

# Friday Times

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MOHARRAM 7, 1440 AH | FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2019

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**MARSH HARBORS:** An aerial view of damage from Hurricane Dorian in Marsh Harbor, Great Abaco Island in the Bahamas. Hurricane Dorian lashed the Carolinas with driving rain and fierce winds as it neared the US east coast after devastating the Bahamas and killing at least 20 people. — AFP

# Dorian hits US east coast

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## Local

## Paper, not plastic



Local Spotlight

By Muna Al-Fuzai

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Every time I go shopping to the local market to buy even a few small items, I end up with a handful of plastic bags, a few items in each. I feel pain about this because plastic bags are damaging to the environment.

The use of plastic bags represents a serious environmental problem, as they are made from materials that do not degrade and remain buried in the environment for many years and often end up in the rivers and oceans. Even in the case of burning them, plastic bags pose a threat as they emit chemical compounds in the form of a black cloud that leads to air pollution which negatively affects human health and increases global warming and climate change. I believe that we need to completely eliminate the consumption of plastic bags.

Some countries in the world began to ban the manufacture, import or use of plastic bags. The first country that passed a ban on the use of these bags was Denmark in 1993. They imposed a law charging a fee for the use of plastic bags, which reduced their consumption by 60 percent. I guess if we asked the public to pay for plastic bags, we would witness a similar reduction in use in Kuwait. But there should also be an alternative like paper bags or biodegradable bags for free. The public would welcome that.

In fact, there are a number of countries in the world that have felt the damage caused by excessive plastic bag use and have begun campaigns supporting this transformation supported by the law to eliminate plastic bags.

The United States began a campaign to fight plastic bags in 2007. In 2014, San Francisco banned the use of plastic bags and banned water bottles that were made of plastic.

In late 2018, a draft resolution was introduced in the Turkish parliament to impose a fee on plastic bags. The plan aimed to protect the environment by imposing purchasing value on the consumption of the plastic bags and selling it to the buyer.

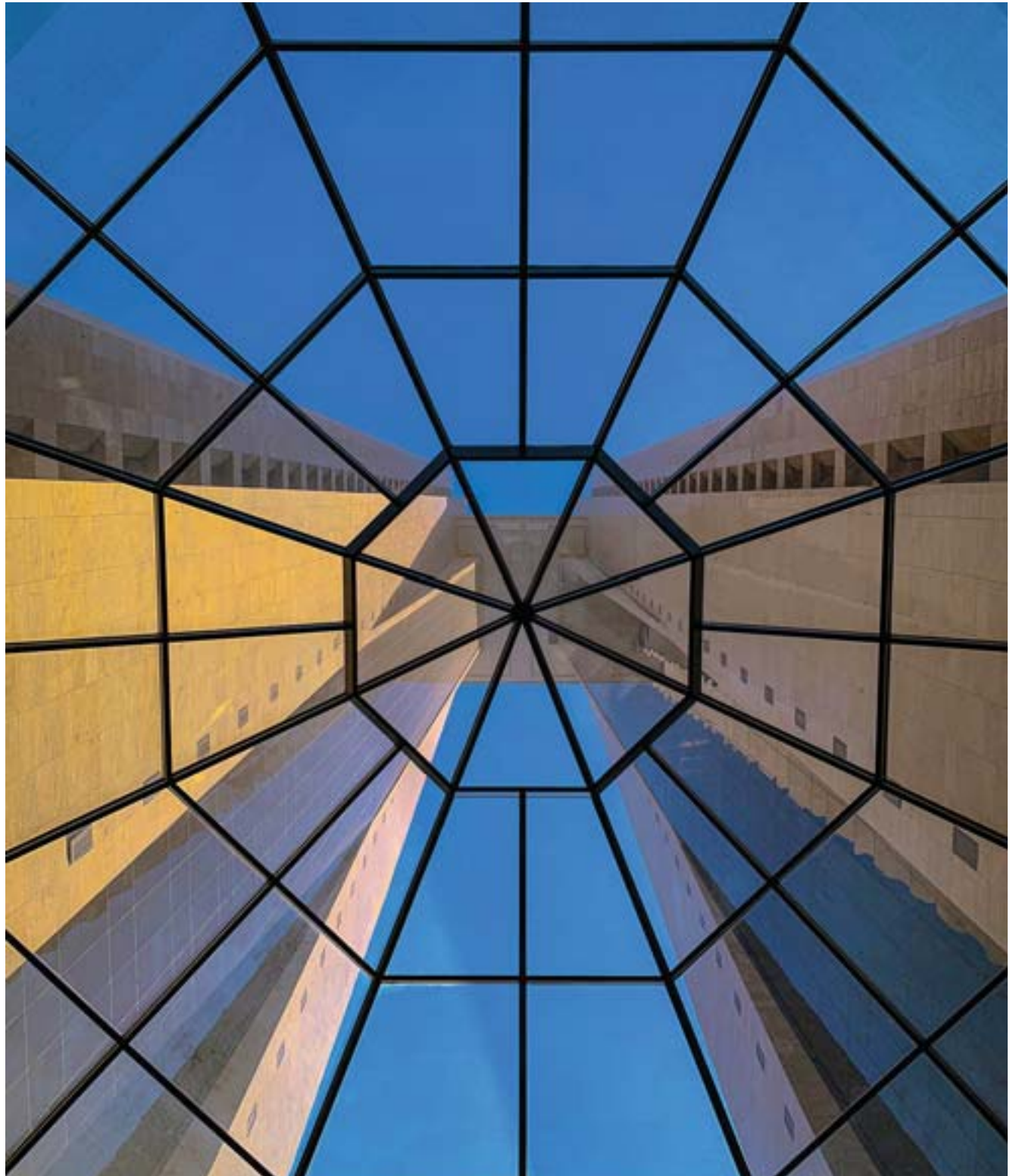
Thus, the buyer and seller reduce the use of plastic bags, using old bags or other bags made of cloth, as the cloth will cause less environmental damage compared to plastic.

I hope that the municipality and the public authority of environment work together on the matter by issuing a law that deals with recycling waste and protecting the environment from the damage of plastic bags. Local coops have recently announced that they will begin to replace plastic bags with eco-friendly ones, a good step in the right direction.

There is a real and urgent need to act on this topic to stop this tampering with our environment and to achieve this goal we need an awareness campaigns for the public starting with school kids to stop using plastic bags and look for other things that won't cause damage to the environment.

It's time we began to consider how our lifestyles, actions and behavior affect and damage the world around us. Without taking measures to protect and preserve our land and our environment, what will the future hold for us?

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



A worm's eye view of Kuwait Twin Towers. — Photo by Maisoon Alfares/KUNA

## Who's the authority for parking meters?

By Ben Garcia

In this digital age, a century-old device such as the parking meter is still around. The meters allow motorists to park their vehicles in designated areas by paying 50 or 100 fils. Parking meters can be found in Salmiya, Fahaheel and Kuwait City. However, many of these meters are no longer functioning, as some of them are destroyed or dilapidated.

To report malfunctions, Kuwait Times approached the interior ministry, but were told they are not the right department for this particular concern. The Municipality and the finance ministry also said they are not the authorities on this matter. Many drivers admitted to not paying anything while using the space for parking. "I've been driving since 2003, and have never paid a single fils when using a metered park-

ing space. There has been no trouble, so I keep on doing this," a taxi driver told Kuwait Times. But according to a police officer, violators can be fined KD 50.

A parking meter is a device used to collect money in exchange for the right to park a vehicle in a particular place for a limited amount of time. The parking meters are used by municipalities as a tool for enforcing their integrated on-street parking policy, usually related to their traffic and mobility management policies, but also for revenue. An early patent for a parking meter was filed by Roger W Babson on August 30, 1928. The meter was intended to operate on power from the battery of the parking vehicle and required a connection from the vehicle to the meter. Holger George Thuesen and Gerald A Hale designed the first working parking meter, the Black Maria, in 1935.

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Local

# The two sides of SHAAB



— Shaab area photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

By Faten Omar

As part of our occasional series exploring various areas of Kuwait, Kuwait Times visited Shaab to discover the main features of this area. Shaab is located in the Hawally governorate of Kuwait. It is divided by the Fahaheel Expressway between residential Shaab, blocks 1-7 and Shaab Al-Bahri, block 8. The residential area includes many homes, a family-friendly park and playground, a coop and several restaurants. Across the highway in Shaab Al-Bahri, mostly apartment buildings mark the skyline and dozens of small restaurants, baqalas, businesses, gyms and medical offices and private clinics can be found.



## Local



Saud Al-Faisal, 36, said Shaab has a mix of races, religions and nationalities. "The area is characterized by its vitality. It includes a social mix of Kuwaiti people of all categories. There is no sectarianism or racism here," he said. He added Shaab is a link between Daiya, Hawally and Salmiya, and people can easily enter and exit the area from the seaside or Road 30, which makes the area less crowded than others.

Abdulrahman Al-Jaafreh, 41, said the area is named after coral reefs in Arabic. "In the past, the sea was full of coral and sometimes it would be out of the water in the Shaab area during the rains. We were told that Sheikh Salem Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah was the first person to inhabit the area, where he built the Shaab Palace," he told Kuwait Times.

Um Ali, 43, pointed out that Shaab's prime location attracts people from everywhere, but like many other areas of Kuwait, its roads need maintenance, "The government must develop the area, maintain the roads and walkways and add more services, because the area deserves more than this," she said.

She added that residents of Shaab need more green spaces and parks, speed bumps should be removed and streets need to be maintained. "It is a vital area, but we need more services to be more civilized. There are not enough workers and services in the area. Even Shaab Co-op Society needs more supplies and goods, as we always buy our groceries from other co-ops. Also, we need entertainment places for children here."



## Local

# TIMBER TRADE IN OLD KUWAIT

The historic remains of old civilizations, possibly dating back to more than 4,000 years ago, that were discovered in Kuwait indicate the country's commercial significance in the Gulf region. Kuwait's unique and strategic location helped in linking together surrounding nations via sea and land routes, becoming a keystone exit for passing trade convoys from Iraq and Iran to the eastern region of the Arabian Peninsula.

Furthermore, several historical documents and data indicate Kuwait's establishment dates back to 1613 when a group of migrating families and tribes decided to settle in the desert land after realizing its significance. They evolved over time into a civilized community of social and political structure, and launched their commercial and economic activities via land and sea, most notably timber trade.

Timber trade has been occupying a unique place in the country's economy since that time and up until present day as it used to supply woods to almost all Gulf States except Oman that had its own merchant navy fleet, Kuwait's Heritage researcher Saleh Al-Methen told KUNA.

Most woods were imported from India, while the famed sandalwood used to be brought from Africa as it grew in specific hard-terrain lands, Al-Methen noted, adding timber traders in Kuwait used to stock their goods in commercial storage, called 'Amara' in Arabic, which location was usually overlooking the sea. There were more than 70 commercial storages in Kuwait, in which traders used to store and sell various types of imported woods that were used for building ships, housing, and other construction purposes, said the Kuwait historian. — KUNA



The process of building ships in Kuwait in the past. — KUNA photos

The hall ways in old Kuwaiti houses

# 1st



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## Local



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received Kuwait Blind Association's officials yesterday. — KUNA photos

## PM receives Kuwait Blind Association's top officials

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah yesterday received the Honorary President of Kuwait Blind Association Fahad Sayyah Abushaiba, Chairman of the board of directors Fayiz Al-Azmi, and board members at Seif Palace. The officials presented His Highness with the first copy of Quran written in 'Braille' and issued by the association.

His Highness the Prime Minister hailed the association's efforts to provide different services for blind people. He added that Kuwait is continuously working on meeting the needs of disabled people, as part of the country's development plans. His Highness also applauded the issuing of Quran in Braille, which will enrich libraries in Kuwait and the Islamic World as well. — KUNA



## Kuwait pitches plan over Gulf eGOV system



**RIYADH:** Kuwait has submitted an idea over how to go about compiling reports on the progress of establishing an e-government (eGOV) system in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). The Kuwaiti proposal calls for more interaction among concerned bodies in the GCC as member states work on setting up an integrated eGOV system, said Dr Walid Al-Hasawi, an advisor at the Gulf state's Central Agency for Information Technology. The Kuwaiti suggestion, made during talks involving an ad hoc committee tasked with looking into the matter, also underlines the need to achieve common objectives, which should be aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, he added. — KUNA

## Kuwait Fire Service inspects Husseiniyas

By Hanan Al-Saadoun, Agencies

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Fire Service Directorate organized inspection tours at the Husseiniyas to make sure they meet safety and security conditions, and provide with special fire prevention instructions. Meanwhile, Kuwait Fire Service Directorate and Communications Ministry have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in regards to coordinating search and rescue operations in Kuwait's territorial waters. KFSM Director General Lt General Khalid Al-Mikrad and Communication Ministry Undersecretary Eng Khlood Al-Shihab signed the MoU.

### Fake news

Kuwait Military General Headquarters said in a statement that a report on the social media about a plan to form a new brigade which will be use as a back up when necessary is untrue and there is no such plan at all. The statement said the rules of accepting members in Kuwait army are very clear, and joining the various units are governed by specialties and qualifications standards, and loyalty is for the country and HHH the Amir.

### Impounded cars

Traffic Department said impounded cars and motorcycles in Mina Abdallah area will be sold on Wednesday 11, September 2019. Those who wish to participate in the auction can go to the Traffic Department at Kuwait Public Transport Company Garage in Mina Abdallah a day before the auction to inspect the cars.



### Bus impounded

Interior Ministry said that the bus that was shown on the social media while violating the traffic law has been impounded.



## Local

# Kuwait submits letter to Security Council over Fisht Al-Eij platform

## Iraq urged to abide by the UN Security Council resolutions

**NEW YORK:** Kuwait has presented a letter to the UN Security Council in a response to a letter submitted earlier by Iraq to the UN body over Kuwait's construction of a platform in Fisht Al-Eij - a piece of land located within Kuwait's territorial water. The Kuwaiti letter, dated 20 August, was handed by Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi to the UNSC president in response to the Iraqi letter, which was addressed to the UNSC president on 7 August, which was issued as an official UNSC document.

Ambassador Al-Otaibi said in statements to KUNA that 'the Iraqi letter focused on the maritime area beyond border mark No 162, or the still undemarcated territorial sea area between the two countries.' Iraq wanted to prove and document its stance that this area is not demarcated,' he noted.

Al-Otaibi clarified that these letters are usually not reviewed or deliberated by the UN Security Council. They are meant to document countries stances, he said. 'We must distinguish between the UN-drawn borders and relevant international obligations on both countries on one hand and the territorial sea, which has not been demarcated yet,' he argued.

He affirmed that Iraq and Kuwait were committed to the relevant UN Security Council resolutions (in particular resolution No 833) which determined land and sea borders. 'There is no dispute over land and sea borders up until the border mark No 162,' he pointed out. Al-Otaibi reiterated that Iraq abides by the UN Security Council resolutions and the UN-drawn border lines with Kuwait.

### Compensations

The demarcation of the joint maritime border beyond the 162 mark is a purely bilateral issue and has nothing to do with Iraq's international obligations, to which it is fully committed, he said. On another issue, the Kuwaiti envoy expressed hope that Iraq would complete payment of compensations of the occupation of Kuwait in coming two years.'

Iraq is also committed to implement its other obligations relating to knowing the fate of prisoners of war and missing persons and returning Kuwaiti property,' he said. Al-Otaibi stressed that there is progress and cooperation between Kuwait and Iraq for accelerating the implementation of these obligations, which are stipulated by UN Security Council resolutions.

He pointed out that the issue of Fisht Al-Eij platform was raised during bilateral talks and there is correspondence between the two countries over it. Kuwait called on Iraq more than once to start negotiations to settle this issue due to its importance for both sides, as settling it would help build mutual confidence and strengthen bilateral relations, he underlined. According to the letter submitted by Al-



Kuwait's Permanent Representative at the UN Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi — KUNA

Otaibi, Kuwait confirmed that its territorial waters have been determined by a decree issued on 17 December 1967, on the breadth of the territorial sea, which was updated by decree No 317 of 29 October 2014 on Kuwait's marine areas as per Article 15 of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

### Sovereign decision

It indicated that Fisht Al-Eij is an area of land formed naturally above the surface of water in the low-lying islands which are located in Kuwait's territorial waters, thus the construction of the platform was a solely Kuwaiti sovereign decision. It stated that the platform was established and installed in Fisht Al-Eij to ensure safety of maritime navigation in Khor Abdullah estuary and to provide support to the Shuwaikh Port Tower in light of the expected increase in the number of private vessels due to the absence of visible means to monitor and follow-up ships movement in Khor Abdullah.

Furthermore, it requires a command site to coordinate security of navigation movement and deal with environmental accidents there. In the letter, Kuwait highlighted certain security considerations: the need for a modern and sophisticated system to monitor the area of Khor Abdullah and a security presence to counter repeated infiltration of unidentified vessels into Kuwaiti territorial waters.

The 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea only obligates Kuwait to notify Iraq and it has done that, affirmed the letter. It explained that Kuwait informed the Iraqi side, before it builds the platform in September 2018. Kuwait notified Iraq about the platform in the sixth meeting of the Kuwaiti-Iraqi committee, responsible for

organizing maritime navigation in Khor Abdullah, which was held on 26 January, 2017 and notified it again in a memo addressed to the Iraqi embassy in Kuwait on 28 February 2017.

The letter affirmed that Kuwait did not violate paragraph 3/A of the joint plan to ensure the safety of navigation in Khor Abdullah as this paragraph only identify communications means between the two sides, thus has nothing to do with the construction of the platform. It stated that Kuwait has responded to the memorandums of the Iraqi side dated 9 May, 2017 and 12 September, 2018, in which Iraq asked Kuwait to wait until the demarcation of maritime borders beyond the border mark No 162.

In those memos, Kuwait apprised Iraq of its plan to set up a platform in Fisht Al-Eij, and reiterated its stance that Kuwait alone has the right to decide on such an issue based on its sovereignty over its territorial land and sea. As for the demarcation of the maritime borders in this area, Kuwait has demanded Iraq, since 2005, in minutes of all joint higher ministerial committees to begin negotiations on the demarcation of the maritime borders beyond mark 162, which was established by the UN Security Council resolution 833 of 1993.

Kuwait also renewed its call in this regard during the seventh session of the joint ministerial committee held in Kuwait in May 2019. The letter stated that Kuwait takes into account its obligations under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and that works in its territorial waters are in line with its obligations under that convention.

Construction works currently underway in the Iraqi port of Al-Faw have reached advanced stages, nevertheless Iraq did not

consult Kuwait despite the obligations imposed by Article 206 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, particularly those focusing on the assessment of impacts on the marine environment due to the construction of Al-Faw port and its breakwater, which was established 5.4 nautical miles off the Iraqi coast into Khor Abdullah waters and less than 1.5 nautical miles from the navigation channel.

### Environmental impacts

The letter pointed to the geomorphological impacts seabed of Khor Abdullah and its navigation channel. It stated that the Kuwaiti side must have been informed about those effects as per Article 205 of the same convention. The Iraqi side has not submitted any studies related to the environmental impacts of the establishment of Al-Faw port despite repeated requests from the Kuwaiti side in this regard.

The letter stated that because of the Iraqi side's failure to provide the Kuwaiti side with the study on the environmental impacts or to discuss with the construction of the Al-Faw breakwater as per the provisions of articles 123, 205 and 206 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, Kuwait submitted a memo to the UN secretary-general on 23 May, 2018, regretting Iraq's failure to cooperate with it in this regard and warning against the negative repercussions of such a stance on that area.

Kuwait also urged the UN to press the Iraqi side to abide by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and to provide Kuwait with a study on environmental impacts of the project and to consult with it in this regard. According to article 192 and article 194 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, Iraq must take the necessary measures to prevent, reduce and control pollution in this area.

In response to the Iraqi request to wait until reaching an understanding on the demarcation of the maritime borders beyond mark 162, Kuwait attached with the letter a list of the minutes of the joint meetings, in which Iraqi voiced commitment to start negotiations on demarcating this area - but all in vain.

The letter pointed out that Kuwait sent invitations and letters urging the Iraqi side to start negotiations to demarcate the maritime border beyond border mark No 162, but the Iraqi side did not respond to all those calls. On this occasion, Kuwait calls once again on the Iraqi side to resolve this issue by starting negotiations on the demarcation of maritime borders after mark No 162 or by resorting to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea established under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. — KUNA



South Africa faces backlash after xenophobic attacks

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## Dorian strengthens to Category 3 storm, lashes US east coast

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KABUL: An Afghan woman weeps for relatives impacted by a suicide attack, as she is supported at the Wazir Akbar Khan hospital following the blast in Kabul. — AFP

# Taleban kills 10 in 'horrific' attack

## Car bomb rocks heavily fortified area adjacent to Green Zone

**KABUL:** The Taleban killed at least 10 people, including a Romanian soldier, in a fresh bombing in Kabul yesterday—yet another horrific attack on the Afghan capital as the US and the insurgents negotiate a deal to see American troops leave the country. The car bomb blast shook Shash Darak, a heavily fortified area adjacent to the Green Zone and home to several important complexes including the National Directorate of Security (NDS), the Afghan intelligence service.

Apparent surveillance footage of the attack, which occurred at about 10:10 am (0540 GMT), showed a grey minivan explode just after it had cut in front of a line of white SUVs waiting to make a right turn right onto a street. One nearby pedestrian can be seen turning and trying to run away as the minivan crashed through a barrier just before the blast. Romania's defense ministry said in a statement that a Romanian soldier "lost his life today while executing a mixed patrol mission near (the) Green Zone in Kabul".

His death comes after a Romanian employee of the European nation's embassy was killed in a separate Taleban attack in east Kabul on

Monday. According to interior ministry spokesman Nasrat Rahimi, at least 10 civilians were killed and 42 more wounded. But Farid Ahmad Karimi, general manager at the Wazir Akbar Khan hospital close to the bomb site, told AFP that both civilians and security personnel were among the dead and wounded.

On Twitter, Taleban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid claimed responsibility for the attack, saying a "martyrdom seeker"—or suicide bomber—had triggered the car bomb and that 12 "foreign invaders" were killed. Massoud Zazai, who owns a photo studio across the street from the blast site, said he was in his shop when the explosion happened. "I fell off my chair and it got dark inside the shop because of smoke and dust," Zazai told AFP.

"I went out to the scene moments after the attack, the side of the road was littered with debris and bodies." Through the smoke, Zazai said he could hear injured people crying and calling for their mothers and brothers. "I saw at least five very badly injured, one was covered in blood and not moving. It was horrifying." The attack was close to where the Islamic State

group killed nine journalists in a blast in April last year, including AFP Kabul's chief photographer Shah Marai.

### 'Bitten by the snake'

On Monday, a Romanian was among at least 16 people who were killed in a Taleban attack on a residential area in east Kabul. Currently, Romania contributes about 760 military personnel to the US-led NATO mission in Afghanistan, which has a total force size of about 17,000 troops from 39 countries. The capital has been gripped by a surge in deadly violence even after the US and the insurgents reached an agreement "in principle" that would see the Pentagon pull thousands of troops from Afghanistan in return for various Taleban security promises.

But there is increasing unease about the deal, with Afghans fearing it will lead to a return of the Taleban to power, and a growing chorus of US lawmakers and officials expressing doubts. According to parts of the deal made public so far, the Pentagon would pull about 5,000 of its 13,000 or so troops from five bases across

Afghanistan by early next year, provided the Taleban hews to its security pledges. The insurgents have said they will renounce Al-Qaeda, fight the Islamic State group and stop jihadists using Afghanistan as a safe haven.

On Wednesday, the Afghan government expressed doubts about the prospective deal, saying officials need more information about the risks it poses. "There is too much concern about it, and we are still not assured of what consequences this agreement could have for Afghanistan's future," presidential advisor Waheed Omar told journalists yesterday. "The people of Afghanistan have been bitten by the snake before, and have been witness to the consequences of hasty deals".

Even as negotiations for an accord have entered what are widely considered to be the final stages, violence has surged across Afghanistan. On Saturday, the Taleban attempted to seize the provincial capital of Kunduz in the north and sporadic fighting has continued on the outskirts all week. Insurgents launched an operation in the city of Pul-e Khumri, the capital of neighboring Baghlan province on Sunday. — AFP

## International

# Iran to unveil details on cuts to nuclear commitments

## Netanyahu opposes talks, calls for international pressure on Iran

**TEHRAN:** Iran is set to detail its latest cut to commitments under a 2015 nuclear deal tomorrow, in response to US sanctions and perceived inaction by other parties to save the accord. Iran's atomic energy organization spokesman Behrouz Kamalvandi will hold a news conference to detail Tehran's third round of cuts in its nuclear commitments since May, the semi-official ISNA news agency reported yesterday.

Iran and three European countries—Britain, France and Germany—have been engaged in talks to reduce tensions and rescue the multi-party deal, which has been unraveling since the US withdrew in May last year. But with no apparent agreement in sight, Iran's President Hassan Rouhani on Wednesday made good on a promise to take another step away from the deal between Iran and the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council powers, plus Germany (P5+1).

"The atomic energy organization (of Iran) is ordered to immediately start whatever is needed in the field of research and development, and abandon all the commitments that were in place regarding research and development," said Rouhani, without elaborating. Iran's arch-enemy Israel responded by calling for more international pressure on Iran. "This is not the time to hold talks with Iran; this is the time to increase the pressure on Iran," said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

The EU yesterday urged Iran to backtrack on moves to drop its commitments under the deal, known as the JCPOA. "These activities we consider are inconsistent with the JCPOA," said European Commission spokesman Carlos Martin Ruiz de Gordejuela. "We urge Iran to reverse

these steps and refrain from further measures that undermine the nuclear deal."

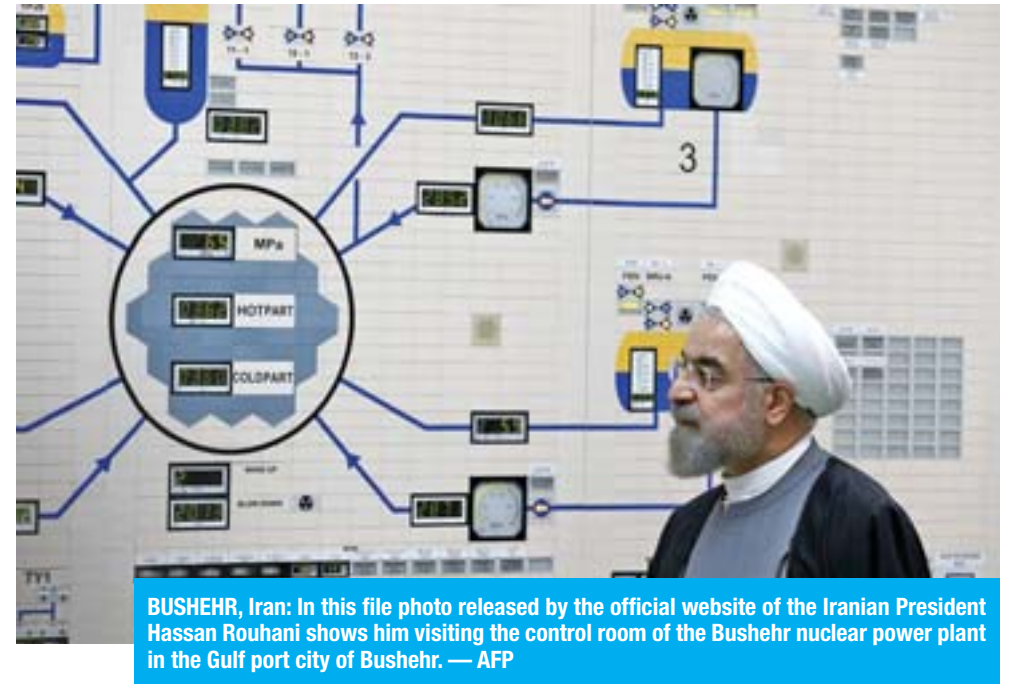
### Building leverage

A senior US official on Wednesday ruled out any sanctions exemptions that would permit a French-proposed credit line, which Tehran says could bring it back to full compliance with the deal. "We can't make it any more clear that we are committed to this campaign of maximum pressure and we are not looking to grant any exceptions or waivers," Brian Hook, the State Department coordinator on Iran, told reporters.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif responded by tweeting that the US Treasury was "nothing more than a JAIL WARDEN." "Ask for reprieve (waiver), get thrown in solitary for the audacity. Ask again and you might end up in the gallows," he tweeted. Iran has expressed mounting frustration at Europe's failure to offset the effects of renewed US sanctions in return for its continued compliance with the agreement. It had already hit back twice with countermeasures in response to the US withdrawal from the deal.

