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# Kuwait condemns Netanyahu's pledge to annex Jordan Valley

Jordan says peace treaty 'at stake' • OIC to meet over 'escalation' • Syria slams expansionism

## MP proposes stiff fines for wearing pajamas in public

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** MP Majed Mousa Al-Mutairi yesterday submitted a draft law for safeguarding law and order by proposing to ban wearing pajamas (pyjamas) in public along with a string of other measures, or risk a fine of between KD 500 and KD 1,000. The lawmaker asked that the bill, which prohibits a large number of behaviors and practices, be given urgency in debate at the concerned committee and then in the National Assembly.

Among other things, the bill bans uttering abusive, vulgar or racist words in public. It also outlaws wearing clothes with images, portraits or remarks that are abusive to public order and morals.

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**KUWAIT/CAIRO:** Arab and Muslim countries yesterday led a wave of outcry after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to annex a key part of the occupied West Bank if reelected. Netanyahu's controversial pledge involves extending Israel's sovereignty over the Jordan Valley and the northern Dead Sea which account for one-third of the West Bank if he wins next week's elections. It would not include however annexing any Palestinian cities such as Jericho. The pre-election promise late Tuesday drew immediate condemnation from Arab powerhouses with many warning of disastrous consequences for the stagnant Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

Kuwait condemned yesterday "in the strongest possible terms" Netanyahu's plans. A source from the foreign ministry said in a statement that such an announcement is a serious and flagrant violation of the Palestinian peoples' rights, a violation of international law, the charter of the United Nations and relevant resolutions of international legitimacy. The official noted that Netanyahu's statements represent a violation of all efforts to

achieve a just and comprehensive peace.

He stressed the need for the international community to take its legal responsibilities in rejecting this declaration and considering it as "void with no legal effects on the legitimate and historical rights of the Palestinian people." The source concluded by affirming Kuwait's principled and firm stance in support of the Palestinian issue to establish an independent Palestinian state on the June 4, 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital in accordance with international laws, the Arab Peace Initiative and international legitimacy.

"The announcement constitutes a dangerous development and a new Israeli aggression," Arab foreign ministers said. They also warned in a statement of "the ramifications of these dangerous, illegal and irresponsible" moves saying it would "undermine the chances of progress in the peace process". Jordanian and Palestinian officials said any such measure risks "killing off" and "destroying" the entire peace process.

Jordan's house speaker Atef Al-Tawameh went as far as to warn yesterday



**JERUSALEM:** Israeli-Arab Knesset member Ayman Odeh uses a phone to take a close-up picture of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the main Knesset chamber yesterday. —AFP

that any such move could even put the country's peace treaty with Israel - only one of two with Israel's neighbors - "at stake". Palestinian leaders said Netanyahu

was destroying any hopes for peace, while senior official Hanan Ashrawi said the plans were "worse than apartheid".

Continued on Page 24

## News in brief

### Saudi crown prince hosts evangelicals

**RIYADH:** Saudi Arabia's crown prince hosted a delegation of American Christian evangelicals on Tuesday, state media said. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman met the delegation, led by Israeli-American author Joel Rosenberg, at his palace in Jeddah, the official Saudi Press Agency said. "Honoured to be back in kingdom of Saudi Arabia for (the second) time in less than a year," Rosenberg said on Twitter. "We met (with) his royal highness the crown prince (and) other senior officials to discuss terrorism, peace, religious freedom and human rights." The delegation also met Prince Khalid bin Salman, the kingdom's deputy defense minister, and secretary-general of the Muslim World League Mohammed Al-Issa, SPA reported. — AFP

### Trump mulls ban on flavored vapes

**WASHINGTON:** US President Donald Trump yesterday announced his administration was considering a ban on flavored vaping products, amid a growing outbreak of severe lung disease in the US that has claimed at least six lives. "It's causing a lot of problems," the president told reporters at the White House, where he was accompanied by Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar and acting Food and Drug Administration head Norman Sharpless. Trump added that First Lady Melania Trump had been involved in the discussions because: "She's got a son ... she feels very strongly about it." — AFP

### Brotherhood chief, deputy get life

**CAIRO:** An Egyptian court yesterday sentenced 11 senior Muslim Brotherhood figures to life in prison on charges of spying for the Palestinian Hamas group, a judicial source said. They included the Brotherhood's supreme guide Mohamed Badie and his deputy Khairat Al-Shater, who were both handed life sentences - 25 years in Egypt. Five other Brotherhood members were sentenced to jail terms ranging from seven to 10 years while six were acquitted. The defendants were accused of "committing crimes in collaboration with foreign organizations" namely Hamas and the Lebanese Shiite group Hezbollah. — AFP

### Fan who set herself ablaze was ill

**TEHRAN:** An Iranian football fan who set herself ablaze and died after being arrested for trying to defy a ban on women in stadiums was ill with a "neurological disorder", her father said. Sahar Khodayari, 30, was arrested early last year when she tried to enter a stadium in Tehran dressed as a man to watch her favorite team, Esteghlal FC. "My daughter had a neurological disorder and that day she became very angry, insulting and fought with law enforcement officers," her father Heidar Ali Khodayari said, quoted by Mehr news agency late Tuesday. — AFP

## Trump vows to hit Taliban as US marks 9/11

**NEW YORK:** US President Donald Trump pledged to hit the Taliban "harder" than ever as America marked the 18th anniversary yesterday of the 9/11 attacks that led the country into war in Afghanistan. Trump spoke after aborting what would have been a historic peace summit and as relatives remembered the victims of the single deadliest attack on US soil at cere-

monies in New York and Washington.

After a solemn commemoration at Ground Zero in Manhattan, Trump spoke at a Pentagon event honoring the nearly 3,000 people killed in the attacks - announcing an unprecedented escalation of the military assault on the Taliban. He said that over "the last four days" US forces have "hit our enemy harder than they have ever been hit before and that will continue." The nature of the offensive was not immediately clear but Trump said it was ordered after he canceled peace talks with the Taliban over the weekend in retaliation for a bomb attack that killed one US soldier last week.

Continued on Page 24



**WASHINGTON:** US President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump listen to the national anthem during a ceremony marking the 18th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks at the Pentagon yesterday. —AFP

## UK to let foreign students stay 2 yrs after graduation

**LONDON:** International students will be able to stay in Britain looking for work for up to two years after they graduate under new rules announced by the government yesterday. Under current rules, introduced by former prime minister Theresa May when she was interior minister, students are only allowed to stay for four months after they finish their degree. "The important contribution international students make to our country and universities is both cultural and economic. Their presence benefits Britain," Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said in a statement.

"Our universities thrive on being open global

institutions. Introducing the graduate route ensures our prestigious higher education sector will continue to attract the best talent from around the world to global Britain." The government said the new graduate route would enable students to work, or look for work, at any skill level. They could then switched to a skilled work visa if they found a job that met the requirements.

There will not be a cap on the number of students who can apply for the graduate route, it said. There are about 450,000 international students a year studying in Britain. It will apply to those who start an undergraduate level or above course from next year in any subject at "a trusted UK university or higher education provider which has a proven track record in upholding immigration checks". "About time. Should have reversed this silly policy years ago. Britain should always be open to the best talent from across the world," finance minister Sajid Javid said on Twitter.

Continued on Page 24

## Water discovered in atmosphere of habitable exoplanet

**PARIS:** Water has been discovered for the first time in the atmosphere of an exoplanet with Earth-like temperatures that could support life as we know it, scientists revealed yesterday. Eight times the mass of Earth and twice as big, K2-18b orbits in its star's "habitable zone" at a distance - neither too far nor too close - where water can exist in liquid form, they reported in the journal Nature Astronomy.

"This planet is the best candidate we have outside our solar system" in the search for signs of life, co-author Giovanna Tinetti, an astronomer at University College London, told AFP. "We cannot assume that it has oceans on the surface but it is a real possibility." Of the more than 4,000 exoplanets detected to date, this is the first known to combine a rocky surface and an atmosphere with water.

Most exoplanets with atmospheres are giant balls of



**A** handout artist's impression shows the K2-18b super-Earth, the only exoplanet known to host both water and temperatures that could support life. — AFP

gas, and the handful of rocky planets for which data is available seem to have no atmosphere at all. Even if they did, most Earth-like planets are too far from their stars to have liquid water or so close that any H<sub>2</sub>O has evaporated. Discovered in 2015, K2-18b is one of hundreds of so-called "super-Earths" - planets with less than ten times the mass of ours - spotted by NASA's Kepler spacecraft.

Continued on Page 24

## Energy 'transition' touted, but fossil future for Gulf

**ABU DHABI:** In the vast air-conditioned halls of an Abu Dhabi conference center, the world's much-vaunted transition to clean energy is the buzzword in sessions of a top industry gathering. But many executives and officials from oil-dependent Gulf states insist that while the change to renewables is essential, fossil fuels remain the future at least for the next few decades, despite the urgent need to fight climate change.

The debate has taken center stage at this week's World Energy Congress, with many officials calling for accelerating the process of moving to clean power sources and minimizing carbon emissions. Speakers addressed issues like the role of nuclear, hydrogen gas and other non-conventional sources of energy as a replacement for fossil fuels which currently account for over three quarters of the world's energy consumption.

However, delegates from oil-producing countries and particularly those in the Gulf argued that although the transition to clean energy sources must be supported, they will not be able to meet rising demand any time soon. "For decades to come the world will still rely on oil and gas as the majority source of energy," said the head of Abu Dhabi Oil Co Sultan Al-Jaber. "About \$11 trillion of investment in oil and gas is needed to keep up with current projected demand," over the next two decades, he told the congress which was attended by representatives of 150 nations and over 400 CEOs.

Energy from increasingly competitive renewable sources has quadrupled globally in just a decade, but insatiable demand for energy particularly from developing economies saw power sector emissions rise 10 percent, a UN report said last week.

