just off the capital at Marawah Island and would be displayed for the first time at the Louvre Abu Dhabi, the local outpost of the famous Paris museum. The 8,000-year-old pearl was hailed as proof that the objects have been traded along the coastline since Neolithic times.

"The fact that it is the oldest known pearl in the world is an important reminder of the antiquity of pearling and the deep connection that exists between the UAE people and the rich resources of the sea," said Peter Magee, head of the Department of Culture and Tourism's archeology section. "Pearling was a major economic activity through large periods of UAE history," he said. "From the 15th century onwards, the pearls from the waters of the UAE were prized possessions in Europe and throughout Asia."

#### Diving into history

Suwaidi's pearl farm lies off the coast of his hometown Al-Rams in the northern emirate of Ras Al-Khaimah, situated against a backdrop of mangroves, with camels grazing near the waterline on one side and mountains rising up on the other. The oysters live in cages suspended from buoys that float close to the shore. After being "seeded", some 60 percent will produce pearls, compared with just one in 100 among wild oysters. But it is the same place where Suwaidi as a young boy would accompany his grandfather to dive for the sea's natural treasures and it is that tradition which captivates him to this day. No one dives commercially for pearls anymore but some people like Suwaidi still do it for the love of it and to show tourists how it is done. Aboard a traditional dhow, the same vessel that Arab pearl divers of the past would set sail in for months at a time, Suwaidi changes from his traditional Emirati dress to an all-cotton black diving suit, or shamshool. —AFP

## Business

# India economy growing at 4.7% as consumer demand weakens

## Govt seeks parliament nod for \$2.7 billion extra spending

**NEW DELHI:** India's economy probably expanded at its weakest pace in more than six years in the quarter to September, a Reuters poll showed, as consumer demand and private investment weakened further and a global slowdown hit exports. The median of a poll of economists showed annual growth in gross domestic product of 4.7% in the quarter, down from 5.0% in the previous three months and 7% for the corresponding period of 2018.

Economic growth could dip to around 4% in the September quarter, two domestic television channels said on Wednesday, citing government sources. If the latest figure for expansion of gross domestic product is 4.7% or less, the quarter will have registered the slowest expansion in 26 quarters, since 4.3% in January-March 2013. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has taken several steps, including cutting corporate tax in September, to boost investments and bolster economic growth.

Economists in a Reuters poll predicted the Reserve Bank of India would cut its repo rate for the sixth time in a row, by 25 basis points, to 4.90% at its Dec 3-5 meeting. "Agrarian distress and dismal income growth so far, coupled with subdued income growth expectation in urban areas, have weakened consumption demand considerably," said Devindra Pant, chief econo-

mist at Fitch arm India Ratings & Research. "Even the festive demand has failed to revive it," he said, citing data on non-food credit, auto sales and select fast moving consumer goods.

### 'Economic emergency'

On Wednesday, in a heated parliamentary debate on the economic slowdown affecting jobs, opposition parties said million of people had lost their jobs and the country faced a "economic emergency". In her reply, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the economy faced a slowdown but no "recession" and cited several government measures to support economic growth. Yesterday, she sought parliament's approval to spend \$2.7 billion in addition to a budgeted 27.86 trillion rupees (\$388 billion) in the 2019/20 fiscal year.

Economists said with persistently tight domestic credit and weak corporate profits, India's recovery could be delayed and the pick-up would remain below potential. India needs to grow at around 8% to create enough jobs for its millions of young people joining the labor force each year. The unemployment rate in October rose to 8.5%, its highest since August 2016, according to the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), though the government estimates that urban unemployment declined.



ALLAHABAD: A shepherd leads a flock of sheep on a pontoon bridge in Allahabad. — AFP

Some economists, however, said economic growth could pick up in the second half of the current fiscal year, after the government took steps to support real estate and non-bank finance companies. "The economic slowdown has bottomed out in the September quarter,"

said NR Bhanumurthy, an economist at the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, a Delhi-based government think tank. "With easing of credit and pick up in festival demand, economic growth is expected to pick up from October onward." — Reuters

## Air India focused on day-to-day survival; shutdown fears bite

**MUMBAI:** India's debt-crippled national airline is focused solely on daily survival and keeping its flights in the air, a spokesman said yesterday, after the government warned it would have to shut down unless a buyer was found. Air India owes more than \$8.6 billion and has struggled to pay salaries and buy fuel, with losses mounting following earlier privatization attempts. The company is unable to pay its debts and its outlook is "gloomy", spokesman Dhananjay Kumar said. "We are concentrating on day-to-day operations and not focusing on the future," he said. "Whatever resources we have, we are trying to use them in an optimum manner and trying to run our flights." Aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri said Wednesday that the airline would "have to close down if it is not privatized", adding the government would soon invite takeover bids.

The company's debt mountain may be hived off in a bid to make it more attractive to potential buyers, according to media reports. Kumar said Air India was not yet in discussion with the ministry over any shutdown plans. But in more bad news for the beleaguered airline, a planned sale of the Air India headquarters in Mumbai may be blocked after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's party was ousted from power in Maharashtra state, local media reported.

The previous state government had agreed to buy the building to help clear the airline's debts. Founded in 1932 and formerly India's monopoly airline, the company was once known affectionately as the "Maharaja of the skies". But it has been hemorrhaging money for more than a decade and has lost market share to low-cost rivals in one of the world's fastest-growing but most competitive airline markets. — AFP

## Japan retail sales slump as tax hike hits demand

**TOKYO:** Japan's retail sales tumbled at their fastest pace in more than 4-1/2 years in October as a sales tax hike prompted consumers to cut spending, raising a red flag over the strength of domestic demand. The Japanese government increased the nationwide sales tax to 10% from 8% on Oct 1, in a bid to fix the industrial world's heaviest public debt burden, which is more than twice the size of the country's gross domestic product.

However, some analysts have warned the tax hike, previously postponed twice, could leave the economy without a growth driver amid a slump in exports and production and as other factors drag on the consumer sector. Retail sales fell 7.1% in October from a year earlier, pulled down by weak demand for big ticket items such as cars and household appliances as well as clothing, trade ministry data showed yesterday, with department stores hit particularly hard.

The drop was the biggest since a 9.7% fall in March 2015 and worse than a 4.4% decline predicted by economists in a Reuters poll. "Regardless of today's outcome, consumption has been of a weak tone, and consumer sentiment is getting worse," said Taro Saito, executive research fellow at NLI Research Institute. "Incomes haven't been rising originally, so consumption hasn't been growing since before the sales tax hike."

The slump was also sharper than the declines reported after the previous two sales tax hikes, in 1997 and 2014, suggesting other factors are dragging on consumption. "Retail sales fell more sharply in October than after previous sales tax hikes," said Tom Learmouth, Japan economist at Capital Economics. "The fall in sales was slightly larger than the 13.7% m/m plunge which followed both the 1997 and 2014 sales tax hikes," he wrote in a note. Sales fell 4.3% in April 2014, the month of the previous tax hike.

Seasonally-adjusted retail sales dropped 14.4% month-on-month in October, the data showed. The negative reading comes after separate data this month showed Japan's economy nearly stalled in the third quarter, while exports in October shrank at their fastest pace in three years. The gloomy conditions have led to calls for the government to compile a big spending package to keep the country's fragile economic recovery on track.

### Price pressures persist

The 2014 previous tax hike to 8% from 5% hit the broader economy hard as households tightened their purse strings after front-loading purchases before the hike. Policymakers this time around do not expect the October tax hike to trigger such a big swing in demand, given the smaller hike and various measures to help offset the hit to spending.

However, analysts said retail sales in October were also hit by poor weather, after a huge typhoon ripped through central and eastern Japan, forcing stores and restaurants to temporarily close. Others also noted more structural pressures faced by retailers even before the sales tax hike, such as the prolonged decline in real wages. Data earlier this month showed inflation-adjusted wages rose 0.6% in the year to September, their first increase since the end of last year.

All those factors pose challenges to a government seeking to shake consumers out of a long-entrenched deflationary mindset, which has weighed on prices, hurt company profits and established a prolonged regime of ultra-easy monetary policy. Adding to these woes is the risk retailers will continue to cut prices to offset the hit from the tax hike, while many stores are also offering discounts for cashless payments.

The government has introduced a rebate program for cashless transactions designed to both soften the tax hike blow to retailers and encourage Japanese consumers to use electronic payments instead of cash. Other retailers are simply reducing prices to lure customers. "This could spark stiff price competition and induce deflation. Small firms that lack competitiveness will be forced out of business," Yukio Kawano, the head of Japan Supermarket Association said. — Reuters

## Business

# World stocks stall as US and China tensions flare

## Hong Kong law hurts optimistic mood

**LONDON:** A four-day rally that had lifted world stocks to near-record highs stalled yesterday as a US bill backing Hong Kong's protesters became law, provoking China's ire and threatening to derail an interim trade deal between Washington and Beijing. Fading hopes of a rapprochement between the world's two biggest economies before additional, potentially damaging tariff hikes kick in, also helped safe-haven assets such as US and German bonds and lifted the yen from six-month lows.

The US legislation, which threatens sanctions for human rights violations and seeks to safeguard Hong Kong's autonomy, prompted China to warn of "firm counter measures". "The risk-off moves clearly reflect a concern this could be an impediment to the 'Phase One' trade deal which is now widely expected," said Adam Cole, a strategist at RBC Capital Markets.

Wall Street's main indexes closed at record levels for a third straight day on Wednesday, albeit in thin liquidity before the Thanksgiving holiday, after data showed US economic growth had picked up in the third quarter and consumer spending had increased. Elsewhere, though, the outlook for growth looks less rosy. Japanese retail figures slumped the most since 2015 as a sales tax hike dragged on the economy, exacerbating a slowdown caused by slowing exports and manufacturing.

That took Asian shares excluding Japan down 0.2%. Japan's Nikkei, Hong Kong's

Hang Seng and Shanghai blue chips all closed weaker. A pan-European index opened 0.2% lower, led by trade-sensitive sectors such as autos and tech. That kept MSCI's world equity index flat, after it approached the record reached in January 2018. However, the index is up almost 3% so far in November and is on track for the best month since June as investors flit in and out depending on the trade news.