On July 1, Iran said it had increased its stockpile of enriched uranium to beyond the 300-kilogramme limit set by the agreement. A week later, it announced it had exceeded the deal's uranium enrichment limit of 3.67 percent. The UN's nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, said on August 30 that Iran's uranium stockpile stood at about 360 kilograms, of which just over 10 percent was enriched to 4.5 percent.

Rouhani has stressed that the countermeasures Iran has adopted are all readily reversible if the remaining parties to the deal honor their



**BUSHEHR, Iran:** In this file photo released by the official website of the Iranian President Hassan Rouhani shows him visiting the control room of the Bushehr nuclear power plant in the Gulf port city of Bushehr. — AFP

undertakings to provide sanctions relief. The Iranian president on Wednesday gave Europe a 60-day ultimatum before Iran drops another commitment. Francois Nicoulaud, a French former ambassador to Iran, said the moves to be detailed tomorrow would likely focus on bringing on line new centrifuges for enriching uranium—and would be "only partially reversible". "Even if research is stopped, the intellectual gains are forever," he said. But analyst Henry Rome argued that the appeared to be "provocative

but reversible". "Tehran is building leverage, not a bomb," said Rome, a specialist on Iran for the Washington-based Eurasia Group consultancy. He added that the French initiative, meant to provide Iran with a multi-billion-dollar line of credit in exchange for returning to deal compliance, is "likely to wither away" because it requires Washington's approval. "Why would the United States endorse a policy initiative aimed at explicitly and directly undermining its 'maximum pressure' policy?" he asked. — AFP

## US offered millions in cash to captain of Iranian tanker

**WASHINGTON:** A senior US official personally offered several million dollars to the Indian captain of an Iranian oil tanker suspected of heading to Syria, the State Department confirmed Wednesday. The Financial Times reported that Brian Hook, the State Department pointman on Iran, sent emails to captain Akhilesh Kumar in which he offered "good news" of millions in US cash to live comfortably if he steered the Adrian Darya 1 to a country where it could be seized.

"We have seen the Financial Times article and can confirm that the details are accurate," a State Department spokeswoman said. "We have conducted extensive outreach to several ship captains as well as shipping companies warning them of the consequences of providing support to a foreign terrorist organization," she said, referring to Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards.

The Adrian Darya 1 was held for six weeks by the British overseas territory of Gibraltar on suspicion that it was set to deliver oil from Iran to its main Arab ally Syria—a violation of European Union sanctions on President Bashar al-Assad's iron-fisted regime. Gibraltar released the ship, formerly called the Grace 1, on August 18 over US protests after receiving written assurances that the vessel would not head to countries sanctioned by the European Union.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif mocked Hook's initiative as he pointed to the Financial Times story. "Having failed at piracy, the US resorts to outright blackmail—deliver us Iran's oil and receive several million dollars or be sanctioned yourself," Zarif tweeted. State Department chief spokeswoman Morgan Ortogus hit back using Zarif's exact words, accusing Iran of "outright blackmail" with its call for \$15 billion from European powers to be paid back from Iran's future oil sales. Iran says that, if it receives the credit line, it will come back into full compliance with a 2015 nuclear accord from which US President Donald Trump withdrew.

US authorities said that Kumar, 43, took over as captain in Gibraltar. After he apparently did not respond to the US offer, the Treasury Department on Friday imposed sanctions both on the ship and on Kumar himself, freezing any assets he may have in the United States and criminalizing any US financial transactions with him. "Any US or foreign persons that engage in certain transactions with designated persons or entities may themselves be exposed to sanctions," the first State Department spokeswoman said.

The Adrian Daya 1 has been elusive since sailing off from Gibraltar, with monitors reporting that it has been moving in the eastern Mediterranean near Lebanon. The United States also announced Wednesday that it was imposing sanctions on a shipping network alleged to be tied to the Revolutionary Guards—and offering up to \$15 million for information that could disrupt the unit's finances.

The shipping network sold more than \$500 million this spring, mostly in Syria, according to the Treasury Department. After pulling from the nuclear accord, the United States has unilaterally threatened sanctions aimed at ending all oil sales by Iran in a bid to diminish the clerical regime's regional influence. — AFP

## Six suspected jihadists killed in Egypt

**CAIRO:** Six suspected jihadists were killed yesterday in a shootout with police near the Bahariya oasis southwest of the Egyptian capital, the interior ministry said. Police carried out a dawn raid against "terrorist elements" in a desert area near Bahariya, roughly 300 kilometers southwest of Cairo, the ministry said in a statement. A shootout led to the death of six suspects, the ministry said, adding that a number of hunting rifles and four assault rifles were found at the site.

Jihadists have launched several attacks in the vast desert area west of the Nile. In November 2018, an Islamic State group attack killed six Copts and an Anglican after they left the Saint Samuel monastery west of the Nile in Minya province. IS carried out another attack nearby in May 2017, killing 29 Coptic pilgrims, many of them children. Tourists have also been killed in attacks, but the violence has mostly targeted police and soldiers.

Hundreds of security personnel have died in an escalation of attacks since the military overthrow of Islamist president Mohamed Morsi in 2013. The ouster was led by then-army-chief Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, who became president following 2014 polls before securing an official 97 percent of the vote in elections last year. — AFP

## International

# South Africa faces backlash after xenophobic attacks

## Nigerians quit WEF event; S Africa tries to contain 'Afrophobia' fallout

CAPE TOWN: South Africa's government said yesterday that prejudice was a factor in deadly rioting that has targeted foreign businesses, as those attacks and reprisals overshadowed a pan-African economic conference it is hosting for a second day. President Cyril Ramaphosa had hoped the World Economic Forum summit would serve as a shop window for his efforts to revive South Africa's ailing economy and boost intra-African trade. But the backdrop of a week of anti-immigrant violence, during which at least seven people have been killed and hundreds of arrests been made, has dominated proceedings.

While the victims' nationalities have not been made public, the rioting has above all exposed dormant tensions between the host country and Nigeria, the continent's two biggest economies. Yesterday Jim Ovia, chairman of Nigeria's Zenith Bank and a co-chair of the whole Cape Town event, withdrew, citing the "hypersensitivity of the issues surrounding the lives and well-being of Nigerian citizens living in South Africa." Nigeria, whose vice president had boycotted the summit on Wednesday, also recalled its High Commissioner to South Africa.

But yesterday the highest-profile absentee was Ramaphosa himself who, as his ministers sought to manage the fallout, cancelled his appearance at the WEF plenary session to address a crowd protesting for a second day about violence against women. Speaking in his place, Finance Minister Tito Mboweni said most South Africans disapproved of attacks on foreigners and the principle of freedom of movement for the continent's citizens was key.

But animosities were generating violence, and politicians were partly responsible. "We have to go to our people politically to discuss what

some of them are doing is wrong." The riots began eight days ago in Pretoria before spreading to nearby Johannesburg. Both cities, in Gauteng province, have large immigrant populations. Police yesterday reported 15 associated deaths since then, of which Gauteng police commissioner Elias Mawela confirmed seven were directly linked to the violence. Police had also made 423 arrests. Asked about the victims' nationalities, he said that "has been taken to the pathologist." Threats of reprisals in Nigeria on Wednesday forced Pretoria to shut its embassy and consulate there, its foreign minister said, and South African companies MTN, and Shoprite closed stores in the country after retaliatory attacks. In Democratic Republic of Congo's second city Lubumbashi, residents protested outside the South African consulate and a South African-owned shop was looted, witnesses told Reuters yesterday.

### Targeting Africans

Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor said the government was aware of a resentment-driven "Afrophobia" and was working to restore calm. It was also in constant contact with Nigerian authorities. "There is a targeting of Africans from other parts of Africa, we can't deny that," she told Reuters on the sidelines of the conference. "But, there is also criminality ... because a lot of this is accompanied by theft," she said, describing the attacks as a complex phenomenon whose root causes were not easy to define.

Police said they found two burnt bodies yesterday in the Gauteng township of Katlehong, but the incident could not be immediately linked to anti-immigrant violence. Some trade traffic was also affected. In neighboring eSwatini, the National Agricultural Marketing Board said trucks that nor-



ABUJA: A demonstrator holds a sign during a protest against xenophobia outside of the main gate of the South African High Commission which was shut down to avert reprisal attacks in Abuja. — AFP

mally carry farm produce south across the border were being kept in their depot after advice from South African counterparts that it was not safe to travel. "We are keeping our fingers crossed that things will normalize by next week," said NAM-Board Agribusiness Manager Tammy Dlamini. Central Bank data yesterday showed South Africa's

trade balance swung to a deficit in the second quarter while the current account deficit widened. The economy grew more than forecast in the same period but it had contracted sharply in the previous three months, and the heads of two local financial firms said yesterday that a meaningful recovery was years away. — Reuters

## Myanmar airport closes after plane skids off runway

YANGON: Myanmar's largest airport was forced to close temporarily after a military plane skidded off the runway, forcing inbound international flights to be diverted, an official at the civil aviation department said yesterday. A Chinese-made Y-8-200F transport plane slid off the runway at Yangon international airport in the morning after one of its engines failed, according to a government statement. There were no injuries reported, but outbound flights were delayed and inbound flights suspended.

"We are in a situation that the airport has temporarily shut down," Ye Htut Aung, Deputy Director-General of Myanmar's Department of Civil Aviation, told Reuters by telephone. International flights would not re-

sume until the aircraft could be removed, he said. "My husband is now stuck at the airport in Dhaka, and can't come home as he planned," said Yu Lwin Soe, who was waiting at the airport with her toddler son. "We don't know what's happening or how long it will take," she said.

In May, a Biman Bangladesh Airlines plane skidded on the runway of the Yangon international airport in heavy rain, leading to more than a dozen people being sent to hospital. Later that month, a Myanmar National Airlines flight was forced to make an emergency landing after its nose gear failed. In June 2017, a Y-8 military plane crashed into the Andaman Sea off Myanmar's southern coast, killing all 122 people on board. — Reuters

## S Africa's Ramaphosa vows to intensify war on rape, murder of women

CAPE TOWN: South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa yesterday vowed to tighten laws to fight rape and murder of women as the nation reels from high profile murders in recent days. In an impromptu address thousands of protesters outside parliament, Ramaphosa admitted that it was time his government took emergency measures to deal with the scourge of rape and murder of women. At least 137 sexual offences are committed per day, mainly against women, according to official figures.

Women Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, said this week that more than 30 women were killed by their spouses last month alone. "Enough is enough and we are going to act," said Ramaphosa, promising to announce later Thursday a raft of new measures his government will take. "Men that kill and rape must stay in jail for life. "The law must change that once you have raped and kill you get life, no bail!" Ramaphosa told the angry crowd.

Thousands of women protested for a second consecutive day in Cape Town at rallies prompted by last month's brutal murders that have triggered outcry and much soul-searching in a country that is seen as one

of the world's most dangerous places for women and often appears numb to murder and sexual violence. In one case University of Cape Town student, Uyinine "Nene" Mrwetyana, 19, was raped and bludgeoned to death when she went to a post office on August 24.

And on Friday boxing champion Leighandre "Baby Lee" Jegels, 25, was allegedly shot dead by her partner, who was a police officer. "Parliament must make a decision on declaring this a state of emergency," said Ramaphosa, who left the World Economic Forum meeting in Cape Town early to accept a memorandum delivered to parliament by a mass demonstration of mainly women.

"I agree completely that the killing of women must be brought to an end here in South Africa," he added. On Wednesday around 500 women demonstrated against South Africa's "femicide epidemic" in front of Cape Town International Conference Centre, where a three-day World Economic Forum on Africa was opening. Last year South Africa recorded a 6.9 percent increase in the number of murders countrywide, with an average 57 murders committed each day. — AFP

# UK's Johnson seeks snap election to break Brexit deadlock

## PM's brother, Jo, quits cabinet, steps down as MP

**LONDON:** UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson called yesterday for an early election after a flurry of parliamentary votes tore up his hardline Brexit strategy and left him without a majority. His government said it would make a second attempt on Monday to trigger the national polls after the opposition Labor party on Wednesday helped block Johnson's first bid.

"It is now time for the people to decide after parliament has failed them so we can resolve this once and for all," a Downing Street spokesman said. The vote's timing is still being debated as the country hurtles toward an October 31 departure from the European Union without a plan for what comes next. The prime minister was dealt a further personal blow when his brother Jo said he was quitting his junior ministerial role and not contesting his seat in parliament in the new ballot. "I've been torn between family loyalty and the national interest—it's an unresolvable tension & time for others to take on my roles," Jo Johnson tweeted.

### Reckless and chicken

Battle lines were drawn across the front pages of British newspapers after a particularly bruising week of UK politics did little to resolve the three-year impasse. The Labor-backing Daily Mirror branded Johnson "Britain's worst PM" for threatening a "reckless no-deal Brexit". The Daily Mail shot back by calling Labor leader Jeremy Corbyn a "chicken" for refusing on Wednesday to back Johnson's proposal to hold a general election on October 15. An opinion poll conducted by YouGov

## Italy swears in new cabinet eyeing fresh start for EU ties

**ROME:** President Sergio Mattarella yesterday swore in Italy's new pro-European government, heralding a fresh start for the eurozone's third largest economy as the far-right falls from power. Brussels warmly welcomed the coalition between the anti-establishment Five Star Movement (M5S) and centre-left Democratic Party (PD), which is expected to markedly improve rocky relations between Europe and Rome. "We're ready to give our utmost for the country," M5S head Luigi Di Maio, the new foreign minister, said. Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte's government still faces votes in parliament on Monday and Tuesday. First on the cabinet's to-do list is the 2020 budget, which has to be submitted to parliament by the end of September, and then to Brussels by October 15. The pick of the PD's Brussels-savvy Roberto Gualtieri as finance minister was hailed as "extremely positive, especially for the relationship with the EU" by Lorenzo Codogno, former chief economist at the Italian Treasury Department.

European Commission President Jean-Claude

on Monday and Tuesday showed Johnson's Conservatives leading Labor by 35 to 25 percent. The pro-European Liberal Democrats were on 16 percent while the Brexit Party of populist Nigel Farage was in fourth place with 11 percent.

### No real negotiations

Parliament is rushing through legislation designed to keep Johnson from breaking Britain off from its closest trading partners without a negotiated agreement with Brussels. MPs appeared on course to do so by Monday—a victory that would be accomplished just ahead of a five-week shutdown of parliament that Johnson controversially ordered at the end of last month. The pound surged to a one-month high against the dollar on rising market hopes of a chaotic breakup being avoided next month.

The parliamentary bill forces Johnson to seek a three-month Brexit extension until January 31 should an EU summit in Brussels on October 17-18 fail to produce a deal. It passed the lower House of Commons with the support of 21 rebel Conservative MPs—who were promptly kicked out of the party. The upper House of Lords ended an all-night filibuster by Johnson's supporters early on Thursday and agreed to finish voting on the bill by Friday night.

The bill could end up back in the House of Commons on Monday for it to consider any changes. It would then go to Queen Elizabeth II for final approval. Johnson rose to power in July on a pledge to deliver Brexit next month-

Juncker congratulated Conte and said Italy's new political era came at "an important moment for our Union", adding that he was sure Rome would play a "front-line" role on key issues. Italy has put forward former centre-left premier Paolo Gentiloni as its candidate for the incoming European Commission. PD chief Nicola Zingaretti said it was an "excellent choice for Italy, which returns to playing a leading role in Europe".

The previous coalition between the M5S and far-right Matteo Salvini's anti-immigrant League had fought bitterly with Brussels over its big-spend budget and critics had bemoaned Rome's sidelining in the EU halls of power. The markets welcomed the new cabinet, with Milan's FTSE Mib stock market up 0.5 percent after the swearing-in ceremony. It is the youngest ever in Italy's post-war history—the average age being 47 — and has more ministers from the country's disadvantaged south than the wealthy north.

### Anti-Salvini

Of the 21 ministers, nine hail from the PD, 10 from the M5S, one from the small left-wing Free and Equals party, and one has no affiliation with any political party—the new interior minister. Political watchers have warned the tie-up between the Movement and PD-bitter foes until just weeks ago-is fragile. "We are very aware that the forces that make up this government have harshly opposed each other over the years," PD heavyweight and new culture minister Dario Franceschini said. —AFP



**LONDON:** Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson checks his watch as he holds a meeting with US Vice-President Mike Pence inside 10 Downing Street in central London.—AFP

"deal or no deal"—and refuses to seek a delay. There is also no guarantee that the other 27 EU leaders will grant one for the third time this year.

"We can see that another six months would not solve the problem," France's European Af-

fairs Minister Amelie de Montchalin said yesterday. Greens European Parliament leader Philippe Lamberts said after a meeting with EU negotiators on Wednesday: "For all the PM's bluster about getting a deal, there are no real negotiations going on in Brussels." —AFP

## Putin finalizes 'large-scale' prisoner swap

**VLADIVOSTOK:** Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday said Moscow was completing negotiations on a "large-scale" prisoner swap with Kiev, in what could be a step towards easing tensions between the neighbors. "We're reaching the final stage of talks on the swap... it will be large-scale," he told an economic forum in the Russian city of Vladivostok, adding that the date of the exchange would soon be announced.

Putin's comments are the first time he has directly addressed the possibility of a prisoner swap, after weeks of reports that Ukraine and Moscow were planning the move. They came as a court in Ukraine released from pre-trial detention a man suspected of involvement in the downing of flight MH17, amid speculation he could be part of the swap. Last week Ukraine released Russian state media journalist Kyrylo Vyshynsky, who had been in custody for more than a year,

pending a trial for "high treason".

Ukraine's new President Volodymyr Zelensky offered to hand Vyshynsky over to Moscow in exchange for Ukrainian film director Oleg Sentsov, who is a prisoner in a penal colony in the Russian Arctic. But Zelensky, whose election earlier this year raised hopes of an easing of tensions with Russia, declined to comment on whether the director would be part of any swap. Putin said Thursday it was a "difficult to make the decision" to swap the people requested by Ukraine, but did not name any names.

The swap "will be a huge step towards normalizing (relations)," he said. Sentsov, 43, has become Ukraine's most famous political prisoner. He was arrested in 2014 and is serving a 20-year sentence for planning "terrorist attacks" in Crimea. Among other prisoners who could be eligible for an exchange are 24 Ukrainian sailors captured last year.

Russia has been holding the sailors since seizing their three vessels off Crimea last November, in the most dangerous direct clash between Russia and Ukraine in years. Some 13,000 people have been killed in Ukraine's conflict with Russian-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine, which broke out shortly after Moscow annexed Crimea in 2014. —AFP

## International

# Pope hails Mozambique peace deal, offers solidarity for cyclone victims

## President Nyusi thanked Pope for his support, encouragement

**MAPUTO:** Pope Francis began the first full day of his visit to Mozambique yesterday, praising a peace deal between government and rebels and offering solidarity to victims of two devastating cyclones. His maiden visit to the poor southeast African country comes after the government and the former rebel group Renamo, now the main opposition party, signed a historic treaty. Mozambique's 16-year civil war devastated the former Portuguese colony, and Renamo had never completely disarmed.

In talks with President Filipe Nyusi, the pope expressed his "personal gratitude... for the efforts made in recent decades to ensure that peace is once more the norm." Reconciliation, he said, is "the best path to confront the difficulties and challenges that you face as a nation." He described the accord as "a landmark that we greet with the hope that it will prove decisive." The talks at the presidential palace were also attended by Renamo chief Ossufo Momade and other opposition leaders.

### Jihadist threat

Nyusi thanked the Pope for his support and encouragement. But he also warned that prospects for enduring peace were being threatened by a jihadist insurgency that erupted in northern Mozambique in 2017. "The effective peace that we long for ... has been threatened in the northern province of Cabo Delgado, where faceless, evildoers sow terror, kill, destroy and plunder goods of defenseless popula-

tions," said Nyusi. Nyusi is hoping for a second term in office at general elections scheduled for October 15. He met the pope last year at the Vatican.

Francis, the first pope to visit Mozambique since John Paul II in 1988, arrived on Wednesday evening to a rapturous welcome by waving and dancing crowds on the streets of Maputo. His three-day trip to the disaster-prone country is the first on a tour of three African countries, including Madagascar and Mauritius. It comes after the country was ravaged two cyclones that killed more than 600 and affected hundreds of thousands. "I would like my first words of closeness and solidarity to be addressed to all those struck by cyclones Idai and Kenneth, whose devastating effects continue to be felt by so many families," he said. "I want you to know of my own participation in your anguish and suffering, and the commitment of the Catholic community to respond to this most difficult situation. "Amid the catastrophe and desolation, I pray that, in God's providence, constant concern will be shown by all those civil and social groups who make people their priority and are in a position to promote the necessary rebuilding".

### Open-air mass

The pope was to address a mass at the giant Zimpeto stadium later today. Expectations are high that he will address the issue of extremism in a country that traditionally is religiously tolerant. Brutal jihadist attacks in northern Mozambique



MAPUTO: Pope Francis shakes hands with Mozambique President Filipe Nyusi at the Interreligious meeting with the Youth at the Maxaquene Pavillion in Maputo. —AFP

have claimed more than 300 lives over two years and forced thousands from their homes. Francis may also speak about climate change, a key topic for the pontiff. According to the World Bank, Mozambique, with its more than 2,000 kilometers

of coastline along the Indian Ocean, is among the 10 most climate-threatened countries in the world. The pope will later visit the large Indian Ocean island of Madagascar and its much smaller neighbor Mauritius. —AFP

## EU launches counter-terrorism judicial database

**BRUSSELS:** The European Union's judicial cooperation arm, Eurojust, launched a shared counter-terrorism database Thursday that officials said would be "crucial" for judicial action against terrorist suspects and organized crime. The Counter-Terrorism Register, operational from this month, will give investigators and prosecutors an overview of criminal proceedings made against suspects in other EU countries and in a few, data-compliant partner countries, Eurojust's chief, Ladislav Hamran, told a media conference.

"Now that terrorists operate more and more in cross-border networks, the EU must do the same," he said. The EU laid the groundwork for judicial data cooperation back in 2005 but the project stalled when some national law enforcement bodies in member states jealously guarded information. That changed in 2015, when jihadists staged attacks in Paris, killing 130 people in a concert hall, a national stadium and in several cafes, said Frederic Baab, a French former member at Eurojust who helped get the database started.

Suspects linked to those attacks—claimed by the Islamic State group—were traced across other EU countries and elsewhere, underlining the "multinational dimension" of such acts, Baab said. "You need to have a complete overview" to go after such suspects with prosecutable cases, he said. "If you don't have this overview you're a blind man." The utility of the database was further highlighted with jihadist attacks in Germany in 2016 and Spain in 2017, prompting Belgium, France, Germany and Spain to throw their weight behind its creation last year.—AFP

## AMLO reshapes Mexico's language along with its politics

**MEXICO CITY:** The jury is still out on whether President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador will "transform" Mexico as he has promised. One thing is sure, though: he is reshaping its language. Elected last year in a surge of anti-establishment disgust, the folksy populist has elicited laughter, groans and head-scratching with his unique take on Mexican Spanish, reviving words that were fading from memory and bringing colorful new ones into widespread use.

"AMLO," as he is known, is like no president Mexico has ever had. Since taking office in December, the leftist anti-corruption crusader has ditched the presidential mansion, guards and jet, and cut his own salary by 60 percent. That radical break with the past also extends to his speaking style, which—like almost everything about Lopez Obrador—has divided Mexicans.

Many opponents can hardly stand to listen to the silver-haired 65-year-old. He has a way of dominating the entire news cycle, starting with his daily press conference, held every weekday at 7:00 am—the "mananera," from a word meaning "morning sex." But he is highly popular: his approval rating is around 65 percent. His opponents have responded by adopting some choice words of their own. In AMLO's Mexico, "fifis" wage political war with "chairos," "pirruris" get mocked for their "machuchon" style, and the "Peje" is out to stop the "moche." Lost? Mexicans sometimes are, too. Many of those words were little-known until Lopez Obrador came along. Now, nine months into his presidency, they are fixtures of the national conversation. Experts say Lopez Obrador's speaking style is one of the secrets to his success. "What distinguishes Lopez Obrador is his colloquial, popular vocabulary.... He has his own personal archive of traditional language, which he draws on constantly," said Luis Fernando Lara, a linguist and author of the Dictionary of Mexican Spanish. "He's a poet of the people."

### From penises to politics

The number one AMLOism is probably "fifi," roughly equivalent to "hoity-toity" in English. Lopez Obrador regularly uses this retro word for business executives, media outlets and opposition politicians he deems conservative. The Royal Spanish Academy, the sentinel of the Spanish language, defines "fifi" as "a conceited person concerned with following fashion trends." The word "had been almost in disuse for more than a century. Originally, it was an adjective to describe elegant dress. If you looked very elegant, people told you, 'You look so fifi,'" Lara told AFP. A similar word is "pirruri," coined from the name of a 1970s TV character, an elitist but idiotic rich kid. The "fifis" and "pirruris" meanwhile have their own word for Lopez Obrador followers: "chairos." That word is a "veritable phenomenon," said Lara. It comes from "chaira," a long, thin knife-sharpener. "Chaira" has come to be used as a metaphor for the phallus, and a 'chairo' is someone who masturbates. So politically, a 'chairo' is a leftist who mentally masturbates," said Lara. The insult "has been a huge success," he added. Another anti-AMLOism: "pejzombies." "Peje" is a nickname for Lopez Obrador, from a less-than-pretty fish widespread in his home state, Tabasco—a southern region whose accent he bears. So "pejzombies" are people who mindlessly follow the "Peje," like zombies.

### New dictionary

Lopez Obrador has even inspired his own online reference work: the "Dictionary of Peje-isms." It defines AMLO favorites such as "machuchon," a word for excessively luxurious things. "That plane is so machuchon," even Donald Trump doesn't have one like it," Lopez Obrador said of the presidential jet he put up for sale, a Boeing 787 Dreamliner valued at \$120 million. Lopez Obrador's linguistic innovations often carry a political message—such as "moche," or "kick-back payment," the money that poor welfare recipients, for example, have to pay corrupt officials to receive their benefits. Like "moche," many of the president's favorite words portray his opponents as evil enemies of the noble Mexican people. That worldview is "polarizing," said political scientist Jose Antonio Crespo. "I don't remember ever seeing such deep fanaticism in the country," he said. Others are more upbeat about the linguistic phenomenon that is AMLO. "Words like 'fifi' are sometimes reductionist, but they serve to start a debate about addressing inequality in Mexico," said analyst Hernan Gomez Bruera. —AFP

## International

Friday, September 6, 2019

# Dorian strengthens to Category 3 storm, lashes US east coast

## Bahamas reels from Dorian's devastation

**CHARLESTON:** Hurricane Dorian lashed the Carolinas with driving rain and fierce winds as it neared the US east coast yesterday after devastating the Bahamas and killing at least 20 people. Parts of downtown Charleston were flooded, with video footage showing people kayaking in the dark in gushing knee-deep water in the stately city on the coast of South Carolina. Trees bent in wind gusting in from the sea. Dozens of streets were reported closed as up to 20 inches of rain were forecast and forecasters warned of flash flooding.

As day broke, the Category 3 hurricane was 80 miles southeast of Charleston, moving north along the coast with maximum sustained winds of 115 mph, the National Hurricane Center said. Hundreds of thousands of people in the Carolinas, Georgia and elsewhere were under evacuation orders as the US girded for its taste of a storm that caused severe destruction in the Bahamas. Power has been knocked out to more than 80,000 customers in South Carolina, and at least 22 shelters have been set up for evacuees, the state emergency management agency said on Twitter.

On Wednesday Bahamas Prime Minister Hubert Minnis said at least 20 people were known dead so far and he described the damage as nothing short of "generational devastation." The US Coast Guard and Britain's Royal Navy airlifted survivors and ferried in emergency supplies as floodwaters receded in the Bahamas. The United Nations said 70,000 people on Grand Bahama and Abaco islands were in "immediate need" of aid. Minnis also warned that looters will be prosecuted "to the fullest extent of the law," and said additional police and defense force

officers had been deployed.

Shelter, safe drinking water, food and medicine were urgently needed for some 50,000 people on Grand Bahama and between 15,000 and 20,000 on Abaco, UN emergency relief coordinator Mark Lowcock said after a meeting with Minnis. "Speed is of the essence," Red Cross official Stephen McAndrew said of rescue operations on the two northernmost islands in the Bahamas archipelago which were pummeled by one of the strongest Atlantic storms on record.

People on Grand Bahama used jet skis and boats to pluck victims from homes flooded and pulverized by the monster storm. US and British helicopters were conducting medical evacuations, aerial assessments to help coordinate relief efforts, and reconnaissance flights to assess the damage. President Donald Trump spoke by telephone to the Bahamian leader and pledged US assistance, the White House said. "A big section of the Bahamas was hit like few people have seen before," Trump said. "They need a big hand." Aerial footage showed scenes of catastrophic damage in Abaco with hundreds of homes missing roofs, cars submerged or overturned, widespread flooding and boats reduced to matchwood.