Continued on Page 24

# Top officials meet with Crown Prince



HH the Deputy Amir receives National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem. — KUNA photos



HH the Deputy Amir receives Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Khaled Al-Saleh.



HH the Deputy Amir receives the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



HH the Deputy Amir receives Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



HH the Deputy Amir receives Kuwait's Ambassador to Bahrain Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan Palace, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem. HH the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. HH also received Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh

Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Interior Anas Khaled Al-Saleh. HH the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also received Kuwait's Ambassador to Bahrain Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. — KUNA

## Kuwait work hard at UNSC to resolve Arab crises: Deputy FM

CAIRO: Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah has shined a spotlight on Kuwait's efforts at the UN Security Council to defend and resolve Arab causes over the past 20 months. Speaking at the 152nd session of the Arab foreign ministers council in Cairo Tuesday, Al-Jarallah said Kuwait had focused during its non-permanent membership at the UNSC to support and promulgate Arab causes.

"Kuwait has worked hard to find appropriate solutions to crises that exhausted the Arab region and undermined its security, stability and prosperity," the senior diplomat asserted. He noted that the Palestinian cause was on the top of Kuwait's agenda at the UNSC. During Kuwait's Presidency of the UNSC in February 2018, the council hosted Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, he pointed out.

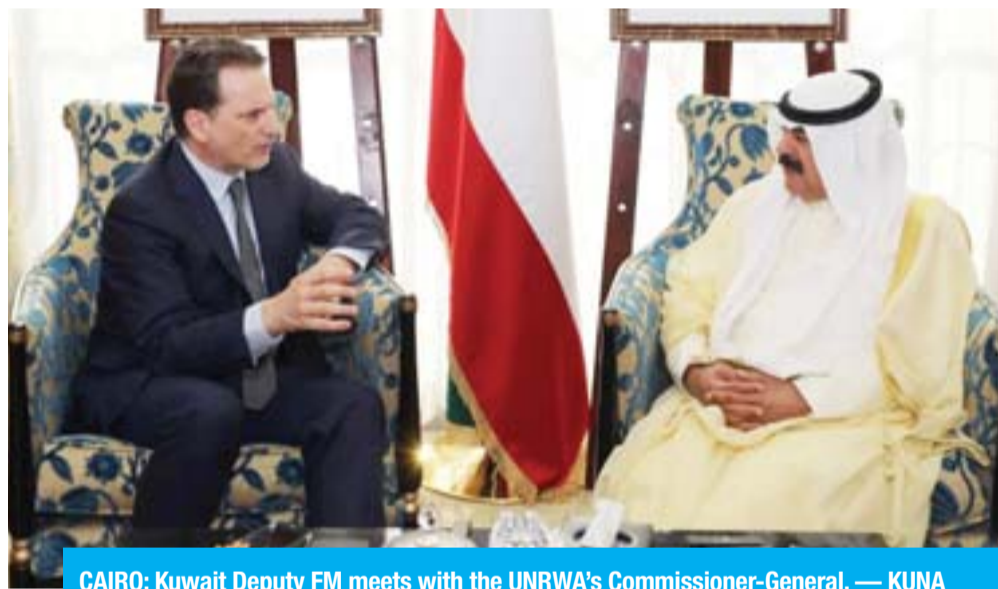
### Palestinian cause

Al-Jarallah stated that Kuwait had also presented a draft resolution to the UNSC in June 2018 to provide international protection to civilian in Palestinian territories. Kuwait also requested holding of several special sessions to discuss developments in the Palestinian territories as well as on the US decision to move its embassy to the occupied Jerusalem, the Israeli massacring Palestinian protesters and the illegal Israeli settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territories, he elaborated. He discussed these matters with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency's (UNRWA) Commissioner-General Pierre Krahenbuhl.

He underscored that the Kuwaiti efforts in the UNSC were meant to back the Palestinian cause and help resolve it in accordance with the UN resolutions and the Arab peace initiative that call for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital. On Yemen, Al-Jarallah indicated that Kuwait had striven to defend Yemeni people's interests and the efforts of the Saudi-led coalition to support legitimacy in Yemen.

Kuwait believed that launching a political process based on the three agreed references and the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution No. 2216, was the optimal solution to the crisis in Yemen, he affirmed. He reiterated Kuwait's support to the UNSC resolutions No. 2451 and No. 2452 which ratified the three-point Stockholm agreement.

"We also support efforts of the UN secretary general's envoy to Yemen to resume consultations with all parties to reach a comprehensive political agreement that meets brotherly Yemeni people's aspirations," he said. Al-Jarallah reiterated Kuwait's condemnation of all missile and drone attacks against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He expressed



CAIRO: Kuwait Deputy FM meets with the UNRWA's Commissioner-General. — KUNA

Kuwait's deep concerns about the recent incidents in Yemen which were not good for its security and stability.

"Kuwait supports the sincere efforts of our brothers in Saudi Arabia to persuade different Yemeni parties to resume dialogue," he said. He also voiced Kuwait's satisfaction with Jeddah statement on this issue. On Syria, the deputy foreign minister recalled that Kuwait was one of three co-penholders for the humanitarian situation in Syria together with Germany and Belgium. Kuwait's efforts had also led to the adoption of UNSCR No. 2401 which called for a 30-day truce across Syria, he said.

### Aid deliveries

He shed lights on Kuwait's spearheading of UNSC efforts in collaboration with Sweden to approve UNSCR No 2449 which authorized one-year extension of cross-border aid deliveries targeting 13 million people in Syria. Furthermore, Al-Jarallah announced that Kuwait was currently working with both Belgium and Germany to prepare a draft resolution calling for cessation of hostilities in the northwestern Syrian Province of Idlib.

Kuwait had always stated that there was no military solution to the crisis in Syria and that the only solution was a political settlement based on the UNSCR No. 2254 and the Geneva communique of 2012, he stressed, voicing Kuwait's support to UN envoy's efforts to resume political process and form a constitutional committee as soon as possible. On Libya, Al-Jarallah expressed support to the efforts of the UN envoy to Libya.

Kuwait had underlined the importance of de-escalation and cessation of hostilities in Libya and the resumption of the political process under the auspices of the United Nations, he said. On efforts to establish peace in the troubled areas in Sudan, Al-Jarallah pointed out that Kuwait, during its membership in the UN Security Council and in collaboration with other members, had succeeded in setting 2020 as a date for starting a gradual pullout of UNAMID forces from Darfur.

### 'Historic visit'

On Iraq, deputy foreign minister shed lights on Kuwait's initiation, during its presidency of the Council, of an "historic visit" of

the 15 members of the UN Security Council to Iraq on June 29, 2019. This visit, co-chaired by Kuwait and the United States, was concluded with a statement expressing the UNSC support for the Iraqi government efforts to eliminate terrorism and the rebuild areas liberated from the so-called Islamic State group, he clarified.

On Lebanon, Al-Jarallah noted that Kuwait had been working in the UNSC to support Lebanon's demands to implement the UNSCR No 1701 to put an end to Israel's violations of its sovereignty. Kuwait's mission had participated in negotiations over the UNSCR resolution No 2485 to extend mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for one year, which was adopted unanimously on July 29, 2019, he said. He disclosed that Kuwait had managed to include a paragraph in the resolution condemning the Israeli violation of Lebanese airspace.

Last June, Kuwait has also helped organize a special UNSC session on upgrading UNSC and Arab League cooperation to retain regional peace and security. Meanwhile, Al-Jarallah voiced concerns about the escalation in the Arabian Gulf region, describing it as a direct threat to the stability of the region. He urged all relevant parties to exercise self-restraint and to respect the rules of international maritime law. He stressed the importance of intensifying diplomatic efforts and coordination with the international community to defuse tension and spare the region all imminent dangers.

He congratulated Foreign Minister of Sudan Asmaa Abdullah on her new post, wishing her success in her mission. Al-Jarallah congratulated Sudan on the signing of the power-sharing deal and the formation of a new government headed by Dr Abdullah hamdok and wishing him success in achieving the aspirations of the Sudanese people. He extended sincere congratulations to the sisterly Republic of Tunisia on its non-permanent membership of the Security Council, to start next year. He expressed confidence that Tunisia would be the best representative of the Arab region in this important international forum. Al-Jarallah affirmed Kuwait's readiness to provide all necessary support to Tunisia render its membership in the UNSC successful. —KUNA

## Kuwait, Japan discuss joint cultural relations

TOKYO: Kuwaiti Ambassador to Japan Hasan Mohammad Zaman and Advisor to the office of the Director General of Kuwait's National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL), Dr Walid Al-Saif met yesterday with Japanese Director-General for Cultural Affairs and Assistant Minister for the Foreign Ministry Mitsuko Shino and her deputy at Tokyo's foreign ministry.

Japanese Director-General Shino expressed their appreciation to Kuwait's support for Japan in elections of 2018 Inter-governmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, in which Kuwait and Japan are members. She pointed out that Japan has

been successful in developing its museums by using children's favorite cartoon characters to explain the objects, which increased their desire to visit those museums more.