"People don't want to be caught on the wrong side," said Geoff Yu, head of the UK investment office at UBS Wealth Management. "It does reflect there's cash on the sidelines. If you can stretch the positive narrative, if the trade issue is out of the way for the time being, we might actually see a demand pick up." US markets are closed for Thanksgiving, but equity futures for all three major indexes were down around 0.3%.

### Hong Hong, Brexit jitters

Jitters over a renewed Sino-US fracas also showed up in currency and bond markets. US bond markets are closed, but German yields fell to their lowest in nearly a month, down 1.5 basis points on the day Japan's yen, a currency investors flock to in times of trouble, gained 2% against the dollar, rising as high as 109.40 yen per dollar. The Australian dollar and the offshore Chinese yuan lost around 0.2%.

The British pound rose on Wednesday after a model for pollsters YouGov, which accu-

to the GDP calculation, according to the revised data. While that could be due to companies stockpiling ahead of announced tariffs, it could also reflect slowing consumption. "In short, slightly stronger than before, but mainly because of inventories. That data continue to show growth slowing, but not dramatically," said economist Jim O'Sullivan of High Frequency Economics. The consensus among economists predicted no revision to the GDP result.

But some correctly forecast the upward revision which puts the third quarter on track to best the two percent growth in the second quarter, after the 3.1 percent expansion in the first three months of the year. Consumption, the traditional driver of growth, accounting for 70 percent of US GDP, increased 2.9 percent, with a strong gain in spending on durable goods such as cars or appliances, according to the data. However, that is a much smaller increase than the prior quarter.

Investment in real estate market jumped 5.1 percent, the strongest in two years, boosted by low interest rates. Exports, which fell 5.7 percent at the height of the trade war in the second quarter, recovered slightly in the latest quarter, rising 0.9 percent - two-tenths stronger than originally reported. Imports also were stronger than previously estimated, rising by 0.8 percent. The latest reading on GDP growth "indicates the economy is not about to fall off a cliff," said Gregory Daco of Oxford Economics. —AFP



**BANDA ACEH:** Vendors wait for customers at a fishing port in Banda Aceh yesterday. —AFP

rately predicted the 2017 election, said Prime Minister Boris Johnson was on course to win a majority in parliament at the Dec 12 election. However, the currency failed to build on its gains, trading around \$1.294. It was flat versus the euro after surging to its highest in nearly

seven months at 85 pence. Implementing Brexit by the end of January, as Johnson had promised, would leave him a "miniscule" 11 months to agree a trade deal with the European Union, analysts at Societe Generale told clients. —Reuters

## US economy grew faster, but trade woes continue

**WASHINGTON:** The US economy grew faster than originally reported in the July-September period and prices remain tame, but amid the unresolved trade war with China economists and businesses note some worrying issues persist. Higher exports and residential investment helped boost growth to a 2.1 percent annual rate from the 1.9 percent estimated last month for the third quarter, according to the more complete data the Commerce Department released Wednesday.

But economists note the apparent good news on the economy is tempered by some concerning elements, reflected once again in a nationwide survey by the Federal Reserve, showing continued concerns about the impact of tariffs and trade tensions. Business investment, which has been hit hard by President Donald Trump's trade war with China, has declined sharply but since it dropped by less than originally reported, falling 2.7 percent rather than three percent in the first estimate, that smaller decline helped growth.

Meanwhile, businesses building up their inventories of products added nearly 0.2 points

## US sparks risk-off move by backing Hong Kong

**LONDON:** The dollar was little changed in early London trading yesterday as a mild overnight risk-off move, sparked by the United States and China clashing over Hong Kong, subsided. After the US passed legislation backing pro-democracy protesters in Hong Kong, China warned that it would take "firm counter-measures" if the US continued to interfere in Hong Kong, saying that the legislation was "doomed to fail".

The dollar index was last down less than 0.1%, trading within narrow ranges, while the Japanese yen - a perceived safe haven - was up around 0.2% versus the dollar. The Swiss franc was up around 0.1% versus the dollar. Heightened discord between the United States and China risks jeopardizing negotiations around the "phase one" trade

deal - a proposed preliminary deal to end the tit-for-tat tariff war between the world's two largest economies.

"The moves have been quite modest because we're still waiting to see what China's response is - what they've said so far is quite vague," said Adam Cole, chief currency strategist at RBC Capital Markets. "They've not gone so far as to say explicitly that this threatens the phase one trade deal, which is clearly what markets are worrying about, and for that reason the reaction so far has been quite mild," he said. The offshore yuan was down 0.2% versus the dollar, still trading within the week's ranges.

The trade-exposed Australian dollar was also down versus the US dollar, with losses due to the risk-off mood compounded by weak domestic data. Record-low volatility and the United States' Thanksgiving holiday mean traders are expecting a quiet day in markets. Euro-zone consumer confidence data for November is due at 1000 GMT and German CPI data for November is due at 1300 GMT. Spanish pricing data held no surprises and did not move the market. RBC's Cole said the hurdle was quite high for such data to move markets. —Reuters

## Business

# Oil trader sues a Lebanese bank BankMed in US court

## Crisis-hit Lebanon faces petrol station strike

**BEIRUT:** An international oil trader is suing a Lebanese bank in the United States over failing to release \$1 billion in deposits, court documents showed, charges the banking institution denied yesterday. IMMS has filed a suit against BankMed in the Supreme Court of the State of New York over the “brazen theft of more than \$1 billion”, according to court documents dated November 22 and seen by AFP. The lawsuit comes as Lebanon grapples with widespread anti-government protests since October 17, a free-falling economy, and an escalating liquidity crisis.

The oil trader, which is incorporated in Belize, said it asked to withdraw its money on November 8, and received no response for several days, according to the court documents. It said the bank on November 12 informed it was terminating overdraft and letter of credit facilities due to “the prevailing circumstances and to the material adverse change in the economic condition of Lebanon and the Lebanese financial markets”.

BankMed yesterday strongly denied the allegations. “The \$1 billion deposit is a blocked deposit by instructions of IMMS maturing in about 2 years from now,” it said. “Between October 30 and November 12, 2019, BankMed discovered material breaches of contract and attempts by IMMS to direct funds due to BankMed overseas,” it said. “BankMed opposed such attempts by IMMS and took appropriate actions.” It said the banking contract was subject to Lebanese law and that it would submit its response to a court hearing in Beirut next month,

without giving a specific date. BankMed is chaired by Mohammed Hariri, a cousin of outgoing Prime Minister Saad Hariri’s late father Rafik. Nazek Hariri, the widow of the embattled premier’s father, sits on the bank’s board of directors—as does the current interior minister, Raya Al-Hassan. Since September, debt-saddled Lebanon has had a liquidity crisis, with banks rationing the withdrawal of dollars. The exchange rate in the parallel market has shot up from the pegged rate of 1,507 pounds to a dollar to more than 2,000.

### Petrol station strike

Meanwhile, petrol stations in Lebanon began an open-ended strike yesterday nationwide, a union representative said amid the country’s worst economic crisis in decades. Protests since Oct 17 have pulled Lebanon deeper into economic crisis, worsening a hard currency crunch that has hit importers and raised fears of price hikes and shortages.

In a statement carried on state news agency NNA, the petrol stations union said it was striking because of losses incurred from being forced to purchase dollars on a parallel market, the primary source of hard currency in economic hard times. Petrol stations must collect payments from customers in Lebanese pounds but pay private fuel importers in dollars. The cost of dollars on the parallel market has surged since the start of protests, hovering currently at about 40% more than the official pegged rate, set at 1507.5



**BEIRUT:** People queue to use an automatic teller machine (ATM) at bank branch in the Lebanese capital Beirut. In a country grappling with a dual political and economic crisis, thousands of Lebanese say their jobs are threatened. — AFP

Lebanese pounds since 1997. There were queues at some petrol stations in Beirut late on Wednesday but the situation remained relatively calm. The central bank said last month that it would prioritize foreign currency reserves for fuel, medicine and wheat, but buyers tapping the

facility are still required to supply 15% of their own dollar needs. Lebanon’s energy ministry sets guidelines for gasoline price levels. The ministry said it would test a state tender for gasoline next month after fuel distributors threatened to raise prices. — Agencies

## Farmers bring central Dublin to a halt with tractor protest

**DUBLIN:** Farmers shut down busy parts of central Dublin for a second successive day on Wednesday by parking dozens of tractors in the streets to protest against low beef prices and climate change initiatives they say are unfair. The farmers arrived on tractors from all over the country on Tuesday for a planned protest in a cordoned off area but instead parked their vehicles in the very centre of the city and refused to leave until the agriculture minister met them. Some slept in their vehicles overnight, many parked outside the luxury Shelbourne Hotel on the corner of St. Stephen’s Green, one of the main bus routes into the city.

Police warned commuters that a number of the city’s main thoroughfares, including Kildare Street, the seat of parliament, were closed to traffic. The city’s bus operator told passengers to expect delays on all routes.

“We’ll sit here for many more nights if we have to but this has got to stop and we have to start getting paid for our produce,” said Nicholas Hughes, a 53-year-old dairy farmer from Moylough in County Galway who stayed awake all night in his tractor.

“It’s the only thing we can do, we’re gone if we don’t do this. We can’t stay producing food below the cost of production and we can’t keep getting blamed for climate change. This is about the death of rural Ireland, it’s dying on its feet as we speak.” — Reuters

## Grocery deliveries go high-tech in New York

**NEW YORK:** In New York, a city famous for always being on the go, grocery shopping can be time consuming. But grocery company FreshDirect promises to deliver within mere hours fruit, fish and bottles of water ordered online, and it relies on its high-tech Bronx warehouse to keep up with demand.

Orders ramping up ahead of Thanksgiving, when families across the United States gather round the table for a huge feast. Everything at the FreshDirect depot is as well-regulated as a Swiss clock, thanks to the computer system. On the ground, employees manage pallets, scan labels and sort products. But above their heads, huge orange and green plastic bins—the company’s signature colors—seem to have a life of their own.