### Lucky in Florida

As rescue efforts ramped up, Dorian rolled along the coasts of South and North Carolina, the NHC said. Dorian left Florida largely unscathed. "We got lucky in Florida, very, very lucky indeed," Trump said. Life-threatening storm surge with significant coastal flooding was expected along large parts of the southeast and mid-Atlantic



CHARLESTON: A car rives around a fallen tree branch on Calhoun St in Charleston, South Carolina. —AFP

coast over the following days, the NHC said. The center predicted the Carolinas could be hit with dangerous storm surge of up to seven feet and six to 12 inches of rain.

Roberto Smith, who was born in Abaco but now lives in Florida, said he was worried about his family. "I spoke to my dad on the night of the hurricane, on Sunday night, and his roof blew up," Smith told AFP. "I haven't spoken to him since then. I am really worried. I can't even eat." "The island is devastated," he added. "There is no power, no running water, no electricity."

### Truly shocking

The US Coast Guard said it had rescued 61 people, including 19 injured patients from Abaco island's Marsh Harbor clinic who were flown to Nassau Tuesday. USAID, the

US relief agency, said it was airlifting supplies such as plastic sheeting for shelter, hygiene kits and water from Miami. Larry Lewis, who runs Paradise Watersports in the city of Freeport on Grand Bahama, said most of the floodwaters had receded but some roads remained impassable. He said very few stores were open. "I saw a lot of people scrapping for something to eat," he told AFP.

A British landing ship, the RFA Mounts Bay, launched boats carrying supplies for Marsh Harbour on Abaco and Britain's Department for International Development said it had deployed a team of three humanitarian experts. "The clock is now ticking to get help to those in need," British International Development Secretary Alok Sharma said. Dorian dumped as much as 30 inches of rain on the Bahamas, a former British colony. —AFP

## Outraged Indians lampoon govt over rise in traffic fines

**BENGALURU:** Many Indians have ridiculed a sharp increase in traffic fines this week, lampooning the poor state of roads and joking that the revenue from the fines would soon exceed that from taxes. The government hopes to bring order to India's often chaotic roads with a tenfold increase in fines for more serious offences to between 5,000 rupees (\$70) and 100,000 rupees (\$1,400). The new fines went into effect on Sunday.

They come as economic growth has slumped to a six-year low, and government data shows a slowdown in the growth of goods and services tax (GST) collections, raising the prospect that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government will miss its fiscal deficit target this year. "If the traffic police and government became half efficient in collecting fines for traffic violations, it will easily cross the GST and IT (income tax) collections," said one Twitter user. Another Twitter user joked: "At this rate Govt can abolish GST & concentrate on traffic fines."

Media reported a tractor driver in Gurugram - near the capital, New Delhi - had to cough up \$820 in fines for 10 violations, while a rickshaw driver separately was hit with fines that were nearly twice the cost of his vehicle. "India's fiscal deficit will soon turn into a fiscal surplus," said another Twitter user, referring to the rate at which the government was raking in traffic fines. The size of the fines is particularly concerning in a country where the per capita monthly income is only 10,500 rupees (\$147).

But officials say the heavy fines are needed to improve safety in a country where more than 100,000 people are killed and nearly 500,000 injured every year in road accidents. "Shouldn't people's lives be saved? There should be respect for the law," Nitin Gadkari, minister for road transport and highways, told the ANI news agency. Gadkari himself though was not spared on social media, with some quick to repost old images of him riding a scooter without a helmet.

People also posted pictures of huge potholes and asked what his department was doing to fix them. An artist had his video go viral this week, after he dressed up as an astronaut and pretended to moonwalk across potholed roads in the tech hub of Bengaluru. "Should we pay fines for these roads? Or at least is the govt going to pay our hospital bills?" said another Twitter post, with an image of a man falling off a scooter on a flooded road. —Reuters

## Philippines vows to hunt down convicts released early

**MANILA:** Philippine police pledged yesterday to track down nearly 2,000 ex-prisoners including convicted murderers and rapists who were let out early for good behavior, in some cases years ago. Revelations in recent weeks about the inmates' release have sparked outrage in the Philippines, with critics accusing authorities of gross incompetence and possibly corruption. "I have immediately directed all police units nationwide to receive and account for (the ex-prisoners)," national police chief Oscar Albayalde told reporters. "Tracker teams... will be deployed".

The controversy centers on about 1,900 people convicted of serious crimes such as rape, murder and kidnapping who were released early due to good conduct under a 2013 law intended to ease conditions at the nation's notoriously overcrowded prisons. —AFP

## International

# Year after India gay ruling, a battle to change attitudes

## Signs show Indian society becoming relaxed about homosexuality

**GURGAON, India:** Vivek Kishore and Vishwa Srivastava hit it off soon after meeting at a cafe, little knowing what lay in store for them as a gay couple in India where homosexuality was a criminal offence until a year ago. The couple's worst fears came true when they were slapped, abused and threatened with police action by none other than Kishore's parents, who found out they were living together.

But life changed for the duo a year ago on Friday when India's Supreme Court overturned a British colonial-era law that had criminalized gay sex as "against the order of nature". Hundreds of people had been prosecuted under the law, known as Section 377, which was often used to threaten, abuse and blackmail members of the LGBTQ community.

"It was huge, it was like getting independence... My immediate thought was both of us can have sex, that's not criminal anymore," gushed Kishore. "Legally there is nothing that my homophobic family can do now against me," the 24-year-old said, locking eyes and toes with his partner at their home in Gurgaon on the outskirts of New Delhi.

### Battle for equality

The decades-long legal fight to legalize gay sex began in India in the 1990s when arranged marriages were the norm, with families carefully choosing a partner for their children from the same religion, caste and status. The community won a big reprieve in 2009 when the Delhi High Court ruled that the law

could not be applied to consensual sex. But orthodox Hindu, Muslim and Christian groups challenged it in the Supreme Court, which then restored the law in 2013.

The LGBTQ community, however, refused to give up and in 2016, a group of high-profile petitioners including a gay dancer and a chef again approached the Supreme Court. They were joined by others and the court began hearing emotional arguments from a community long ostracized in a country that remains socially conservative. "It's very important that people who have a voice should use it because it's not easy (to come out)," said Anjali Gopalan, one of the petitioners and a gay rights activist.

### Attitudes

Gopalan, however, admitted that just scrapping the law on September 6, 2018 was not enough and that the real change would only come when regressive attitudes change. In the past year, there have been tentative signs that Indian society is becoming more relaxed about homosexuality. Gay characters have featured in a popular online series as well as a Bollywood film, while more restaurants and cafes are declaring themselves gay-friendly.

In May, sprinter Dutee Chand became a trailblazer by becoming the first Indian athlete to reveal she is in a same-sex relationship. Pride marches were held across India with much gusto in June as students and members of the civil society joined to show their solidarity to the community.



**GURGAON, India:** In this photograph Indian gay married couple Vishwa Srivastava, right, and Vivek Kishore, left, sit on a bench at a market in Gurgaon on the outskirts of New Delhi. —AFP

### Colorful wedding

Kishore and Srivastava got married in a colorful Hindu ceremony in 2017, even before Section 377 was scrapped, but their union has no legal standing. "Our life is like any other straight couple but still we can't claim any spousal benefits like healthcare and property rights," said Srivastava, an educator. "If one of us, heaven forbid, dies then we can't even

claim each other's bodies. It's so disturbing."

Srivastava's mother, Priti, has stood by him in his quest for rights, braving barbs from relatives and nosy neighbors. "The law may have gone but the social stigma is still there. I try not to worry about what people are saying behind my back but I know they are," she said. "But if you show you don't care if your child is gay or not, then others also don't care." —AFP

## Three dead as monsoon deluge sparks Mumbai chaos

**MUMBAI:** Three people were killed and dozens of flights were cancelled or delayed after severe flooding in India's financial hub Mumbai, with authorities warning of heavier monsoon rains yesterday. Mumbai—home to 20 million people—has been hit by torrential downpours over the past two months amid the annual monsoon deluge. Non-stop rain over several hours on Wednesday paralyzed traffic, halted trains and delayed airport operations at the western city.

"Two BMC (Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation) staffers died after falling in rainwater on Wednesday. Another man drowned in an overflowing Mithi river," the city's disaster management cell spokesman Tanaji Kamble said. Residents spoke of being trapped in traffic for several hours amid chaotic scenes. "It was a nightmare and the entire city came to a standstill," chartered accountant Kevin Gogri said. Maharashtra state government minister Ashish Shelar said schools would be closed yesterday "as a precautionary measure". The city's residents were bracing for more chaos



**MUMBAI:** A truck drives on a flooded road during heavy rain showers in Mumbai. —AFP

yesterday with the India Meteorological Department issuing an alert for the "possibility of very heavy rainfall".—AFP

## Man killed over kidnapping rumors

**NEW DELHI:** Indian police said yesterday that five people had been arrested for lynching a man after accusing him of kidnapping children, the latest in a renewed string of attacks fuelled by malicious rumor-mongering. Some 150 people have been attacked recently across the country based on false kidnapping reports, some of them shared on WhatsApp, leaving authorities in a fix. Since August 1, at least nine people have died and 135 others injured in mob attacks, according to figures collated by local media.

Police said in the latest incident a mob set upon the 45-year-old man in eastern Jharkhand state late Tuesday, thrashing him with sticks and shoes. "The rumor was going around in the village about child lifters roaming in the area. We have arrested five persons in the case," senior local police officer Prabhat Kumar told AFP by telephone. The attack came on the heels of six persons being thrashed in the same state on Monday.

A pregnant deaf and mute woman was also attacked in New Delhi in late August, with the mob wrongly believing she was involved in kidnapping. Lynchings are nothing new in India, but the spread of smartphones to even the most remote corners has enabled rumors to be shared at lightning speed and in huge volumes. —AFP



## International

# In Kashmir, shopkeepers refuse to open despite India easing curbs

## Communication restrictions make reporting difficult

**SRINAGAR:** A month after India withdrew contested Kashmir's autonomy, locked it down with thousands of additional troops and made mass arrests, residents are resisting attempts by authorities to show some signs of normalcy returning in the Muslim-majority valley. On August 5, Prime Minister Narendra Modi revoked special rights for Jammu and Kashmir state, striking down long-standing constitutional provisions for the Himalayan region, which is also claimed by neighboring Pakistan.

To dampen the possibility of widespread protests, India flooded Kashmir - already one of the world's most militarized zones - with troops, imposed severe movement restrictions, and snapped all telephone, mobile phone and internet connections. Thousands of people were arrested. New Delhi has since eased some of the curbs although no one detained has been freed and mobile and internet connections remain suspended.

Officials in Jammu and Kashmir's summer capital Srinagar say that 90 percent of the Kashmir valley is free of restrictions on daytime movement, some landline phone connections have been restored and thousands of schools have reopened. However, checkpoints remain in place and communication restrictions make reporting from the region difficult. Despite the partial relaxation, an informal but widespread boycott by students, shopkeepers and public and private sector workers is taking place across the valley, aimed at protesting against New Delhi, according to interviews with seven government officials and dozens of residents of the valley.

"For us, our identity at stake and its safeguarding is our priority," said Shabir Ahmad, a shopkeeper from the old quarter, or downtown,

Srinagar. "Let them restore it and we will re-start our businesses." The informal civil disobedience movement has sprung up alongside small but regular street protests by stone-throwing crowds that have been quickly quashed by security forces with tear gas and pellet guns.

### Self-imposed strike

In previous phases of protests in Kashmir, separatist groups would issue official calls for shutdowns and protests. This time, however, separatist leaders - who either want independence for Kashmir, or support joining Pakistan - have been detained alongside mainstream politicians, including three former chief ministers and hundreds of other civil society leaders. In posters across Srinagar, which began appearing in late August, shopkeepers have been asked to only open late in the evenings and early in the mornings to enable locals to buy essentials.

In the commercial areas of downtown Srinagar, the vast majority of shops remain shuttered. Despite security forces asking owners to return to normal opening hours, many have refused. "We were opening shops in the evenings for people," said Mohammad Ayub, a Srinagar shopkeeper. "(But) the troops tell us either to open the shops for the full day or don't open in the evenings." Rohit Kansal, the official spokesman of the Jammu and Kashmir state government, blamed "anti-national" forces for preventing shops from opening. "Security forces have taken note of it," he said.

### Schools, government shutdown

Attendance in major government offices in Srinagar is around 50 percent and those in smaller, subordinate offices in the city is substantially



**KARACHI:** Pakistani doctors hold placards and shout slogans as they take part in a protest against India, in Karachi. — AFP

lower, a state government official said, declining to be named as he was not authorized to speak to the media. At an office of the state housing and urban development department in western Srinagar, only 30 out of around 300 staff are in attendance on most days, another official said.

"Only those who live nearby report to the office. The others come in once in a while," the official said. Government workers employed to clean Srinagar's iconic Dal Lake have not turned up for work in several weeks, officials said, and the water's surface has become clogged with weeds. Many schools remain empty. "How can I send my children to school? There is a clamp-

down and we are concerned for the safety of our wards," said Javed Ahmad, a Srinagar parent. Kansal said that 4,000 schools in Kashmir were now functional, and that attendance is improving, although it remains low in some areas.

The shutdown and the restrictions still in place are having an impact across all areas of society. With tourists avoiding the region, hotel owners say occupancy rates are close to zero. Srinagar's historic Jamia Masjid mosque has been closed for a month. Kashmir's postal service is heavily disrupted, and online retailers, including Amazon, say their operations in Jammu and Kashmir remain suspended. — Reuters

## Bangladesh bans two aid agencies from Rohingya refugee camps

**COX'S BAZAR:** Bangladesh yesterday said it has banned two aid agencies from Rohingya camps in the country's southeast, alleging they were telling refugees to reject repatriation to their homeland in Myanmar. The move came amid growing impatience from Dhaka about the presence of the refugees in the country, two years after some 740,000 were driven over the border by a military crackdown on the Muslim minority.

The latest repatriation attempt by Bangladesh and Myanmar two weeks ago, the second in less than a year, failed with not a single refugee volunteering to cross the border back home. US-based Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) and local organization Al Markazul Islami were accused by the government's NGO Affairs Bureau of "instigating" the stateless minority against the recent repatriation attempt. —AFP

## Stay or go? Asian nations mull options as seas rise, cities sink

**BANGKOK:** Small islands and coastal cities in Asia-Pacific need more funds to assist vulnerable communities and help them decide whether to relocate or stay and defend against rising sea levels and extreme weather, climate experts said yesterday. Indonesia last month said it would relocate its capital from the sinking city of Jakarta, while Fiji plans to move dozens of coastal villages inland, and the Marshall Islands is building sea walls to protect coastal communities.

"As much as possible, we must try to adapt and mitigate in situ because that's where people have their homes, land and livelihoods," said Harjeet Singh, global climate change lead at charity ActionAid. "But more places are becoming uninhabitable because of land degradation, rising sea levels or other weather impacts, and there is no choice but to relocate," he said at the sidelines of a United Nations climate event in Bangkok.

More than 20 million people are uprooted every year by floods, storms, landslides and other extreme winter conditions,

with the vast majority of such displacement occurring in the Asia-Pacific region, according to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Displacement can have devastating impacts on those who have to move, as well as on communities that receive them, said Victor Bernard, Asia-Pacific program officer at human rights advocacy the Raoul Wallenberg Institute.

"Countries must ensure relocations are not forced, and that the rights of vulnerable communities are protected," he said. Fiji moved its first coastal community inland in 2014, and may have to move dozens more to higher ground as sea levels rise, said Nilesh Prakash, the country's head of climate change and international cooperation. "Moving them inland means they lose access to livelihoods. There are also socio-cultural and traditional ties to consider."

Fiji, with 900,000 people on hundreds of islands, plans to set up a fund to pay for loss and damages caused by the effects of climate change, including relocation, he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. Sea-level rise and erosion are set to make most island atolls uninhabitable by 2050, and for the Marshall Islands, home to 75,000 people, moving to higher ground is not an option. The islanders are already seeing the effects of warming oceans in damaged reefs and fish stocks, said Angelina Heine, the country's national energy planner. — Reuters

## International

# One dead, 30 hurt as train, truck collide near Tokyo

## Train company launches investigation into accident

**YOKOHAMA, Japan:** An express train travelling at around 120 kilometers per hour smashed into a truck at a crossing south of Tokyo yesterday, sparking a blaze and killing one person with around 30 others injured. The crash derailed the train's front carriage and pinned the truck to a wall, as it burst into flames, spewing black smoke into the air and its cargo of citrus fruit on to the tracks. The force of the impact shattered the train's front window and bent an overhead power line, with witnesses describing an intense fire and panic among the 500 passengers on board the train as it sped through the crossing near Yokohama, south of Tokyo.

"Emergency crews took 30 injured people into care. Of those, two sustained serious injuries. Of those severely injured, the hospital has confirmed the death of one person," a fire department official told reporters at the scene. National broadcaster NHK said the truck driver was pinned under the train but it was not immediately clear whether he was the victim. Another woman in her 20s was also seriously injured. According to the Keikyū train company operating the service, the driver said he had applied the emergency brake but too late to prevent the collision.

The company said it had launched an investigation into the accident that took place just before noon. "The maximum speed there is set at 120km per hour and we believe the train was travelling as fast as that," a Keikyū spokesman,

who declined to be named, told AFP. "There is an abnormality detection system there for emergencies and cases such as a truck getting stuck on the crossing. This system kicked in and an alarm signal was flickering," added this spokesman.

### It was a panic

Eyewitnesses spoke of a fierce fire and panic, with TV images showing terrified passengers streaming from the carriages after the collision. One man who was travelling in the first carriage told national broadcaster NHK there was a "sudden sound" and that the impact left people in heaps. "I saw flames. Then the fire became more and more intense. So everyone rushed to get outside. It was a panic," this eyewitness said. Another person who witnessed the scene said there were flames coming from the bottom of the truck and that the "smoke was awful".

Japanese trains have a well-deserved reputation for safety and punctuality and accidents are rare. Earlier this year, 14 people suffered light injuries when a driverless train in suburban Tokyo went the wrong way and smashed into the buffers. In April 2005, a speeding commuter train near Osaka jumped the tracks on a tight bend during the morning rush hour and smashed into an apartment tower. The driver and 106 passengers were killed and more than 550 people were injured.

The crash was Japan's worst rail disaster since 1963 when 161 people died in Yoko-



**YOKOHAMA:** A train is seen derailed after a collision with a truck at a crossing in Yokohama, Kanagawa Prefecture. — AFP

hama after a freight train collided with a truck and was then hit by two passenger trains. Japan's deadliest-ever train accident

was in February 1947 when a passenger train derailed near Tokyo, killing 184 people and injuring nearly 500. — AFP

## 'Defecting' North Korean waitresses abducted to South

**SEOUL:** A group of North Korean waitresses who "defected" to Seoul in 2016 were actually abducted by the South, a fact-finding team of international lawyers has concluded after a visit to Pyongyang. The case has long been controversial, with Pyongyang saying the 12 women were kidnapped from a North Korean state-run restaurant in China while Seoul insists they defected of their own free will. During their six-day stay in the North Korean capital, which ended yesterday, the lawyers said they spoke to seven former waitresses who claimed they managed to escape while their colleagues were tricked into coming to Seoul.

The seven North Korean women said they were able to escape—and eventually return to the North-only because their team leader overheard a conversation between the restaurant's manager and a representative of the South Korean intelligence service, who had come to take them to the airport. While they escaped, the 12 other waitresses had already left without knowing they were being taken to South Korea, the joint fact-finding committee of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers said in a statement.

The 12 women were "taken away by deception ... against their will, separated from their families and country", it said after taking evidence from their seven colleagues. "This constitutes the criminal offence of abduction." At a briefing in Pyongyang on Wednesday, one of the lawyers slammed the Seoul government for its handling of the case. The team had received "full cooperation" from the North but were not allowed to meet the 12 North Korean women who are currently in the South, said Niloufer Bhagwat, vice president of the Confederation of Lawyers of Asia and the Pacific. — AFP

## Indonesia restores internet access in unrest-hit Papua

**JAKARTA:** Indonesia has started restoring internet access in restive Papua, which has been gripped by two weeks of mass protests sparked by anger over racism and fresh calls for self-rule. A low-level insurgency against Indonesian control has simmered for decades in Papua, the country's easternmost territory, and Jakarta has responded to the recent deadly riots by flooding the region with thousands of extra security personnel.

It also blocked internet access to quell the unrest, and on Wednesday charged a high-profile rights lawyer over spreading online videos about deadly riots in the territory. The government said the block was intended to stop what it described as a flood of hoaxes and provocative comments about Papuans that were stoking unrest. Late Wednesday, the government said it had started lifting the blockade—slammed by media and free speech advocates—in some 29 of 42 districts across the mountainous, jungle-covered region.

"The security situation in some areas is recovering and the spread of fake news and provocative, hateful commentary related to Papua is also declining," the communications ministry said. "The government will keep monitoring developments in areas where data services are still blocked." On Wednesday, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet said she was "disturbed" by the violence in Papua.

"I encourage the authorities to engage in dialogue with

the people of Papua... on their aspirations and concerns, as well as to restore internet services and refrain from any excessive use of force," she said in a statement. Indonesia took control of the former Dutch colony in the 1960s after an independence vote widely seen as being rigged. Jakarta has refused to discuss fresh calls for an independence vote. The majority of Papuans are Christian and ethnic Melanesian with few cultural ties to the rest of Muslim-majority Indonesia.

### Firestorm of protests

On Wednesday, authorities charged Veronica Koman, a lawyer and Papuan rights activist, for alleged incitement over a video she shared of the mid-August arrest and tear gassing of dozens of Papuan students, who were also racially abused. A firestorm of protests broke across Papua and other parts of the Southeast Asian archipelago after the arrests in Indonesia's second-biggest city Surabaya. Koman could face six years in jail if convicted.

"These charges are clearly intended to deter others from speaking out against human rights violations related to Papua," Amnesty International said. Dozens have been arrested for taking part in protests and the government banned demonstrations that could lead to what it called "anarchist acts". Indonesia has also said it is restricting foreigner travel to Papua after four Australians were deported this week for taking part in demonstrations. There have been conflicting reports about casualties.

Officially, five civilians and a soldier have been killed, while 15 local people and two police have been injured since the unrest broke out. But activists say there have been more civilian deaths, amid unconfirmed reports that security forces gunned down six protesters in the remote district of Deiyai last week. The government has denied those claims. The internet blockade has made it difficult to independently verify information.—AFP

# Lifestyle

Friday Times

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2019

[www.kuwaittimes.net](http://www.kuwaittimes.net)



Mexican dancer Alejandro Meneses poses for a photograph.—AFP

## Aztec ballgame returns to Mexico City after 500 years

See Pages 22 & 23

## Lifestyle | Music/Movies

## Justin Bieber opens up on drug abuse, weight of fame

Justin Bieber is opening up about “massive ups and downs” he experienced as he went from beloved teenage heartthrob to “the most ridiculed, judged and hated person in the world.” In a lengthy Instagram post over the holiday weekend, the 25-year-old pop phenom reflected on how child stardom triggered depression and a

lack of humility that led to drug abuse and his becoming “resentful, disrespectful to women, and angry.” “I became distant to everyone who loved me, and I was hiding behind, a shell of a person that I had become,” he wrote. “Everyone did everything for me so I never even learned the fundamentals of responsibility,” Bieber said, saying by 18 he had “no skills in the real world” despite “millions of dollars and access to whatever I wanted.”

Bieber had abruptly cut short his 2017 tour, later saying he needed to work out “insecurities.” The move came as the superstar was becoming known more for his antics than his music, including accidentally striking a photographer with his car. The star faced legal trouble for incidents that included racing a vehicle through Miami and throwing eggs at a neighbor’s house. In 2017, China said Bieber was not welcome to perform in the country due to his “bad behavior,” saying he had a lot of growing up to do if he wanted to return.

In his introspective Instagram post, Bieber said his marriage to model Hailey Baldwin along with support from his friends and faith helped him get his life back on track. “Luckily god blessed me with extraordinary people who love me for me,” he said. “All this to say even when the odds are against you keep fighting.” —AFP



Justin Bieber



The family of the late American soul singer Jackie Wilson, who passed away at 49 in January 1984, pose for a photo as his star is unveiled during a ceremony in Hollywood, California. —AFP

## Singer Jackie Wilson Posthumously Receives Hollywood Walk of Fame Star

Singer Jackie Wilson, who helped usher in the emergence of soul and rhythm-and-blues music in the 1960s, was posthumously honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame Wednesday. Motown founder Berry Gordy, legendary singer Smokey Robinson and Marshall Thompson, a member of the R&B/soul vocal quartet “The Chi-Lites,” were among the notables who gathered for the ceremony at 7057 Hollywood Blvd., near Sycamore Street. The star was accepted by Wilson’s son, John. “If my father was here today, he would say getting a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame has truly taken us higher than we’ve ever been lifted before,” John Wilson said. The ceremony coincided with the release of “The Definitive Jackie Wilson,” a compilation of 50 remastered iconic songs. “Jackie Wilson was absolutely the man,” Robinson told the crowd. “I am so happy that he finally got this recognition and he will be on this street for all times.” Born June 9, 1934, in Detroit, Wilson was an amateur boxer

who began singing in a gospel quartet called the Ever-Ready Gospel Singers. In 1953 he joined Billy Ward and His Dominoes, eventually becoming its lead singer. Wilson began his solo career in November 1957 with his debut single “Reet Petite (The Finest Girl You Ever Want To Meet),” written by Gordy and Billy Davis. The song reached 62nd on Billboard’s pop chart.

Wilson’s breakout hit “Lonely Teardrops,” written by Gordy, his sister Gwendolyn Gordy and Davis, was released Nov. 17, 1958. It reached No. 1 on the R&B chart and seventh on the pop chart. It is 315th on Rolling Stone’s list of The 500 Greatest Songs of All Time and listed on the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame’s list of “The 500 Songs that Shaped Rock & Roll.” “Lonely Teardrops” led to Wilson appearing on “The Ed Sullivan Show” and “American Bandstand.” —www.nbclosangeles.com

From 1958 to 1970, Wilson was a mainstay of the R&B and pop charts with two dozen Top 40 singles,



British rocker Morrissey

## Rights group urges Morrissey boycott over ‘racist’ views

Muslim civil rights group the Council on American-Islamic Relations is urging fans to boycott British rocker Morrissey’s concert in the US state of Maryland yesterday over his “bigotry.” The former Smiths frontman once considered a poster child for misfits increasingly has become an alienating figure as he faces accusation of racism over his rhetoric on immigration and support for Britain’s far right. “Under the circumstances, attending Morrissey’s concert is a form of financial support and, in effect, an endorsement of his bigotry,” said Zainab Chaudry of CAIR in comments originally made to The Baltimore Sun.

“Therefore, CAIR is calling on fans to boycott the event to protest his racist, hate-filled views and to send a strong message that we expect better from him.” The 60-year-old indie performer, a staunch animal rights advocate, once described Chinese people as a “subspecies” over their treatment of animals. In May Morrissey performed on a US late-night talk show wearing a badge for the controversial “For

Britain” party, which he appeared to be sporting again during his brief Broadway residency that month. The minor far-right British nationalist group was formed by anti-Islam activist Anne Marie Waters after she lost the 2017 leadership election for the right-wing UK Independence Party.

In 2018 Morrissey—who first soared to fame as the frontman of The Smiths in the 1980s—said the “For Britain” party’s founding gave him “hope” and in June this year again defended the group, saying “everyone ultimately prefers their own race... does this make everyone racist?” CAIR itself has faced accusations, which it has flatly rejected, of links to Palestinian Sunni fundamentalist group Hamas and of promoting Islamism. It was controversially designated a terrorist organization in 2014 by the United Arab Emirates for alleged links to the Muslim Brotherhood. Morrissey’s show at Columbia, Maryland’s Merriweather Post Pavilion launches his fall tour across the United States with American rock band Interpol. —AFP

## Californian charged with selling Mac Miller fentanyl-laced pills

Nearly one year after Mac Miller’s shock death authorities on Wednesday arrested a California resident charged with selling counterfeit fentanyl-laced pills to the rapper two days before his fatal overdose. The 26-year-old performer born Malcolm McCormick died on September 7, 2018 after ingesting a lethal combination of fentanyl, cocaine and alcohol, according to the Los Angeles medical examiner. The Department of Justice said Cameron James Pettit, 28, was to supply Miller with 30 milligram oxycodone pills along with cocaine and the sedative Xanax.