For his part, Al-Saif said that there is massive cooperation between the Kuwait's Permanent Delegate to UNESCO Ambassador Adam Al-Mulla in the cultural, science and technology fields, with the coordination of the membership of committees within United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as well as cultural cooperation between the National Council for Culture, Arts and Literature and the Japanese Embassy in Kuwait. Kuwaiti Ambassador Zaman told KUNA in a statement, Kuwait is keen to enhance cultural relations with Japan as well as with museums, media and international cultural organizations. The intangible cultural heritage is a practice, representation, expression, knowledge, or skill, as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts, and cultural spaces that are considered by UNESCO to be part of a place's cultural heritage. — KUNA



TOKYO: Assistant Minister for the Japanese Foreign Ministry and the Kuwaiti Ambassador to Japan. — KUNA

## GCC Audit, Inspection Bureaus undersecretaries meeting begins

MUSCAT: The Kuwaiti participation at the 20th meeting of GCC Undersecretaries of Audit and Inspection Bureaus, is within Kuwait strategy to support and develop the Institutional capacity of State Audit Bureau of Kuwait, which would raise GCC inspection level. This came in statement to KUNA, by Undersecretary of the State Audit Bureau Ismail Ali Al-Ghanem, following the two-days meeting in Oman which kicked yesterday. Al-Ghanem also stressed the importance of this meeting that witnessed positive conditions experienced by the GCC states. The meeting would discuss Kuwait's suggestion to raise awareness in monitoring sustainable development goals, and follow-up decisions of previ-

ous meetings, he said.

Meanwhile, Oman's Deputy Chairman of the State Audit Institution Nasser bin Hamood Al Rawahi, stressed at his opening speech the importance of cooperation between the agencies in capacity building towards achieving the desired goals, expressing appreciation for the efforts made by the agencies and the training and development committee to activate joint work in this area. For his part, Assistant Secretary-General of the GCC General Secretariat Hamad Al-Marri delivered a speech in which he thanked the Sultanate of Oman for hosting the two-day meeting, praising the efforts of the State financial and administrative control authority in preparing for this meeting. — KUNA

Local

# Al-Fadhel takes part in Asian Ministerial Energy Roundtable

‘Session focused on cooperation among the Asian countries’



**ABU DHABI:** The Eight Asian Ministerial Energy Roundtable (AMERS) kicked off on Tuesday with Kuwaiti Minister of Oil and Minister of Electricity and Water Dr Khaled Al-Fadhel participating. The gathering provides a platform for ministers from the Asian member states of the International Energy Forum (IEF) to exchange views and share experience on how to address the challenges facing the energy sector, Dr Al-Fadhel told KUNA.

“Today’s meeting, held at Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre, focused on cooperation among the Asian countries in energy security,” he said, noting that Asia accounts for the lion’s share in the world’s energy production in terms of oil and gas. “The conferees have debated some technical issues such as role of new technologies for a more competitive and productive world energy mix, and the role of clean energy uses in curbing

carbon dioxide emissions.” We have discussed ways to advance inclusive access to secure, affordable and sustainable energy services, and the supportive relationship between producers and consumers for the world to grow as a whole,” he revealed.

Dr Al-Fadhel added that Kuwait has always been keen on attending the Asian Ministerial Energy Roundtable and sharing experience in the areas of renewable energy. The meeting was held on the sidelines of the triennial World Energy Congress – the World Energy Council’s global flagship event offering a unique platform for global energy leaders to explore new energy futures, critical innovation areas, and new strategies. Opened yesterday at Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre under the theme of “Energy for Prosperity”, The 24th edition of World Energy Congress will conclude today.



## MOCI leads campaign to purge counterfeit goods

**KUWAIT:** The ministry of commerce and industry has given merchants selling counterfeit goods three weeks’ notice to remove such products off the market and take advantage of the deadline set by the ministry to avoid legal violations and expropriation of goods. The move is part of the ministry’s extensive campaign to eliminate fake goods in Kuwait.



وزارة التجارة والصناعة  
Ministry of Commerce and Industry

It said these goods are negatively affecting the economy because of their popularity and cheap prices. They are also affecting the environment of the country and could harm consumers’ health, pointing out that many official scientific studies have confirmed negative medical effects threatening consumers’ health because of the use of fake cosmetic products that mostly contain poor quality ingredients.

The campaign is monitoring the market for any abnormalities. It is monitoring the commercial sector for selling fake items like clothes, shoes and bags. It is also monitoring the information technology sector such as software programs, computer spare parts and other fake products found in the market. The ministry has also notified printing businesses and centers not to print slogans, signs, symbols and logos to protect the authorship of copyrights and intellectual property from abuse.

The ministry of commerce and industry aims to protect companies and consumers from commercial fraud and piracy, which poses a great national economic risk. The ministry is applying its authority to protect both the market and the consumer from the dangers of counterfeit goods, reminding of the fact that piracy and selling fake products is a crime penalized by law.

## Kuwait renews its support for Afghanistan

**NEW YORK:** Kuwait has renewed its support for Afghanistan in its fight against terrorism and its efforts to extend its control and sovereignty over its entire territory. This came in Kuwait’s speech at the Security Council session on Afghanistan delivered by Permanent Representative Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi on Tuesday night.

Al-Otaibi stressed the importance of addressing the threat posed by terrorism, which remains a key factor for stability in the security situation in Afghanistan through the collective commitment to combat this scourge within the framework of the international strategy to combat terrorism. He praised the efforts made by the security authorities in Afghanistan in the fight against crime and drugs, which is reflected in the recent report of the Secretary General.

Al-Otaibi said: “We are holding the meeting today, just days before the presidential elections in Afghanistan and note with satisfaction that the past period has made remarkable progress in preparing for those elections and provided new opportunities for political participation for peace in the light of continuing serious challenges that must be overcome.” He pointed out that the current stage in Afghanistan is a historic phase, where intensive consultations are taking place among various groups and political parties in order to elect a president of the

country, who has the responsibility to ensure Afghanistan’s transition to a phase of comprehensive and lasting peace.

Al-Otaibi added that the current phase is also witnessing the continuation of the electoral management bodies to prepare for the presidential elections scheduled for September 28, 2019. He praised the vital role of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the Independent Election Commission in monitoring the registration of voters and candidates and preparing polling stations for those elections.

Al-Otaibi said that the total number of voters, which reached 9.6 million voters, is a clear indication of the desire of the Afghan people to choose the path of democracy as a path for them despite the security threats endangering their lives. He applauded the courage of the Afghan people, who reaffirmed that a political solution in Afghanistan must come with Afghan leadership and be determined by the Afghan people themselves.

Al-Otaibi stressed the importance of national reconciliation and the peace process in Afghanistan. He said that Kuwait has been keenly following up all measures adopted by the government of Afghanistan, the last of which was the establishment of a ministry for peace to support the reconciliation efforts. He noted that Afghanistan is still unfortunately suffering from the instability of the security situation in its territory, adding that the recent report of the Secretary-General pointed out that there were 5,856 security incidents during the period from 10 May 2019 to 8 August 2019, including 3,294 incidents as a result of armed fighting. — KUNA

## Info Ministry’s care for disabled receives int’l tribute

**GENEVA:** Kuwait’s Assistant Undersecretary for Press and Publications Affairs Mohammad Al-Awash said yesterday that the meeting with members of the International Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was a very good opportunity for the Ministry of Information to present its programs to support people with disabilities in society.

Al-Awash said, in a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) after the conclusion of Kuwait’s first report on the situation of persons with disabilities before the International Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, that this occasion was a good opportunity to become acquainted with international experts’ opinions in this respect.

He added that during the meeting, the ministry presented its experience over supporting the disabled and integrating them in the media institutions as well as the services provided by the ministry such as the adoption of sign language in news bulletins and live broadcast programs in addition to programs prepared by the disabled to enable them to raise their aspirations, issues and hopes.



Mohammad Al-Awash

He added that the efforts of the Ministry of Information also includes the dissemination of advertising flashes in various media, including social media, stemming out from the belief that people with disabilities are like other citizens with rights similar to any segment of the society. Al-Awash pointed out to Kuwaiti Minister of Information Mohammed Nasser Al-Jabri’s good interest in this issue and that he has clear directives in this context to integrate the disabled in the media and then to the Kuwaiti society. — KUNA

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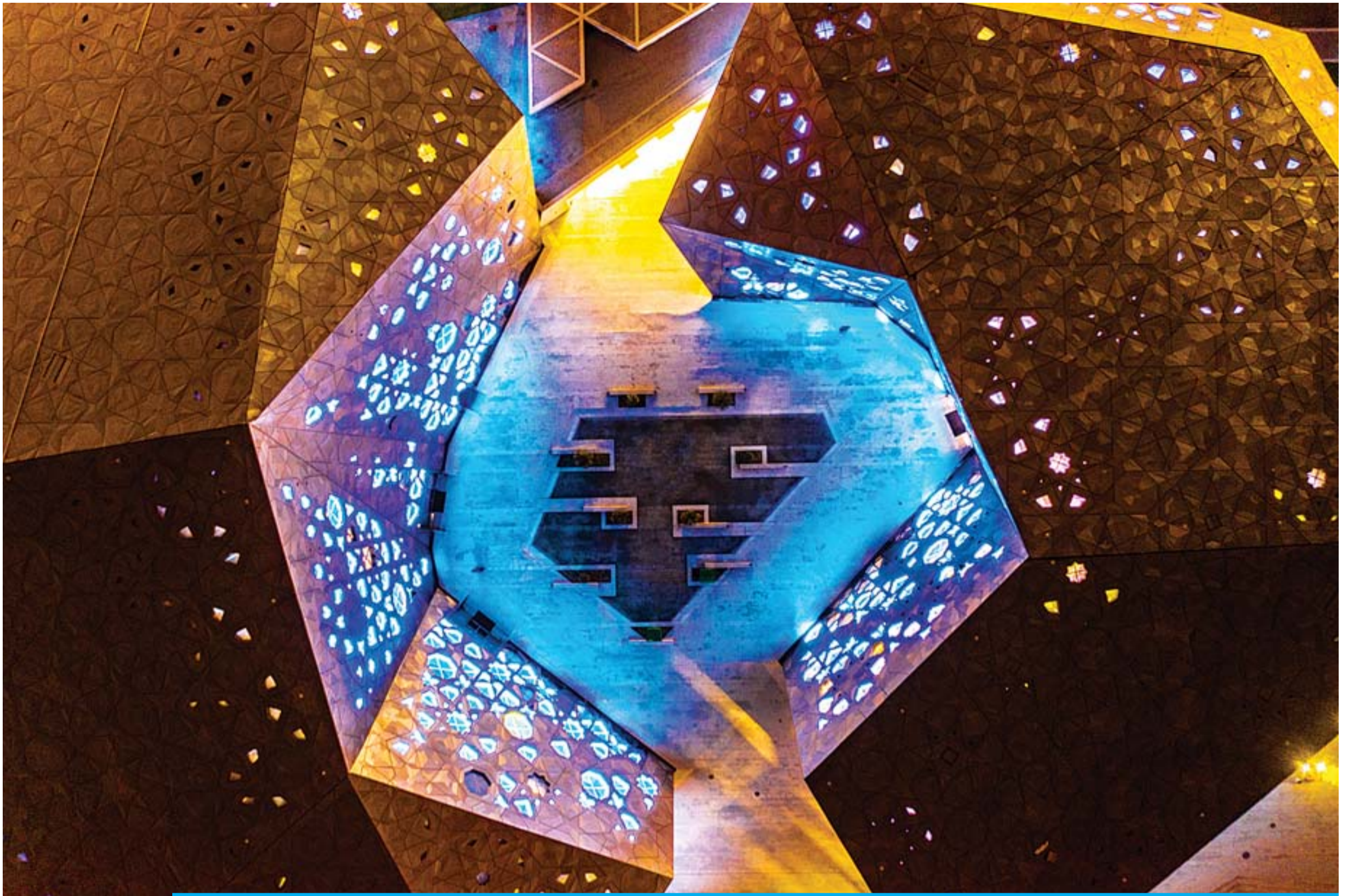
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## Local

## Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: A bird's-eye view of Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Cultural Center. —KUNA

## Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Centre's artists make waves at International Exhibition

First Kuwaiti contemporary art exhibition to open in Venice by Kuwait's largest museum complex



MILAN: Kuwait Consul General in Milan with the representative for tourism and travel and the Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Centre Team.



MILAN: The Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Centre Team and the accompanying artists.

**KUWAIT:** Following the first successful appearance in the 'Heart of Culture' exhibition in June, Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Centre recently unveiled the new exhibits of three of its contemporary artists at Scolettadell' Artedei Tiraoro e Battioro, Venice, Italy on 10 September, 2019. Developed through the Fine Arts Centre's Artist-in-Residence program, the exhibition titled, "In my Dream I was in Kuwait" signified the Centre's aim to cement Kuwait's position as an emerging competitor in the global art community.

The high-profile platform encourages the narration of one's national and cultural identity by combining self-expression and the respective use of specific practices such as technique, material, and inclination. In

addition, during the second phase, 'Heart of Culture' provides the Kuwaiti artists with the opportunity to attend a series of curated workshops with local Venetian master craftsmen and contemporary artists, specialized in various tools and mediums.

Reflecting on the new collection, Luca Berta & Francesca Giubilei, Curator of the exhibition 'In my Dream I was in Kuwait' said, "The second group of artists exhibiting their works in the exhibition 'In my Dream I was in Kuwait' at the Scolettadei Battioro e Tiraoro in Venice from September 10th to November 24th is composed of Khaled Anjadi, Naseer Behbehani and Ahmed Muqem. All three artists are united by an interest in the investigation of the human figure through

individual and collective identity and will offer pictorial and photographic works that show the evolution and changes of their country seen from different angles." The opening was attended by His Excellency Kuwait Consul General in Milan, Abdul Nasser Bukhadour, and the Mayor of Venice and the representative for tourism and travel, Paola Marr.

Inspired by a drawing by the artist Zahra Marwan, 'In my Dream I was in Kuwait' presented the plurality of the artistic practices by Amani Althuwaini, Mahmoud Shaker and Zahra Marwan, whose works were displayed from June till August, while the artworks by Ahmed Muqem, Khaled Al Najdi and Naseer Behbehani, were revealed in September and

remain open until November 2019.

The Artist-in-Residence program, continues to serve as common grounds for talented artists to advance their work and explore new creative realms. The program's mission includes fostering a local sense of creative community, creating dialogue and interest around the artist's work, as well as building community engagement across domestic and international artistic platforms. Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Centre is one of the many projects developed by the Amiri Diwan to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and promote critical, creative, and interpretive thinking within Kuwaiti society through world-class exhibitions and educational public programs.

### New technique for treating spinal damage

**KUWAIT:** The consultant of Interventional Radiology, Spinal Column and Chronic diseases Dr Waleed Al-Hajji revealed a new technique in treating damages, adding that it has 90% improvement in patients. He said damages occur for two reasons, first having multiple discs leading to the narrowing of the spinal cord channel and the second their emergence following classical procedures in which a large incision is made in the back, removing the cartilage then fixing the vertebrae with screws. Al-Hajji said the new technique offers an easy solution, as a catheter is used for the spinal column, with the use of local anesthetic, as the catheter is inserted through the coccyx area and damages are removed mechanically, followed by injections of antibiotics. He said Kuwait has around 30% of such



Dr Waleed Al-Hajji

cases, with symptoms of difficulty in walking long distance due to neurological claudication.

### GCC workshop tackles International agreements on e-commerce

**MUSCAT:** Kuwaiti official in Ministry Of Commerce and Industry Saleh Al-Dhafiri said yesterday that the GCC workshop discussed the international agreements reached by the World Trade Organization (WTO) on e-commerce. Al-Dhafiri told KUNA on the sidelines of his participation in the workshop organized by the General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) that the WTO agreements on e-commerce and their impact on existing trade agreements.

The workshop provided experiences from countries and services as well as problems that exist in materials traded in the e-market, he added. Al-Dhafiri explained that GCC workshop discussed key factors in e-commerce, market trends and business models such as exemption of e-mails from customs and issues raised to develop a unified law for e-commerce in the GCC countries through national policies and initiatives. In addition, the three-day workshop also dealt with the presentation of the GCC countries' legislation and current situation to deal with the e-commerce market. —KUNA



Saleh Al-Dhafiri

## Local

# MoI officials accused of covering up for fake social media accounts

By A Saleh and Meshal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: MP Ahmed Al-Fadhli yesterday stressed that some MoI officials have been covering up for owners of fake social media accounts, adding that the public prosecution had detained a senior official over suspicions of involvement with the owners of such accounts. As of now, he has been released pending further investigations.

"We adopted this issue to track down rumormongers and discovered very sensitive and dangerous information about a few MoI officials who have been covering up for those account owners," Fadhli said. He pointed out that in January, he had explained to the parliament how public opinion was being manipulated by putting pressure on lawmakers and officials, but some of his colleagues had undermined his opinion and accused him of wasting the parliament's time.

## Heated argument at municipality

Municipal councilmember and head of Hawally committee Abdullah Al-Roumi argued with the manager of a municipality branch over the latter's decision to dismiss a number of municipal employees for not showing up to work, said informed sources. They noted that the argument almost developed into a fistfight until security officers stopped it. The sources added that Roumi was trying to undo the dismissal decision and that both sides filed complaints about the incident with the police.

## Pay your fines

The public prosecution yesterday urged both citizens and expatriates to pay any fines imposed on them for municipal violations through the ministry of justice portal at [www.kuwaitcourts.gov.kw](http://www.kuwaitcourts.gov.kw) or at collection centers at the ministry in order to avoid administrative restrictions on their transactions with the municipality.



MP Ahmed Al-Fadhli

## VIVA launches 'Talent Development Program'

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, launched recently the 'Talent Development Program' in cooperation with Huawei Technologies Kuwait, during an event held at VIVA HQ, in the presence of VIVA's CEO Maziad Naser Al-Harbi, VIVA's CHRO Anas Al-Ateeqi and Huawei's Deputy CEO Rico Lin.

This collaboration between VIVA and Huawei is the result of a robust relationship between both companies. Huawei will provide an intensive program for VIVA employees through the 'Huawei Training Academy' to introduce the latest technology of the 5G network and how to benefit from its advantages in creating new and innovative solutions, products and services that serve different segments of the society and meet their aspirations in line with the digital transformation that the telecommunications market witnesses, as well as educating the employees to earn at the end of the program an international accreditation of 'Huawei Training Academy'.

On this occasion, VIVA's CHRO Anas Al-Ateeqi commented: "Huawei has always been and still is a strategic partner since VIVA's inception hence leading to a long track record of achievements together throughout this past decade and more to come. That said, we have great confidence in Huawei's expertise to provide all the support



required to educate and brace our employees about the 5G network, specially that it is considered today as one of the main topics in the technology market, and which will automatically result in enhancing our performance and customer service levels."

Al-Ateeqi added: "VIVA being a pioneer in the telecom industry, we believe that investing in our people, and

sharpening their talents is a priority that we have always implemented through regular educational activities and courses. We believe that human development is the key factor in our strategy to strengthen VIVA's leadership stance in the region, towards sustainable growth, improved operational performance and capacity building to deliver new digital services (ICT) to our customers."

## Wife and maid raped by husband's 'close friend'

KUWAIT: A woman called her husband to tell him his friend had raped her and filmed the act on his mobile phone. The husband went home to find his wife in a very bad condition. She told him his friend entered the house and not only raped her, but also raped the maid before leaving. He left his cap behind. The man composed himself and took his wife and the maid to the police station and told them what his close "friend" did, and provided details of the man. The prosecutor considered it a felony and asked detectives to arrest the suspect.

## Subordinate beats boss

A police lieutenant is being questioned for insulting his superior - a brigadier - and beating him. The incident took place at work when the lieutenant became very angry and tore his uniform. He then went to his superior, insulted and beat him. Employees intervened and called for help. A police source said the actions of the officer were due to differences over work instructions.