They zip along on conveyor belts that spiral up to the ceiling, carrying the bins through countless levels of shelves. As soon as a customer starts placing a FreshDirect online order, the system recognizes them. “The system knows you, where you live, what amount of groceries you usually buy, what truck it will fit on, and based on that, what time can be offered,” explained Timothy Knoll, the chief operating officer. Orders are grouped by destination, and the boxes can then be sent out.

### Nine miles

The conveyor belts run for almost nine miles, criss-crossing the 400,000 square foot depot. But their layout was designed to limit bins’ trips, which last between 25 to 30 minutes on average. For small products, robots will pick them out one by one from the massive shelving units and bring them to one of six packing stations. Once there, employees scan them, package them and put

them in boxes that are quickly sent on their way with the touch of a big red button. Bottles of water, the most popular item, are stored near the conveyor belts. For fruits and vegetables, employees can see which products have been requested on tablets and employees set aside any that are damaged.

In a refrigerated room, other workers cut the fish of the day, still soft in their boxes of ice. “About 90 percent of our fresh connections are... with the farmers and the people that actually grow and raise our food,” said Scott Crawford, the chief merchandising officer. This allows FreshDirect to eliminate middlemen and save time. “You can order a pound of codfish seven days from now, that fish is still swimming in the ocean for another four or five days before we actually have it in-house,” said Knoll.

In order to accurately predict supply and avoid waste, “we are confident with our vendors, and we’re comfortable with how we handle things in the building to control the inventory,” he added. Each item has a barcode denoting the type of product, where it came from and its expiration date. FreshDirect also relies on 20 years of data accumulated since its launch in 1999. The company knows how to anticipate consumer habits as accurately as traffic patterns, including by accounting for weather conditions.

The company is not as prevalent as it has been in New York, but it still dominates: FreshDirect makes 68 percent of the grocery delivery market in the Big Apple, well ahead of Instacart (13 percent), Peapod (nine percent) and Amazon Fresh (nine percent), according to the data analysis firm Earnest Research. Sales slumped slightly just after the Bronx depot opened in the summer of 2018. As the system worked out any kinks, customers complained of incomplete or late orders. FreshDirect has regained some ground since then.

The company, which has offered same-day delivery since March, said that online business “continues to grow, and we are operating better than ever before.” “An online grocer’s biggest enemy is not Amazon—it’s itself,” said Paula Rosenblum, a retail technology analyst for RSR Research. — AFP



## Business

# Herbs and hotels: Businesses helping revive rural Portugal

## Small businesses cropping up in rural areas

**PORTO:** After Bruno Vargas and his wife had their first baby, they wanted a quieter life. So, they left their home in Angola and returned to his native region in Portugal's rural interior to set up an organic herbs company. The remote Santarem district of central Portugal is known for its agricultural plains and salt flats. The Vargas' nearest town, Rio Maior, is about 30km away.

Vargas launched Herbas Organic Herbs in 2015 using seed money from the European Union and the Portuguese government through a fund aimed at enticing businesses to set up in rural areas. Now he grows an array of aromatic plants including lemon thyme, lemon balm, peppermint and common mint, mainly for export. "We decided to come back (here) to improve our quality of life," he said.

Herbas is one of a growing number of small businesses cropping up in Portugal's sparsely populated rural interior, drawn by the availability of land, rising tourist interest and business funding opportunities, say rural development experts. Portugal's rural areas have been losing population for several decades, said Luis Chaves, the national coordinator of Minha Terra, the Portuguese Federation of Local Development Associations. "Difficult living conditions ... meant that, in the 1960s in particular, hundreds of thousands of Portuguese opted for emigration, especially to Central Europe," he explained. Currently 35% of the country's population of more than 10 million lives in rural areas, according to World Bank data. Since 2014, the rural population has been dropping by about 1% every year. But there are signs that the trend is reversing. Amandine Desille, a geography fellow at the University of Lisbon, said she sees an emerging city-to-village movement in areas like the southern Alentejo region and northeastern Portugal.

"Although we are not speaking in great numbers, it does change the face of some villages to have new people and new businesses," she said. In northeastern Portugal, for instance, some city-dwellers are moving back to the countryside to set up tourist lodgings, motivated by EU rural development funds that give financial support for renovating old houses, she explained. "There is quite a lot of European money available to boost the countryside," Desille stressed.

## LG replaces CEO and top executives after losses

**SEOUL:** South Korean appliance giant LG Electronics replaced its CEO and a raft of other top leaders yesterday after net profits slumped more than 30 percent in the third quarter and its smartphone division struggles. The company is South Korea's second-largest electronics firm after Samsung, producing a range of products, from mobile phones to televisions and home appliances including air conditioners, washers and refrigerators.

CEO Jo Seong-jin, dubbed a "washing machine genius", was appointed in December 2016, and is respected in South Korea for his unlikely journey to the top without a college degree in the education-driven country. But he has struggled to turn around the failing smartphone division, which

Agustin Cocola-Gant, principal investigator of Smartour, a company that looks at the impact of companies like Airbnb on real estate, said another reason people are moving to the country is the rising property prices that are pushing them out of cities. "Lisbon is getting really expensive and people are moving out, for sure. Even the city council and the real estate sector recognize that there is a housing crisis," he noted.

### Rural revival

For some ventures, it is the remoteness of the countryside that offers the greatest opportunities - like wild food producer Terrius, which is nestled amid the cork trees and olive vines of the desert-like Alentejo region. Rita Beltrao Martins, who founded Terrius in 2012, would often visit the region where her ancestors lived and eyed an opportunity to revive some of the area's food traditions that died out half a century ago. "We decided to try to put products in the market that have disappeared many years before, like (flours made from) acorns, porcini mushrooms and chestnuts," she explained.

The chance to revive old traditions was also what drove Franck Laigneau to open the Da Licenca hotel and gallery in Alentejo last year and fill it with hand-woven blankets, tapestries and clay figurines made by local artisans. The Parisian entrepreneur was introduced to the region by his Portuguese partner, and said he saw potential in the area's untouched terrain. "I fell in love with these vernacular landscapes of olive and cork trees, vines ... and I thought: where in Europe can you find an authentic region still preserved and almost unknown?," he said.

### Return to the countryside

Martins said finding small producers to work with today is easier than it was when she started Terrius seven years ago, because more of them are setting up in the region, returning to the places of their heritage. "Many young people whose grandparents were from the region went away and are now coming back," she said. Portugal has become a popular tourist destination in recent years, with a record-breaking 12.8 million visitors last year. As landlords and developers transform their properties into short-

term rentals to cater to tourists, that has pushed up rental prices for locals. Research by the Confidential Imobiliario property consultancy shows that rents in Lisbon increased by more than 110% between 2013 and 2017.

term rentals to cater to tourists, that has pushed up rental prices for locals. Research by the Confidential Imobiliario property consultancy shows that rents in Lisbon increased by more than 110% between 2013 and 2017.

last month announced its 18th consecutive quarter of losses. As a whole LG Electronics' net profits plummeted 30.5 percent in the July-September period from a year earlier. Jo's term as vice-chairman was extended for three years in March 2018, but LG said Thursday he was being replaced as CEO by Brian Kwon, 56, with effect from Sunday. It also changed its chief financial officer and created a new post of chief strategy officer, while changing the presidents of its home entertainment and mobile communications units.

"We have judged we need a fast decision making process... rather than stick with management style drawn from past successes," the company said in a statement. Insisting the change was amicable, LG said Jo had resigned and released a picture of him and his successor smiling and hugging each other. Kwon, a graduate of top Seoul National University with a major in industrial engineering, has been with the firm for 32 years and has "in-depth experiences and skills" in areas including big data, artificial intelligence and cloud technologies, the company said. —AFP



LISBON: Police officers demonstrate to demand better wages and better working conditions in Lisbon. —AFP

term rentals to cater to tourists, that has pushed up rental prices for locals. Research by the Confidential Imobiliario property consultancy shows that rents in Lisbon increased by more than 110% between 2013 and 2017.

### Collaboration

Even with Portugal's growing number of rural entrepreneurs, Chaves at Minha Terra said the government is still not doing enough to draw businesses into underdeveloped parts of the country. A "lack of attention and investment has continued to this day", but national policy and promotion of small business could help to revive rural Portugal, he stressed.

"Young entrepreneurs have families that need basic services in education, justice, health, culture... and on equal opportunities with families living in cities." Rural areas need more health centers, post offices, banks and schools, he noted. Ana Abrunhosa, Portugal's minister of territorial cohesion, said "there is a lot of room for entrepreneurship in inland Portugal."

"Our job at the government is to make sure these

businesses have the conditions they need to be sustainable, profitable, and to be able to scale up one day, to generate more jobs," she said in emailed comments. In some parts of inland Portugal, like Braganca in the north, local universities, research centers, small businesses and municipalities have started collaborating to revive local production of wine and fruit, Abrunhosa said. These new networks will bring more young people to the territory, which will "generate more demand for better services and infrastructure", she added.

Terrius co-owner Martins said being so far out of the city can have its downsides - in the winter, the food producer's shop only gets a handful of visitors. But for her, the benefits are far greater. The countryside offers opportunities for her business that she could never get in the city, she said, such as the chance to give visitors experiences like mushroom harvesting and cookery classes right where the ingredients are grown. "We are a small country, but there are many areas of the countryside that people are discovering - and that are unique in the world," she said. —Reuters

## End of an era as Japan's Panasonic exits chip business

**TOKYO:** Japanese electronics giant Panasonic said yesterday it was exiting the semiconductor business, selling its loss-making subsidiary to a Taiwanese firm as it struggles with intense competition from China and South Korea. It marks the end for a once iconic Japanese business, with Panasonic seen as a global chip-making powerhouse in the 1980s and 1990s.

The Japanese conglomerate said it was offloading its subsidiary Panasonic Semiconductors Solutions to Taiwan's Nuvo-ton, with the sale scheduled to take place in June. A spokeswoman for the firm told AFP Panasonic would receive \$250 million. The firm said it was the "best way" in the face of "extremely intense competition with rival firms' business expansion and massive investment". —AFP

## Sports

# No skate parks: Vietnamese medal hopefuls skating under nose of Lenin

**HANOI:** They have few places to practise, no government funding and little public support, but Vietnam's first national skateboard team are carrying high hopes of winning medals for their country. The youth-friendly sport is being featured for the first time in the Southeast Asian Games, which open in the Philippines on Saturday, and it will also debut at next year's Tokyo Olympics. But skateboarding's reputation as a teenage, counter-culture hobby has been a major hurdle for the sport in Vietnam where there are no proper training facilities and just a handful of skate shops.