But according to the criminal complaint filed against Pettit, who is expected to appear in a Los Angeles federal court later Wednesday, the Hollywood Hills resident actually sold Miller counterfeit oxycodone pills containing fentanyl—a synthetic opioid at least 50 times more potent than heroin. In social media exchanges obtained by the US



Drug and Enforcement Administration and included in the affidavit, Pettit told another Instagram user that “most likely I will die in jail” as news of Miller’s death began circulating.

If convicted, Pettit would face a maximum sentence of 20 years in federal prison, according to the DoJ. Miller, a Pittsburgh native and one-time partner of pop-star Ariana Grande, had released his latest album “Swimming” days before his death and was set to embark on a new tour. Fentanyl late last year became the deadliest drug in the United States, killing more than 18,000 Americans in 2016, the latest year for which full data is available, according to federal health officials. The opioid, which acts on the brain like morphine or heroin, was blamed in the high-profile deaths of icon Prince and rocker Tom Petty, both of whom died of overdoses. —AFP

## Lifestyle | Features

## Fashion influencer Ferragni steals show at Venice film festival

The longest queues at the Venice film festival have not been to see Hollywood stars like Brad Pitt or Scarlett Johansson. Instead the most hysterical fans were those who thronged the Lido dreaming of a selfie with Chiara Ferragni, the fashion influencer who has become rich selling clothes and her starry you-can-have-it-all lifestyle on Instagram. While heartthrob Timothee Chalamet signed autographs for 20 minutes before his premiere of "The King", even kissing one lucky woman's "Call Me By Your Name" tattoo, the crowds were nothing compared to those Ferragni drew.



Italian blogger Chiara Ferragni poses on the red carpet as she arrives for the screening of the film 'Chiara Ferragni Unposted' presented out of competition during the 76th Venice Film Festival at Venice Lido.

Hundreds were turned away from screenings of a new Amazon Prime documentary, "Chiara Ferragni-Unposted", about her remarkable rise. "You will never understand our love for her," said Angela Fozzi, 24, who had made the long trip from Milan to see her and waited outside the cinema till 1 am in the hope of a chance encounter. "She is the greatest role model for women in the world," the supermarket cashier told AFP, her hands shaking with emotion. "She did it all herself. All she had was her smartphone and determination. She is an inspiration for women and we are so proud she is Italian," she added.

### Tears on Instagram

Ferragni told screaming fans that this "was one of the greatest days of my life" when she briefly appeared on stage late Wednesday before a screening in a black Dior haute couture gown by her friend and fellow Italian Maria Grazia Chiuri—who also designed her wedding dress last year. Earlier the statuesque blonde had



Italian blogger Chiara Ferragni and her husband Italian singer Federico Leonardo Lucia, also known as Fedez, arrive at the screening of the film 'Chiara Ferragni Unposted'.

posted a video of herself weeping uncontrollably at the film to her 17.2 million Instagram followers.

Such is Ferragni's appeal that her wildly lavish three-day nuptials in Sicily, where she tied the knot with Italian rapper Fedez, reportedly made more of a splash online than the British royal wedding of Prince Harry and American actress Meghan Markle. The heavily-tattooed singer had proposed to her on stage in Verona with an enormous solitaire diamond ring while thousands of his fans held heart-shaped cards aloft. In the film, major fashion players including LVMH's Delphine Arnault and Moschino's Jeremy Scott queue up to trumpet how the super influencer has democratized fashion and to dismiss "the haters" who at one time or another also included plenty of style royalty.

### 'You don't need a man'

With more than 17 million followers on Instagram and her own \$40-million fashion line, Ferragni can not longer be dismissed as a flash in the pan. The influencer's trailblazing story has become a Harvard Business School example of how social media fame can be monetized, with brands paying for her to endorse their products. One American academic in the documentary even credits her with "reinventing storytelling by taking out the conflict" to set the template for Instagram's "perfect life" aesthetic. Her fashion-conscious mother confided to the filmmakers that the dentist's daughter was never interested in power and "only wanted to be loved". Fans in Venice told AFP that it was Ferragni's down-to-earth attitude that chimed most with them even as she travelled the world first-class in designer clothes.

"I don't care how rich she is," said 19-year-old art student Maria, who was dressed to the nines for the premiere. "That she has done it means I maybe can do it too." But Ferragni won't be moving on anytime soon. In the film she is seen taking advice from veteran designer Diane von Furstenberg about how to stay the course. —AFP

## Spain picks Almodovar's 'Pain and Glory' for Oscars



Spanish director Pedro Almodovar shows his award after receiving a Golden Lion for lifetime achievement during a ceremony at the 76th Venice Film Festival at Venice Lido. — AFP

Spain's film academy said yesterday it has picked veteran director Pedro Almodovar's latest drama "Pain and Glory" to represent the country at the Oscars. The film, a semi-autobiographical story featuring Penelope Cruz and Antonio Banderas about an ageing Spanish director plagued by physical and psychological frailty who revisits childhood memories, will compete with other global entries for a nomination as Best International Feature Film.

The five nominations for the category that up until now has been known as the best foreign-language film will be announced on January 13. The 92nd Academy Awards will be held on February 9, 2020. Almodovar, who won the Golden Lion lifetime achievement award at the Venice Film Festival last month, has already picked up two Oscars—for best foreign film with "All About My Mother" in 2000 and for best original screenplay with "Talk To Her" in 2003. The 69-year-old has directed 21 feature films, including "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown", "Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!" and "High Heels". — AFP

## Selfies from the disaster zone: How TV show changed Chernobyl tourism

The hit TV series "Chernobyl" has attracted a new generation of tourists to the nuclear disaster zone but guides say that many are more interested in taking selfies than learning about the accident. "They do not need information anymore, they just want to take a selfie," said Yevgen Goncharenko, an official plant guide, at the site of the worst nuclear accident in history. Tourists now are often on the look out for locations featured in the acclaimed HBO drama and can be surprised to discover that certain sites were fictional, he told AFP.

The hard-hitting mini-series recreates the April 1986 disaster, when one of the reactors at the Soviet Union's Chernobyl plant, in what is now Ukraine, exploded during testing. The blast spewed radiation over a vast swathe of Europe and a 30-kilometre (19-mile) exclusion zone remains in place around the plant, although a small part of it is open to a growing number of tourists. The abandoned site had already become a "dark tourism" destination in recent years, even before the eponymous TV show that has picked up 19 Emmy nominations.

But some Ukrainian travel agencies have adapted their tours to take in locations from the "Chernobyl" series and offer further special trips, such as kayaking in rivers around the exclusion zone. Oleksandr Syrota, head of the Chernobyl information Centre, said that certain tourist companies were offering up the disaster zone as "fast food"—a quick and easy travel experience. And the trend towards more tourists looks set to continue. In July, new Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky signed a decree that aims to develop the site further as a tourist attraction.

### 'Mutants'

Louis Carlos, a 27-year-old visiting from Brazil, said he didn't know much about the disaster before watching the TV series but was motivated to travel to Ukraine to find out more. "If people come here to understand what happened and try to learn, it's a good thing," Carlos said, as a friend took a photograph of him next to the nuclear power station. "It's history," he added. —AFP



Tourists take pictures at New Safe Confinement (NSC), new metal dome encasing the destroyed reactor, at Chernobyl plant, Ukraine.



Journalists are taking in kayaks along the Uzh river in the Chernobyl exclusion zone in Ukraine. — AFP photos

## Lifestyle | Feature



Mexican Beatriz Campos, player of a pre-Columbian ballgame called 'Ulama' -in Nahuatl indigenous language- performs the 'Copal' ceremony ahead of a match at the FARO Poniente cultural center in Mexico City.



Dancers and players perform ahead of a pre-Columbian ballgame called 'Ulama'. — AFP photos



Mexican Uriel Ordaz, player of a pre-Columbian ballgame called "Ulama" -in Nahuatl indigenous language- poses for a photograph hitting a "Ulamaloni" (solid rubber ball) with his hip.



A man plays a pre-Columbian ballgame called "Ulama".

## Aztec ballgame returns to Mexico City after 500 years

Five centuries ago, newly arrived in what is now Mexico, the Spanish conquistadors banned an indigenous game involving a heavy ball, circular stone goals and human sacrifice. Now, a group of young players are bringing the game back to life for the first time in Mexico City—without the human sacrifice—at the site of an old garbage dump. The players proudly tie thick leather belts around their waists as they prepare to play "ulama," as the game is known in the Nahuatl language: a mixture of sport, ritual and ceremony whose promoters are now using it to help at-risk youth in a downtrodden neighborhood on the Mexican capital's north side.

Pre-Columbian ballgames dating back thousands of years were once played across a broad swathe of the Americas by civilizations including the Mayas, Incas and Aztecs, and they have been revived elsewhere in Mexico and the region in modern times.

But this is the first time in half a millennium that there has been a place in Mexico City, once the capital of the Aztec empire, to play the game known in Spanish as "juego de pelota."

"The game had been forgotten," says Emmanuel Kakalottl, who coaches players at the cultural center where the new ulama court was built. "It was toppled 500 years ago, but now we're raising it up again," he told AFP. Wearing their traditional belts and loincloths, his players hit the nearly four-kilogram (nine-pound) rubber ball with their hips, trying to send it through a vertical stone ring six meters (20 feet) high. The game is played by teams of one to seven players. Centuries ago, they were all men. But here, the game is open to women, too. "We're women-warriors at heart, because it isn't easy. Not just anyone can play this sport. It takes a lot of practice, and your body takes a beating," says Beatriz Campos, 25.



Dancers perform ahead of a pre-Columbian ballgame called "Ulama".

Lifestyle | Feature



Life and death

In pre-conquest Mexico, ulama was played in various contexts, including fertility rituals and wars. The court was a highly symbolic realm, representing the duality of the universe. But the outcome was very real for the players, who risked being sacrificed, usually by decapitation. The tradition varied over the centuries, researchers say: sometimes, it was the winners who were sacrificed, which was considered an honor. At other points, it was the losers.

“The game and its religious connotations changed over time. First-hand accounts from the post-classical period (900 to 1521) suggest that by that stage, it was the loser who was sacrificed,” says Annick Daneels, an expert on pre-Columbian ballgames at Mexico’s largest university, UNAM. The ritual died out soon after the Catholic conquistadors arrived, in 1519.

“When the Spanish arrived, because of the political and religious aspects of the ballgame, it was probably one of the first



Mexican Elena Garcia, dancer of a pre-Columbian ballgame called “Ulama” poses for a photograph.

things they banned,” says Daneels, who is Belgian. It was never played again in what had been the Aztec capital, Tenochtitlan—until the cultural center, looking for projects to revive the blighted site of an old garbage dump in the Azcapotzalco neighborhood, decided to build an ulama court there.

Players take the game very seriously. No alcohol or smoking is allowed at the court. For some, ulama is an escape from drug addiction or a history of crime. “There are some basic fundamentals in the indigenous worldview: the unity of our physical, intellectual, emotional and energetic beings. A lot of times, when people lose their way, it’s because they don’t have that unity. We help find it again,” says Lia Membrillo, coordinator at the cultural center, which is operated by the city government. Giovanni Navarro, 30, takes issue with the idea that he and his fellow players are “rescuing” ulama. “Actually, the game is rescuing us,” he says. — AFP



Mexican dancer Carlos Mora, who performs the fire dance during a pre-Columbian ballgame called “Ulama” poses for a photograph during a photo session at the FARO Poniente cultural center in Mexico City.



Mexican Beatriz Campos, player of a pre-Columbian ballgame called “Ulama” poses for a photograph.

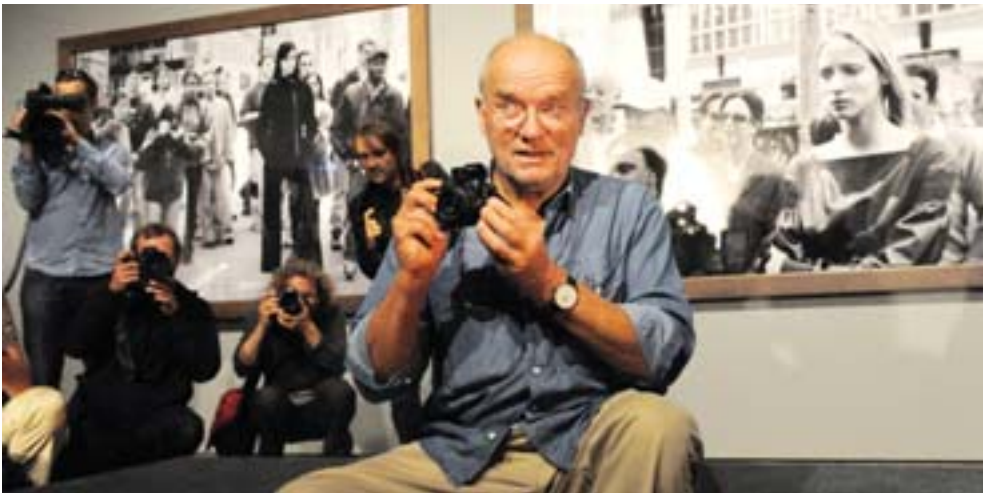


Mexican dancer Isaac Luna, who represents “Mictlantecuhtli” (deity of the dead in the Mexica mythology) in a pre-Columbian ballgame called “Ulama” poses for a photograph.



Mexican dancer Jorge de Jesus Trujillo, who represents “Mictlantecuhtli” (deity of the dead in the Mexica mythology) in a pre-Columbian ballgame called “Ulama” poses for a photograph.

## Lifestyle | Feature



File photo shows German photographer Peter Lindbergh during a press conference for his show 'Peter Lindbergh - On Street' in Berlin. — AFP photos



In this file photo taken on September 24, 2010 a visitor walks past the photographs 'Kate Moss' (right, 1994) and 'Mathilde' (1989) by German fashion photographer Peter Lindbergh during a press preview of the exhibition 'On Street - Photographs and Film' in Berlin.

## Peter Lindbergh, revolutionary fashion photographer, dies aged 74

**P**eter Lindbergh, the German photographer credited with launching the careers of supermodels such as Naomi Campbell, Cindy Crawford and Linda Evangelista, has died aged 74, his family told AFP Wednesday. Lindbergh's stark black-and-white images of models and stars staring straight at the camera, which played with light and shadow, helped overturn glossy standards of beauty and fashion in the 1980s and 1990s. Lindbergh was born in Lissa in western Poland in 1944. When he was a few months old his family fled the advance of Russian troops to southern Germany.

He grew up in the steel town of Duisburg, which he recalled as "the worst industrial, depressive part of Germany", only discovering the art world when he later moved to Berlin. He shot the first ad campaign for Volkswagen Golf and also worked with Stern magazine—renowned for its photography—before moving to Paris in the late 1970s. It was his 1988 photo of a group of young women in white shirts and tousled hair on a beach in Malibu—a far cry from the big make-

up, big-hair studio shoots of the day—that helped define his stark, cinematic style.

The new faces included Evangelista, Christy Turlington and Tatjana Patitz, all of whom would go on to become stars of the international catwalks. "He had a way of turning your imperfections into something unique and beautiful... and his images will always be timeless," Crawford wrote on her Instagram account. "Caring, kind, and of course hugely talented. We shall miss him," fellow fashion photographer Mario Testino wrote on Instagram.

### 'No beauty without truth'

The Vogue editor at the time, who commissioned the shoot, was unhappy with the clean, natural look and tossed the picture aside. But it was unearthed by Anna Wintour, who took over the magazine's helm a few months later and promptly hired Lindbergh for her first cover shoot. Lindbergh also worked with Vanity Fair, Harper's Bazaar and The New Yorker magazine. His aversion to touching up photographs to hide

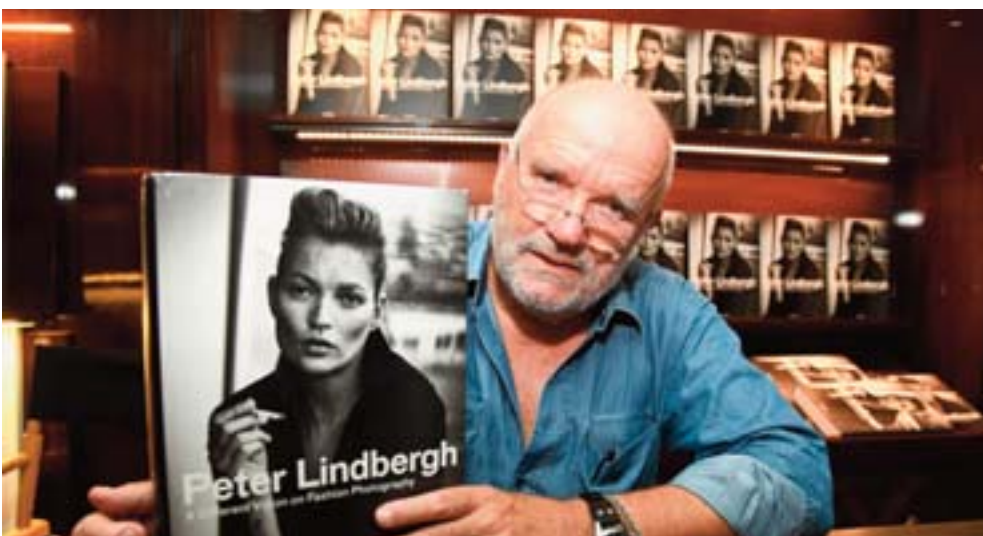
imperfections was legendary. "There is no beauty without truth. All this fake making up of a person into something that is not them cannot be beautiful. It is just ridiculous," he said in November 2016 when launching the 2017 Pirelli calendar.

For that feminist-friendly edition of a calendar long synonymous with languorous nudes, he roped in veteran stars Helen Mirren and Charlotte Rampling—aged 71 and 70 — as "a cry against the terror of perfection and youth". Lindbergh had most recently worked on the September "Forces for Change" edition of Vogue UK, guest edited by Meghan Markle, now the Duchess of Sussex.

It included his shots of New Zealand Premier Jacinda Ardern and the teenage Swedish activist Greta Thunberg. "There is no other photographer she considered to bring this meaningful project to life," according to a post on the duchess's royal Instagram account. — AFP



In this file photo taken on September 18, 2007 US model Cindy Crawford and photographer Peter Lindbergh attend the "30 Days Of Fashion" event hosted by Hearst Magazines at Hearst Tower in New York City.



In this file photo taken on September 20, 2016 in Los Angeles, German photographer Peter Lindbergh attends his Book Signing for "A Different Vision On Fashion Photography".



In this file photo taken on October 21, 2008 a visitor looks at a photograph of (from left) US model Cindy Crawford, German model Tatjana Patitz, Danish model Helena Christensen, Canadian model Linda Evangelista, German model Claudia Schiffer, British model Naomi Campbell, Dutch model Karen Mulder and US model Stephanie Seymour taken by German photographer Peter Lindbergh during the preparation of the 35th edition of the international contemporary art fair FIAC, at the Grand Palais in Paris.





Children sit under a canopy as they play during a chess class at Ogolonto in Ikorodu district of Lagos.

Children sit under a canopy as they play during a chess class. — AFP photos

## Chess offers Nigerian slum children new move

Crowds of children bustle around chessboards in Nigeria's Lagos, figuring out their next moves as part of a project aimed at bringing hope in one of the city's impoverished slums. Dozens of matches are played simultaneously as participants as young as three master a game often considered out of reach for the masses in Africa's most populous country. "Sometimes you win, sometimes you lose," 24-year-old teacher Tunde Onakoya tells his young charges after getting their attention. "But it's how you respond that makes you a champion. Don't get down when you lose, don't feel like you can't do it, just concentrate and do your best."



Children sit under a canopy as they play during a chess class.

Seasoned player Onakoya started the Chess in Slums project last September in the sprawling neighborhood of Ikorodu, a place where residents often feel cut off from the bustle and business of the vibrant megacity around it. The goal of the club is to provide a space to play and learn the game for the young inhabitants of the slum, many of whom are not in school and work to support their families. Held beneath a makeshift tent in the courtyard of a local bar, in less than a year the program has already drawn an enthusiastic following. As elderly men sip beer and watch football nearby, a dozen volunteers divide the pupils into groups.

While some turn their figures into battling action heroes, most are focused and intent on winning. The youngest children sing rhymes about chess to help them master the rules, as the older ones settle down into intense games. They use mobile phone apps to time their moves and record the matches in notepads to review their mistakes and successes later. "I want to be a Grandmaster," one of the children tells AFP, laughing.

### 'Food for your brain'

Chess—a board game famous for its reliance on strategy—has a tiny but avid following in Nigeria. The West African nation ranks 88th out of 186 countries, according to the FIDE World Chess

Federation's rating of top players across the globe, but still does not have any Grandmasters. Other board games are more popular. Nigeria is a superpower in Scrabble, winning multiple championships and boasting 29 of the top 100 players in the world, more than any other country. Onakoya says that chess has lagged behind in part due to an image problem.

"There's this perception of it as being a really difficult game, not as accessible, like for people of a different class," he says. Onakoya took chess in primary school and works with private schools as a consultant to add it to their curricula. "I believe in the game because it helps your cognition, your creativity, your focus. It's like food for your brain," he said.

Last year, he started the club in Ikorodu specifically to reach disadvantaged children. "Ikorodu is the kind of place where there's a lot of troubles and poverty. It is a tough place to get to, if you tell someone to come to Ikorodu they will laugh," he says. "I felt it would be powerful to help children here because many of them are really talented. "If they could master a game that people wouldn't expect them to even know, it could really show them their potential and give them confidence."

### School sponsorship

The club already boasts several success stories. Ten-year-old Odunayo Olukoya joined Chess in Slums in January. Four months later, she came first in the national chess championship for her age group. For Jamiu Ninilowo, 14, taking part has also been transformative. The skinny boy worked as a mechanic fixing cars at a garage in Ikorodu instead of attending school. He had to earn money for his family after his mother's leg was mangled in an accident as she picked scrap at a local refuse site to sell on for a meagre profit. In February, Ninilowo joined the club and is now its best player.

After he won a tournament in April, an impressed donor partnered with Chess in Slums to pay for his secondary education. "Chess is helping me to be a mechanical engineer by sending me to school," he tells AFP, proudly wearing the medal he won.

The attention that the project has generated has helped shine a spotlight on more of these marginalized children. Videos of the budding chess masters shared on Instagram also showcase some of their other talents that have often been overlooked in the struggle to survive. One 11-year-old boy even got a mentorship from a leading Nigerian architect after he was seen building models out of cardboard. "At first it was about teaching the kids a game that can impact the way they think and boost their confidence, but actually it's become much more. It's become a gateway to other opportunities," says Onakoya. "It is helping us show them that their lives can go far beyond Ikorodu." — AFP



Chess teacher Omiwale Mistura (left) conducts a tutorial during a chess class.



Fourteen-year-old mechanic Jamiu Ninilowo holds a medal he won following a chess tournament at Ogolonto in Ikorodu district of Lagos.



Children sit under a canopy as they play during a chess class.

# K-Pop and Kimchi: Tokyo's 'Little Seoul' shrugs off spat

**TOKYO:** In the "little Seoul" area of Tokyo, Japanese shoppers flock to get their fix of K-pop and Korean face cream, seemingly shrugging off a deep freeze in Japan-South Korean ties. Visitors to Shin-Okubo could be forgiven for thinking they had stumbled into a district in Seoul, with rows of restaurants serving kimchi and music shops selling the latest K-pop hits from BTS or Wanna One.

And in contrast to South Korea where anger over a deterioration in bilateral ties has sparked consumer boycotts of Japanese goods, it seems it takes more than a political spat to put off avid fans of Korean products. "I love everything, K-pop, the food, the clothes. I would also like the two countries to make up," said Anna Kaneko, a 19-year-old student making one of her regular trips to Shin-Okubo with a friend.

The latest row is deeply rooted in the bloody history between the two, particularly Tokyo's occupation of the peninsula as a colony, during which hundreds of thousands were forced to come to Japan as labor and women forced into brothels as wartime sex slaves. Koreans remaining in Japan after Tokyo's defeat in World War II suffered discrimination and hardship and several exist to this day in a grey zone in terms of citizenship.

The diplomatic friction has culminated in tit-for-tat trade restrictions and the scrapping of a military information-sharing pact between the two-alarming the United States which has security treaties with both. Bae Cheo-leun, who runs an organization bringing together South Koreans in Japan, admitted that a few years ago "hate speech" against Koreans could be heard in the streets around Shin-Okubo but this has not been the case during the most recent row.

"There was a law brought in to prevent it which has proved effective, even though there is no real punishment," Bae told AFP. "The young Japanese K-pop fans who come to this district have a deep love for South Korean culture," added Bae, who accuses politicians on both sides of whipping up "nationalist sentiment."

## NO Japan protests

Kim Heun-hee, a Korean teacher who also runs a cultural cafe in Shin-Okubo, pointed to a difference in attitude between South Koreans living in Japan and those based in their homeland. "The feeling in South Korea is very severe against Japan now, so some people think it must be dangerous for South Koreans to be in Japan," said Kim. "On the other hand, Japanese people in Shin-Okubo don't want to talk about South Korea so much. Japanese people don't have much interest in politics but many people also seem to be reluctant to respond heatedly to the political difficulties."

Many South Koreans have taken up a "NO Japan" boycott campaign of Japanese products, ranging from beer, clothes and cosmetics to cigarettes, but there has been little apparent retaliation from consumers in the other direction. South Korean culture has spread globally in recent years, led by the huge success of K-pop stars such as Psy-whose 2012 hit "Gangnam Style" became the first video to top one billion views on YouTube-and BTS, which finally topped charts in the US and Britain earlier this year.

A particular craze among young Japanese women is for Korean cosmetics such as exfoliating creams, anti-acne masks or stick-on false nails.



But while there seems to be little public anger in Japan at South Korea, there is also scant expectation that the situation will improve any time soon. South Korean journalist Park Jin-hwan said that "tensions including historical issues and economic issues between the two countries will remain for a long time. I think Japan and South Korea are now entering a period like the Cold War."

So long as both sides have contrasting interpretations of the 1965 peace treaty that normalized diplomatic relations between the pair,

political tensions will endure, added Park. Bae said ties between Seoul and Tokyo were "the worst since World War II" but sees hope for the future on the streets of Shin-Okubo. "Today I got off at Shin-Okubo station and I saw the town so busy with young people enjoying South Korean food and culture. These young people accept good as well as bad things about South Korea," Bae said. "I have high hopes that people like them will respect culture no matter how sour the political situation gets."—AFP

## New York Fashion Week



Designer Chen Zhi of i-am-chen walks the runway at Tmall China Cool: I-Am-Chen, Songta September 2019 during New York Fashion Week: The Shows at Gallery II at Spring Studios in New York City. —AFP photos





## Bolivia's fires destroy 'heritage' rock art sites

**LA PAZ:** Wildfires that have raged across forests and grassland in eastern Bolivia for weeks have destroyed rare rock art sites, archeologists announced Tuesday. "We believe that the damage is big and wide in terms of our heritage of rock art," said Danilo Drakic, chief archeologist in the eastern Santa Cruz department. Santa Cruz is home to numerous rock art sites, including paintings and engravings spanning several millennia, experts say.