## Drunk Kuwaitis attack detectives

Two Kuwaitis who were drunk attacked detectives who stopped them in front of the criminal detectives building, because they were disturbing the peace with loud music. The two citizens aged 47 and 33 drank too much while in their car in Salmiya and played music loudly without regard to detectives in the area. Detectives stopped them, so they attacked the officers in an attempt to escape, but failed.

## Illegal repair shop

Five Pakistanis turned the building of the old Shuwaikh police station into a car repair shop, so they were arrested and sent to concerned authorities. Police, while touring the area, were surprised by people going in and out of the old police station, only to discover that the yard was used to repair cars. Instructions were given to arrest the five, who are being questioned for using state property for personal use.

## 'You'll arrest me for KD 300?'

A Kuwaiti was arrested for being wanted for a debt after being stopped late at night. The woman was found wanted, so she told police, "What is wrong with you? You'll arrest me for KD 300?" Police took her to concerned authorities.

## Hacker steals KD 1,500

A hacker withdrew KD 1,500 in 13 transactions from a citizen's account, who lodged a complaint. The victim went to the bank to withdraw money and found KD 1,500 was missing, so he asked bank employees about it. They found the money was transferred electronically to companies and shops over two days to purchase goods over the Internet. The victim lodged a complaint and investigations began.

## Smart meters are now operational

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: The ministry of electricity and water had installed 5,000 smart meters by June, which started operating this month. These smart meters are for both water and electricity and will help conserve these resources. The infrastructure for the smart meters is ready. "This infrastructure was completed with Zain and includes computer systems, communications and electronic payment systems.

Now we are in the tender award phase for 300,000 smart meters, including 200,000 for electricity and 100,000 for water," Meshan Al-Otaibi, Assistant Undersecretary for Consumer Affairs at the Ministry of Electricity and Water, told Kuwait Times yesterday.

"We expect to sign the contract before the end of the year. The smart meters will be installed by the first quarter of 2020. This is the first phase of the smart meter installation. Kuwait needs another 800,000 meters to cover all areas. This will be realized within three years," he added.

The smart meter has many benefits. "It will help save power and water. As these meters will be installed at each flat separately, tenants will pay their water and energy bills, which will encourage them to rationalize their consumption. Also, by allowing online payment, the consumer will know their consumption and will save water and energy," explained Otaibi.

Furthermore, the online service simplifies the payment process. "The consumer doesn't have to visit the ministry just to pay the bill. This will save their time and effort, as well as relieve the ministry from more visitors. Also, the consumer's control over their consumption will encourage them to pay regularly, which will avoid accumulating debts," he added.

The smart meters will cover all Kuwait's buildings. "The 5,000 smart meters were distributed in various areas as a trial. The new meters will gradually be installed in other areas as well. In commercial and investment areas, they will be installed in every flat of the building and every tenant will pay their bill. This way it's better for both the landlord and the tenant, as it will rationalize consumption," concluded Otaibi.



Dr Meshan Al-Otaibi



KUWAIT: A pack of stray dogs is seen in the Kabd area. Kuwait has witnessed a rise in stray dogs, many of them dumped in the desert or outlying areas by owners who no longer want the responsibility of their pets. Government authorities have responded by launching poisoning campaigns - targeting packs by leaving poisoned meat out for them to eat. Videos of poisoned dogs in the final throes of death have been shared widely on social media. — Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh



## Lt General monitors the traffic situation

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Lt General Al-Naham made an air tour of Kuwait, accompanied by Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs and operations. The tour was organized to check on the status of traffic, the main and side roads, as well as to reduce traffic jams. He also inspected roads lead-

ing to Shadadiya University to direct patrols to be made around the campus to avoid further jams and means to make it easier for students to drive around the university.

## National Guard

Acting National Guard Secretary Maj Gen Jamal Al-Thiyab opened the National Guard Forces advanced infantry institution for officers and the Foundation Infantry Course at the Sumud Camp. Major General Thiyab welcomed the participants and conveyed the greetings of National Guard Chief His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali and Deputy Chief Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber.



## Romanian ambassador

Interior Ministry Undersecretary Lt General Essam Al-Naham recently received the Romanian Ambassador to Kuwait Nicusor-Daniel Tanase. They discussed bilateral relations and the means of strengthening ties between the two friendly countries.

## Farwaniya field tours

Kuwait Municipality Public Relations said the cleanliness and road occupancy team in Farwaniya made field tours against roaming vendors in Jleeb, Riqec, Ardhiya and Farwaniya. The tour resulted in 11 citations being issued against vendors and the removal of eight lorry loads from random markets.



Brexit in chaos: Court rules PM's suspension of parliament unlawful

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## Reports of 'CIA mole' in Kremlin put lives at risk

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TEHRAN: President Hassan Rouhani (center) chairs a cabinet meeting in the capital Tehran, with a banner behind him reading in Arabic 'O martyr Abu Al-Abbas Al-Hussein', hung up during the Ashura mourning period and referring to the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) grandson Imam Hussein ibn Ali. — AFP

# Three Australians detained in Iran

## Latest in a series of Westerners seized by authorities in Tehran

**SYDNEY:** Australia yesterday revealed that three of its citizens had been detained in Iran, the latest in a series of Westerners to be seized by authorities in Tehran. News of the trio's detention comes at a sensitive geopolitical juncture, and after Australia announced that it would join a US-led mission to protect shipping through the Strait of Hormuz with tensions high in the Gulf region.

"The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is providing consular assistance to the families of three Australians detained in Iran," a spokesperson told AFP, declining to comment further citing privacy obligations. Canberra is battling to keep efforts to free the trio under wraps, and it is not clear if the three have been charged.

Confirmation of their detention comes after the Times of London reported that two British-Australian women were being held in Tehran's Evin prison, and Australian

broadcaster ABC said that the Australian boyfriend of one of the women was also detained.

One of the women was reported to be an academic who has been in detention for months, while the couple were said to have been detained while camping near a military facility on a journey across Asia. Earlier this week, the Australian government updated its travel advice for Iran to "reconsider your need to travel" and "do not travel" to areas near the border with Iraq and Afghanistan.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison last month announced a "modest" contribution to the US-led Gulf mission including a frigate, a P8 maritime surveillance aircraft and support staff—which will also involve British forces. Already difficult relations between Iran and the United States—and American allies—have threatened to boil over since President Donald Trump abandoned a deal to limit

Tehran's nuclear program in 2018. Iran has responded by resuming some proscribed nuclear activities.

### Collateral damage?

Meanwhile, a rising number of dual nationals have been detained in Iran in what many see as a ruthless diplomatic strategy. They include Meimanat Hosseini-Chavoshi, an Iranian-Australian population expert who was detained late last year while visiting Iran on a study tour. Analysts see the arrests as either a tactical ploy to gain diplomatic leverage or as part of the murky politics in Iran—with hardliners in the judiciary and the security apparatus scuttling the more conciliatory approach of moderates.

The detention of two dual British-Australian citizens, if confirmed, would deepen tensions between London and Tehran and pose a further challenge to

embattled Prime Minister Boris Johnson. The two countries have clashed over Britain's detention of an Iranian tanker, which was released recently on the condition that it did not provide oil to Syria. "It is now clear that Iran has breached these assurances and that the oil has been transferred to Syria and (President Bashar al-Assad's) murderous regime," the British Foreign Office said Tuesday.

Johnson had previously come in for withering criticism for jeopardized the case of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, a British-Iranian woman held in Tehran for sedition, by mischaracterizing her job. "Iran once again ups the stakes" with the latest arrests, said Tulip Siddiq, Zaghari-Ratcliffe's member of parliament. "This is a wake up call for our Prime Minister, Government and Ministers that they must act urgently to bring our innocent citizens home." — AFP

## Mugabe's body arrives home; burial place still a mystery

**HARARE:** The body of Zimbabwe's founder Robert Mugabe arrived at the country's main airport yesterday, but his final resting place remained a source of mystery amid a dispute between some family members and the government. Mugabe, one of the last "Big Men" of African politics who ruled the southern African nation for 37 years until he was ousted by his own army in November 2017, died in a Singapore hospital five days ago.

He is proving as polarizing in death as he was in life, as the fight over where he will be buried threatens to embarrass his successor, President Emmerson Mnangagwa, and deepens divisions in the ruling ZANU-PF party. The former president's body arrived at Harare's Robert Gabriel Mugabe International Airport shortly after 1330 GMT, a Reuters witness said. Crowds had gathered at the airport well before the scheduled arrival time, with some people wearing T-shirts bearing Mugabe's face and others with Mnangagwa's image, while music blared from loudspeakers.

A convoy of 4x4 vehicles with number plates bearing the letters "RG Mugabe" and the former leader's signature were also on the runway. Mugabe's wife Grace and Zimbabwean Vice President Kembo Mohadi were among those accompanying the body of the former leader on the plane. Leo Mugabe, a nephew and family spokesman, said. Mnangagwa, top officials and other Mugabe family members



HARARE: Zimbabwean soldiers perform during a ceremony as the casket of late Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe arrives at Harare airport yesterday. — AFP

were at the airport to receive the body.

Leo Mugabe declined to say where Mugabe would be buried, saying only that on arrival his body would be taken to his palatial home in the capital, known as Blue Roof. Today, ordinary Zimbabweans and supporters are expected to pay their last respects to Mugabe at a Harare soccer stadium, where the body will lie in state before being taken to his rural home in Kutama, 85 km from the capital, he added. Mnangagwa and his party want Mugabe buried at a national monument to heroes of the liberation war against the white minority Rhodesian regime.

But some of Mugabe's relatives have pushed back against that plan. They share Mugabe's bitterness at the way former allies including Mnangagwa conspired to topple

him and want him buried in his home village. A government minister said on Tuesday the burial was still planned for Sunday, a day after a state funeral. But the minister said Mugabe's burial site would only be known once the body had arrived and government officials had consulted with the family.