"The biggest problem is that we don't have a skate park," said Do Ngoc Linh, the manager of Vietnam's three-person skateboarding squad heading to Manila this weekend. His troubles don't end there. Though the Vietnam General Administration of Sport has recognised skateboarding as a sport, it does not offer any funding for training or travel.

Instead the squad secured sponsorship to help fund their trip to the Games, where they will compete in the game of skate and street skate categories. The team has been practising for several hours most days, gathering at an abandoned basketball court where they've installed a few rails and benches.

Some days they go to Lenin Square or other public grounds, popular skate spots in the city

sometimes crowded with children or tourists — or foul-tempered police trying to shoo them away. With no skate parks in Hanoi they won't be trying their hand in the Park category, which includes bowls or ramps, nor will they be racing in the Downhill. But that's not holding back their ambitions. "I want gold," 23-year-old Tran Dinh Anh told AFP, his skateboard underfoot.

## 'I FELL IN LOVE WITH IT'

Regardless of the results, the team knows that even just going to the Games is a chance to re-brand the sport back home, where it is known as a frivolous — and dangerous — pastime by some. "This is really important for us because any medal we get, the sports federation can help make the sport bigger and make a skate park," said Linh, who opened the city's first skate shop 10 years ago. "People can see this is not just something for the street — this is a sport," he added. Back when he opened his store there were few customers and almost no awareness of the sport, but today he estimates there are a few thousand skaters in the city.

Most are young and like his team members were first exposed to it on YouTube or in music videos. "I fell in love with it... I realised there's a culture that comes with it — music, fashion, arts," said 20-year-old teammate Tong Cam Vu, who practises with Japanese pop



**HANOI:** Tran Dinh Anh practices at a skateboarding ground in Hanoi. They have few places to practice, no public funding and little public support, but Vietnam's first professional skateboard team are carrying high hopes of winning big at the upcoming SEA Games. — AFP

blaring in his earphones. He hopes that skate culture will continue to spread in the buttoned-up capital of communist Vietnam, where more than half the country's 95 million people are under the age of 30. Coach Linh anticipates the biggest competition at the SEA Games will

be from established skateboarders from Indonesia, Philippines or Thailand, where facilities are years ahead of Vietnam's. But still, he's hopeful about the team's prospects. "I think we have a chance, I'm just hoping we get something," he said. — AFP

## Canadian Latifi replaces Kubica at Williams for 2020

**ABU DHABI:** Canadian Nicholas Latifi said his dream had come true after Williams announced yesterday he would be making his Formula One debut in 2020 as Robert Kubica's replacement. The 24-year-old, who is second in the Formula Two feeder series with two races remaining this weekend, is already the British team's reserve and has driven for them in six practice sessions this season.

"For me, it's a dream come true and something I've been working towards for almost half my life," Latifi said in a statement ahead of the season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. "It still feels a bit surreal. I don't think it will sink in fully until I'm on the grid in Melbourne next year."

Latifi's appointment alongside Mercedes-backed Briton George Russell, who made his debut this year, fills the last vacant spot on the 2020 grid. "Nicholas has become an established and well-respected member of Williams," deputy team principal Claire Williams said. "We look forward to him stepping up into this new role as we look to fight our way back to the midfield."

Former world champions Williams are currently last in the overall standings. Kubica, who made his Formula One comeback this season after a near-fatal rally crash in 2011, has scored the team's only point. The 34-year-old has been outperformed by Russell, however, and announced in September that he would be leaving the team. He has been linked with a move to US-owned Haas in a reserve or simulator driver role. Latifi, who can bring valuable funding to the team with his billionaire father already having invested in McLaren, had been a leading candidate to replace Kubica. "I can't wait to take the next step forward as a full-time race driver," he said.

"I don't underestimate the challenge ahead, going into F1 as a rookie, but I'm extremely motivated and determined to give it my all." His confirmation means that Nico Hulkenberg, who is being replaced at Renault by Frenchman Esteban Ocon for 2020, is now sure to leave the Formula One grid after Sunday's race. — Reuters

## Hamilton eyes season-ending victory in UAE twilight zone

**ABU DHABI:** Lewis Hamilton heads into this weekend's season-ending floodlit Abu Dhabi Grand Prix seeking to mark his 250th Formula One race with a memorable performance as Mercedes bid to bounce back from an off-form outing in Brazil. The six-time world champion, whose future beyond 2020 when his current contract expires has been a subject of intensifying speculation, has conceded that he faces a battle with his advancing age next season against the sport's new generation of younger tyros.

"I feel like I'm still able to kick it with these guys right now and so I am excited about the future," said 34-year-old Hamilton. "But you know it's inevitable that the youngsters are going to come through."

Speaking after he finished third on the road in Sao Paulo, before being penalised and dropped to seventh for a late clash with Red Bull's Alex Albon, Hamilton made clear also that he still relishes on-track battles and hopes next season will see a multi-team multi-driver scrap for glory.

"That would be great for Formula One," he said. Mercedes team chief Toto Wolff's future has also been under scrutiny and linked with Hamilton's as the sport prepares for the introduction of a radical new set of rules to brighten up the racing in 2021.

Wolff, tipped by some as a future boss of the sport, was absent in Sao Paulo, missing his first race since 2013, and said this week that he wants to see a reaction from the champions at the Yas Marina circuit this weekend.

Hamilton won from pole position last year and has enjoyed four pole position starts at the track and four victories, but may not have it all his own way in this weekend's twilight contest scheduled to maximise global viewing potential.

"Brazil was disappointing for us — we didn't have the fastest car and we lost a lot of points due to our own mistakes," said Wolff. "But we have analysed what went wrong, both our



Lewis Hamilton

reliability and our decisions during the race, to make sure it doesn't happen again. "It was a good learning experience for the entire team and something that will make us stronger in the long run. So, this weekend, we head out with a point to prove in Abu Dhabi. We know that in Formula One you are only as good as your last result."

Mercedes have won the last five Abu Dhabi Grands Prix, but know that both Ferrari and Red Bull will mount a fierce challenge to them in

the season finale, which starts in sunshine and finishes under floodlights. Hamilton will hope, in particular, to add to his record 87 pole positions after struggling in qualifying, relatively, since taking pole at the German event in July, his fourth this season — a meagre return by his standards.

Both Sebastian Vettel, back in form after a desultory early season run, and his team-mate Charles Leclerc will be aiming to take pole for Ferrari and to claim the Italian team's first win at a venue sited very close to the vast Ferrari World theme park.

Leclerc has taken seven poles this year to emerge as a leading contender for future titles and this weekend may see him in a close battle with his fellow-22-year-old rival Max Verstappen, who won in Brazil for Red Bull.

Their futures appear destined to be locked in championship campaigns long after the dust settles on Sunday night. — AFP

## Sports

## Penguins rally for wild win

**PITTSBURGH:** Kris Letang's one-timer from the right circle with 3:06 left in regulation broke a tie for good Wednesday to give the Pittsburgh Penguins a wild 8-6 win over the visiting Vancouver Canucks. The Penguins erased a three-goal deficit in the third, a period that featured a total of eight goals, six by Pittsburgh. Matt Murray gave up four goals on 14 shots before being pulled. Tristan Jarry made six saves on eight shots. Pittsburgh's Evgeni Malkin had two goals, including an empty-netter, and three assists. Jake Guentzel had two goals and two assists, Bryan Rust a goal and three assists, and Dominik Kahun and Zach Aston-Reese also scored for the Penguins. J.T. Miller and Adam Gaudette each scored twice, Elias Pettersson and Jake Virtanen each had a goal and assist, and Quinn Hughes had three assists for Vancouver.

**BRUINS 2, SENATORS 1**

Brad Marchand and Zdeno Chara scored third-period goals as Boston rallied to top host Ottawa and post a fifth consecutive victory. The veteran Bruins duo scored 3 1/2 minutes apart to erase a 1-0 lead that the Senators grabbed in the first minute of the third period. Goalie Tuukka Rask stopped 33 of 34 shots for Boston, which won both games of its back-to-back and beat Ottawa for the second time. The Senators' Thomas Chabot opened the scoring in the first minute of the third period.

**FLAMES 3, SABRES 2 (OT)**

Elias Lindholm scored 1:17 into overtime as Calgary salvaged the finale of its four-game road trip with a victory against Buffalo. The Flames, who went 2-1-1 on their road swing, were without coach Bill Peters, who is being investigated by the team and the NHL after allegedly using racial slurs against one of his players a decade ago in the minor leagues. Associate coach Geoff Ward took command of Calgary's bench. TJ Brodie and Matthew Tkachuk also scored for the Flames, who won for just the second time in their past nine games (2-5-2). Calgary goaltender David Rittich made 34 saves. Jimmy Vesey

and Victor Olofsson scored for the Sabres.

**MAPLE LEAFS 6, RED WINGS 0**

Andreas Johnsson had two goals and an assist, Frederik Andersen made 25 saves to notch the shutout, and visiting Toronto rolled past reeling Detroit. The Leafs are 3-0-0 since Sheldon Keefe replaced Mike Babcock as head coach. Tyson Barrie, William Nylander and John Tavares each had a goal and an assist for the Maple Leafs. Travis Dermott also scored for Toronto. Detroit's winless streak increased to seven games (0-5-2). Red Wings goaltender Jimmy Howard left the game in the opening period due to injury. He was replaced by Jonathan Bernier, who was battling an illness. Bernier made 37 saves on 40 shots after Howard made 11 saves on 14 shots.