Drakic said fires that have raged since May had caused significant damage to rock art sites near the eastern town of Robore. The sites contain engravings dating from 1,500

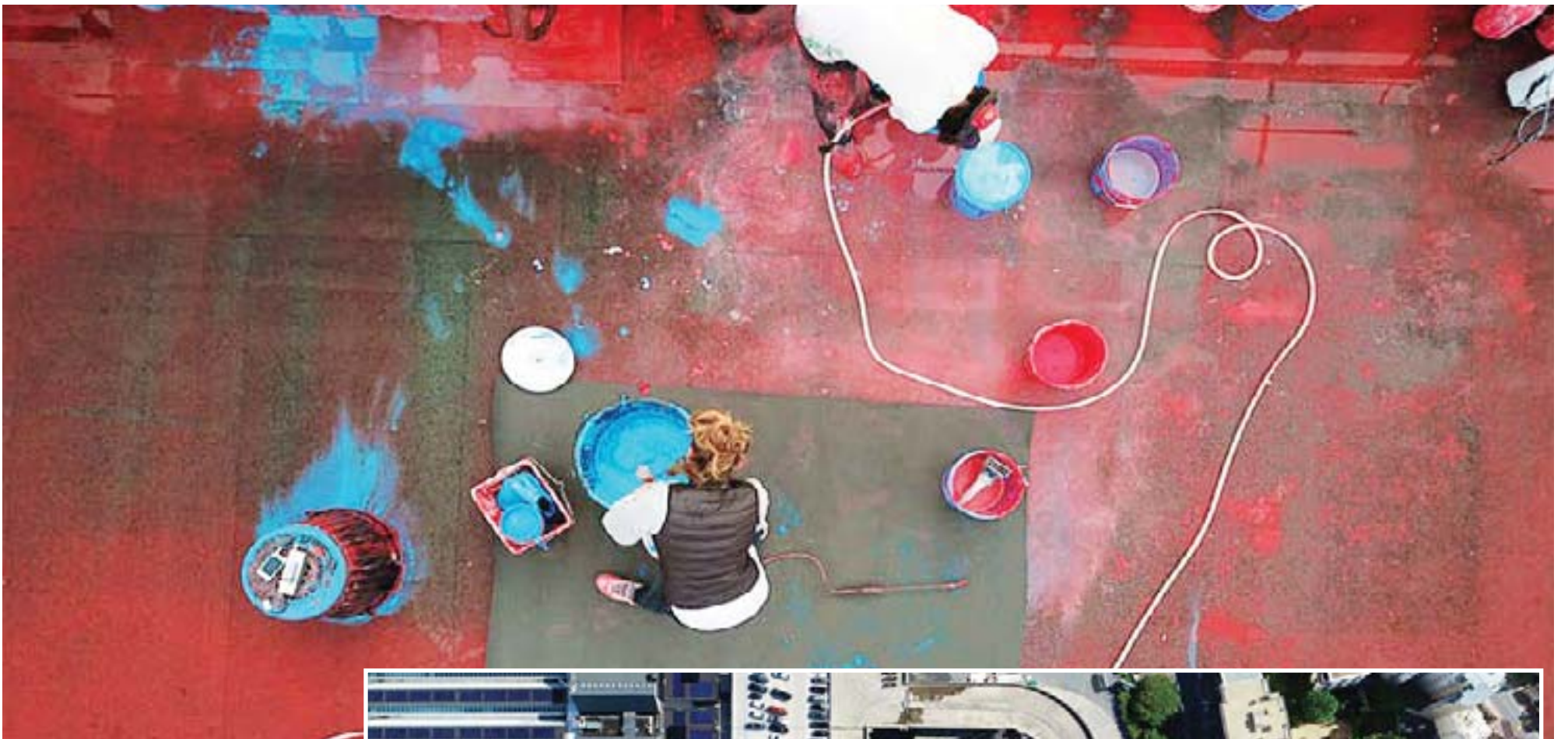
BC. "A dark layer of soot has covered all the paintings," said Drakic, citing an initial appraisal of the damage. Heat from the fires "has caused stones to break, even to collapse." He said a full assessment of the damage could only be made once the fires had been quenched.

Authorities declared the town, some 1,300 kilometers east of the capital La Paz, a "departmental capital of rock art" in May 2017. Bolivia's culture ministry said the fires were endangering the Jesuit Missions of the Chiquitos, six settlements built by the Catholic religious order in the 17th and 18th centuries that were declared World Heritage Sites by UNESCO. Culture and Tourism Minister Wilma Alanoca said the Jesuit sites closest to the fires "have not yet been affected" but are in danger.

"There is no doubt that there is an impact on the intangible heritage of the area, which will have to be evaluated once all heat sources are eradicated, which is a priority for the central government," state media quoted Alanoca as saying. Fires have so far destroyed 1.2 million hectares of forest and grasslands in Bolivia this year, the government said last week, though environmentalists claim the true figure is much greater.—AFP



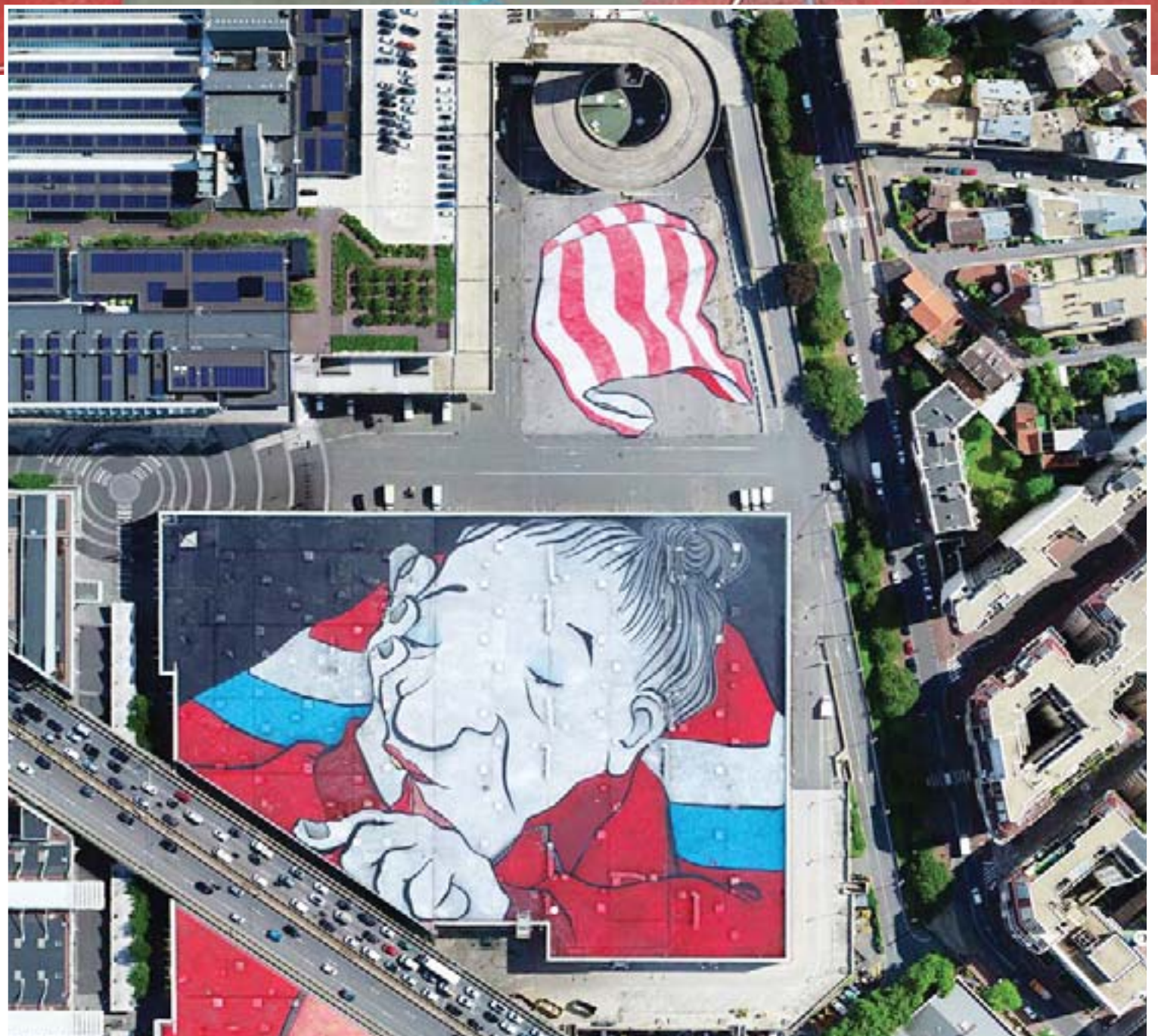
The world's  
largest street  
art mural is  
unveiled in  
**Paris**



French creatives Ella & Pitr have unveiled the world's street art largest mural in Paris, but it may prove tricky to find. Created on the top of a building, the sprawling 25,000-square-metre mural can only be seen from above. It depicts the figure of an elderly grandmother pointing towards a six-lane highway that passes above the building and cuts through the artwork, while above her head on a separate site a red and white plastic bag floats away in the breeze. The mural has been done in an eye-catching cartoon style and incorporates France's colors - red, white and blue.

"We were inspired by our grandmother Sylvette, who was always concerned with the small things in life. Compared to the artwork, the cars are very small and the people are like ants. The figure is looking at the road, probably thinking that there are a lot of people running everywhere. Things are going too fast for her," Ella & Pitr told Lonely Planet. The process took eight days to complete, with the artist's working 12-hour days alongside friends and volunteers. First they drew the main lines using magnetic stones, before painting in the colors in blocks.

"We don't really care about any type of record, we just love to play. If you give us a small piece of paper, we'll paint it. If you give us a huge roof, we'll paint it too. After a gigantic project like that, we usually feel as if we have given birth - exhausted but happy," Ella & Pitr said. The pair previously painted a mural on the 47-metre-high facade of Le Barrage du Piney dam near the small village of La Valla en Gier, close to St-Etienne. —www.lonelyplanet.com





## Finland named best country to visit for wildlife travel

If you are a fan of wildlife travel, you may be interested in traveling to countries that have been deemed to be the best destinations for wildlife enthusiasts. The Global Wildlife Travel Index for 2019 ranked every country on its wildlife travel offering, analyzing a variety of factors including wildlife biodiversity, prevalence of national parks, conservation efforts and protected natural areas. It has been expanded to include more detailed insights this year, including an increased focus around environmental sustainability, which is ever important to the increasingly eco-conscious traveler.

True Luxury Travel analyzed various factors to determine the 2019 report, which found Finland to be the best destination in the world for wildlife travel. This is due to its high levels of environmental sustainability, its unique and varied diversity of species, beautiful

natural landscapes and conservation efforts. The country has also continued to see a rapid increase in visitor levels over the last year. It came top thanks to its 39 national parks and the fact that it has forest areas that cover over 73.1 percent of its land.

When it came to environmental sustainability, the report looked at the risk posed to groups of species across every country. Using the Red List Index, it assessed the extinction risk of different species based on various genuine threats. Sweden, ranked second in the overall report, came in top position in this category. According to the newly-released report, the rest of the top ten best countries for wildlife travel were 3. Brazil 4. Canada 5. US 6. Norway 7. Spain. 8. Germany 9. Poland and 10. Slovenia. — [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com)



## Comic

### Word Search

#### Dance crazes

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

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

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|----------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| BALLROOM       | HAND JIVE      | QUICKSTEP     | TEXAS TWO-STEP  |
| BOLLYWOOD      | HIP HOP        | RIVER         | THE BUNNY HOP   |
| CALYPSO        | HOCKEY POKEY   | ROBOT         | THE HUSTLE      |
| CHA CHA SLIDE  | JITTERBUG      | RUMBA         | THE JERK        |
| CHARLESTON     | JUMP ON IT     | SALSA         | THE RUNNING MAN |
| CHICKEN DANCE  | LIMBO          | SAMBA         | THE TWIST       |
| DA DIP         | LINDY HOP      | SHIMMY        | THRILLER        |
| DISCO          | LINE           | SINGLE LADIES | VOGUE           |
| ELECTRIC SLIDE | MACARENA MAMBO | SQUARE DANCE  | WALTZ           |
| FLAMENCO       | MERENGUE       | SUZIE Q       | WATUSI          |
| FOOTLOOSE      | MODERN         | SWING         | YMCA            |
| FOXTROT        | MOONWALK       | TANGO         | ZUMBA           |
| GANGNAM STYLE  | TAP            |               |                 |

### Yesterday's Solution

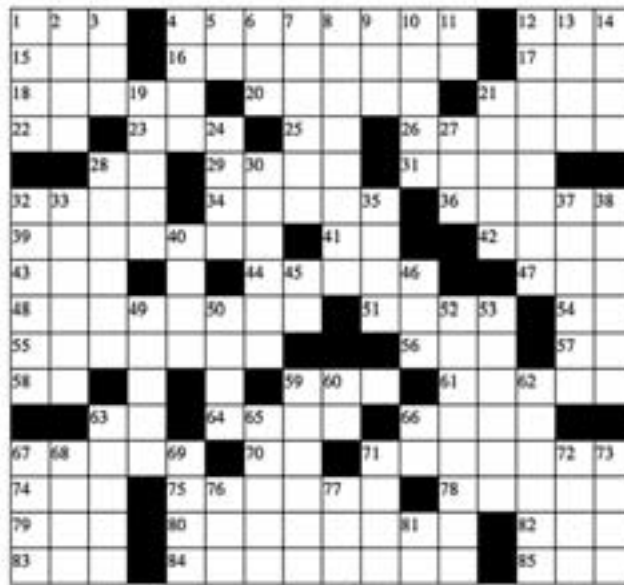
#### Countries of Europe

A A D T A W R O N I E T S N E T H C E I L W I  
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S E A D S F I N L A N D A Z E R B A I J A N M  
T E L P O E D N A L E C I C T B U L G A R I A  
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M R S R L E I S N R E N E A E L O I E G E T O  
G M E E A N T D E T M H R M R N U R U R T A C  
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C E R O L D A U G A R E N T H E D O R A N S K K  
C E T N S B S I E M L A E T M O U A D U G A R  
E L S U L T N I D O I T N O F M C R R E V A  
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|--------------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| ALBANIA            | ENGLAND            | LITHUANIA   | SAN MARINO        |
| ANDORRA            | ESTONIA            | LUXEMBOURG  | SCOTLAND          |
| ARMENIA            | FINLAND            | MACEDONIA   | SLOVAKIA          |
| AUSTRIA            | FRANCE             | MALTA       | SLOVENIA          |
| AZERBAIJAN         | GERMANY            | MOLDOVA     | SPAIN             |
| BELARUS            | HUNGARY            | MONTENEGRO  | SWEDEN            |
| BELGIUM            | IRELAND            | NETHERLANDS | SWITZERLAND       |
| BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA | ITALY              | NORWAY      | TURKEY            |
| BULGARIA           | LATVIA             | POLAND      | UKRAINE           |
| CROATIA            | LIECHTENSTEIN      | PORTUGAL    | SERBIA/MONTENEGRO |
| CYPRUS             | RUSSIAN FEDERATION | ROMANIA     | VATICAN CITY      |
| CZECH REPUBLIC     |                    | WALES       |                   |
| DENMARK            |                    |             |                   |

Hidden sentence: IN RESPECT TO AREA EUROPE IS THE SECOND SMALLEST CONTINENT IN THE WORLD

### Crossword 2300



#### ACROSS

- The 7th letter of the Greek alphabet.
- A sheath for a sword or dagger or bayonet.
- Hormone released by the hypothalamus that controls the release of thyroid-stimulating hormone from the anterior pituitary.
- A light touch or stroke.
- Wild variety of the common fig used to facilitate pollination of certain figs.
- 10 hao equal 1 dong.
- Jordan's port.
- Covered with or consisting of rust.
- Informal terms for a mother.
- A mature blood cell that contains hemoglobin to carry oxygen to the bodily tissues.
- A unit of weight equivalent to 1000 kilograms.
- Situated at an apex.
- Slightly open.
- Long and thin and often limp.
- Marked by excessive complacency or self-satisfaction.
- Painful grief.
- A genus of Laridae.
- Congenital deformity of the foot usually marked by a curled shape or twisted position of the ankle and heel and toes.
- That is to say.
- A man who is the lover of a girl or young woman.
- American prizefighter who won the world heavyweight championship three times (born in 1942).
- A diacritical mark (an inverted circumflex) placed above certain letters (such as c) to indicate pronunciation.
- Considerate and solicitous care.
- Any of various tropical plants of the genus Capsicum bearing peppers.
- No longer having or seeming to have or expecting to have life.
- A soft yellow malleable ductile (trivalent and univalent) metallic element.
- A festival featuring African-American culture.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
- A complete metric system of units of measurement for scientists.
- (Jungian psychology) The inner self (not the external persona) that is in touch with the unconscious.
- A small island.
- A coffee cake flavored with orange rind and raisins and almonds.
- The branch of engineering science that studies the uses of electricity and the equipment for power generation and distribution and the control of machines and communication.
- The sign language used in the United States.
- A cyst on the underside of the tongue.
- Occurring or done each day.
- Being one more than two.
- Absence of one of both testes.
- The sound made by a gentle blow.
- The portion of the vertebrate nervous system consisting of the brain and spinal cord.
- The act of sitting or standing astride.
- A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.

#### DOWN

- Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls.
- The basic unit of money in Bangladesh.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
- Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
- A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
- The month following March and preceding May.
- Characteristic of or relating to winter.
- Of or relating to or resembling a bistro.
- (nautical, aeronautical) Situated at or toward the stern or tail.
- The basic unit of money in Saudi Arabia.
- 1/10 gram.
- Heavy and compact in form or stature.
- Type genus of the Ranidae.
- A young horse.
- (Norse mythology) God of poetry and music.
- (Sumerian and Babylonian) A solar deity.
- (of a young animal) Abandoned by its mother and raised by hand.
- (in golf) The standard number of strokes set for each hole on a golf course, or for the entire course.
- Eurasian perennial bulbous herbs.
- (Old Testament) Moses' successor who led the Israelites into the Promised Land.
- A landlocked republic in southern central Africa.
- Tall woody perennial grasses with hollow slender stems especially of the genera Arundo and Phragmites.
- A deep bow.
- Hardy evergreen dioecious shrubs and small trees from Japan.
- English illustrator of several of Dickens' novels (1815-1882).
- Before noon.
- Large brownish-green New Zealand parrot.
- Marked by quiet and caution and secrecy.
- City in southwestern Colombia in a rich agricultural area.
- An Old World reptile family of Sauria.
- Fairly small terrestrial ferns of tropical America.
- The thin serous membrane around the lungs and inner walls of the chest.
- A light strong brittle gray toxic bivalent metallic element.
- Produce a literary work.
- The principal evil jinni in Islamic mythology.
- A Spanish title of respect for a man.
- A state in northwestern United States on the Pacific.
- The seventh month of the Hindu calendar.
- A river that rises in northeastern Turkey (near the source of the Euphrates) and flows generally eastward through Armenia to the Caspian Sea.
- King of Saudi Arabia since 1982 (born in 1922).
- (botany) Of or relating to the axil.
- Monotypic genus of palms of Australasia.
- (prefix) Opposite or opposing or neutralizing.
- A digital display that uses liquid crystal cells that change reflectivity in an applied electric field.
- Being nine more than forty.

### Yesterday's Solution

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

### Daily SuDoku

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

### Yesterday's Solution

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

## TV Listings



01:20 The Recruit  
03:30 Mean Dreams  
05:20 Battle Drone  
07:00 A Deadly View  
08:35 Bad Day For The Cut  
10:25 Battle Drone  
12:15 Cold Moon  
14:00 Bad Day For The Cut  
15:55 Thor: The Dark World  
18:00 Striking Distance  
19:55 Con Air  
22:00 Open Grave  
23:55 Crank

13:15 Live PD: Police Patrol  
13:45 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 It Takes A Killer  
22:00 Broadmoor: A History Of The Criminally Insane  
23:00 Live PD: Police Patrol  
23:30 Live PD: Police Patrol



00:45 Guardians Of Rescue  
01:40 Wildest Islands  
02:35 My Cat From Hell  
03:25 Lone Star Law  
04:15 Guardians Of Rescue  
05:02 Untamed China With Nigel Marven  
05:49 Pit Bulls & Parolees  
06:36 Animal Airport  
07:00 Animal Airport  
07:25 The Bronx Zoo  
10:05 Wildest Europe  
12:50 My Cat From Hell  
13:45 The Vet Life  
14:40 Nature's Strangest Mysteries: Solved  
15:05 Nature's Strangest Mysteries: Solved  
15:35 Wildest Islands  
16:30 Flying Wild Alaska  
17:25 Animal Cops Houston  
18:20 My Cat From Hell  
19:15 The Vet Life  
20:10 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet  
21:05 Untamed China With Nigel Marven  
22:00 Biggest And Baddest  
22:55 Pit Bulls & Parolees  
23:50 The Vet Life

00:25 Roast Battle UK  
00:50 Impractical Jokers  
01:15 Tosh.0  
01:40 Friends  
02:03 Friends  
02:25 Broad City  
02:50 Comedy Central Presents  
Comedy 3alwagef  
03:20 Tosh.0  
03:45 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
04:15 Roast Battle UK  
04:40 Impractical Jokers  
05:00 Real Husbands Of Hollywood  
05:24 Real Husbands Of Hollywood  
07:00 Lip Sync Battle  
07:25 Lip Sync Battle  
07:50 Comedy Central Presents  
Comedy 3alwagef  
10:20 Friends  
12:20 Key And Peele  
14:25 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 Comedy Central Presents: Menna W FINA  
22:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
22:30 Nick Swardson: Seriously, Who Farted?  
23:25 Broad City  
23:50 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah



00:20 EastEnders  
00:50 Ordeal By Innocence  
01:45 Holby City  
02:40 Inside No. 9  
03:10 The Detectorists  
03:40 The Collection  
04:35 Holby City  
05:30 Doctors  
06:00 Doctors  
06:30 EastEnders  
07:00 Casualty  
07:50 Holby City  
08:45 Carters Get Rich  
09:10 Death In Paradise  
10:05 Father Brown  
10:50 The Detectorists  
11:20 The Detectorists  
11:50 Holby City  
12:45 Casualty  
13:35 The Coroner  
14:20 The Coroner  
15:10 The Detectorists  
16:05 Holby City  
17:00 Doctors  
18:30 Agatha Raisin  
19:20 Agatha Raisin  
20:10 The ABC Murders  
21:10 Line Of Duty  
22:15 The Good Karma Hospital  
23:05 The Good Karma Hospital  
23:55 Doctors

00:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
00:30 Bizarre Foods With Andrew Zimmern  
01:20 Must Love Cats  
02:10 My Cat From Hell  
03:00 Dirty Jobs  
03:50 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman  
04:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
05:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
05:30 Must Love Cats  
06:15 My Cat From Hell  
07:00 Dirty Jobs  
07:50 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman  
08:40 Weather Top Tens  
09:30 Secret Space Escapes  
10:20 Mighty Cruise Ships  
11:10 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
11:35 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
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 Breaking Magic  
15:45 Breaking Magic  
16:10 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
16:35 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
17:00 Must Love Cats  
17:50 My Cat From Hell  
18:40 Dirty Jobs  
19:30 Chopped Junior  
20:20 The Next Great Magician  
21:10 Penn & Teller Tell A Lie  
22:00 Tricks On The Streets  
22:25 Tricks On The Streets  
22:50 Keeping Up With The Kruger  
23:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things



00:00 Home Alone  
01:00 Killing Time  
02:00 Serial Killer: The Devil Un-chained  
03:45 Home Alone  
04:30 Murder Chose Me  
05:20 Murder Comes To Town  
06:10 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall  
07:00 Murder In The Heartland  
07:55 Murder In The Heartland  
08:50 The Killer Beside Me  
09:45 The Killer Beside Me  
10:40 Murder Comes To Town  
11:35 Murder Chose Me  
12:30 Murder Chose Me  
13:25 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall  
14:20 Nightmare Next Door  
15:15 Nightmare Next Door  
16:10 Murder Comes To Town  
17:05 The Perfect Murder  
18:00 The Perfect Murder  
19:00 Disappeared  
20:00 Disappeared  
21:00 Obsession: Dark Desires  
22:00 Forbidden: Dying For Love  
23:00 Diabolical: Deadly Love



00:00 Alex & Co.  
00:50 Evermoor Chronicles  
01:15 Evermoor Chronicles  
01:40 Alex & Co.  
02:05 Binny And The Ghost  
02:55 Evermoor Chronicles  
03:45 Alex & Co.  
04:35 Violetta  
05:25 Binny And The Ghost  
05:45 Rolling With The Ronks  
05:50 Rolling With The Ronks  
06:00 Shake It Up  
06:25 Coop And Cami Ask The World  
06:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts  
06:55 Sydney To The Max  
07:20 Penny On M.A.R.S  
07:45 K.C. Undercover  
08:10 Bizaardvark  
08:35 Jessie  
09:00 Jessie  
09:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
10:15 Bizaardvark  
10:40 Bizaardvark  
11:05 Liv And Maddie  
11:30 Liv And Maddie  
11:55 K.C. Undercover  
12:45 Bunk'd  
13:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
13:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
14:00 101 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  
16:50 Raven's Home  
17:15 Coop And Cami Ask The World  
17:40 Sydney To The Max  
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 Sofia The First S4  
00:25 Disney Junior Music Nursery Rhymes  
00:30 Gigantosaurus 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  
04:25 The Hive  
04:35 The Hive  
04:45 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:10 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:35 The Hive  
05:45 PJ Masks  
06:30 Gigantosaurus S1  
06:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons S1  
07:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse Y2  
07:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2  
08:00 PJ Masks  
08:30 Vampirina  
09:00 Sofia The First S2  
09:30 Elena Of Avalor S2  
10:00 PJ Masks  
10:30 PJ Masks  
11:00 Vampirina S2  
11:30 Vampirina S2  
12:00 Gigantosaurus S1  
12:30 Gigantosaurus S1  
13:00 Puppy Dog Pals  
13:30 Puppy Dog Pals  
14:00 PJ Masks  
14:30 PJ Masks  
15:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers  
15:30 Vampirina  
16:00 Sofia The First S4  
16:30 Elena Of Avalor S2  
17:00 PJ Masks  
17:25 PJ Masks Music Videos S2  
17:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2  
18:00 Fancy Nancy S1  
18:30 Vampirina  
19:00 PJ Masks  
19:30 The Lion Guard  
20:00 Sofia The First S4  
20:25 PJ Masks Music Videos S2  
20:30 Doc McStuffins  
21:00 PJ Masks  
21:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2  
22:00 Fancy Nancy S1  
22:30 Vampirina  
23:00 PJ Masks  
23:30 The Lion Guard



00:15 Ultimate Survival  
01:05 Savage Builds  
01:50 Mythbusters  
02:35 Salvage Hunters: The Restorers  
03:20 Fast N' Loud  
04:05 Fast N' Loud  
04:50 How Do They Do It?  
05:15 How Do They Do It?  
05:35 Garage Gold  
06:00 Shed And Buried  
06:20 Garage Gold  
06:45 Ultimate Survival  
07:35 Deadliest Catch  
08:20 Gold Rush  
09:10 Alaska: The Last Frontier  
09:55 Salvage Hunters  
10:45 How Do They Do It?  
11:10 How Do They Do It?  
11:30 Fast N' Loud  
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 Islands  
16:15 American Chopper  
17:05 Gold Rush  
18:40 How Do They Do It?  
19:05 How Do They Do It?  
19:25 Fast N' Loud  
19:55 Fast N' Loud  
21:00 Speed Is The New Black  
21:50 Shifting Gears With Aaron

Kaufman  
22:40 Twin Turbos  
23:30 Deadliest Catch



00:10 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
00:35 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
01:00 Booster  
01:20 Booster  
01:45 Counterfeit Cat  
02:10 Counterfeit Cat  
02:30 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
02:55 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
03:20 Booster  
03:40 Booster  
04:05 Counterfeit Cat  
04:30 Counterfeit Cat  
04:50 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja  
05:15 Furiki Wheels  
05:35 Furiki Wheels  
06:00 Lab Rats  
06:25 Lab Rats  
06:50 Phineas And Ferb  
07:15 Phineas And Ferb  
07:40 Gravity Falls  
08:05 Gravity Falls  
08:30 Phineas And Ferb  
08:55 Phineas And Ferb  
09:20 Big City Greens  
09:40 Big City Greens  
10:05 Phineas And Ferb  
10:25 Phineas And Ferb  
10:50 Lab Rats  
11:10 Lab Rats  
11:35 Phineas And Ferb  
11:55 Phineas And Ferb  
12:20 Gravity Falls  
12:45 Gravity Falls  
13:10 Disney Mickey Mouse  
13:15 Phineas And Ferb  
13:40 Phineas And Ferb  
14:05 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
14:30 Phineas And Ferb  
14:55 Phineas And Ferb  
15:20 Big City Greens  
15:45 Big City Greens  
16:10 Supa Strikas  
16:35 Supa Strikas  
17:00 Space Chickens In Space  
17:13 Space Chickens In Space  
17:25 Big City Greens  
17:50 Phineas And Ferb  
18:15 Phineas And Ferb  
18:40 DuckTales  
19:05 Lab Rats  
19:30 Lab Rats  
19:55 Disney Mickey Mouse  
20:00 Space Chickens In Space  
20:13 Space Chickens In Space  
20:25 Big City Greens  
20:50 Phineas And Ferb  
21:15 Phineas And Ferb  
21:40 DuckTales  
22:05 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
22:30 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
22:55 Disney Mickey Mouse  
23:00 Furiki Wheels  
23:25 Dude That's My Ghost  
23:50 Dude That's My Ghost



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



00:15 Clash Of Warriors  
01:00 UFO Files  
01:45 Ancient Discoveries  
02:30 In Search Of Aliens  
03:15 The Universe  
04:00 Ancient Aliens  
04:45 Mummy Forensics  
05:30 Evil Genius  
06:15 America's Book Of Secrets  
07:00 UFO Files  
07:45 Ancient Discoveries  
08:30 In Search Of Aliens  
09:15 The Universe  
10:00 Ancient Aliens  
10:45 Mummy Forensics  
11:30 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved  
12:15 America's Book Of Secrets  
13:00 Ancient Discoveries  
13:45 In Search Of Aliens  
14:30 The Universe  
15:15 Ancient Aliens  
16:00 Mummy Forensics  
16:45 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved  
17:30 America's Book Of Secrets  
18:15 UFO Files  
19:00 Ancient Discoveries  
19:45 In Search Of Aliens  
20:30 The Universe  
21:15 Ancient Aliens  
22:00 MysteryQuest  
22:45 Evil Genius  
23:30 America's Book Of Secrets



00:20 Alone: Lost And Found  
01:05 Pawn Stars South Africa  
01:50 American Pickers  
02:35 Storage Wars  
03:00 Storage Wars  
03:25 The Lost Evidence  
04:15 JFK Declassified: Hunting Oswald  
05:05 Forged In Fire  
06:00 Counting Cars  
06:45 Alone: Lost And Found  
07:30 Pawn Stars South Africa  
08:15 American Pickers  
09:00 Storage Wars  
09:20 Storage Wars  
09:45 The Lost Evidence  
10:30 JFK Declassified: Hunting Oswald  
11:15 Forged In Fire  
12:00 American Pickers  
15:00 Truck Night In America  
18:45 Mountain Men  
21:00 Ronnie O'Sullivan's American Hustle  
21:50 Ronnie O'Sullivan's American Hustle  
22:40 American Pickers  
23:30 American Pickers



00:00 Fish Tank Kings  
01:00 Dive Detectives  
02:00 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces  
02:55 Log Cabin Fever  
03:50 Living Free With Kimi Werner  
04:45 United Plates Of America  
05:40 Chasing The Sun  
06:35 Island Hunter  
07:30 Ariana's Persian Kitchen  
08:25 Cruise Ship Diaries  
09:20 Fish Of The Day  
10:15 Fearless Chef  
11:10 Chasing The Sun  
12:05 Island Hunter  
13:00 Ariana's Persian Kitchen  
13:55 Cruise Ship Diaries  
14:50 Fish Of The Day  
15:45 Fearless Chef  
16:40 Chasing The Sun  
17:35 World's Best Beaches  
18:30 Ariana's Persian Kitchen  
19:25 Cruise Ship Diaries  
20:20 Fish Of The Day  
21:15 Fearless Chef  
22:10 Peter Kuruvita Coastal Kitchen  
22:35 Peter Kuruvita Coastal Kitchen  
23:05 Chasing The Sun



00:00 Homicide Hunter  
01:00 Nightmare In Suburbia  
01:55 Homicide: Hours To Kill  
02:50 It Takes A Killer  
03:45 Live PD: Police Patrol  
04:30 The First 48  
05:15 Homicide Hunter  
06:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill  
07:00 Live PD: Police Patrol  
07:20 The First 48  
08:50 Homicide Hunter  
10:30 Homicide: Hours To Kill  
12:20 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence



## Stars



### Aries (March 21-April 19)

You enjoy working hard and being organized and you exercise skill and discipline in anything that affects your career. This is a perfect combination for excellent manager skills. Your disappointments come when people do not show respect for each other. Continue to keep your own personal standards—one of your duties in this life is to teach through example. You will have many students—some you are not aware of just now. There is a temptation to spend or give away money today. It is important for people to feel that they can supply their own needs; you might be helpful in guiding them toward a sensible budget. The planetary energies show a bit of anxiety on your part this evening but a little dinner and a little music puts all that anxiety to rest.



### Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Perhaps there is a sense of challenge or blockage just now. You may not find the support you need so, if possible, back away from what you know may be stressful and try again later—another day. Pace yourself and re-think your expectations. You enjoy working hard and being organized and you exercise skill and discipline in anything that affects your career and reputation. Getting to the core of most any problem is becoming much easier now. Your friends are your main interest this afternoon and you might find a group or team sport the perfect activity to relieve the stresses of the day. You are quite able to manage a very active and strong emotional life. Strong spirit; attractive. This can be a period of healing and may mark a time of increased vitality.



### Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You accomplish more while working with others today. Your directional abilities are in high focus. Lightning fast when it comes to the business deal, you seem to have direct insight into what is worthwhile and worthless in a situation. You have new and unconventional ways to cut through the red tape and get at what is important. This may be a period when you take your work more seriously than usual. A lot of energy goes into getting things scheduled and organized. Anything out of place gets your attention. This evening you may be more involved with neighbors than usual.



### Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You will rise to the occasion and pull off a magic trick in order to meet a deadline today. Your inner resources and emotions are accented. Expect the positive and stay strong in that thinking—pleasant results happen. You should be noticing an increase in income now. If you have not received a promotion, it is time to request one. This is a period of manifestation and marks a time when you are better able to coordinate all the factors necessary to achieve success or to realize your goals. Take a little trip, or get outside this afternoon. You may want to break that routine and try something new or different. You may discover insights into day-to-day problems that will be of great value later. A hobby or some creative endeavor may bring you much joy this evening.



### Leo (July 23-August 22)

You may find that both your personal growth and your career may depend on how you can handle some fairly sensitive psychological material coming up now. You will benefit from analytical insights, getting to the heart of things—penetrating. This is not the best time to attempt to get your ideas across to others, but there is success along the lines of opening up some communication barriers—listening. You should be able to achieve some real breakthroughs in the form of ideas, communications and the mind in general. There are opportunities to push forward in your career through teaching or expanding your skills. Insights into your own mental workings, original thoughts and the like are possible now. A hobby occupies your mind tonight.



### Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You may have insights or breakthroughs regarding work issues now. Others are interested in what you have to say as your judgment and insights are valued. At heart, you have a deep sense of responsibility and purpose and this seriousness is genuine and felt by others. Law and religion may be of strong interest to you and an emotionally charged drama will gain your attention. Friendships and involvement in group activities usually play a fun part in your life and by this afternoon, you are ready to be with your friends. Friends are our only true riches and the satisfaction that comes from accomplishing things in cooperation with others is something no one can take away from you. You set examples that others will follow.



### Libra (September 23-October 22)

Any emotional problem today deserves a bit of thought. Let a day or so pass, if possible, and then return to the problem. A work problem that involves math, sales, shelving, timing, cutting back or building up the stock, transporting, etc. Should have your full attention. Do not make assumptions—get all the facts. You could be helping another co-worker as well as yourself. This afternoon you will find a common ground between you and a customer—the result is a positive. You will find yourself more concerned with maintaining and strengthening your position, rather than pushing outward. This can be a very rewarding attitude. You are very attentive when it comes to financial security—you may find opportunities for wise investments later today.



### Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You are driven when it comes to fulfilling your ambitions and carving out a career. There is no lack of energy or drive here and nothing will stand in your way. Everything is poured into making the right moves and the correct decisions. You are outgoing, enthusiastic and diplomatic—everybody's favorite. A career in psychology and in areas of the mind and self that are vulnerable and sensitive is indicated. You not only like change and transforming experiences, you pursue them for their own sake. You head straight for whatever challenges your sense of identity and puts you through changes. A creative talent is due for recognition now and rewards are within your reach. Display your creative talent with pride.



### Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Psychological values and material possessions become very important for you now and they are in a state of change: what is old and familiar is left behind or changed so thoroughly as to be unrecognizable. This can be a very productive time in your life. You may be reviewing your investments and perhaps, changing some of your ideas about which ones are most profitable. You can go out of your way to be clear minded and practical—removing every vestige of imagination and dreaminess. This is an attempt to ignore your more spiritual and mystical side, which seems to challenge you at every turn. Invest in your creative side this evening. Get back in touch with this side of you by becoming involved in some creative writing or music.



### Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Opportunities appear all around you and seem to challenge your social standing just now. You must decide whether the risk of participating in these changes will be worth the effort. If you are looking to change position within your company, it might be good to show your participation and attitude are positive . . . Come on, get ready, go. Unusual ideas and novel ways of expressing them play a bigger than usual part in your life now. A neighbor could play a part in this—or perhaps a brother or sister. The ways you get around and stay in touch at the everyday level are changed by technology or social circumstances. This may mean you get to drive a hybrid car or an all-electric car this day. A little romance this evening is possible.



### Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Your family can provide you with tremendous incentive to move forward in your career and vice versa. You will receive a little boost of encouragement today. You are able to dispense with some of the unessential and develop what is most basic and true in your environment. You encourage good support. You may feel that you are in touch and in harmony with others; the lines of communication are open. The support you need is available. Being successful in life is easy; you have a built-in sense of how to approach and unravel even the most difficult problems. You have an instinct for justice and the law and you always know how to approach a problem from just the right angle. This ability makes you a natural counselor or guide for others.



### Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Career insights and breakthroughs are possible at this time. You might discover that unconventional solutions to life's problems or new directions and paths are in order. You could find a teacher or guide—a new approach to your career, etc. You could discover yourself through creativity and self-expression. An increased confidence and a more outgoing manner may be the keys that open doors in your career now. There are opportunities available—your job is to pick and choose. Having and appreciating things of beauty and value play a bigger role in your life. Provided you do not spend it all on the fancy things that catch your eye, this can be a financially favorable period. There are opportunities to pursue your artistic interests this evening.

## Country Codes

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

# CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times

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Friday, September 6, 2019

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- 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:

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- 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:

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

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 @DrFahadS, @DrFahadS, @DrFahadS  
 Email: dr.fahad@beautybeyond.com.kw  
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**DR KHALED ALMERRI**  
 Consultant Interventional Cardiology  
 Department: Heart & Vascular Center

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- 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.
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- 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

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- Vocal cord augmentation.
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- Thyroid surgery.
- Surgery for the deviated nasal septum.
- Endoscopic sinus surgery.
- Treatment of allergic rhinitis.
- Treatment of snoring.
- Treatment of vertigo.

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

Scope of Clinical Practice:

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

Academic Certificates, Trainings & Fellowships:

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

**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).

**Dr. Hani Haider**  
 General Surgery Consultant

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Sunday, Monday and Tuesday from 9:30 am to 5 pm  
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**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.
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### CHANGE OF NAME

Thanjavur - 612202, has converted to Islam with the name of AHAMED RASHEED on 17th June 2015. (C 5587)

I, Alvi Mirahussain Abdullatif, holding Indian Passport No. Z2816291, S/o Abdullatif Dawood Alvi, PR/O 28/10, FLR-2, Ashok Niwas, Nawroji RD-5, Mumbai-400009. Presently residing in Kuwait, hereby declare that henceforth my name is read as Given name: Mirahussain, Surname: Alvi, Father Name: Abdullatif (C 5588)

I, JOSEPH MORAES, holder of Indian Passport No. M6712986 having permanent address at Benclean Vaddo, Cuncolim, Salcete - Goa, at present residing in Kuwait, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as GIVEN NAME: JOSEPH and SURNAME: MORAIS. (C 5589) 5-9-2019

Thiru Saravanan (Hindu), Son of Thiru Jayaraman, born on 28th April 1977 (native district: Thanjavur) residing at No. 347, Mariyamman Kovil Street, Murukkudi, Kumbakonam Taluk,

## 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

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### Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

**BY DAY:** Very hot with light to moderate freshening at times north westerly wind, with speed of 12 - 45 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

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

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 05/09/2019 0000 UTC	
KUWAIT CITY	45 °C	35 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	47 °C	30 °C		
ABDALY	47 °C	28 °C		
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C		
JAHRA	47 °C	33 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	- °C	- °C		
SALMIYAH	42 °C	34 °C		
AHMADI	43 °C	35 °C		
NUWAISIB	46 °C	31 °C		
WAFRA	46 °C	27 °C		
SALMY	45 °C	29 °C		

### 4 DAYS FORECAST

DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Friday	09/06	Very hot	48 °C	31 °C	NW	10 - 35 km/h
Saturday	09/07	Very hot and some scattered clouds will appear	47 °C	31 °C	NW	12 - 38 km/h
Sunday	09/08	Hot and some high clouds will appear	45 °C	28 °C	NW	10 - 35 km/h
Monday	09/09	Hot	44 °C	27 °C	NW	12 - 38 km/h

### PRAYER TIMES

Fajr	04:05
Sunrise	05:27
Zuhr	11:47
Asr	15:20
Sunset	18:07
Isha	19:26

### RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT

MAX. Temp.	46 °C
MIN. Temp.	34 °C
MAX. RH	29 %
MIN. RH	10 %
MAX. Wind	N 46 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

# Business

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2019

**38** Dubai house prices will decline sharply in 2019, 2020: Experts



**39** Zain announces expanded cloud offerings with Oracle FastConnect



**40** Angry residents send German wind industry spinning; investments fall



ESSEN: This file photo, shows a board bearing the logo of German industrial conglomerate ThyssenKrupp outside its headquarters in Essen, western Germany. —AFP

## Recession risks for Germany rises in Q3

### Industrial giant ThyssenKrupp relinquishes blue-chip status

**BERLIN:** Weaker demand from abroad drove a bigger-than-expected drop in German industrial orders in July, suggesting that struggling manufacturers could tip Europe's biggest economy into a recession in the third quarter. Germany's export-reliant economy is suffering from slower global growth and business uncertainty caused by US President Donald Trump's 'America First' trade policies and Britain's planned, but delayed, exit from the European Union. Contracts for 'Made in Germany' goods fell 2.7 percent from the previous month in July, data showed yesterday, driven by a big drop in bookings from non-euro zone countries, the economy ministry said. That undershot a Reuters consensus forecast for a 1.5 percent drop.

"The misery in manufacturing continues. The decline in new orders significantly increases the risk of a recession for the German economy," VP Bank analyst Thomas Gitzel said. Germany's gross domestic product contracted by 0.1 percent quarter-on-quarter in the second quarter on weaker exports, with the decrease in foreign sales mainly driven by Britain and below average demand from China.

"The danger is great that negative growth will also be recorded in the third quarter," Gitzel added. The economy ministry said new orders in manufacturing had a weak start to the third quarter and that the outlook for the sector was also looking grim.

"In light of still unresolved international trade conflicts and muted business expectations in manufacturing, there are still no signs of a fundamental improvement in the industrial sector in the coming months," the ministry added. Orders from non-euro zone countries plunged nearly 7 percent on the month while demand from other euro zone countries and domestic bookings rose slightly, the data showed.

Without the distorting effects of bulk orders, industrial orders rose 0.5 percent on the month in July, the ministry added. The overall reading for June was revised up to an increase of 2.7 from a previously reported 2.5 percent increase.

#### Little light

The VDMA business association said engineering orders in July fell by 3 percent in real terms

from the previous year, driven by weaker demand from both domestic and foreign clients. "The business and export outlook is still gloomy for the second half of the year given the economic and political risks," VDMA chief economist Ralph Wiechers said. Germany's DIHK business association said that companies around the globe were reluctant to invest due to slowing world trade and growing business uncertainty.

"So there is little light on the horizon for German industry which is characterized by its large share of capital goods producers," DIHK economist Kevin Heidenreich. Carsten Brzeski from ING noted that the downward trend in manufacturing was not only driven by weaker foreign demand and trade conflicts.

Meanwhile, struggling German industrial conglomerate ThyssenKrupp is set for ejection from the DAX index of 30 leading shares on the Frankfurt stock exchange, operator Deutsche Boerse said late on Wednesday. The historic Essen-based giant's shoes will be filled from September 23 by MTU Aero Engines, which makes components for aircraft mo-

tors. Thyssen was a DAX member from the index's creation in 1987, becoming even weightier after a merger with rival Krupp in 1999. But its shares have plummeted more than 60 percent since 2018, with the European Commission's decision to block its merger with India's Tata in June worsening the slide. "There's no question we're disappointed to leave the DAX," chief executive Guido Kerkhoff said in a statement to AFP.

"We're now looking to the future, it's important to reconfigure the business in a more profitable way to win back investors' trust." Metzler bank analyst Pascal Spano judged that ThyssenKrupp "is currently only a shadow of its former self".

One sign of that is the fact that its elevators division, one of its slew of products from submarines to construction materials, is valued more highly than the business as a whole, at 14 billion euros (\$15.4 billion). While ThyssenKrupp has dropped plans to split in two, it remains set on listing separately the highly profitable lifts unit. For MTU, the switch comes after a meteoric rise, multiplying its market value by 20 since the 2008-09 financial crisis. —Agencies

## Business

# Dubai house prices will decline sharply in 2019, 2020: Experts

## Economic slowdown and oversupply pose big risks to outlook

**BENGALURU:** Dubai house prices will decline sharply this year and next, according to property market experts in a Reuters poll, who said a slowdown in the economy and an oversupply of housing units are big downside risks to their already weak outlook.

Dubai - with a diversified trade and tourism economy and one of the seven territories of the United Arab Emirates - has faced a sharp slowdown in its real estate market for most of this decade, barring a pick up for a brief period more than five years ago. That downward trend is likely to continue in Dubai housing market activity, one of the primary contributors to its gross domestic product.

The Aug. 14-Sept. 3 Reuters poll of market analysts at 11 investment firms and research institutions showed house prices in Dubai would fall 10 percent this year and 5 percent next. They are forecast to decline 3.3 percent in 2021.

Those views also driven by worries the US-China trade war is hurting global growth, and lines up with similar Reuters polls which showed housing market activity in the United States, Britain, Canada and India is struggling. Last year, Dubai's economy grew just 1.94 percent, the slowest since the 2009 financial crisis, hurt by a rough patch amid a downturn in its real estate market.

Dubai, whose economy is focused on tourism and international business services, is now forecast to grow 3.8 percent in 2020 and 2.8 percent

in 2021, according to the government but much will depend on external factors.

### Market correction

While a recently announced government stimulus package could spur a recovery in the real estate market, the chances are high an oversupply of housing units would hurt prices and demand. "At the moment, there is a glut of supply coming into the market, which has been the case over the last couple of years," said Haider Tuaima, head of real estate research at ValuStrat.

"There have been record numbers of off-plan projects since 2017 that were met by very successful sales campaigns promising very attractive payment plans for investors that run post-handover for a number of years, which has impacted the capital values of existing properties in Dubai," he added.

But when asked what would boost the weakening property market, a majority of analysts in the poll said any introduction of affordable homes would provide the biggest upside. Other options available were strong economic performance, visa reforms and the upcoming 2020 World Expo. "Overall, price declines have been healthy for Dubai as prices were inflated," said Lynnette Abad, director of research and data for the Propertyfinder group. "The new supply coming in will continue to put pressure on prices and we will see declines in the double digits, however



Dubai Property prices have contracted by 25-35 percent since a mid-2014 peak and there will be no respite until 2022 at least, a poll showed yesterday. — AFP

this will make housing more affordable." Property prices have contracted by 25-35 percent since a mid-2014 peak and there will be no respite until 2022 at least, the poll showed. Yet when asked on a scale of one to 10, where one is extremely cheap and 10 extremely expensive, what best describes the level of Dubai house prices, the median was seven which is leaning to-

wards the expensive side. "The Dubai realty market is witnessing a market correction as property prices are adjusting to the increased new supply," said Shajai Jacob, CEO of Middle East business at ANAROCK Property Consultants. "This benefits consumers who may have previously aspired to own a property but were priced out." — Reuters

## Samsung to launch foldable smartphone after major delay

**SEOUL:** Tech giant Samsung has said it will launch its hotly anticipated first foldable smartphone today, months after faulty screens forced an embarrassing delay of its release.

The world's largest smartphone maker spent nearly eight years developing the Galaxy Fold, but had to hold its launch in April after reviewers reported screen problems within days of use.

It was a major setback for the firm, which was hoping to spark demand for its high-end phones with the launch of the \$2,000 device, with profits plunging in recent quarters in the face of a weakened market and strong competition from Chinese rivals. After months of "refining" the Galaxy Fold-which is ready for use on high-speed 5G networks in some markets-Samsung said it will release the smartphone in South Korea today, followed by select countries including the United States, Germany and France.

The firm will also offer a program to Galaxy Fold users under which the company would cover 70 percent of the cost of screen repair once within a year of use.

Samsung Electronics shares closed up 3.6 percent in Seoul. The Galaxy Fold has been widely promoted as the "world's first foldable smartphone", while rivals such as China's Huawei have been racing to bring similar devices to market. Samsung has a history of humiliating setbacks with major products, most notably a worldwide recall of its Galaxy Note 7 devices in 2016 over exploding batteries, which hammered its reputation.

The firm has also been caught up in the intensifying trade war between Japan and South Korea stemming from World War II disputes. The row saw Tokyo impose tough restrictions on exports



**SAN FRANCISCO:** In this file photo, Samsung senior vice president of product marketing Justin Denison speaks about the new foldable smartphone during its product launch in San Francisco, California on February 20, 2019. — AFP

crucial to South Korean tech giants in July, and Samsung vice chairman Lee Jae-yong-who called the situation a "crisis"-has visited Tokyo to secure materials.

Analysts have said the trade dispute will affect the delivery of Samsung products-among them the Galaxy Fold as it relies on a chemical film produced by Japanese firm Sumitomo Chemical.

Lee is currently facing a retrial over his role in a massive corruption scandal that brought down former president Park Geun-hye. He was initially jailed for five years in 2017 on multiple convictions including bribery, which was reduced to a suspended sentence on appeal, only for the Supreme Court to order a retrial last month. Analysts say the ruling could pose a serious challenge for Samsung. — AFP

## US private payrolls accelerate; weekly jobless claims rise

**WASHINGTON:** US private employers boosted hiring in August, suggesting the economy continued to grow at a moderate pace despite trade tensions which have stoked financial market fears of a recession.

Labor market resilience was underscored by other data yesterday showing a slight increase last week in the number of Americans filing applications for unemployment benefits. The year-long trade war between the United States and China is weighing on business investment and manufacturing, threatening the longest economic expansion in history. That is expected to prompt the Federal Reserve to cut interest rates again this month. The US central bank lowered borrowing costs in July, citing growing risks to the economy from the trade fight and slowing global growth.

Labor market strength is supporting the economy, now in its 11th year of expansion, through strong consumer spending. "Extreme uncertainty over trade issues has soured the sentiment of some in the business community, but companies continue to hold on tight to the workers they have and are also onboarding new workers at a fast clip," said Chris Rupkey, chief economist at MUFG in New York. "This isn't what a recession is supposed to look like." The ADP National Employment Report showed private payrolls increased by 195,000 jobs in August after rising by 142,000 in July. — Reuters

# Zain announces expanded cloud offerings with Oracle FastConnect

## Innovative platform connects customers and different cloud service providers

**KUWAIT:** Zain Group, the leading mobile telecom innovator in eight markets across the Middle East and North Africa, and Gold level member of Oracle PartnerNetwork (OPN), yesterday announced it will offer dedicated and private access to Oracle Cloud through Oracle Cloud Infrastructure FastConnect, becoming one of the first mobile operator in the region to receive this accreditation.

The elevation of Zain to becoming a gold level member with Oracle means the telco can now connect customers directly with Oracle Cloud Infrastructure including to applications such as compute, storage and content delivery, databases and other services. The collaboration bolsters Zain's own Cloud-based activities that allow customers to connect their office/data centers to Oracle's Cloud over Zain's international MPLS network with dedicated bandwidth options ranging from 10Mbps up to 10Gbps.

Zain Cloud Connect is an innovative platform that connects customers and different cloud service providers (CSP) in a simple and cost-effective way. It may enable customers to build flexible and scalable hybrid cloud-based solutions, providing customers with the most convenient way to connect to different CSPs.

Commenting on the Oracle FastConnect relationship, Henri Kassab, Zain Group's Managing Director, International, Wholesale & Roaming said, "We have identified the government and enterprise market as key strategic customers

and we are dedicated to providing them with the latest and most robust tools and solutions for them to go about their businesses successfully."

Kassab continued, "Zain has been a pioneering company since inception and so we are proud to introduce another first to the communications sector in the MENA region through the availability of Oracle FastConnect. We believe strongly that innovation is driven by the delivery of cutting-edge solutions, and Zain continues to seek out partnerships with market-leading technology providers to achieve this goal."

"Customers require seamless connectivity from their data centers and networks to Oracle Cloud for their most demanding workloads and applications," said Vinay Kumar, vice president of product management, Oracle Cloud Infrastructure. "With the FastConnect service, customers can provision the dedicated and private connections they need today and easily scale with their growing business demands."

Oracle Cloud Infrastructure FastConnect enables enterprise cloud connectivity to Oracle Cloud from trusted enterprise data centers. Connecting directly to the Oracle Cloud through Oracle FastConnect may enable a fast, private connection to the industry's broadest and most integrated cloud platform, with a complete range of services across Software-as-a-Service (SaaS), Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) and Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS).

Today, Oracle is the only company delivering



a complete and integrated set of cloud services and building intelligence into every layer of the cloud. With Oracle Cloud Infrastructure, customers benefit from best-in-class security, con-

sistent high performance, simple predictable pricing, and the tools and expertise needed to bring enterprise workloads to cloud quickly and efficiently.

## ABK announces winners of salary transfer campaign

**KUWAIT:** Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced the two winners of the sixth "Transfer your Salary and Find Reasons to Smile" monthly draw campaign, held on the 22nd August under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Interior. The lucky winners were Fajer Maitham Mohammad Behbehani and Abdulrahman Hussain M Abdullah, who will each receive the equivalent of their monthly salaries.

The next draw for this campaign takes place on 19

September 2019, with the last draw taking place on 19th December 2019. Customers must have their salaries transferred to the bank at least one month prior to the draw date to enter, and the draw is open to both Kuwaiti and expatriate customers who hold Elite, Prestige or Al-Raed Salary Transfer Accounts.

In addition to the draw, the "Transfer your Salary and Find Reasons to Smile" campaign offers ABK salary account customers a range of exceptional rewards. Kuwaiti salary account holders receive cash gifts of up to KD 1,000 provided they transfer a salary equivalent to or higher than KD 500. Moreover, Kuwaiti customers are eligible for an interest-free loan of up to KD 10,000 and expatriates up to KD 5,000. These loans are subject to ABK's terms and conditions, as well as the Central Bank of Kuwait's regulations and policies.

## Indonesia scrambles to toss millions of eggs to boost chicken prices



**JAKARTA:** Cheap chicken may be good for consumers, but it has dug its claws into the poultry industry.— Reuters

**JAKARTA:** Indonesia is set to get cracking on a plan to destroy millions of eggs in a bid to prop up slumping chicken prices, calling on poultry breeders to cut supply by either destroying them or giving them away.

"The only way we can do something about it is by discarding 10 million... eggs," said I Ketut Diarmita, director general of Livestock and Animal Health Services. Officials hope reducing the number of eggs

will cut chicken supplies and boost market prices.

Cheap chicken may be good for consumers, but it has dug its claws into the poultry industry. Prices have tanked 25 percent this year to 30,050 rupiah (\$2.10) per kilogram, the lowest in three years, according to official figures. Dozens of firms are expected to take part in destroying the eggs, according to the Indonesia Poultry Breeding Association.—AFP



## Business

# Angry residents send German wind industry spinning; investments fall

## Germany's ambitious renewables transition plan in crisis

**BERLIN:** Wind power is a key pillar in Germany's ambitious renewables transition plan, but the sector has struck strong resistance, forcing the Chancellor Angela Merkel's government to open talks on the crisis yesterday.

After years of breakneck growth in capacity and uptake that has seen wind power delivering a fifth of Germany's total energy production, vocal "not-in-my-backyard" opposition by residents and a lack of government support have seen investments shrink in the sector.

More than 600 citizen initiatives have sprung up against the giant installations, with a district called Saale-Orla even offering 2,000 euros to anyone taking action to get expert opinions opposing wind farms. The far-right AfD party, branding itself as the climate-sceptic outfit, had seized on the topic during state elections in Brandenburg, saying it stands by residents steamrollered by wind energy corporations.

Against the backdrop of bitter division, expansion in Germany's wind power production capacity plunged in 2018 to half that in 2017 as companies struggled to obtain permission to build.

And only a few dozen new turbines were installed since the beginning of this year, down 82 percent from a year ago, said Germany's Wind Energy Association (BWE). And repeatedly every quarter, official tenders for electricity production have returned undersubscribed—a "worrying" trend, said the Federal Network Agency.

"With regard to the expansion of onshore wind power, Germany has moved from the fast to the breakdown lane," said Achim Derck, pres-

ident of the German Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHK). For BWE president Hermann Albers, the implication is clear—"this development calls into question the success of Germany's energy transition."

### Ending subsidies

Market players said the tipping point came in 2016 when Germany amended its Renewable Energy Act. After almost two decades of providing subsidies to prop up the nascent sector, Chancellor Angela Merkel's government decided that the industry was now sufficiently mature and began withdrawing support. With obtaining building permits often taking years thanks to stubborn local opposition, projects took even longer to recoup costs, also shifting the calculation by firms whether to invest.

In the months following the 2016 amendment, the wind power sector shed 26,000 jobs in Germany, more than in the dwindling coal industry, according to figures provided by the Bundestag, Germany's lower parliament. "We have sounded the alarm, but why the German government has chosen to go down this path remains a mystery to this day," said BWE head Albers, who feels that Berlin had put too much "emphasis on costs" in the transition to green energy.