Mugabe left behind an economy wrecked by hyperinflation and deeply entrenched corruption, and a raging political rivalry between ZANU-PF and the opposition MDC. The MDC said in a statement yesterday that it had postponed its 20th anniversary rally because of Mugabe's funeral. It said: "Notwithstanding our legendary differences with Mr. Mugabe, we have no reason to exhibit barbarity by hosting a national festivity during his funeral." — Reuters

## Mugabe a 'broken soul' in final years

**HARARE:** Once feared for the all-encompassing power he wielded in Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe died a "broken soul," bereft at his downfall, his allies and relatives say. Mugabe died in Singapore on Friday at the age of 95, nearly two months before the anniversary of the coup that forced him from power. He had ruled the southern African country uninterrupted for 37 years and seven months. During these long decades, Mugabe was Zimbabwe, and Zimbabwe was Mugabe.

But in his twilight years, he became vulnerable and helpless, according to relatives, allies and analysts. Mugabe bowed to pressure and resigned on November 21, 2017 in a military-backed coup, ending an increasingly tyrannical rule that saw millions leave Zimbabwe to escape repression and economic ruin. People close to him said the coup hit Mugabe very hard. He never recovered from the shock that lieutenants whom he had groomed and trusted for years could betray him, they said.

"It was sudden," his nephew Leo said. "He could not believe that those he trusted most turned against him." The coup was his "lowest moment - that period from November 2017 up to his last day... sometimes he would just sit there," said Mugabe. "A person who was used to waking up at 4 o'clock every morning, exercises, baths, goes to work and he has the whole country to look at, and sud-

denly that is abruptly brought to a halt - that is bound to affect." Mugabe's health deteriorated incredibly quickly, he said.

### 'Blind to reality'

The coup had been in the making for months but Mugabe was blind "to reality at that time," said Ibbo Mandaza, one of the intellectuals who served in Mugabe's government after independence. "Mugabe's last years were years of extreme vulnerability," said Mandaza, now head of a thinktank, the Southern Africa Political Economy Series (SAPES) Trust. Shortly after tanks rolled into the streets of Harare in a show of force, one of Mugabe's allies who sought shelter at the leader's house, was former education and information minister Jonathan Moyo. Moyo, who spent time with Mugabe in the post-coup turbulence, said the once-feared autocrat dramatically changed.

"He became unusually introverted," Moyo said. "He just became instantly withdrawn and non-engaging. He was deep in thought and palpably at a loss." He became a "broken soul, an obliterated soul and someone whose world collapsed in front of him and left him helpless." Moyo said in a phone interview from Kenya where he fled after the coup. Generals seized power days after Mugabe fired his vice president and there were mass street protests over concern Mugabe was positioning his wife Grace to succeed him. After days of talks mediated by a Jesuit priest Fidelis Mukonori, Mugabe resigned. Close to Mugabe for decades, Mukonori mediated most conflicts of Zimbabwean politics, starting in the 1970s with talks between guerrillas and colonial ruler Britain that led to independence in 1980. — AFP

## International

# US 'warmongering' a failure, Iran says, as Bolton ousted

## 'Removal of moustache person from the White House means little'

TEHRAN: President Hassan Rouhani said yesterday that the United States' "warmongering" was a failure, as Iran welcomed the sacking of hawkish US national security adviser John Bolton. Rouhani also dismissed the prospect of a meeting with President Donald Trump at a time his US administration is continuing to slap more crippling sanctions on the Islamic republic.

"The Americans must understand that bellicosity and warmongering don't work in their favor. Both... must be abandoned," Rouhani told a meeting of his cabinet, according to the government's Twitter account. "The enemy imposed 'maximum pressure' on us. Our response is to resist and confront this," he said, referring to the US campaign of economic sanctions.

Arch-foes Tehran and Washington have been at loggerheads since May last year when Trump unilaterally withdrew from a 2015 nuclear deal and began reimposing the punitive measures. Iran has riposted by scaling back its commitments to the landmark accord, which gave it the promise of relief from sanctions in return for curbs on its atomic program. On Tuesday, Trump announced his decision to dismiss Bolton. It was a move an adviser to Iran's president, Hesameddin Ashena, hailed as a "clear sign of the defeat of America's maximum pressure strategy" against Tehran.

### 'Commitment for commitment'

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin stressed the US would maintain the strategy. But they added that Trump was willing to meet Rouhani without preconditions. The idea of a Trump-Rouhani meeting was floated last

month by French President Emmanuel Macron, who has been spearheading European efforts to de-escalate tensions. Rouhani said in response that Iran was ready to comply with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action only if the Americans did so too. "We have said many times that our policy... is one of peaceful (nuclear) technology, and that our approach in the JCPOA is commitment for commitment," he said.

"We have taken the third step... If it is essential and necessary in the future, we will take other steps." Iran said on Saturday it was firing up advanced centrifuges to enrich uranium at a faster rate-its third step back from the 2015 nuclear deal. It had announced on July 1 that its stockpile of enriched uranium had increased to beyond the deal's 300-kilogram threshold, and a week later that it had exceeded a 3.67-percent cap on the purity of its stocks.

### 'Moustache removal'

Iran's UN representative Majid Takht-Ravanchi poured cold water on any talk of a Trump-Rouhani meeting. The envoy said a meeting could take place only if Washington ended its "economic terrorism" and that it would have to be held in the framework of the group of major powers that negotiated the nuclear deal. "As long as the US government's economic terrorism and such cruel sanctions are imposed on the Iranian people, there is no room for negotiations," he was quoted as saying by state news agency IRNA.

The diplomat said Trump's decision to dismiss Bolton—a hardliner accused of pushing Trump towards war against Iran—was a matter for the Americans. "The removal of John Bolton is an internal affair and we



JORDAN VALLEY: In this file photo, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and then-US National Security Advisor John Bolton (right) visit an old army outpost overlooking the Jordan Valley between the Israeli city of Beit Shean and the West Bank city of Jericho. —AFP

don't take stands on domestic issues." Takht-Ravanchi said. Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif suggested little would change with Bolton's removal. "As the world... was breathing a sigh of relief" over his ouster "Pompeo and Mnuchin declared further escalation of #EconomicTerrorism against Iran," he tweeted.

"Thirst for war-maximum pressure-should go with the warmonger-in-chief," he said, referring to Trump.

One analyst cast doubt yesterday on speculation that Bolton's removal could boost the chances of a meeting happening at the UN General Assembly later this month. "Such a meeting will not take place. The removal of a moustache person from the White House means little," tweeted Mohammad Marandi, head of the American studies department at Tehran University. —AFP

## Japan's Abe shakes up cabinet, brings in rising star

TOKYO: Japan's Shinzo Abe yesterday appointed new foreign and defense ministers and promoted a popular rising political star, in a cabinet reshuffle that fuelled speculation over the prime minister's successor. The spectacular appointment as environment minister of the telegenic Shinjiro Koizumi, the 38-year-old son of much-loved former PM Junichiro, set tongues wagging in Tokyo political classes as the Abe era draws to a close.

"Abe intends to start an open race to pick the next prime minister or even the one after that," said SMBC Nikko Securities chief market economist Yoshimasa Maruyama. A darling of the Japanese media, Koizumi received blanket coverage for his recent marriage to television broadcaster Christel Takigawa, which was announced at the prime minister's office. He is the third-youngest minister appointed to the cabinet in Japan since the end of World War II, in a country where seniority is prized in politics and many other walks of life.

Despite intense media spotlight, he has been coy on expressing his view on the issues of the day and there will be close scrutiny over his policies on nuclear power, particularly on whether he will break with his father's anti-nuclear stance. "I hope Mr Shinjiro Koizumi will tackle global issues such as ocean plastics and climate change not with worn-out approaches but with the new ideas of the young generation," Abe said. "He is more seasoned than I was in my 10th year" (since being elected). I hope he will secure results," said the prime minister.



TOKYO: Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (front center) walks down the stairs with his new cabinet at his official residence in Tokyo following a cabinet reshuffle yesterday. — AFP

### 'New challenge'

Abe is set to become Japan's longest-serving prime minister in November but is expected to step down at the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) leadership election in 2021 and the jostling for position is already beginning. "We should take on the challenge to create a new country at a time when the whole of Japan is filled with positive feeling," Abe told reporters, noting that people were excited about the forthcoming Rugby World Cup and the 2020 Summer Olympics.

He reiterated his long-cherished ambition of amending Japan's post-war constitution to change the status of the country's Self Defense Forces. The Abe government is poised to hike its consumption tax from

eight percent to 10 percent on October 1, amid fears this could act as a brake on the world's third-largest economy. Japan's new foreign minister is Toshimitsu Motegi, who was promoted as a reward for his work in negotiating a trade deal with the United States, which he will continue.

Outgoing foreign minister Taro Kono was shifted to the defense portfolio, in a move seen as reinforcing Tokyo's hard line towards South Korea at a time of worsening ties between the two neighbors. Kono, who has amused commentators by interacting with people on social media—even offering relationship advice at times—struck a hard line during the recent spat with Seoul that has infected their trade and security ties. —AFP

## Exhausted Central Africans leave exile for the unknowns

MONGOU MBA: Under the tarpaulin shading the back of the lorry, the heat is still stifling on a rough road for some 30 refugees travelling home to the strife-weary Central African Republic. Potholes rattle spines and send up fine grit that sticks to the sweaty bodies of exhausted adults and small children and animals, almost hidden in a tangle of limbs. Yet the men and women look relieved. They are glad to be homeward bound after tough years spent in the Republic of Congo, following agreements signed with neighboring countries by the government and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in July and August.