**RANGERS 3, HURRICANES 2**

Mika Zibanejad scored a power-play goal in his return from an upper-body injury, and Henrik Lundqvist made 41 saves as New York built a three-goal lead in the opening period and held on to defeat visiting Carolina. Zibanejad scored his fifth goal of the season but the first since getting a hat trick at Ottawa on Oct. 5. Brendan Smith and Fox also scored for the Rangers, who won a third consecutive game for the first time this season. In Lundqvist was appearing in his 1,000th career appearance for the Rangers, counting the regular season and postseason. Ryan Dzingel and Warren Foegele scored in the second period for Carolina, which is 1-14-3 in its past 18 trips to Madison Square Garden. Despite the loss, the Hurricanes are 6-2-0 in their last eight games.

**GOLDEN KNIGHTS 4, PREDATORS 3 (OT)**

Paul Stastny scored at 1:52 of overtime after teammate Max Pacioretty had tied the game with three-tenths of a second left in regulation as visiting Vegas rallied over Nashville. Vegas got into overtime by pulling goaltender Malcolm Subban for an extra attacker with 1:05 remaining, and Pacioretty tied it



**MONTREAL:** Nick Cousins #21 of the Montreal Canadiens and Torey Krug #47 of the Boston Bruins skate for the puck while goaltender Jaroslav Halak #41 defends the net during the second period at the Bell Centre in Montreal, Canada. —AFP

with a shot from the bottom of the right circle off a feed from Mark Stone that just beat the buzzer. Pacioretty, Stone and Reilly Smith each had a goal and an assist, and Schmidt added two assists for Vegas, which snapped a three-game losing streak as well as a five-game road losing streak. Mikael Granlund, Ryan Ellis and Matt Duchene were the Predators' goal-scorers.

**KINGS 4, ISLANDERS 1**

Dustin Brown, Jeff Carter, Matt Roy and Alex Iafallo scored goals as Los Angeles overcame a brief first-period deficit to earn a victory over visiting New York. Jonathan Quick had 24 saves as the Kings won for just the second time in their last five games and earned the victory after losing consecutive

games at home. Derick Brassard scored a goal for the Islanders, who not only saw their 17-game point streak end Monday at Anaheim, but they lost all three games in their trip to California.

**FLYERS 3, BLUE JACKETS 2**

Tyler Pitlick, Scott Laughton and Claude Giroux each scored a goal and Philadelphia got a rare win in regulation in Columbus. It was the Flyers' first road win in Columbus in regulation since Dec. 13, 2005. The Flyers also won for just the second time in the last 15 games in Columbus. Nick Foligno and Seth Jones had one goal apiece for the Blue Jackets, who had won four of five entering this game. Blue Jackets goaltender Joonas Korpisalo made 19 saves but had his four-game winning streak snapped. —Reuters

## Pacquiao: Philippines scouts hunting for boxing's next big thing

**MANILA:** In the boxing-obsessed Philippines, scores of young fighters dream of becoming the next Manny Pacquiao, but it takes a sharp eye and vast experience to pick out a potential world champion. That expertise comes from the scouts and trainers who scour amateur matches at dusty town "fiestas", rely on spotters' referrals or size up hopefuls as young as eight training in well-worn gyms. They are the lesser known but vital cogs in the Philippines' boxing machine, which has produced dozens of world champion fighters, many of whom were born into poverty.

It's a risky way to make a living — some coaches have faced ruin when the fighters they have backed, pouring money into their training and upkeep, didn't win. But when victory comes, the pay-off can be big, or at least enough to keep going in the sport they love. The shining example is, of course, Pacquiao. Born into a poor family, he quit school at 14 and ended up on the street. Pacquiao, now also a Philippine senator, declared assets worth some \$59 million in 2018. His career, including an unparalleled eight world championships in different weight divisions, is a tempting incentive to boys born into similarly bleak circumstances.

While in real life they may be impoverished and ignored, in the boxing world they are a precious element to be forged into winners. "We, the coaches, are looking for boxers who would become the next Manny Pacquiao so we teach them everything, including discipline and humility," said Anthony Ornopia, a former boxer who is now a trainer.

Spotting them is more art than science, but the scouts are looking for

more than just the ability to pummel opponents with their fists. "The number one trait I look for in a boxer is the attitude," trainer Joven Jimenez told AFP, saying his fighters need to be "determined, obedient and disciplined". "It's a bonus if the boxer looks good, too," he quipped, saying it helps in the promotion of a match.

A dozen fighters train under his guidance in a rough outdoor camp south of the capital Manila, spending hours a day sparring and lifting weights. Jimenez's star, and partner in the gym, is 27-year-old Jerwin Ancajas, who is set for an IBF junior bantamweight title defence in December.

The boxers are a significant investment — and gamble — as they are fed, housed and given a modest allowance. Years of training expenses and no wins drained Jimenez's savings, and by 2013 he was forced to sell his properties to stay afloat.

But exercising the same determination they demand of their fighters, Jimenez and Ancajas kept going — even if they had to train in vacant lots and in the street. Then in 2016 came what they had hoped and prayed for: Ancajas's IBF junior bantamweight belt. A defence of the title a year later netted enough cash to invest in their own gym.

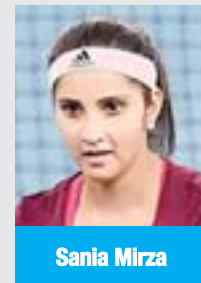
The enormous popularity of the sweet science in the Philippines means scores of children gravitate to gyms, but just a handful stick it out. "Out of 10 children, there will only be one or two of them who really wants to pursue boxing," said trainer and coach Edito Villamor.

"I hope just one of two of them will (succeed)," he added. "Just one or two of them and we're good." One of the hotspots of boxing in the Philippines is Pacquiao's hometown, General Santos City in the nation's south.

Regular tournaments put plenty of contenders on display, and serve as a magnet for fighters from other areas. "We look for the potential of the boxer whether he wins or loses in a fight," said promoter JC Mangangquil of Sanman Promotions, which has 40 fighters including 12 who have won international titles. —AFP

## India's Mirza set for tennis comeback

**NEW DELHI:** Indian tennis star Sania Mirza yesterday announced her return to competitive tennis at the Hobart International in January, two years after taking a maternity break. The 33-year-old, who last played at the China Open in October 2017, will team up with Ukraine's Nadiia Kichenok — ranked 38 in the WTA doubles chart. Mirza, who married former Pakistan cricket captain Shoaib Malik, gave birth to her first child — a son the couple named Izhaan. "I am playing in Hobart, then I am playing the Australian Open," Mirza was quoted as saying by the Press Trust of India news agency. "I am planning to play a tournament in Mumbai, which is a \$25,000 (ITF women's event) next month, but I am 50-50 about it, so let's see how my wrist behaves. We will see, but Hobart and Australian Open (for sure)." She added that she had experienced "a lot of change" after having a baby. "Your routine and sleep pattern changes. I (now) feel fit, my body is where it used to be before I had the baby," Mirza said. The Hobart WTA takes place between January 11-18 and is a key lead-in tournament to the Australian Open. Mirza, regarded as India's best-ever women's tennis player, will partner American Rajeev Ram for the mixed doubles at the Australian Open. Mirza in 2005 became the first Indian to win a WTA tournament singles title. —AFP



**Sania Mirza**

## Sports

# Brooks, spinners put West Indies on top in Afghanistan Test

**LUCKNOW:** A maiden Test century by Shamarh Brooks and wily spin bowling put the West Indies in firm command of the one-off Test against Afghanistan yesterday. Brooks made 111 as West Indies managed a lead of 90 after they were 277 all out in the second session of day two in the northern Indian city of Lucknow, which has been hit by heavy air pollution over the past month.

Spinners Rakheem Cornwall and Roston Chase then took three wickets each to leave Afghanistan tottering at 109 for seven at stumps on day two. The Afghans lead by just 19 runs in their second innings.

Opener Javed Ahmadi made 62 before falling to Chase's off spin on the final delivery of the day dominated by West Indies, who resumed on 68 for two in response to Afghanistan's 187. Cornwall, the heaviest man in Test cricket — weighing 140 kilograms (308 pounds), and 1.96 metres (six feet five inches) tall — rattled the Afghanistan top-order and improved his match haul to 10 so far.

The 26-year-old Cornwall, who returned figures of 7-75 with his off spin on day one, struck in three successive overs. He trapped Ibrahim Zadran for 23 after a brisk start by the Afghan

openers and then got Rahmat Shah and Asghar Afghan back in the pavilion for scores of zero.

Chase also took three wickets in his three overs. The air quality reading in Lucknow for PM 2.5 particles — the fine particles of dust that can penetrate lungs and pass into the bloodstream — was 275 microns per cubic metre, 11 times the World Health Organisation safe limit of 25. But Brooks, who started the day on his overnight score of 19, seemed undaunted as he piled on the runs without getting much support from his fellow batsmen. He was finally bowled by debutant spinner Amir Hamza who took five wickets.

Brooks was involved in two crucial partnerships including an 82-run third-wicket stand with overnight partner John Campbell, who made 55. Brooks, playing just his third Test after making his debut against India in August, also put together 74 runs with Shane Dowrich, who made 42.

Amir combined with skipper Rashid Khan to mop up the tail as the umpires called for early tea. Rashid Khan claimed three wickets with his leg spin while left-arm wrist spinner Zahir Khan took two. —AFP



**LUCKNOW:** West Indies' Rakheem Cornwall (R) delivers a ball during the second day test international cricket match between Afghanistan and West Indies at the Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow yesterday. —AFP

## Emotional Australia cricketers pay tribute to Hughes

**ADELAIDE:** Australia's cricketers have paid moving tribute to Phillip Hughes on the fifth anniversary of his death, gathering on the Adelaide Oval pitch to remember him after his death in a freak on-field accident. Hughes, who played 26 Tests, died from bleeding on the brain on November 27, 2014, after being hit on the neck by a rising ball while batting in a domestic match at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

His death stunned Australia and the world cricket community, sparking an outpouring of grief and ushering in stronger protocols around concussion and better player safety equipment.

David Warner and Nathan Lyon, part of the team that will play Pakistan in the second Test starting Friday, were on the field when Hughes collapsed, while Steve Smith was also a teammate and friend of the 25-year-old. Australian captain Tim Paine said coach Justin Langer gathered the team in a circle on the pitch late Wednesday, the anniversary of Hughes's death, to remember their colleague. "Last night actually it was quite a nice moment. JL had us in the middle of the ground, in a bit of a circle and we just had one of those moments," he said yesterday.