### 'Tip of the iceberg'

But the crisis in the sector has now shot back up to the top of the political agenda as youths took on the climate emergency with their vocal Fridays for Future protests. In order to meet the government's target of sourcing 65 percent of



Germany's wind power industry has lost momentum and still remains behind coal as a source of electricity. —AFP

Germany's energy from renewables by 2030, the proportion of wind power will have to grow from around 20 percent currently to replace coal, which still makes up close to a quarter of the mix. Ahead of a broader government announcement on September 20 on its climate strategy, Economy Minister Peter Altmaier (CDU) will host crisis talks on Thursday in Berlin with key players in the wind energy sector.

With 5,000 first generation wind turbines also up for renovation, the stakes are high.

For some however, the political attention has come too late. "We've been asking for help for

months. I don't think the government understands that it is destroying an economic ecosystem that is a source of cutting-edge engineering and innovation, that has taken time to create and has made Germany famous," Yves Rannou, head of the German wind turbine manufacturer Senvion, told AFP.

The company said last week that it is closing down, as its German revenues, which once represented 60 percent of its revenues, have shrunk to just 20 percent. "We are only the tip of the iceberg, the first to get down on our knees, but not the last," Rannou warned. —AFP

## Russia's Novatek announces launch of huge Arctic gas project

**VLADIVOSTOK:** Russia's Novatek yesterday announced the launch of a major liquefied natural gas project in the Arctic with Chinese, French and Japanese partners.

The privately owned company said that a "final investment decision" had been made on financing the \$21 billion Arctic LNG 2 project with partners including France's Total, CNPC and CNOOC of China, and a Japanese consortium. The announcement came during Russia's Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok, where President Vladimir Putin is hosting Asian leaders including Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Arctic LNG 2 will see the development of the Utrenneye field and the building of a natural gas liquefaction plant on the Gydan Peninsula in Russia's Arctic.

The plant will have a capacity of 19.8 million metric tonnes and its first exports are expected in 2023. "Today we have taken another step forward in our goal to become one of the largest LNG producers in the world," Novatek CEO Leonid Mikhelson said in a statement. Novatek became Russia's largest independent natural gas producer following the launch two years ago of its first Arctic LNG plant in the Yamal Peninsula. Russia, already the world's biggest gas exporter, is keen to develop its LNG potential in the Arctic, in particular for Asian markets. —AFP

## Nissan CEO Saikawa admits receiving excess pay

**TOPKYO:** The head of crisis-hit Japanese automaker Nissan admitted yesterday he received more pay than he was entitled to but denied wrongdoing, as the firm's former chief faces financial misconduct charges. Nissan is already mired in scandal over the arrest and ouster of ex-boss Carlos Ghosn, who is accused of wrongdoing including misrepresenting his compensation.

And yesterday, current CEO Hiroto Saikawa acknowledged he had received pay to which he was not entitled. "I left the issue to someone else so I had thought it was dealt with in an appropriate manner," he told reporters in Tokyo.

But he denied any wrongdoing and said he would return the excess payments. The admission came after local media reported an internal Nissan probe found that Saikawa and other executives received more equity-linked remuneration than they were entitled to. Contacted by AFP, the automaker said "findings from Nissan's internal investigation are scheduled to be reported to the board of directors on September 9".

"We have heard that share appreciation rights will also be part of this report," it added, declining to comment further. The Nikkei business daily said Saikawa was suspected of improperly adding 47 million yen



Nissan Motors CEO Hiroto Saikawa leaving a press conference at the company's headquarters in Yokohama. —AFP

(\$443,000) to his compensation by altering the terms of a bonus.

However, Nissan does not believe the overpayment was illegal, Kyodo News reported, citing unnamed sources. The overpayments were made in a scheme known as stock appreciation right, under which directors can receive a bonus if their company's share price rises above a certain level in a set time period. Nissan is currently undergoing an overhaul intended to strengthen governance after the Ghosn scandal.

In June, Nissan shareholders voted in favour of various measures including the establishment of three new oversight committees responsible for the appointment of senior officials, pay issues and auditing. —AFP



## Business

# Vietnam Airlines secures first license for direct US flights

## Vietnam plans to nationalize civilian airports operator

**HANOI:** Vietnam Airlines has become the first carrier in the country to secure a coveted license to fly direct to the United States, according to the airline and a regulatory filing seen by AFP. The approval has for months been sought by Vietnamese carriers eager to exploit a fast-growing market for air travel among Vietnam's booming middle class.

Domestic and regional air travel has mushroomed among Vietnamese travellers, and carriers are hoping the market will extend to US travel too. Vietnam Airlines has been licensed to fly from Hanoi and the southern business hub Ho Chi Minh City to Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, Seattle and Dallas, according to a regulatory filing from the US Department of Transportation obtained by AFP.

The carrier will also be able to connect to Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto in Canada, it said. The terms, which came into effect on August 26, cover "air transportation of persons, property and mail" between the Vietnamese and North American cities. It was not immediately clear if the flights would be non-stop or would transit through Taipei, Osaka and Nagoya, which were listed as approved intermediate hubs in the filing.

The national carrier confirmed the approval yesterday, calling it "an important move by Vietnam Airlines in preparing its plan to fly to the US in the coming time".

It did not say when the first flight could take

to the skies. The regulations were announced after the US Federal Aviation Administration in February awarded Vietnam a "category 1" rating, meaning airlines from the country can fly to the United States. Vietnam's newest airline Bamboo Airways has also said it plans to fly to the US by the end of this year, with budget carrier VietJet expressing interest as well.

Vietnam's aviation sector has soared in recent years, with passenger numbers jumping from 25 million in 2012 to 62 million last year. Tourist visits from the US have also climbed, jumping nearly 60 percent in the past five years. Aviation analyst Greg Waldron said a move into the US market is a big bet for Vietnam Airlines, which will face tough competition from established hub carriers in Taiwan, South Korea and China.

Visa issues could also create obstacles—both US and Vietnamese travellers require entry permits for travel—along with the steep costs required to run long-haul routes. "There are some serious competitive and practical restraints facing (Vietnam Airlines)," said Waldron, Asia managing editor at Flightglobal. Last year Singapore Airlines launched the world's longest direct flight with its route to Newark, New Jersey, topping out at 19 hours and 15,290 kilometers (9,500 miles).

Meanwhile, Vietnam is considering nationalising Airports Corporation of Vietnam, a move that economists say may hurt investor sentiment and hamper the Southeast Asian country's pri-



vatization drive. The Ministry of Transport has sent a proposal to Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc to buy shares in the company, which operates the country's civilian airports, from private investors, Deputy Minister of Transport Nguyen Ngoc Dong said late on Wednesday.

The move is aimed at "ensuring the highest security and defence conditions", Dong said without elaborating further in a statement posted on the government website. The proposal comes as Vietnam has been seeking to speed up its privatization of state firms in recent years to improve their performance and to fill its coffers.

The government said last month it would sell stakes in 93 state-owned enterprises, including the country's largest bank by assets - Agribank, by the end of 2020.

The government sold tiny stakes in Airports Corporation of Vietnam to private investors in 2016 as part of that privatization process.

The government currently owns 95.4 percent of the company while several foreign investment funds, such as Dragon Capital, Korea Investment Management and RBC Global Asset Management, hold the remainder, according to Refinitiv Eikon data. —Agencies

## US sees 'modest' growth, businesses show 'near-term' optimism: Fed

**WASHINGTON:** The US economy grew at an unspectacular pace in recent weeks, while businesses still took a rosy view of the near future despite the escalating US-China trade war, the Federal Reserve said Wednesday.

But Fed still drew a spotty portrait, pointing to an array of softening or deteriorating conditions just as concrete signs emerge that the trade conflict is weighing on growth. "Although concerns regarding tariffs and trade policy uncertainty continued, the majority of businesses remained optimistic about the near-term outlook," the central bank said in nationwide survey of economic activity.

Though disagreements remain, policymakers are widely expected to cut interest rates again in two weeks to insulate the United States from the weakening global economy and mounting fears of economic damage wrought by President Donald Trump's trade wars. The Fed cut rates last month for similar reasons, marking the first downshift for monetary policy in a decade.

The latest "beige book" survey, which gathers anecdotal reports from business people and other contacts in the Fed's 12 districts, said growth had continued "at a modest pace."

### Sharp deterioration

The report may not have reflected all of last month's sharp deterioration in the trade conflict with Beijing, as research concluded on August 23, just as Beijing and Washington announced fresh increases on hundreds of billions of dollars in two-way trade. According to the Fed, anecdotal reports say auto sales rose and



**WASHINGTON, DC:** In this file photo, US President Donald Trump shakes hands with Chairman of the Federal Reserve, Jerome Powell (right), in the Rose Garden of the White House in Washington, DC. — AFP

tourism was "solid," while bank lending and commercial real estate leasing both increased a little.

Elsewhere, however, things were less than stellar. Farms were beset by a trio of woes: bad weather, low prices and uncertainties from America's trade wars. Meanwhile, consumer spending—the sole strong point in the US economy—was "mixed" outside the auto sector, demand for transportation softened, home sales "remained constrained" and housing construction was flat. Across the nation, employers complained they had difficulty finding workers to fill open positions and faced "strong upward pressure" to offer higher pay to entry-level and low-skill workers. —AFP

## France's number 2 airline suspends some flights, sales

**PARIS:** France's second-largest airline Aigle Azur, which went into receivership earlier this week, said yesterday it had halted flights to several destinations and was suspending ticket sales. In a brief statement on its website, the airline said that "we inform all our passengers from/to Sao Paulo, Bamako and Porto that all our flights are cancelled" and apologized to customers. It added in a separate statement that for the moment it had also halted the sale of tickets for all flights from September 10, the day following the deadline for submitting bids to acquire the airline.

Following years of losing millions of euros, Aigle Azur filed for bankruptcy on Monday and was placed into receivership. While flights have been suspended for the moment to destinations in Brazil, Mali and Portugal, the airline's top market, Algeria, which accounts for a majority of its activity, is not affected.

However, the airline said that bankruptcy rules would force it to gradually suspend regular flights.

The largest shareholder in Aigle Azur, which has 1,150 employees, is the Chinese conglomerate HNA Group, which owns Hainan Airlines, with a 49-percent stake. David Neeleman, an American airline entrepreneur whose companies include JetBlue and TAP Air Portugal, owns 32 percent, and French businessman Gerard Houa owns 19 percent. — AFP

## Sports

## Dodgers break NL homer record



PITTSBURGH: Elias Diaz #32 of the Pittsburgh Pirates hits a home run in the ninth inning during the game against the Miami Marlins at PNC Park. — AFP photos



LOS ANGELES: Relief pitcher Ross Stripling #68 of the Los Angeles Dodgers throws against the Colorado Rockies during the sixth inning at Dodger Stadium.

LOS ANGELES: Joc Pederson hit two more home runs Wednesday, and the Los Angeles Dodgers set a National League record for homers in a season during a 7-3 victory that gave them a three-game sweep over the visiting Colorado Rockies. The Rockies saw their losing streak reach a season-high nine games, during which they have allowed 82 runs. Pederson hit two home runs in a game for the second time in the series. He did not play Tuesday after crashing into the right field wall Monday and leaving the game after already hitting a pair of homers. He also hit a game-winning, pinch-hit homer in the 11th inning Sunday at Arizona. The Dodgers now have 250 home runs, eclipsing the 2000 Houston Astros, who previously held the NL record at 249. The Astros moved to the American League in 2013.

#### METS 8, NATIONALS 4

Robinson Cano returned to the lineup with three hits, including a home run, and New York rebounded from its epic loss on Tuesday night to win at Washington. After absorbing the first loss in franchise history in a game they led by six runs in the ninth inning or later, the Mets took a 7-1 sixth-inning lead Wednesday and held on. Reinstated yesterday after missing a month with a torn left hamstring that could have ended his season, Cano reached base four times and scored twice in his first action since Aug. 4. Juan Lagares and Pete Alonso also homered for New York, but Wilson Ramos went 0-for-4, ending his 26-game hitting streak, the longest in the majors this season.

#### PIRATES 6, MARLINS 5

Bryan Reynolds dropped a two-run bloop single to left field in the ninth inning to give Pittsburgh a win over visiting Miami. Trailing 5-3 going into the ninth against Jose Urena

(4-8), the Pirates pulled within a run on Elias Diaz's leadoff homer. Kevin Kramer then walked and Adam Frazier doubled, setting up Reynolds' hit that gave the Pirates their fifth win in six games. Garrett Cooper homered for the second straight game and added an RBI double, and Starlin Castro hit three doubles and a two-run homer for the Marlins.

#### YANKEES 4, RANGERS 1

Aaron Judge hit a two-run homer, and Gleyber Torres added a solo homer as New York beat visiting Texas. Judge became the fifth Yankee to reach 20 homers this year while Torres tied Gary Sanchez for the team lead with his 34th as New York won for the eighth time in 10 games. The Yankees also improved to 18-0-3 in their past 21 home series since dropping two of three April 12-14 to the Chicago White Sox. Rougned Odor homered in the ninth inning for Texas, which scored both runs of its final two games of the series in the ninth.

#### RED SOX 6, TWINS 2

Mookie Betts slugged a pair of first-pitch home runs and had four hits and five RBIs to lead Boston past visiting Minnesota. Betts had his second four-hit game of the year and matched his season high for RBIs, as Boston won for the fifth time in its past seven games. Eduardo Rodriguez (17-5) earned the victory with seven shutout innings, allowing five hits and four walks and striking out eight. Eddie Rosario hit a two-run homer for the Twins, who lost for just the second time in their last 11 games.

#### INDIANS 8, WHITE SOX 6

Rookie Oscar Mercado had an RBI single among his three hits and made a diving catch with the bases loaded in the ninth inning as

host Cleveland held on for a victory over Chicago. Franmil Reyes belted a two-run homer and rookie Yu Chang ripped a two-run single for the Indians, who scored in six of the first seven innings to build an 8-2 lead. Jose Abreu launched a two-run homer in the eighth inning and Tim Anderson did the same in the ninth for the White Sox, who have lost eight of their past nine games.

#### GIANTS 9, CARDINALS 8

Kevin Pillar hit a two-run homer in the eighth inning to rally San Francisco to a victory at St. Louis. The Cardinals erased 4-0 and 7-4 deficits in the see-saw marathon, but the Giants persisted while pounding out 15 hits. Tyler Rogers (1-0), the fourth of six Giants pitchers, earned the victory. Closer Will Smith got the final four outs to earn his 31st save. Giants starter Madison Bumgarner allowed six runs in five-plus innings. Brandon Crawford hit a three-run homer for the Giants and Mike Yastrzemski hit a solo shot. Pillar also had an RBI single. Paul Goldschmidt had a double, a triple and four RBIs to pace the Cardinals.

#### REDS 8, PHILLIES 5

Joey Votto singled, doubled, homered and drove in two runs to lead host Cincinnati to a win over Philadelphia. Jose Iglesias hit a pinch-hit solo home run in the seventh to move Cincinnati ahead 6-5, and relief pitcher/center fielder Michael Lorenzen drilled a two-run blast in the eighth to make it 8-5. Lorenzen (1-4) became the first player to get the win as a pitcher, play the field and hit a home run in the same game since Babe Ruth in 1921.

#### ROYALS 5, TIGERS 4

Jorge Soler homered for the second con-

secutive night, bashing his 40th of the season, as host Kansas City defeated Detroit. The Royals are no longer the only team in the majors without a player ever to hit 40 home runs in a year. One night after breaking the club's single-season homer record, Soler caromed one off the Royals Hall of Fame beyond the left field wall. The exit velocity off his bat was 115 mph. Hunter Dozier and Alex Gordon each had three hits for Kansas City. Jakob Junis (9-12) allowed four runs on seven hits in seven-plus innings, and Ian Kennedy pitched a perfect ninth for his 26th save in 30 chances.

#### A'S 4, ANGELS 0

Sean Murphy rebounded from being called for catcher's interference to homer in his first major league game, and Oakland won its second straight game against visiting Los Angeles. A's right-hander Tanner Roark continued his impressive form at his new home, tossing 6 2/3 innings of five-hit ball. Jurickson Profar and Marcus Semien also homered for the A's, who have opened a six-game homestand with a pair of wins after completing a seven-game trip last week with a pair of losses.

#### DIAMONDBACKS 4, PADRES 1

Ketel Marte's grand slam broke a scoreless tie in the seventh inning, and Zac Gallen gave up only one hit in seven shutout innings as Arizona defeated San Diego in Phoenix. Marte has 30 homers, and he is hitting a major-league-best .386 with 13 homers and 38 RBIs since June 15. He also had two singles and leads the NL in hits (173) and multiple-hit games (55). Gallen (3-4) lost his no-hitter when Manny Machado lined a hard single to right field with one out in the seventh inning. He struck out eight and walked one. — Reuters

# Alpine skiing great Hirscher quits on top of the world

**SALZBURG:** Marcel Hirscher said on Wednesday he was no longer “ready to pay the price” after calling time on an illustrious alpine skiing career that saw him win a record eighth consecutive overall World Cup title this year. “Today is the day when I end my active career,” the 30-year-old Austrian told a packed press conference in the city of Salzburg.

The multiple world and Olympic champion said he made the decision two weeks ago, saying he had noticed after the season’s end that it was taking him longer than before to recover and considered himself lucky to be healthy and ending his career without any serious injuries. “I always wanted to stop while still winning races... I’m not ready anymore to pay the price. I have always put in my full commitment and effort,” he said, looking calm and casual in a white T-shirt.

But he admitted making the decision to call it quits hadn’t been easy, adding “the last two weeks were full of turbulence”. “It is a life that one stops from one day to the next... I had never dared to dream I would win so much,” he said. Hirscher already has two more overall World Cup titles than the second most successful skier in history, fellow Austrian Annemarie Moser-Proell, who won six large globes. She is followed by Marc Girardelli of Luxembourg with five, and American Lindsey Vonn and Austrian Hermann Maier both with four. Earlier this year, Vonn retired aged 34, as did her close friend Aksel Lund Svindal, at 36.

## ‘Record no one will ever break’

Vonn congratulated Hirscher on his “amazing

career”. “Racing in the same era as you has been an honor. 8 overall titles is a record no one will ever break!” the American wrote on Twitter on Wednesday. The slalom specialist has also secured seven world championship gold medals, as well as two gold medals at the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics, eclipsing his previous best, a slalom silver from Sochi four years earlier.

One of the records that escapes Hirscher, however, is the one for the total number of World Cup victories. There, Hirscher’s 67 wins fall short of the 86 won by Sweden’s Ingemar Stenmark. But Svindal said Hirscher could still be the best skier ever. “It’s been an absolute honor competing with you. Excuse me Stenmark. I think maybe the greatest skier of all time is Marcel Hirscher. At least that’s how it felt trying to compete against you. Because you’ve been almost too good,” he said. Praise also poured in from Austria for one of the ski-mad country’s favourite sporting sons. “Your exceptional accomplishments have shaped professional skiing and are a huge incentive for our young junior athletes,” former chancellor Sebastian Kurz said on Twitter.

## ‘Bye Marcel’

Austrian papers had been running front-page headlines for days on Hirscher’s expected retirement. “Bye Marcel” the Oesterreich tabloid front page read Wednesday, and “Thank you Marcel!” said the Kronen tabloid on Saturday. Hirscher had spoken before about calling it quits — as early as 2014, in fact — and more recently had said that he wants to spend more time with his



**ARE, Sweden:** In this file photo taken on February 17, 2019 Austria’s Marcel Hirscher competes in the first run of the men’s slalom event at the 2019 FIS Alpine Ski World Championships at the National Arena. — AFP

family. He married and had a son last year.

On Wednesday he said he wanted to play football and ride motocross with his son. “I’m excited to see what the future will hold for me, how I will feel,” he said, adding he ruled out a comeback for now. Born in Annaberg-Lungoetz, near Salzburg, Hirscher started to ski at the age

of two, taught by his father, who has been by his side and coached him throughout his career. His family spent summer seasons in an Alpine hut in the mountains around Salzburg, according to a media interview with his father. The World Cup season starts again with the first race in Austria’s Soelden from October 25. — AFP

## Leclerc to be empowered for Ferrari’s Monza home race

**MONZA:** Charles Leclerc will be propelled by an upgraded Ferrari power unit and his own raw emotions, this weekend when he bids to claim a second career victory at the Italian Grand Prix. The 21-year-old Monegasque’s maiden Formula One triumph was shrouded in tragedy at last weekend’s Belgian Grand Prix following the death of his close friend Antoine Hubert.

For Leclerc and his team-mate four-time champion German Sebastian Vettel, the race in the old royal park at Monza offers another opportunity to show their cars’ superior power and straight-line speed against champions Mercedes. “It’s time for our home Grand Prix and there can be no better way to come to Monza than as the winner of the last round in Spa-Francorchamps,” said Binotto, ahead of this weekend’s race.

“It’s a great thank you to our fans who have given us so much support during what has been a far from easy season so far. “Monza is a track where we run at very high average speeds, featuring long straights and heavy braking, running a low down-force package - and, this weekend, we plan to introduce our third (upgraded) power unit.”

## 90 years of Scuderia Ferrari

After a season so far in which Ferrari have won only once in 13 outings, with Mercedes triumphing 10 times and Red Bull twice, Binotto knows his team must deliver a near-flawless performance again to resist the overall excellence and race pace

of Mercedes’ defending five-time champion Lewis Hamilton. “We saw in Belgium that, in order to win, we must do everything to perfection and our aim is to do exactly that in Monza too,” he said. “There will be no room for error. Our home race is always important, but that is especially true this time as we are celebrating 90 years of Scuderia Ferrari.

“Racing in front of our home fans is always an extra boost and further motivation to do well. Apart from anything else, there is no podium quite like Monza and we think there is no better crowd than the Italian one.” Last year’s race ended with the ‘tifosi’ booing loudly when the triumphant Hamilton stood atop the podium, having won after Ferrari had locked out the front row of the grid following Kimi Raikkonen’s all-time fastest qualifying lap.

The Briton’s brilliant victory drew him level with Ferrari legend Michael Schumacher’s record five Monza victories and was Mercedes fifth successive Italian triumph. Hamilton admitted however that Ferrari have every chance of snapping that run. “Monza is going to be a happy weekend for Ferrari, most likely, because it is all straights and they are so fast,” he said. “We’ve got to make drastic improvements to our straight speed, somehow. I don’t know if it’s possible, but if anyone can do it, it’s our team.”

Going into the 90th Italian Grand Prix, Hamilton has the luxury of a 65-point lead over his re-signed Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas in the drivers’ championship. His old rival Vettel may be an unlikely title contender, but after a year without a win since the 2018 Belgian race, he may find a return to the scene of his own maiden victory - in a rain-soaked race for Toro Rosso in 2008 - motivates him to re-boot his flagging season. Beyond the leading teams, Red Bull may struggle on the power-hungry track particularly as Max Verstappen is set to start from the back of the grid along with Toro Rosso’s Pierre Gasly, both men having taken new Honda engines for the event. — AFP

## Tokyo organizers to test fake snow for Olympics

**TOKYO:** Tokyo 2020 Olympic chiefs have already rolled out everything from misting stations to flowerbeds to beat the heat at next year’s games, and now they want to let it snow. Organizers confirmed yesterday that they plan to test the use of artificial snow at a canoe event later this month as they look for novel ways to keep spectators and athletes cool during Tokyo’s notoriously steamy summer months.

“Artificial snow will be sprayed over spectator seating,” some of which may be in direct sunlight, during a canoeing event on September 13 that will serve as a test for the Olympics, a spokeswoman for the Tokyo 2020 organizers said. “We haven’t decided definitively that we will use this system next year for the Olympics, but we want to test it to see how effective it is,” she said. “We’re open to trying all potentially useful ideas,” she added, when asked about possible criticism of the environmental side-effects of the method.

Public broadcaster NHK said the test would use small snow-making machines to produce about a ton of snow per day, and that officials from the organizing committee would attend in spectator stands to judge the technique’s effectiveness. Olympic organizers have been on the offensive over concerns that holding the Games during summer months when Tokyo regularly reaches 35 degrees centigrade with 80 percent humidity will be unsafe.

They have already tested measures including misting stations, air-conditioned cooling tents and even rows of potted flowers along the routes of queues — thought to psychologically cool spectators. — AFP

## Sports

# Shah steers Afghanistan with a historic ton against Bangladesh

**CHITTAGONG:** Batsman Rahmat Shah yesterday became the first Afghanistan cricketer to score a Test century, helping the minnows start strongly against Bangladesh on the opening day of the one-off match. Shah made 102 and put on a crucial 120-run fourth-wicket stand with Asghar Afghan, batting on 88, to counter the Bangladesh spin attack at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong.

Afghanistan were 271 for five at stumps with Afghan and Afsar Zazai, on 35, putting together a 74-run partnership in the final session of play. But it was Shah and Afghan who ensured that Afghanistan fought their way back in to the contest after being in trouble at 77 for three at lunch. "It is a proud moment for me. I am the first person who has the first half century (in a Test) for the country and now the century," Shah told reporters after the opening day's play. "I had the dream to become the first centurion for Afghanistan. So naturally I was very upset when I got out scoring 98 against Ireland. Today I got the chance and scored the century," he said. Taijul Islam and Naveem Hasan took two wickets each to hurt Afghanistan after the tourists elected to bat first in just their third five-day game. The war-torn nation had a bruising introduction to Test cricket after India outplayed them inside two days in 2018.

## Standing ovation

Afghanistan registered their first Test victory

against Ireland early this year with Shah scoring two fifties in the game including a 98 in the first innings. The top-order batsman extended his prolific run of form as he reached his hundred with a boundary off Hasan, raising his bat to a standing ovation from the crowd and the dressing room.

His celebration though was shortlived as Hasan got the batsman, who hit 10 fours and two sixes in his 187-ball knock, out on the next ball. Hasan struck again with his off spin three balls later in the same over, rattling the stumps of Mohammad Nabi for nought as Afghanistan slipped to 197 for five. Afghan, who survived a reprieve on 42 by TV umpire after being given leg before out off Mehidy Hasan, struck three fours and two sixes so far in his second Test fifty.

In the first session Taijul bowled opener Ihsanullah Janat for nine with his left-arm spin and became the fastest Bangladeshi bowler to reach 100 Test wickets. Taijul, who finished the day with 2-73, also became the third Bangladeshi bowler after Shakib Al Hasan and Mohammad Rafique to achieve such a feat in the longer format in his 25th match.

Off-spinner Mahmudullah chipped in when he forced Hashmatullah Shahidi to give a catch to Soumya Sarkar at slip for 14 in his first over. Bangladesh fielded an all-spin attack without picking a single pace bowler while Afghanistan handed a Test debut to Ibrahim, Qais Ahmed and



**CHITTAGONG:** Afghanistan's cricketer Rahman Sha (C) plays a shot during the first day of the one-off cricket Test match between Bangladesh and Afghanistan at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium. — AFP

Zahir Khan. Afghanistan skipper Rashid became the youngest ever Test captain at the age of 20 years 350 days with the toss, overtaking the

record of Zimbabwe's Tatenda Taibu, who made his debut as Test captain just eight days older than Rashid in 2004. — AFP

## Asia and Africa out of World Cup at first hurdle

**SHANGHAI:** It is the largest basketball World Cup ever but there will be no teams from Asia or Africa in the second round of the sport's global showpiece. Hosts China with their 1.4 billion population crashed out of contention on Wednesday with a 72-59 defeat to Venezuela. That came hours after Tunisia surrendered a spot in the next round, and a guaranteed place at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, with an agonizing 67-64 loss to Puerto Rico.

Nigeria thrashed South Korea 108-66 at the same time, but the fate of Africa's highest-ranked team already been sealed after losing both their opening games. The last time there was no team from Asia or Africa in the second round was in 1998, when the championship had only 16 teams. Now it has a record 32 but it is almost exclusively teams from the Americas, led by reigning champions the United States, and Europe who will compete for the medals. Outside of those only Australia, nominally Asian in the FIBA rankings are concerned, have also reached the second round and they could be joined by New Zealand if they beat Greece.

Paolo Povia, coach of the Ivory Coast, said there were "a lot of factors" why African sides had failed to make their mark in China. "There's definitely a difference in experience

and knowledge of the game," said Povia after his team lost 80-63 to Poland on Wednesday, their third defeat in three games. "The development of the game (in Africa) is a little inconsistent. In our team we have some guys who have learned to play the game in different places all over the world. "So you don't get the same continuity all the time in how the game is learned." Basketball is hugely popular in the Philippines but the national team — the joint-shortest at the competition — have lost all three of their matches. They were drubbed 108-62 and 126-67 by Italy and title-contenders Serbia respectively before narrowly succumbing to already eliminated Angola on Wednesday. Serbia's plain-speaking coach Sasha Djordjevic said that the Philippines' lack of physicality and athleticism "might be the problem".