Albert Bekpa, a fisherman from the capital Bangui, made the most of the journey despite the discomfort. "This is a feast day!" he proclaimed, brandishing an elegantly carved walking stick, a treasure he has kept close since exile in 2014. His cries found echoes from outside. All along the track from the Congolese border to a UNHCR transit camp at Mongoumba, villagers turned out to hail their returning compatriots. Children waved palm branches and the elders stood up from their seats.

The United Nations estimates that more than a quarter of the 4.7 million inhabitants in the deeply poor and landlocked CAR fled abroad in the turmoil after an armed movement drawn from the Muslim minority ousted President Francois Bozize in 2013. Since then, the CAR has been ravaged by conflicts pitting a range of armed movements against the security forces and each other in a ragged civil war fuelled by ethnic factors, religious faith and a struggle to control resources.

### 'A legal framework'

The UNHCR estimates that more than 600,000 of the uprooted civilians still live abroad, mainly in



MONGOU MBA: Central African refugees coming back after years in Congo-Brazzaville stand at the rear of a truck in Mongoumba, at the Congo-Brazzaville border, about 100 km south of Bangui. — AFP

Cameroon, the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Many refugees have returned on their own, particularly since the Bangui government, which is supported by a UN peacekeeping mission, signed peace pacts in February with 14 of the armed groups staking territorial claims.

For the past seven months, several provinces have seen relative calm. "Those who returned in spontaneous fashion had no support," said Stella Fatime, communications official with the UNHCR. "We needed to set a legal framework to guarantee that volunteers could return in dignity and safety." According to available figures, 4,983 refugees in the Republic of Congo have asked to be taken home since August 1 under one of the signed agreements. Valerie, a Christian trader from the mainly Muslim PK5 district of Bangui, wants to forget the clashes between communities that forced her to flee in 2013. "In the camps, we lived together very well," she said as the lorry arrived at Mongoumba. "We'll do the same at home." —AFP

## Cameroonian president calls 'national dialogue'

YAOUNDE: Cameroon President Paul Biya has announced that he intends to hold a major "national dialogue" later this month in a bid to put an end to the conflict between security forces and armed separatists from the anglophone minority in the west. Over the past two years, the francophone-majority country has been mired in the unrest which has left more than 2,000 people dead as English-speaking separatists demand independence in the Northwest and Southwest regions.

More than 500,000 people have been forced from their homes as a result according to the Human Rights Watch group. "I have decided to convene, from the end of this month, a major national dialogue to allow us... to examine the ways and means to respond to the deeply-held aspirations of the populations in the Northwest and Southwest, but also in all the other component parts of our great nation," the 86-year-old president said in an address to the nation aired on national television and radio.

Biya, who has been in power for 37 years, reiterated his offer of a "pardon" to any separatists who voluntarily lay down their arms, while vowing that those who refuse to do so will face "the full force of the law" as well as the country's security and defense forces. He said the talks in late September would be presided over by Prime Minister Joseph Dion Ngute and will bring together representatives of numerous factions, including security forces and the armed separatists. —AFP

### News in brief

#### Niger floods killed 57

NIAMEY: Deadly floods across Niger have left 57 people dead and affected more than 130,000 since they began in June, according to the latest government toll. Extreme weather is common in Niger, one of the world's poorest countries, but the capital and even desert areas in the North were hit during this year's rainy season, which typically lasts three months. Niger's government said in a statement late Tuesday the floods had resulted in 57 deaths and that 132,528 people had been affected. The rains had destroyed over 12,000 houses, killed more than 850 cattle and engulfed more than 2,000 hectares of crops. The south-east Maradi and south-central Zinder regions have been the hardest hit by the floods this year, with more than 65,000 and people affected. Last year, 56 people died in flooding which affected over 200,000 in total. —AFP

#### Indian police kill militant

NEW DELHI: Security forces in Indian Kashmir shot dead yesterday a suspected member of a Pakistan-based militant group who was accused of attacking the family of a fruit trader, the state police chief said. Tension is running high in Jammu and Kashmir since India withdrew the disputed Muslim-majority region's special rights in order to integrate it into the country, prompting protests. Last week, militants attacked the home of a fruit trader in Sopore, the region's main fruit-growing area, for carrying on with his business despite widespread protest boycotts, wounding his son, granddaughter and another family member, Indian authorities said. Yesterday, police killed a militant identified as Asif, who police said was a member of the Lashkar-e-Taiba, a Pakistan-based group fighting Indian rule in Kashmir, in Sopore, state police chief Dilbagh Singh said from Srinagar, the state capital. — Reuters

#### Heatstroke kills 2 in Japan

TOKYO: Heatstroke has killed two people in Japan, officials said yesterday, as nearly half a million homes struggled with electricity outages after a powerful typhoon battered Tokyo and the surrounding area. A 93-year-old woman and a 65-year-old man were found unconscious at their respective homes on Tuesday and were later confirmed dead by doctors, an official from Chiba prefecture east of Tokyo said. At least 48 other people were sent to hospital for symptoms of heatstroke Tuesday, she said, as the mercury hit above 35 degrees Celsius (95 degrees Fahrenheit) in areas where electricity is still out after Typhoon Faxai hit on Monday. By yesterday morning, some 456,000 households were still without power. Tokyo Electric Co (TEPCO) said in a statement. "Please take refuge in cool places and drink water to avoid heatstroke," TEPCO said, apologizing to customers for the outage. — AFP

#### Pre-school panic in Sweden

STOCKHOLM: A young child sparked panic at his Swedish pre-school when he brought in a grenade he found on a military firing range to show his friends, local officials said yesterday. The child arrived with the grenade in his hand at the school in the southern town of Kristianstad on Tuesday. A teacher who saw the grenade contacted police. Police officers were able to determine it was a "dangerous" grenade the boy had picked up this summer at the Rinkaby firing range, located outside Kristianstad. They blocked off the area and the national bomb squad neutralised the ammunition at the scene several hours later. "We don't know how bad the damages would have been" if it had exploded, a police spokesman said. — AFP

## International

# Brexit in chaos; UK court rules PM's suspension of parliament 'unlawful'

## Labor deputy calls for another referendum

**LONDON:** Prime Minister Boris Johnson's suspension of the British parliament was unlawful, a Scottish court ruled yesterday, prompting immediate calls for lawmakers to return to work as the government and parliament battle over the future of Brexit. Scotland's highest court of appeal ruled that Johnson's decision to prorogue, or suspend, parliament from Monday until Oct 14 was unlawful - a blow for the government as it seeks to leave the European Union on Oct 31 with or without a deal.

With seven weeks until Britain is due to leave the EU, the government and parliament are locked in conflict over the future of Brexit, with possible outcomes ranging from leaving without a deal to another referendum that could cancel the divorce. "We are calling for parliament to be recalled immediately," said Scottish National Party lawmaker Joanna Cherry, who led the challenge, after the verdict by Scotland's Court of Session.

"You cannot break the law with impunity, Boris Johnson." The government said it would appeal against the ruling to the Supreme Court, the United Kingdom's highest judicial body. Johnson announced on Aug. 28 that parliament would be prorogued, saying the government wanted the suspension so it could then launch a new legislative agenda.

Opponents said the real reason was to shut down debate and challenges to his Brexit plans. The court was shown documents that showed Johnson was considering prorogation weeks before he formally asked Queen Elizabeth to suspend the legislature. Buckingham Palace declined to comment on the ruling. Misleading the monarch, who under Britain's unwritten constitution must be apolitical, would be considered a grave affront.

Johnson, who was a figurehead for the Vote Leave campaign in the 2016 referendum, when 52 percent of voters backed Brexit, has rejected opposition complaints that he was denying parliament the right to debate Brexit in an undemocratic way. Dominic Grieve, one of 21 Brexit rebels

thrown out of Johnson's Conservative Party last week, said that if Johnson had misled the queen over the reasons for prorogation, he should resign. "If that were to be the case that this had happened, Boris Johnson would find himself in an untenable position in parliament," Grieve told BBC TV.

### Brexit up for grabs

Johnson's bid to quit the bloc "do or die" on Oct. 31 has hit the buffers: parliament has ordered him to delay Brexit until 2020 unless he strikes a deal while a new Brexit Party is threatening to poach Conservative voters. After three years of tortuous Brexit crisis, British politics is in turmoil, with the prime minister blocked by parliament and an election or even a second referendum on the cards.

In an exonerating judgment, the Scottish judges ruled the principal reason for parliament's suspension was to stymie lawmakers and allow Johnson to pursue a no-deal Brexit policy. "This was an egregious case of a clear failure to comply with generally accepted standards of behavior of public authorities," concluded one judge, Philip Brodie, according to a summary of the court verdict. Judge James Drummond Young had determined that "the only inference that could be drawn was that the UK government and the Prime Minister wished to restrict Parliament", it added.

### Labor splits

The 2016 Brexit referendum showed a United Kingdom divided about much more than the EU, and has given rise to soul-searching about everything from secession and immigration to capitalism, empire and modern Britishness. It has also triggered civil war inside both of Britain's main political parties as dozens of lawmakers put what they see as the United Kingdom's fate above that of party loyalty. The divisions in the opposition Labor Party over Brexit were on display yesterday, when its deputy leader, Tom Watson, said he supported pressing for a second referen-



**LONDON:** Anti-Brexit activists, and demonstrators opposing the British government's actions in relation to the handling of Brexit, protest near Downing Street in central London. — AFP

dum before an early national election.