"He's big on guys talking about things that help them deal with it. Obviously for a few guys it was a difficult day.

"We just got in a circle and guys who had spent a lot of time with him told stories about Hughesy and the times they spent with him," Paine added. "It was just trying to remember him in a positive way and remind ourselves how lucky we are to be playing the game that he loved and we love and how much playing for his country meant to Hughesy. "And for us to never take that for granted."

Cricketer Australia chief executive Kevin Roberts said the impact of Hughes' tragic death was still being felt. "A man dedicated to his family, a loyal friend, a popular teammate and a prodigiously talented cricketer," Roberts said. "There hasn't been a single day over these last five years when Phillip's loss hasn't been felt acutely by the Australian cricket family." —AFP

## Pakistan recall Abbas after Gabba horror show

**ADELAIDE:** Pakistan were set to recall paceman Mohammad Abbas yesterday for the second Test against Australia as they look to add consistency to their bowling attack under lights at Adelaide Oval. Skipper Azhar Ali will also drop down the order to bat at number three in the day-night Test starting today, with Imam-ul-Haq set to get the nod to open the innings alongside Shan Masood and Haris Sohail dropped.

Seamer Abbas has taken 66 wickets at just 18.86 in his 14 Tests but was a surprise omission for the opening clash in Brisbane, where Pakistan were crushed by an innings and five runs.

"Definitely there will be some changes," Azhar said of the team line-up, which will be announced on Friday. Asked if Abbas would be one of those changes, he replied: "Yes."

"He's (Abbas) done well in Test matches, he can definitely bring

## Players want answers from Australia board over Smith ban

**MELBOURNE:** The Australian Cricketers' Association is seeking a meeting with Cricket Australia regarding the anti-corruption ban given to Emily Smith as pressure grows on the governing body to lighten the Tasmania wicketkeeper's sanction.

Last week, Hobart Hurricanes' Smith was banned for a year, with nine months suspended, for posting the Women's Big Bash League team's line-up on Instagram about an hour before its scheduled release.

The 24-year-old accepted the sanction, which rules her out of the remainder of the Women's T20 Big Bash League and the national cricket league, but said the posting was intended to be a

lot of control and he has worked a lot since the last Test match on his rhythm and he is feeling better," he said.

"Obviously a bowler of his class, you feel he has something to offer." Azhar would not say who Abbas would replace, but Imran Khan is a candidate after failing to fire in Brisbane. Naseem Shah, 16, could also be rested with Pakistan keen to manage the workload of the teenager, whose mother died recently.

Pakistan desperately need their bowlers to perform in Adelaide, having lost 13 consecutive Tests in Australia.

They will be facing an Australian team that has won all five of its pink-ball matches and with David Warner, Joe Burns and Marcus Labuschagne in fine form after big scores at the Gabba.

Azhar acknowledged Pakistan have long laboured in Australia, with their inability to bowl the opposition out twice their biggest problem. "A lot of our tours to Australia we have struggled to pick up wickets. We have to control the rate, bowl in good areas for a long time," he said. "Wickets in Australia, a lot of people say it is bounce, it is pace. But equally it is good for batting as well, so if you can't bowl well for a long period of time, you can't put teams under pressure." He added: "If we want to pick up 20 wickets we have to execute our plan perfectly." Pakistan have played one pink-ball fixture in Australia — three years ago in Brisbane, when they lost by 39 runs. —AFP

joke about her lowly position in the batting order.

A number of former players and pundits have condemned the sanction as harsh, and the players' union held an extraordinary board meeting on Tuesday to discuss the case. "The ACA Board has resolved to seek a meeting with Cricket Australia Board as soon as practicable to discuss and better understand both the sanction and the process," an ACA spokesman said.

Smith posted the Hurricanes' team line-up for their Nov 2 match in the WBBL against Sydney Thunder at Burnie in Tasmania state. The match was later abandoned due to bad weather. CA said its anti-corruption code prohibits sharing of insider information which could be used for betting. The governing body acknowledged that Smith had no intention to breach the code.

Australian spin bowling great Shane Warne said the sanction was too harsh for a "naive mistake", while former England captain Michael Vaughan said she had been "hung out to dry". An anti-gambling campaigner said Smith's ban under the anti-corruption code was hard to reconcile given CA's sponsorship arrangements with betting firms. —AFP

## Sports

## Davis leads Lakers in New Orleans return

**NEW ORLEANS:** Anthony Davis scored 41 points in his return to New Orleans, and the Los Angeles Lakers won their ninth straight game, beating the Pelicans 114-110 on Wednesday night. Davis was roundly booed whenever he touched the basketball in the city where he played his first seven seasons before demanding a trade from New Orleans, which sent him to the Lakers in July. LeBron James added 29 points and 11 assists as the Lakers improved their league-leading record to 16-2. Kyle Kuzma added 16 points. Jrue Holiday had 12 assists and 29 points, but just four in the second half, as the Pelicans squandered a 16-point, third-quarter lead. Brandon Ingram, one of three players Los Angeles traded along with a group of draft choices for Davis, had 23 points and 10 rebounds.

**CLIPPERS 121, GRIZZLIES 119**

Montrezl Harrell tipped in the game-winner with 2.3 seconds remaining, capping a raucous fourth-quarter rally as visiting Los Angeles beat Memphis to earn its seventh straight victory. The Clippers were led by 24 points and 10 rebounds from Harrell, and 24 points from Lou Williams. Moe Harkless scored just five points, getting the start in place of Kawhi Leonard, but provided a win-sealing block of Jaren Jackson Jr.'s shot in the final seconds that would have tied the score. Jonas Valanciunas posted game highs of 30 points and 16 rebounds for Memphis. Rookie guard Ja Morant endured a slow scoring start, but he scored nine of his 20 points late in the fourth quarter, and dished a game-high 11 assists for the night.

**WARRIORS 104, BULLS 90**

Alec Burks scored six of his 23 points in a fourth-quarter flurry as Golden State won for just the second time at home all season. Eric Paschall scored a team-high 25 points, and both Burks and Omari Spellman recorded double-doubles for the Warriors, who had lost three straight and 10 of their previous 11 games. Burks had a nice all-around game with 10 rebounds and seven assists. Spellman produced 13 points and a game-high 11 rebounds. Zach LaVine poured in a game-high 36 points for the Bulls. Tomas Satoransky added 19 points, seven rebounds and a team-high seven assists, and Wendell Carter Jr. grabbed a team-high nine rebounds to go with eight points.

**TRAIL BLAZERS 136, THUNDER 119**

With a hot start and a strong third quarter fueled by their starting lineup, Portland picked up a blowout win over visiting Oklahoma City. It was a balanced scoring effort for Portland in its return home from a 2-4 road trip, led by 27 points from Damian Lillard. CJ McCollum added 22 points, Hassan Whiteside 21 points and 16 rebounds, and Carmelo Anthony 19 points on 9-of-11 shooting. Abdel Nader came off the Oklahoma City bench to score a team-high 23 points. Chris Paul added 16 points as the Thunder lost for the fourth time in their past five games.

**WIZARDS 140, SUNS 132**

Bradley Beal scored 35 points and made four 3-pointers, and Thomas Bryant tied a season high with 23 points and added nine rebounds as Washington gave up most of a 21-point lead but held on to win at Phoenix. Ish Smith tied a season high with 21 points and had seven assists, and Davis Bertens had 16 points, including four 3-pointers, for the Wizards, who rebounded



**NEW ORLEANS:** Dwight Howard #39 of the Los Angeles Lakers and Brandon Ingram #14 of the New Orleans Pelicans fight for a rebound at Smoothie King Center in New Orleans, Louisiana. — AFP

from two of their lowest-scoring games of the season by shooting 57.3 percent and making 19 treys. Devin Booker had 27 points and eight assists, Ricky Rubio had 18 points, and Dario Saric, Cam Johnson and Cheick Diallo had 17 points apiece for the Suns, who had eight players in double figures.

**BUCKS 111, HAWKS 102**

Giannis Antetokounmpo posted his 18th consecutive double-double to start the season, leading Milwaukee past visiting Atlanta for its ninth win in a row. Antetokounmpo scored 30 points and added 10 rebounds and four blocked shots. He is the first player since Hall of Famer Bill Walton to start a season with 18 straight double-doubles. The Bucks also got 16 points from Khris Middleton, who returned from a seven-game absence caused by a left thigh contusion. Atlanta was led by Jabari Parker, who had a career-high 25 points in the first half and finished with a season-high 33 and 14 rebounds. Trae Young added 29 points and four rebounds.

**CELTICS 121, NETS 110**

Kemba Walker scored a season-high 39 points in his return from a neck sprain as host Boston held off Kyrie Irving-less Brooklyn. Jaylen Brown had 22 points and 10 rebounds as six Celtics scored in double figures. Boston won for the third time in its last five games. The Nets also placed six scorers in double figures, led by Garrett Temple and Joe Harris with 22 and 21, respectively. Despite hitting 21 3-pointers as a team, Brooklyn saw its four-game winning streak end.

**HORNETS 102, PISTONS 101**

Charlotte finally figured out how to close a game, riding a season-high 19 points from Bismack Biyombo to a victory against visiting Detroit. The Hornets, who dropped three games by fewer than 10 points in a four-day span last week, had help on Detroit's botched final possession, hanging on to snap a five-game losing streak. PJ Washington scored 17 points, Devonte' Graham tallied 16 points and Miles Bridges had 15 for the Hornets, who have defeated the Pistons twice this month in home

games. Graham added a career-high 15 assists. For Detroit, Griffin posted 26 points, Kennard notched 16 points, and Andre Drummond had 14 points and 21 rebounds.