"Obviously you are missing quality," he told a reporter from the Philippines. After easy wins over the Philippines and Angola, Djordjevic also questioned the format of the enlarged World Cup, containing eight groups of four countries in the first phase. "There are some groups that from the start you practically know which two teams are going to advance," he said, shaking his head. "I don't know if that's a good thing for the World Cup in general because what does it serve us? "What does it serve the Philippine team losing by this points difference?" he said, of Serbia's 59-point win. Ousted teams such as the Philippines need to rally themselves, because they now face a low-key "classification" round with Olympic qualifying in play. — AFP

## 'A long way to go': Hosts China stung by World Cup exit

**SHANGHAI:** The knives were out in China yesterday after the basketball World Cup hosts failed to reach the second round, triggering criticism normally reserved for the country's woeful football squad. Chinese basketball boss Yao Ming, an NBA Hall of Famer, was reduced to 7ft 5in of melancholy at the Beijing courtside Wednesday night as China were eliminated 72-59 by Venezuela.

Though not expected to go deep into the tournament, China's performance was seen as a disappointment, especially since they had been drawn in one of the easiest preliminary groups. They managed only one win — against lowly Ivory Coast — in their three group games, underlining the challenge faced by Yao, who took over in 2017 as head of Chinese basketball with plans to revive that nation's fortunes. "We have certain advantages in Asia, but when faced with strong European and American teams, we are always at a disadvantage," said the influential Beijing Youth Daily. "If Chinese basketball wants to (compete with Europe and the United States) there is still a long way to go."

Yao, now 38, led China to some of their best showings in global competitions and his NBA success helped fuel basketball's popularity in China and had raised hopes of a new era which have been dashed. "The young Chinese men's basketball team failed to play at the level that they should

have, on both defense and offense," said the national team's official social media account.

## Pressure rises

Comments on Weibo, China's popular answer to Twitter, ranged from disappointed to savage, with some comparing them to the huge nation's perennially underachieving football team. "Seeing men's basketball perform like this, I can understand the men's football now," said one posting. "Eliminated at home, it stung." Another added: "Please have this group of people return their national team uniforms, make a public self-criticism, and give their report to Yao Ming, the fans and the national team."

China, ranked 30th in the world, had placed their hopes largely on the shoulders of a towering front court of three seven-footers: veteran Yi Jianlian and relative newcomers Zhou Qi and Wang Zhelin, but the trio failed to dominate. Basketball and football are China's most popular sports. But while China dominate on the court regionally, winning Asian Games gold in Jakarta a year ago, they struggle against the world's best and have not discovered a successor to trailblazer Yao.

Former Houston Rockets star Yao took over as head of the Chinese Basketball Association (CBA) two years ago and raised hopes with plans to reform an entrenched state development system that he says badly needs an overhaul. Pressure for results may now increase after the demoralizing showing on home soil, especially if China performs poorly in Olympic classification contests that are up next. Under this year's World Cup format, China's tournament is not over and they will need to rally in the classification round — they face South Korea today — with Tokyo 2020 Olympic qualifying in play. — AFP

## Sports

# All Blacks' treble quest hinges on solving playmaker puzzle

**WELLINGTON:** The All Blacks are confident they can win an unprecedented third straight Rugby World Cup in Japan, even if they have to shift one of the team's star players from his favored position to do it. No one in the current New Zealand squad can match the individual accolades heaped upon Beauden Barrett, a two-time World Rugby player of the year.

Barrett, 28, earned his awards for excelling at fly-half, coordinating the All Blacks in attack and splitting opposition defenses with his deft kicking. His prowess in the number 10 jersey was the reason the Auckland Blues broke the bank to lure him away from Wellington Hurricanes for the 2020 Super Rugby season. However, the All Blacks believe the key to winning their third consecutive World Cup, and fourth overall, is moving Barrett to full-back and handing fly-half duties to Richie Mo'unga, long seen as his understudy.

The genesis of the decision lies in the British and Irish Lions tour of 2017, when the visitors employed a rush defense to put the New Zealand backs under pressure. It left Barrett at times looking rattled and forced uncharacteristic errors as the series ended in a draw. Since then, other opponents have adopted the same strategy and coach Steve Hansen acknowledged ahead of this year's Rugby Championship that it was an issue for the world champions.

"Hopefully we can show some big improvement in the decision-making under line speed, which is an area of the game that we believe everyone is going to chuck at us," he said. "The better we get at it the better result we're going

to get for ourselves." Hansen's plan to counter a rush defense was to field dual playmakers — one at fly-half and the other at full-back — providing extra attacking options.

## 'Take the risk'

Barrett initially stayed as pivot, with Damien McKenzie at fullback. The experiment produced mixed results in late 2018 before it was abruptly halted when McKenzie blew a cruciate ligament, ruling him out of the World Cup. Hansen turned to Plan B, pushing Barrett to full-back in favour of Mo'unga at fly-half. Barrett filled in as full-back on a couple of occasions early in his Test career and Hansen said he gave the player no choice about returning to 15. "I didn't ask him his opinion... when I said 'you're playing full-back', he said 'yep no worries'. That's about how it went," he said. Playing a prized asset such as Barrett out of position has raised eyebrows, particularly since it forces the highly respected Ben Smith — a World Cup winner at fullback in 2015 — onto the wing.

"Putting Beauden Barrett at 15, to me, is absolutely ridiculous. He's the best 10 in the world," Australian legend David Campese said during the Rugby Championship. "I know what they're trying to do... but to drop Ben Smith... (he is) one of the best fullbacks in the world and has been for many years." The Mo'unga-Barrett pairing made a mixed debut in a 16-16 draw with South Africa, followed by a 47-26 mauling by Australia in Perth. They finally clicked in a 36-0 win over the Wallabies in Auckland and Hansen will hope they can maintain that form during the big matches in Japan.

against Eddie Jones' England in Newcastle on Friday. "(Against France) we faced a team similar to South Africa from a physical point of view," said O'Shea. "It's a defeat that must help us understand where to continue working to achieve the goals we have set for the World Cup."

## 'Play our cards'

Iconic captain Sergio Parisse, and fellow veteran Leonardo Ghiraldini, back from a cruciate ligament injury, will lead the Azzurri in a largely youthful squad with 23 tournament debutants. "The World Cup was not today (against France) and it will not be in Newcastle next Friday, but from September 22 against Namibia," said 140-times capped Parisse before his fourth world tournament.

"We certainly suffered in physical duels, and we weren't as good at exploiting key moments when we had the advantage. "But we have to learn from this, and then go and play our cards at the World Cup." Italy arrive in Japan on September 8 and kick off their campaign against Namibia in Osaka on September 22.

"There's lots still to do, lots of changes still need to be made to allow us to fulfil our potential, but boy we have a good group of players," said former Ireland full-back O'Shea. "This last year for me has been the turning point for Italian rugby. "You can see the depth and competition in so many positions and we know where the young players are coming up behind." Italy's young guns include full-back Matteo Minozzi, back after an anterior cruciate ligament injury ruled him out of this year's Six Nations, along with wing Mattia Bellini and England-born flanker Jake Polledri, who both scored tries against France. — AFP



**BUENOS AIRES:** This file photo taken on July 20, 2019 shows New Zealand's All Blacks flyhalf Beauden Barrett preparing to kick the ball against Argentina during their Rugby Championship match at Jose Amalfitani stadium. — AFP

The coach is moving on after the tournament and anything less than an All Blacks' win in Japan will tarnish a legacy that includes victory in the 2015 tournament. But Hansen has shown no nerves about tinkering with the All Blacks' backline so close to rugby's global showpiece, expressing

confidence that Barrett and Mo'unga will successfully adapt to his vision and get the job done. "At some point, you want all your good players on the park. Both of them are world class," he said. "I've often said if the reward's worth the risk, then take the risk." — AFP

## Italy still plotting WC pool escape

**MILAN:** Conor O'Shea's Italy face a herculean task to avoid another early Rugby World Cup flop heading into a tough Pool B that includes reigning champions New Zealand and South Africa. Italy, who have never reached a World Cup quarter-final — the only Six Nations side to have failed to do so, will play the All Blacks and two-time former winners the Springboks after meeting Namibia and Canada.

The 13th-ranked Italians can be expected to win their opening two matches against 23rd-ranked Namibia and Canada, two places above the Africans. But unless they can pull off a huge shock over either of the former world champions, as Japan did against South Africa four years ago, then a ninth consecutive pool exit looks likely. "We want to make history and actually get results for ourselves," insists O'Shea, who guided Italy to a historic win over South Africa in November 2016, shortly after he took over.

But the Springboks have moved on since then under coach Rassie Erasmus, and Italy's statistics are not good. The Italians have not won a match in three years in the Six Nations — a run of 22 consecutive defeats — despite being more competitive in this year's edition. The road to Japan has been fraught, with World Cup warm-up losses in Ireland (29-10) and France (47-19), either side of a big home win over Russia. The French defeat was described as "a slap in the face" and "wake up call" by Italy lock Dean Budd and a massive trip awaits

## Patchell gets nod to start against Irish

**CARDIFF:** Rhys Patchell's impressive second-half performance in the 22-17 defeat to Ireland last Saturday has earned the fly-half the starting spot for Wales's final World Cup Test against the same opponents on Saturday. The 26-year-old transformed the Welsh when he came on for the second period as they came back from 22-3 down to pull to within five points, Patchell scoring a try to boot.

That gave him the edge over Jarrod Evans as backup to fly-half Dan Biggar — who himself was second pick behind Gareth Anscombe until the latter suffered a knee injury last month. Patchell teams up again with scrum-half Tomos Williams, who also came on for the second-half against the Irish. The half-backs are relatively raw in terms of Test rugby but will have the experienced centre partnership of Jonathan Davies and Hadleigh Parkes outside them. Wales head coach Warren Gatland has recalled several others of his front line players — having given some fringe players the chance to book their ticket to

Japan in the Test last Saturday in Cardiff. The likes of full-back Leigh Halfpenny, who only returned to Test rugby after a long absence in the victory over England last month, try machine George North, No8 Ross Moriarty and Justin Tipuric will line-up. The side will be captained by veteran lock Alun Wyn Jones, who skippered them to the Six Nations Grand Slam earlier this year sealing it with a dominant performance over the Irish in Cardiff.

Gatland, who brings the curtain down on his 12 year tenure which has yielded three Grand Slams after the World Cup, said Saturday permitted some players to put pressure on the incumbents for a starting spot in their first game in Japan against Georgia. "This is our final preparation match so it is important we get enough rugby into us, get rugby ready ahead of our RWC opener against Georgia (September 23) which is just over two weeks away," said the 55-year-old New Zealander, who flies out with the team on Wednesday.

"It is important we hit the ground running in Japan and we give the players enough time on the field. "Saturday is the first time these players would have taken to the field as members of the RWC squad, it has been a big week and it is a big opportunity for players to put their hand up and secure spots for the starting XV in Japan." — AFP

## Sports

# Favorite Nadal into US Open semis as Berrettini wins thriller

**NEW YORK:** Rafael Nadal will play Italy's Matteo Berrettini in the US Open semi-finals after the 18-time Grand Slam champion defeated Argentine 20th seed Diego Schwartzman 6-4, 7-5, 6-2. Second seed Nadal — a winner at Flushing Meadows in 2010, 2013 and 2017 — beat a spirited Schwartzman for the eighth time in as many meetings in a nearly three-hour match that finished early Thursday morning.

Schwartzman put up firm resistance against Nadal and twice fought back from double-break deficits in the first two sets, but the Spaniard found another gear at crucial moments to secure an eighth semi-final berth in New York. "Straight sets but big challenges especially after the first two sets, having 4-0 and 5-1 and losing both breaks in a row, but I know how good he is when he's confident," Nadal said. "I'm so happy how I accepted the situation and challenge and kept going, point after point. Here I am in the semi-finals. I'm super happy, it means everything."

Nadal, who was forced to retire during last year's semi-final against Juan Martin del Potro, played down concerns over his left forearm as he received treatment early in the third set. "Physically I am fine. Today was a very heavy day, big humidity out there. I'm this kind of player who sweats a little, but sometimes under these conditions it's tough," he said. Nadal is the only former major champion left in the men's field following the elimination of Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic, leaving him as the clear frontrunner in his pursuit of a 19th major title.

Schwartzman, who stands a mere 5ft 7in

(1.70m), was bidding to become the shortest Grand Slam semi-finalist since 5-foot-6 Harold Solomon at Roland Garros in 1980. "He's like a lion in the middle of the jungle. He's a fighter," Schwartzman said of Nadal. "He knows how to play the important moments every single time. I played eight times, and every important moment he played better than me."

### 'Great fight'

Berrettini, the 24th seed, became the first Italian man to reach the US Open semi-finals in 42 years. He matched Corrado Barazzutti's run to the last four in 1977 after outlasting 13th-seeded Frenchman Gael Monfils 3-6, 6-3, 6-2, 3-6, 7-6 (7/5) in three hours and 57 minutes. The 23-year-old Berrettini joined Barazzutti, 1976 Roland Garros champion Adriano Panatta and Marco Cecchinato as just the fourth Italian to advance to a men's Grand Slam semi-final in singles.

"What a great fight. I think it was one of the best matches I maybe ever saw — I was playing but I also saw. I'm really happy I don't know what to say," Berrettini said. The first-time Slam quarter-finalist blew a 5-2 lead in the final set and four match points before finally seeing off Monfils in a thriller at Arthur Ashe Stadium. "I was lucky I had match points and he didn't have it — it's better when you have them. I'm really proud of myself, I was always focusing on the next point."

A nervous Berrettini doubled-faulted on his first match point at 5-3 before a resolute Monfils fought off two more on his serve to send the deciding set into a tie-break. Monfils coughed up a costly pair of double faults in the



**NEW YORK:** Rafael Nadal of Spain returns a shot during his Men's Singles quarterfinal match against Diego Schwartzman of Argentina on day ten of the 2019 US Open at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center. —AFP

breaker — and 17 in total — as Berrettini surged 5-2 ahead, the Frenchman rescuing a fourth match point before a booming serve from the Italian clinched a memorable win. "Right now I don't remember any points, just the match point. I remember also my double fault I must be honest," Berrettini said.

Defeat for Monfils prolonged France's lengthy wait for a first men's Grand Slam title

since Yannick Noah won the French Open in 1983. "I know how to bounce back, I've had some tough ones here before," said Monfils, who was beaten by Roger Federer in the 2014 quarter-finals after holding two match points. "It was tough, I was just competing as much as I could but there was a big lack of serve today." "I'm going to take the positive from these two weeks," he added. —AFP

## I'll bounce back, says Monfils after sore US Open loss

**NEW YORK:** Gael Monfils said he wouldn't dwell on his agonizing US Open quarter-final loss to Matteo Berrettini on Wednesday that prolonged France's 36-year wait for a men's Grand Slam singles champion. The 33-year-old Monfils saved four match points against Italian 24th seed Berrettini before losing 3-6, 6-3, 6-2, 3-6, 7-6 (7/5) in an entertaining four-hour battle at Arthur Ashe Stadium.

Monfils fell short in his bid to reach a second US Open semi-final, having also missed out in 2014 after squandering two match points in the last eight against Roger Federer. "I had tough ones in my career like that. Actually I have a tough one here in match point with Roger. I know how to bounce back," Monfils said. "Actually I played very good after that quarter that I lost in 2014 with Roger. I've got to take the positive of this almost two weeks and keep working hard and get back for the Asia swing."

Monfils was the last of 14 French represen-

tatives left in the men's draw at Flushing Meadows but was hindered by serving troubles that resulted in 17 double faults — two of which came in the fifth set tie-break. "I think the key today was I served very poorly. My serve was very off, a lot of double faults. Not at all first serve. That's I think a key in the match," he said. "I was battling with that and with my opponent. So it was tough. I just competed as much I could."

Yannick Noah remains the last Frenchman to capture a Grand Slam singles title, at the 1983 French Open. The last Frenchman to triumph in New York was Henri Cochet at the US Championships in 1928 — 40 years before the Open era. Monfils savored his time in the US Open spotlight and hopes to stick around a little longer to support girlfriend Elina Svitolina, who plays Serena Williams on Thursday for a place in the women's final.

"I'm not a sore loser. I give it all today. I served bad, but I gave my heart. The crowd was amazing. They pushed me. They helped me. It was fun. It was exactly what I play for," Monfils said. "I wish I could win, but I love those matches no matter what. I'm proud of myself, and, you know, I will be happy, I will be happy to cheer for my girlfriend tomorrow. Definitely if it can be one more day here, I'm on it." —AFP

## Bencic hopes to end 20-year Slam drought for Swiss women

**NEW YORK:** No Swiss woman has won a Grand Slam singles title since Martina Hingis captured the 1999 Australian Open, but Belinda Bencic hopes to end that two-decade drought at the US Open. And with Swiss legend Roger Federer and his three-time Grand Slam-winning countryman Stan Wawrinka ousted in the men's quarter-finals, Bencic has extra motivation entering Thursday's semi-finals at Arthur Ashe Stadium.

"This is not a good thing. I'm not happy about this actually," Bencic said of the Federer and Wawrinka losses. "I'm kind of surprised, like I think everyone is. "It would be really nice if the boys could also make it to semi-finals but I'm happy I can kind of do it for them and don't let them down." This year's showdown at Flushing Meadows is the 83rd Slam since Hingis won the last of her five major singles titles.

Bencic will face Canadian teen 15th seed Bianca Andreescu, a fellow Slam semi debu-

tante, for the first time Thursday at Arthur Ashe Stadium. She's trying to become the first Canadian singles Grand Slam champion. "That would be pretty awesome," said Andreescu. "If it happens, then I think I can pave way for many other athletes, the next generation, not only for Canadian tennis but I think for many people."

Ukraine's fifth-seeded Elina Svitolina meets Serena Williams, seeking her 24th Slam title to match Margaret Court's all-time record, in the other semi-final. Bencic, seeded 13th, has battled back from 2017 left wrist surgery and other injuries that slowed her career for most of two seasons, winning her third WTA title in February at Dubai. "She likes to be very aggressive," Andreescu said. "She has a very good serve. She moves pretty well, too."

### 'Step by step'

The is Bencic's deepest Slam run, surpassing her 2014 US Open debut last-eight appearance, but it comes after having had to battle adversity. "It's there like a dream always. Even when you are playing bad, you want to come back to this feeling. I think that's the motivation enough to keep going," Bencic said. "For sure being number one in the world or winning a Grand Slam is always a dream. But I think it's still a long way to that. Of course, I think you can see it there. "The work and staying in the moment is more important right now. Just taking it step by step." —AFP

# Germany set to shrug off Sane absence ahead of Dutch derby

**BERLIN:** Joachim Loew's resurgent Germany face their first test without Manchester City winger Leroy Sane when they renew their rivalry with neighbors the Netherlands in today's Euro 2020 qualifier in Hamburg. Sane, 23, is one of several German players missing through injury after he tore knee ligaments during City's Community Shield win over Liverpool last month.

The twinkle-toed winger has been a key part of the national team's recovery from their World Cup debacle last year, scoring in five of Germany's last six games. Two of those goals have come against Friday's opponents the Netherlands, who Germany have faced three times since last October in a resumption of one of international football's biggest rivalries. Yet Sane's team mates insisted this week that they would be able to compensate for his absence.

"Leroy creates a lot of space and is very important for the team, but we have a lot of quality to replace him," said Borussia Dortmund player Marco Reus on Wednesday. Sane is expected to be replaced by in-form RB Leipzig striker Timo Werner, who is hoping to fight his way back into the Germany first team. "Leroy's unfortunate injury means there is a space in attack. I believe I can show the same performances here as I have for my club," said Werner, who has scored five goals in three games for Leipzig this season.

Aside from the Manchester City star, coach Loew is also without Chelsea defender Antonio Ruediger, Bayern Munich midfielder Leon Goretzka and Paris Saint-Germain's Thilo Kehrer and Julian Draxler. "It's a shame because, for a young team, it is important to

play regularly together in the same formation," said Loew yesterday.

## Historic Hamburg

Having twice failed to beat the Dutch in the Nations League last year, Germany's 3-2 win in Amsterdam in March marked a change in fortunes and left them six points clear of their rivals in qualifying Group C. Victory in Hamburg would therefore represent a huge step towards qualification, adding further spice to the cross-border derby. "Games against the Netherlands are always big, iconic games. You stand on the pitch and think: 'awesome'," said Reus. For the Dutch in particular, the location of Friday's match is a fateful one.

It was in Hamburg that Marco Van Basten fired a late winner past West Germany to send the Netherlands into the final of the 1988 European Championships, where they won their only major title to date. Now 31 years later, the Dutch are under pressure after picking up just three points from their first two games. They currently sit in Group C's play-off spot, nine points behind leaders Northern Ireland, albeit with two games in hand. Yet at a press conference Monday manager Ronald Koeman dismissed the notion that the match against Germany was a case of do-or-die for his team.

"The game against Germany is not crucial," said Koeman, who played in the 1988 semi-final and famously pretended to wipe his backside with a German shirt after the match. "We have to get 12 points in the matches against Estonia and Belarus and pick up more points than Northern Ireland in our two games with them." — AFP



Leroy Sane

## Dest mulling national future amid US-Dutch tug-of-war

**LOS ANGELES:** Ajax teenager Sergino Dest said Wednesday he has yet to decide on his international future as he prepares to make his senior debut for the United States this week. The 18-year-old fullback, the son of an American father and Dutch mother, has been called up to the United States squad for friendlies against Mexico and Uruguay.

However, talking to reporters on Wednesday, Dest revealed he had been approached by officials from the Royal Dutch Football Association (KNVB) about a possible international career for the Netherlands. Dest, who played for the United States at this year's FIFA Under-20 World Cup, is still free to choose his international future as he has yet to play in a competitive senior fixture. "I'm happy for this opportunity and I'm happy that I'm here right now," Dest said at a US team media availability. "But I don't know for the future. You guys will see what happens."

Dest, who made his senior debut for Ajax last month, would not be drawn on whether he would be ready to commit to the United States by the time of the CONCACAF Nations League game against Cuba on October 11. Once Dest plays a competitive game, his international allegiance will be set. "I don't know yet," Dest said. "I can't make that decision." The teenager meanwhile added that Dutch officials had approached him about playing for the nation's under-23 side.

"Yes, they said something to me. It was not like the first team yet. It was the under-23s. They want to have a meeting with me. I'm keeping the options open," he said. Dest was drafted into the US squad after impressing at the Under-20 World Cup and in Ajax's opening games of the Eredivisie. "Sergino is a guy we've been tracking, watching his progress with Ajax in making his way up to the first team," US coach Gregg Berhalter told reporters.

"We're excited by him and that he can play in both fullback positions. He's got an excellent offensive skillset and he fits into the profile of player that we're looking for for our full-backs. "He can come inside or stay wide. I'm really intrigued with how he plays at Ajax. It's really interesting watching him play." Dest is expected to feature in one or both of the United States friendlies against Mexico on Friday and Uruguay on September 10. — AFP

## Bale 'raring to go' for Wales after Madrid drama

**LONDON:** Gareth Bale says he feels more settled after a turbulent period at Real Madrid and is "raring to go" as Wales prepare to take on Azerbaijan in a Euro 2020 qualifier today. Bale looked set to leave Real in a big-money move to China in the transfer window, only for the Spanish giants to pull the plug at the last moment.

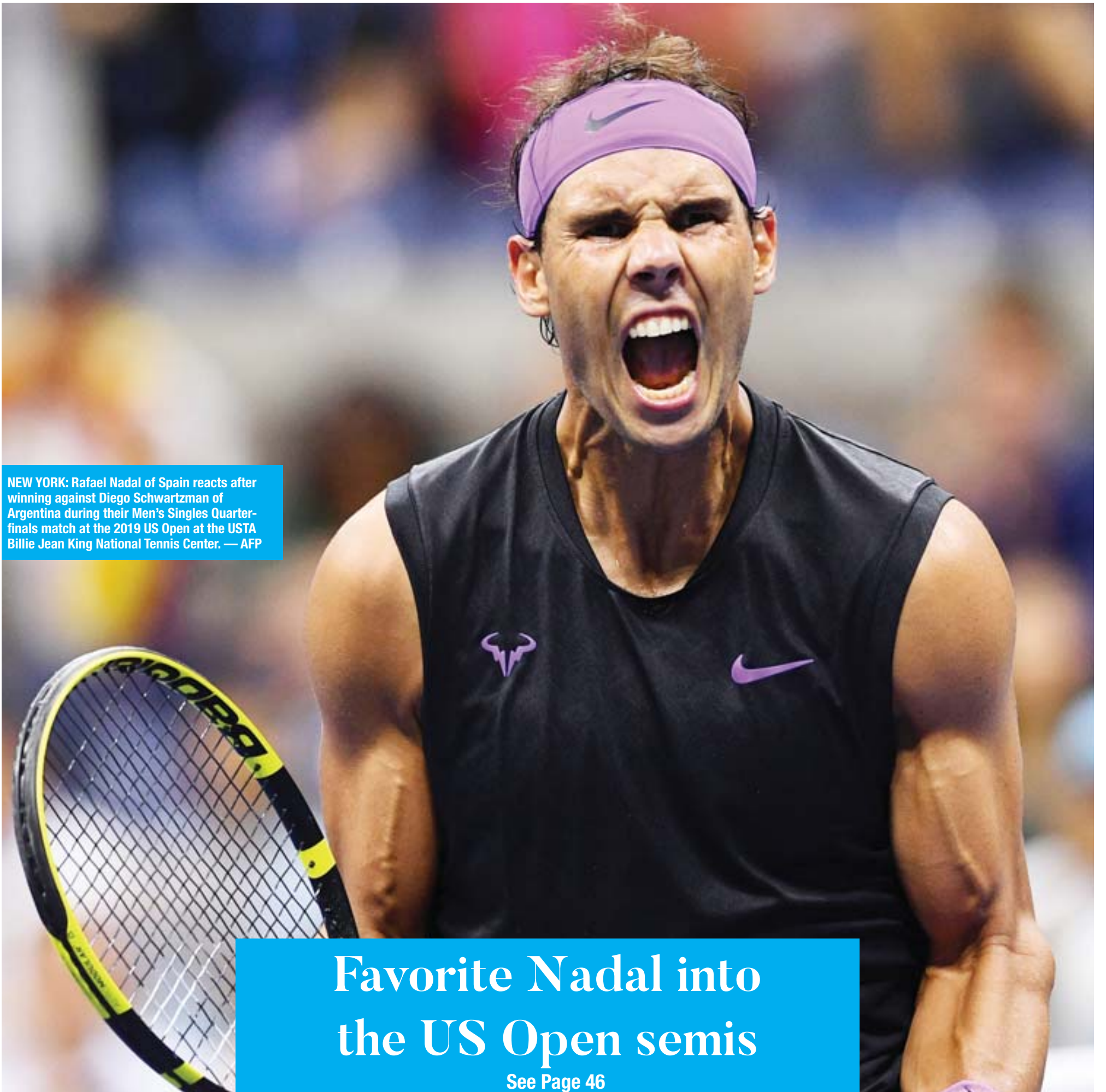
The 30-year-old ended a scoring drought stretching back to March with two goals in the 2-2 La Liga draw at Villarreal on Sunday but was sent off in stoppage time. "The transfer window has closed," Bale said on Thursday. "I don't think mentally it affected me but I had not played for four to six weeks. "It was nice to be back on the score-sheet (for Real Madrid) and now I am fit and raring to go."

Real teammate Thibaut Courtois suggested in an interview earlier this year that Bale was often isolated from the rest of the

squad and was called the "golfer" due to his passion for the sport. But Bale said he was happy with the moniker, adding: "I am a golfer. People make a lot of it, but I enjoy it and it keeps me calmer on the pitch." The Wales forward said not being picked by Harry Redknapp at Spurs "for a year" was a harder time in his career.

"I just kept my head down and worked hard in training," he said. "If you want answers you maybe need to ask Real Madrid." Wales trail group leaders Hungary by six points, with a game in hand, and are three points adrift of Croatia and Slovakia in the race for a top-two spot. Wales boss Ryan Giggs was pleased with Bale's contribution on Sunday and said: "When he scores he tends to get on a roll."

Giggs revealed that Ben Woodburn is likely to be missing against Azerbaijan due to illness but confirmed that the rest of his squad are fit and available, including Daniel James. Manchester United's new signing from Swansea has scored three goals in four appearances for the club so far this season. Former United winger Giggs has not been surprised by James's start to life at Old Trafford. "He's at the right club — a club which loves wingers," Giggs said. "We've all seen what he's capable of in the last eight or nine months and he's going to get better and better." — AFP



NEW YORK: Rafael Nadal of Spain reacts after winning against Diego Schwartzman of Argentina during their Men's Singles Quarter-finals match at the 2019 US Open at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center. — AFP

## Favorite Nadal into the US Open semis

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