**TIMBERWOLVES 113, SPURS 101**

Andrew Wiggins poured in 26 points as visiting Minnesota defeated slumping San Antonio to capture its second straight game on the road and its first win in the Alamo City since 2013. Karl-Anthony Towns scored 23 points and took 14 rebounds for the Timberwolves, while Keita Bates-Diop added 16 points, Okogie had 11, and Gorgui Dieng and Jarrett Culver each scored 10 points for Minnesota. San Antonio, which has lost five straight games at home, missed seven of its last eight shots from the floor over the final four minutes. LaMarcus Aldridge led the Spurs with 22 points, and DeMar DeRozan scored 20.

**MAGIC 116, CAVALIERS 104**

Evan Fournier scored 19 of his season-high 30 points in the first half as Orlando recorded its first road victory, topping Cleveland. Fournier made four 3-pointers to highlight his performance for the Magic, who lost their first seven road games before winning the finale of their four-game trek. Jonathan Isaac and Terrence Ross each scored 16 points, and Mo Bamba made all five of his 3-point attempts to match Markelle Fultz with 15 points. Collin Sexton scored 20 points on 8 of 14 shooting while playing in his 100th consecutive game to begin his NBA career. Cedi Osman scored 14 points and Tristan Thompson added 13 for the Cavaliers, who fell for the eighth time in the last nine games.

**PACERS 121, JAZZ 102**

T.J. Warren scored 23 points, and Domantas Sabonis added 23 points and 12 rebounds to lead Indiana to a victory over Utah in Indianapolis. Malcolm Brogdon finished with 22 points and eight assists for the Pacers, who earned their fourth consecutive win. Jeremy Lamb added 18 points, eight rebounds and six assists. Bojan Bogdanovic scored 30 points to lead the Jazz, who dropped their second straight. Donovan Mitchell added 26 points while Rudy Gobert

chipped in 14 points and 13 rebounds. Gobert returned to the lineup after a two-game absence caused by a sprained ankle.

**76ERS 97, KINGS 91**

Joel Embiid rebounded from the first scoreless game of his career with a game-high 33 points, leading host Philadelphia past Sacramento. Embiid, who shot 0-for-11 on Monday in a loss at Toronto, went 10-for-19 against the Kings, leading the 76ers to their eighth straight home win. Ben Simmons also recorded a double-double for Philadelphia with 10 points and 14 rebounds to go with five assists and two steals. Buddy Hield paced the Kings, losers of two straight, with 22 points.

**ROCKETS 117, HEAT 108**

James Harden made seven 3-pointers and scored 34 points to help Houston cruise past visiting Miami. Russell Westbrook added 27 points, nine rebounds and seven assists as Houston halted a three-game slide. Danuel House Jr. scored a career-best 23 points to help the Rockets avenge a 129-100 loss to the Heat in Miami on Nov. 3. Tyler Herro scored 22 points off the bench for Miami, which was without star Jimmy Butler due to illness. The loss was just the second in the past eight games for the Heat. Miami's Kelly Olynyk added 19 points, and Bam Adebayo recorded 17 points, 11 rebounds and eight assists.

**RAPTORS 126, KNICKS 98**

Pascal Siakam scored 31 points and grabbed eight rebounds as host Toronto won its eighth straight home game to start the season, a franchise record, in a blowout of New York. The Raptors have won 15 of their past 16 games against the Knicks, including the past seven in a row. Siakam, who did not play the fourth quarter as the starters were rested, finished 5-for-8 on 3-point attempts. Fred VanVleet added 15 points for the Raptors. OG Anunoby contributed 13 points and a career-best 12 rebounds, and Chris Boucher had 13 points and 12 rebounds. Julius Randle scored 19 points and pulled down eight rebounds for the Knicks. Toronto-born RJ Barrett added 16 points. — AFP

## Sports

# Martinez, Lukaku sink Slavia to keep Inter's knockout hopes alive

**PRAGUE:** A brace from Lautaro Martinez and a Romelu Lukaku goal handed Inter Milan a 3-1 win at Slavia Prague on Wednesday, keeping the Italians in contention for the Champions League last 16.

Inter are level with Borussia Dortmund on seven points each in Group F topped by Barcelona who clinched a last-16 spot after beating the Germans 3-1 at the Camp Nou. "The win is important for us, we had no choice but to win," said Inter coach Antonio Conte.

"We knew what to expect, the forward duo were decisive and I'm very happy for them," he added. In the last round of games on December 10, Inter face Barcelona at the San Siro while Dortmund host Slavia.

"We gave meaning to this match against Barca by winning," said Conte. "We are expecting a great match, hard, but we know that we can count on 80,000 people who will come to the stadium to push us. That was what we wanted." Martinez opened the scoring on nineteen minutes after Lukaku had picked up a pass, fought off two challenges and took the ball into the box before cutting it back to the unmarked Argentinian.

Martinez scored for the fourth consecutive Champions League game for Inter. Tomas Soucek levelled for Slavia from the penalty spot in the 37th minute after Stefan de Vrij had brought down striker Peter Olayinka in the box.

Polish referee Szymon Marciniak first ignored the foul and let play continue with Lukaku scoring on the counter-attack before seeing his goal chalked off as the video referee took centre stage. Lukaku added Inter's second nine minutes from the end after Slavia's last man Michal Frydrych slipped and let him round keeper Ondrej Kolar.

Martinez then volleyed home his second as Lukaku robbed the Slavia defence and provided him with a superb cross in the 88th minute.

Outside of the four goals, Slavia had the first sight of the target on five minutes when Josef Husbauer narrowly missed with a header. Inter's first shot came from Martinez whose low shot across the goal narrowly went the wrong side of Kolar's left post.

After Inter's opener, Slavia put the Nerazzurri under pressure, but Frydrych headed wide and Lukas Masopust just missed the top left corner of Samir Handanovic's goal. Inter were on the front foot early into the second half, but they failed to produce a decent chance at first.

On the other side, Handanovic had a hard time clearing a deflected Masopust shot over the crossbar and Slavia's second-half substitute Ibrahim Traore missed narrowly. Moments later, Lukaku sent his header onto the crossbar and Marcelo Brozovic then followed suit with a volley halfway into the second half.

Five minutes later Masopust intercepted



**PRAGUE:** Slavia Prague's Romanian midfielder Nicolae Claudiu Stanciu (L) gets the ball from Inter Milan's Uruguayan midfielder Matias Vecino during the UEFA Champions League football match SK Slavia Prague v Inter Milan in Prague, Czech Republic. — AFP

a pass and sprinted down the centre but failed to beat Handanovic one-on-one. "The game went the wrong way, we had many losses during the game and Inter, leaning on two excellent forwards, could

capitalise on that," said Slavia coach Jindrich Tрпиšovsky. "Inter's performance improved in the second half and ours was getting worse. In fact, they could have scored the decider much earlier." — AFP

## Man City owners snap up Mumbai City as global empire grows

**LONDON:** Manchester City's parent company City Football Group announced yesterday that it had bought a majority stake in Mumbai City, expanding its global empire of teams. The Premier League club tweeted that CFG was delighted to welcome the Indian club to its "family of clubs".

"City Football Group (CFG) has agreed a deal to acquire a majority stake in its eighth club, Mumbai City FC in the Indian Super League, marking a major move into Indian football," the group said in a statement.

"CFG will become the 65 percent majority shareholder of the club, alongside existing shareholders, acclaimed actor and film producer, Ranbir Kapoor and Bimal Parekh who combined will hold the remaining 35 percent of shares."

Other clubs in the CFG stable include New York City, Melbourne City, Yokohama F. Marinos in Japan and Girona FC in Spain. "We believe that this investment will deliver transformative benefits to Mumbai City FC, to City Football Group and to Indian football as a whole," said CFG chairman Khaldoon Al Mubarak.

"City Football Group is committed to the future of football in India and to the potential for Mumbai City FC within that future." Manchester City have won the Premier League title four times since Abu Dhabi United Group, the investment vehicle owned by Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, took over the club. They have enjoyed 11 successive years of financial growth and earlier this month reported record revenue of £535.2 million (628.6 million euros) last season. They are sitting third in the Premier League table and reached the knockout stages of the Champions League on Tuesday. — AFP

## Zenit deny Lyon chance to clinch last 16 spot

**SAINT PETERSBURG:** Lyon missed out on a chance to seal a Champions League last 16 place with a match to spare after losing 2-0 at Zenit Saint Petersburg on Wednesday.

A victory in Group G over the Russian Premier League leaders would have claimed a knockout spot for Rudi Garcia's men. Lyon are now third behind Zenit, level with the Russians on seven points, ahead of their final group match on December 10 against leaders Leipzig, who are three points clear at the top and assured of a place in the knockout round.

"Lyon are a really good team. But we were prepared well and did what we had to," Zenit midfielder Magomed Ozdoyev told UEFA.com. "Now it's all about the match in Lisbon and we will be ready for it." Bundesliga side Leipzig's last-gasp 2-2 draw with Benfica later in the day gave them a place in the last 16 for the first time leaving Lyon and Zenit in pursuit of the second qualifying spot.

"It's not over, we still have our last match to play and we're supporting Benfica (who face Zenit in the last round)," Garcia said.

## West Brom thrash Bristol City to go top

**LONDON:** West Brom moved back to the top of the Championship with a thumping 4-1 victory over Bristol City at The Hawthorns. Leeds had gone top with victory at Reading on Tuesday, but Slaven Bilic's men restored their two-point lead in style. Grady Diangana was the key man for the Baggies, setting up Kieran Gibbs to open the scoring on 10 minutes with a smart backheel and then being brought down on the edge of the area

"What is certain is that we have to beat Leipzig, who I think are the best team in the group."

Zenit coach Sergei Semak kept faith in the starting lineup from the weekend's 2-1 league victory over Rubin Kazan, with Artem Dzyuba who scored that winner in that game leading the attack. Garcia, who replaced the sacked Sylvinho in October, was without injured midfielder Thiago Mendes and ill winger Martin Terrier after beating Nice on Saturday as 16-year-old attacking midfielder Rayan Cherki was named on the bench.

The best of the early chances fell to Sardar Azmoun on 35 minutes after Daler Kuzayev and Joachim Andersen were shown yellow cards in the opening half an hour. Iran forward Azmoun, broke through the French defence but his chipped shot hit the post before he was brought down by Anthony Lopes, with VAR deciding against awarding a penalty.

Dzyuba went one better than Azmoun seven minutes later to claim a lead for the Russian outfit. The Russia international headed in from a Douglas Santos corner as Lyon protested with referee Daniele Orsato for Dzyuba's tussle with Marcelo in the penalty area.

Captain Leo Dubois and fellow-wing back Marcal were shown yellow cards by Orsato for their complaints. Semak's men controlled a lacklustre second-half and Ozdoyev made sure of all three points with his third goal of the season in the 84th minute. — AFP

five minutes from half-time. Matheus Pereira took full advantage of the dangerous position to curl a left-footed free-kick over the wall and into the top corner.

Famara Diedhiou pulled a goal back for the visitors 10 minutes from time, but Hal Robson-Kanu made it 3-1 just two minutes later and substitute Charlie Austin completed the scoring in the 87th minute. Nottingham Forest moved up to fourth in the table with a 4-0 win at Queens Park Rangers, who had Lee Wallace sent off early in the second half. Tobias Figueiredo headed Forest in front after 15 minutes and the home side had a mountain to climb when Wallace was shown a straight red card for bringing down Joe Lolley. It took until the 82nd minute for Lewis Grabban to double his side's lead and further late goals from Joao Carvalho and Alfa Semedo completed a miserable evening for QPR. — AFP

## Sports

# Messi fires Barca into last 16, late equaliser sees Leipzig through

**PARIS:** A Lionel Messi-inspired Barcelona booked their place in the Champions League knockout stages on Wednesday by crushing a desperate Borussia Dortmund 3-1, while RB Leipzig made the last 16 for the first time with an incredible stoppage time comeback.

Lucien Favre's position as Dortmund coach looks increasingly in peril following the thumping at the Camp Nou, orchestrated by a sensational Messi, that ensured Barca's progress to the last 16 as Group F winners and leaves the Germans in danger of not qualifying.

The Argentine scored one and set up the other two for Luis Suarez and Antoine Griezmann to inflict a punishing defeat on Dortmund and move up to 11 points, four ahead of the Germans and Inter Milan, who won 3-1 at Slavia Prague. "He (Messi) was incredible," said Barcelona coach Ernesto Valverde. "It's all about what he does and when he does it. It was a performance to put us through." Messi got the ball rolling with a neat pass which allowed Suarez to open the scoring in the 29th minute, before the Uruguayan returned the favour four minutes later to lay on Messi for his 613th Barca goal on his 700th appearance.

Messi, who has scored 10 times in his last nine games, was also at the heart of the goal which extinguished Dortmund's hopes of a result in the 67th minute, slipping a wonderful through ball for Griezmann that the Frenchman could happily stroke first time past Roman Burki.

Dortmund slip down to third behind Antonio Conte's Inter side, who roared to a fine win which keeps alive their hopes of a place in the next round. Romelu Lukaku's first Champions League goal for Inter and a Lautaro Martinez

double saw off a spirited Slavia side that had levelled in the 37th minute through a VAR-awarded Tomas Soucek penalty after Lukaku thought he had doubled his side's lead. Lukaku had another strike ruled out for offside by VAR in the dying moments, but it made no difference to the result and now a win over Barca at the San Siro next month will guarantee them a place in the last 16. "We've given meaning to the match with Barca by winning tonight," said Conte. "We are expecting a tough, great match, but we know that we can count on 80,000 people who will come to the stadium to push us on."

## LEIPZIG BACK FROM THE DEAD

Leipzig made the knockout stages in dramatic style after Emil Forsberg fired them back from two goals down in the final minute to draw 2-2 with Benfica. The Germans needed a point to qualify but looked down and out as the match dragged towards added time, but Forsberg pulled a goal back from the penalty spot in the 90th minute before hitting the leveller six minutes later, sparking wild celebrations.

"Reaching the knockout stages for the first time in the club's history means that we're doing the right things and moving in the right direction. I'm just so proud," said Forsberg. The draw gave Lyon a big let-off after they failed to snatch a knockout spot when they fell to 2-0 defeat at Zenit Saint Petersburg.

Rudi Garcia's team looked in peril of not qualifying at all from Group G after the loss but Leipzig's last gasp efforts mean they will go through with a win over the Bundesliga side on December 10. Liverpool and Napoli were made to wait for their spots with a tense 1-1 draw at

Carlo Ancelotti. The Italians had travelled to Merseyside in disarray with Ancelotti seemingly on the brink of being sacked after a slump in Serie A. President Aurelio De Laurentiis has also threatened to sell the entire squad and take legal action against the players after they refused his orders to be confined to a week-long training camp earlier this month.

However, the Italians are the only side to have beaten the European champions this season and proved a thorn in Liverpool's side again. "This is a healthy club within the locker room and with the desire of everyone to emerge from this difficult moment," added Ancelotti. "I spoke to the president, he was very happy with everyone and congratulated us all on the performance." Liverpool were unsettled by the early loss of Fabinho to an ankle injury and Klopp is worried that the Brazilian could be sidelined for some time.

"The biggest thing tonight is the Fabinho injury," added Klopp. "That's massive, it's still early and we hope it is not too serious but it is pretty painful." The home side were still regrouping when the visitors opened the scoring on 21 minutes. Mertens leaned into Virgil van Dijk as the Dutchman headed clear and was left on the ground holding his side. Napoli played on and when the ball was played forward again Mertens was unmarked to run through before beating Alisson Becker from a narrow angle. — AFP



**BARCELONA:** Barcelona's Argentine forward Lionel Messi (C) vies with Dortmund's Portuguese defender Raphael Guerreiro (L) during the UEFA Champions League Group F football match between FC Barcelona and Borussia Dortmund at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona. — AFP

Anfield. Dries Mertens opened the scoring with a sweetly struck opener midway through the first half, before Dejan Lovren's header salvaged a point to keep the Reds top of Group E. However the European champions still need to get at least a point away to Salzburg next month to secure their passage into the last 16, while Napoli need a draw with bottom side Genk to claim their spot. Ajax also need a point to go through thanks to a 2-0 win at Lille that featured the fastest goal of this year's competition to open a two-point lead

at the top of Group H. Hakim Ziyech netted after 94 seconds at eliminated Lille with Quincy Promes hitting his fourth of the tournament on the hour mark. Four-time European champions Ajax have 10 points from five games, two more than Valencia and Chelsea who fought out a hugely entertaining 2-2 draw in Spain earlier in the day. Ajax host Valencia in their concluding fixture next month, while Chelsea welcome Lille to Stamford Bridge knowing a win would be enough to ensure their place in the draw. — AFP

## Liverpool and Napoli draw

**LIVERPOOL:** Liverpool are used to making life difficult for themselves, admitted Jurgen Klopp as a 1-1 draw with Napoli leaves the European champions with work to do to reach the Champions League last 16.

Klopp's men must avoid defeat away to Salzburg on December 10 to secure their passage into the knockout stages. Dries Mertens threatened to inflict Liverpool's first home defeat in the Champions or Premier League since April 2017 with a sweetly struck opener midway through the first half.

Dejan Lovren's header protected that proud unbeaten run, but after a host of late winners in the Premier League this season there was no such joy for the hosts this time round. "Our way was always the hard one," said Klopp. "We have to go to Salzburg. If we had done it (qualified) tonight we would've tried to win there and we will do the same now."

Napoli remain a point behind Liverpool, but are well-placed to reach the knockout stages as they host winless Genk in two weeks' time. "It's not easy to get a draw here. We suffered under pressure and began to defend too deep, but there's no other way to emerge alive from Anfield," said Napoli coach

## Chelsea made to wait for last 16 spot after draw

**VALENCIA:** Daniel Wass's late equaliser denied Chelsea a place in the last 16 of the Champions League as a profligate Valencia fought back for a 2-2 draw that maintains both sides' chances of reaching the knockout stages.

A wide open game swung the visitors' way after Carles Soler's opener for Valencia as Mateo Kovacic and Christian Pulisic put Chelsea in pole position to avenge their 1-0 defeat on home soil to the Spaniards on matchday one.

However, after Kepa Arrizabalaga had saved Dani Parejo's penalty, Wass's cross flummoxed the Spaniards on matchday one. Both sides are tied on eight points in second place in Group H, two points behind Ajax, who beat Lille 2-0.

Victory at home to Lille in two weeks' time will ensure Frank Lampard's men make the last 16 and they were thankful to five huge misses from the hosts to escape with a point on a night that could also prove costly as top-scorer Tammy Abraham was stretchered off at half-time. "We nearly won it, nearly lost it. It was end-to-end, not that we wanted it to be," said Lampard. "It keeps it in our hands and we have to be happy with that." They were arriving in our

box too much. Credit to the players for their work-rate and hanging on in there, but sometimes you have to be more secure than that."

Maxi Gomez was the principal villain for Valencia as the Uruguayan twice failed to find the net with the goal at his mercy in the first half.

"In a very open game in which we've both had chances, we had by far the clearest chances, on top of the penalty," said Valencia coach Albert Celades. "The key was that we didn't take them." When Valencia did finally break the deadlock there was a hint of fortune in the finish as the ball ricocheted off Soler's legs, but had enough power to beat Kepa.

Defeat would have left Lampard's men on the brink of elimination, but they responded immediately after falling behind as Kovacic produced his first goal for the club at the perfect time with a fine low strike. Abraham was then left wincing in pain and holding his left hip as he was trampled on inside the area and eventually had to be stretchered down the tunnel after both sides had already made their way to the dressing room at half-time. "He's had a bang on the hip but it might not be as severe as we first thought," said Lampard, who confirmed the England international has not gone to hospital. Despite the loss of their key marksman, Chelsea took the lead five minutes into the second period when Pulisic kept up his fine scoring form by prodding home Kurt Zouma's knockdown. Following a lengthy VAR check for offside, the goal was given, but Valencia were furious there was not a check for a potential foul by Zouma in the build-up. — AFP

WUHAN: File photo shows Sania Mirza of India serves as she and partner Peng Shuai of China play in their women's doubles semifinals match against Yung-Jan Chan of Taiwan and Martina Hingis of Switzerland at the WTA Wuhan Open. — AFP



# India's Mirza set for tennis comeback

See Page 43