"So let's deal with Brexit, in a referendum, where every person can have their say, and then come together and

fight an election on Labor's positive social agenda on our own terms, not on Boris Johnson's Brexit 'do or die'," he said in a speech in London. — Reuters

## News in brief

### Texas executes inmate

**WASHINGTON:** The US state of Texas executed an inmate on Tuesday, nine years after he took part in a week-long crime spree that included two murders. Mark Soliz, 37, was pronounced dead at 6:32 pm (23:32 GMT), the Texas Department of Criminal Justice said in a statement. In his last words, Soliz apologized "for the grief and the pain that I caused," the statement said. In June 2010, Soliz, who had already been convicted of theft several times, stole several weapons during a robbery with an accomplice named Jose Ramos. The following week, the two men robbed several people, wounded a man and killed the driver of a delivery truck in a parking lot. That same day, the crime spree ended when they broke into the home of a 61-year-old woman and murdered her. — AFP

### Swiss revoke citizenship

**ZURICH:** Switzerland has revoked the citizenship of a man convicted of helping recruit jihadist fighters, invoking a law allowing dual nationals to be stripped of their Swiss passports for conduct detrimental to national interests or reputation. Though the Swiss federal immigration office said this was the first time it had made such a move under the 66-year-old law, other Western nations have also stripped citizenship of people linked to extremist violence in the Middle East. Last year, Australia revoked the nationality of an Islamic State (IS) recruiter, despite some concerns the move would leave him stateless, while Britain in February stripped a 19-year-old teenager of citizenship on security grounds. The Swiss office did not release the other nationality of the man, who is in prison after receiving a multiple-year sentence for crimes including membership in a terrorist organization, spreading IS propaganda and seeking to convince fighters to participate in jihadist violence in the Middle East. — Reuters

### US lawmakers renew fights

**WASHINGTON:** US lawmakers clashed on Tuesday over funding for President Donald Trump's border wall and women's reproductive health programs, flashpoints that could threaten funding to keep the federal government operating beyond this month. Last December, Trump's insistence on money to build a wall on the US-Mexico border to deter Central American immigrants, stymied passage of a wide-ranging government funding bill. It was opposed by Democrats and some Republicans and led to a record-long 35-day partial government shutdown that extended into January 2019. The standoff ended when Trump circumvented Congress and declared a national emergency, which he said allowed him to divert money appropriated for other programs to construct the wall, a major plank of his 2016 election campaign. — Reuters

### Malaysia detains Shiites

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malaysian authorities detained dozens of Shiite Muslims in raids over the past week as they marked a major festival, sparking fears that the minority is facing growing persecution. Malaysia has a Muslim majority but most follow Sunni Islam. Shiites have long faced discrimination, with religious authorities considering them deviant and imams regularly denouncing them in sermons. On Monday eight men were detained by religious authorities and police in southern Johor state during a Shiite event at a private residence, according to a participant. "They used violence on us, some of us were handcuffed. They accused us of insulting Islam," cleric Hasan Askari said yesterday. On Friday religious officials and police in central Selangor state arrested 22 Shiites at a private property as they recited the Koran and hauled them in to give statements, according to cleric Kamil Zuhairi. — AFP

## John Bolton, warrior in White House goes out swinging

**WASHINGTON:** Donald Trump stunned Washington once again Tuesday with a tweet saying he had fired John Bolton, his national security adviser who has pushed US foreign policy to the right for decades. But just 20 minutes afterward, Bolton—a consummate insider despite his contempt for the establishment-hit back with his own tweet and text messages to reporters, already showing daylight with Trump by saying that he had quit on his own.

Bolton, who lasted 17 months at the helm of national security policy in Trump's turbulent White House, has always been a Washington fighter, more willing than virtually any other senior US official to deploy military force and waging his battle deep within the bureaucracy. An unapologetic campaigner for the Iraq invasion who at times advocated war against Iran and North Korea, Bolton was so controversial that former president George W. Bush had to bypass the Senate to appoint him ambassador to the United Nations.

After leaving the Bush White House, Bolton relished his role as a media commentator, stridently denouncing Barack Obama and flirting with his own presidential run. He had seemed like a relic from an earlier time—until the



**Former US National Security Advisor John Bolton**

television-loving Trump saw him on Fox News. The mogul-turned-president was impressed by the loquacious expert, although he reportedly was put off by one of Bolton's signature traits—his bushy moustache. Bolton joined despite clear philosophical differences with Trump, who has frequently called for less US involvement overseas.

"He has strong views on things but that's okay," Trump said in May. "I actually temper John, which is pretty amazing." Suzanne DiMaggio, a foreign policy scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, said Bolton survived so long in part because he shattered the painstaking decision-making process, which Trump holds in contempt. "Bolton played an important role for Trump—he freed him from the bureau-

cratic constraints of a national security policy process by demolishing it," she said.

### From 'human scum' to aide

But Bolton's differences with the rest of the Trump team had increasingly been out in the open. Bolton had been highly critical of talks with Afghanistan's Taliban, so much so that The Washington Post reported that he was excluded from seeing a draft plan on pulling US troops. He also would have furiously protested a summit with Iran, as mullied by Trump.

Bolton has long been close to Iran's militant exiled opposition, telling them at a rally shortly before he was appointed that they would go together to Tehran to celebrate regime change "before 2019." And when Trump walked onto North Korean soil in June to see leader Kim Jong Un, Bolton—once branded "human scum" by Pyongyang for his hawkish stance—headed to Mongolia. Trump has also seemed increasingly uninterested in speaking about Venezuela, a major cause for Bolton who wants to oust leftist leader Nicolas Maduro. Of all issues, Bolton has said he is proudest of his efforts under both Bush and Trump to disrupt the International Criminal Court, believing it could target Americans and violate US sovereignty. In one of Bolton's most memorable remarks, he dismissed the United Nations in a 1994 speech, quipping that if the 38-floor secretariat in New York "lost 10 stories, it wouldn't make a bit of difference." Bolton traces his views, including his fervent denunciations of what he sees as elitism within an internationalist-minded foreign policy establishment, to his working-class childhood in Baltimore. — AFP



**MANCHESTER:** Attendees of the New Hampshire Democratic Party Convention hold up signs for Democratic presidential candidate, former Vice President Joe Biden at the SNHU Arena in Manchester. — AFP

## Eyes on Biden as Democrats ready for third debate

**WASHINGTON:** Ten Democrats seeking the White House will gather today for their party's third debate of the 2020 cycle, with frontrunner Joe Biden sharing the stage with top rival Elizabeth Warren for the first time. The televised showdown in Houston will be the longest to date in the primary contest, a three-hour marathon that will give voters their first opportunity to see all the leading candidates onstage together.

The previous encounters, in June and July, featured 20 candidates over two nights, leaving viewers shell-shocked a full seven months before the first votes are cast, in Iowa next February, to determine the nominee.

While most of those candidates remain in the race, the debate is effectively halving the field as Democrats seek a challenger to President Donald Trump. Today's debate, airing on ABC from 7:00 pm (23:00 GMT), will bring America's diversity to the fore.

The 10 candidates are white, black, Hispanic, and

Asian-American: seven men and three women; three septuagenarians and four candidates 30 to 40 years their junior; and centrists, progressives and liberals. In a sign of the different political currents coursing through the party, the moderate Biden will take center stage sandwiched between the prominent progressives Warren and Senator Bernie Sanders, a self-described Democratic socialist who launched the universal health care approach known as Medicare for All.

All eyes will be on 76-year-old Biden, who maintains a grip on pole position with 29.8 percent support, according to a poll average compiled by RealClearPolitics. His summer of verbal miscues - and an apparent lack of preparedness for spirited attacks by rivals in the first debate - raised doubts about Barack Obama's deputy's age and mental clarity, and whether he will stand the test of a grueling political campaign.

To date, the Democratic veteran has largely kept those concerns at bay. He enjoys strong support in particular from African-American communities and from working-class whites who appreciate his blue-collar appeal and believe he is best able to beat Trump, a top priority for Democratic voters.

There is potential for fireworks between Biden and Warren, who trails at 18 percent but is the one candidate who has enjoyed a steady rise in support. — AFP

## More Americans 'out of poverty', but more lack health insurance

**WASHINGTON:** More than a million Americans rose out of poverty last year but household incomes stagnated and - for the first time in nine years - the share of people with no health insurance crept higher, officials reported Tuesday. The annual snapshot offered a mixed portrait of prosperity in the year after US Republicans slashed income taxes and as President Donald Trump moved to undermine the health insurance system created by his predecessor Barack Obama.

The numbers showed Americans are at last recouping painful losses from the Great Recession of 2007 to 2009, but improvements may have stalled.

Individual worker wages are up and poverty is down but, after three years of growth, households overall did not bring in higher incomes in 2018.

Meanwhile, government health coverage intended for the poorest Americans weakened, notably affecting large numbers of children.

With unemployment holding near historic lows and wages rising, Trump has hailed his economic agenda as a blessing for American workers even though data suggests his trade wars are weighing on growth.

Republicans in last year's mid-term elections faced angry waves of voters who denounced attempts to dismantle the health coverage system known as Obamacare.

Democrats seized on the report's conclusions that coverage in public health care had shrunk.

"President Trump's cruel health care sabotage has left two million more people without health insurance, forced to live in constant fear of an accident or injury that could spell financial ruin for their families," Nancy Pelosi of California, speaker of the House of Representatives, said in a statement.

Health care is again a dominant issue among Democratic presidential candidates this year, with several calling for universal, state-run health coverage. According to the Census Bureau, the poverty rate fell in 2018 to 11.8 percent, or 38.1 million people, down 0.5 percent from 2017.

As a result, for the first time in 11 years, poverty was significantly lower than 2007, the year before the Great Recession. — AFP



## International

# Who let the villains out? Philippines crime-busting president red-faced

## Early release of rapists, murderers, drug criminals embarrasses Duterte

**MANILA:** The early release of hundreds of convicted rapists, murderers and drug criminals has acutely embarrassed Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte, with his justice minister saying they were ineligible to be freed because of the severity of their crimes. Some 1,700 felons serving life sentences have quietly walked free under a good behavior program in the three years since Duterte swept to power, promising to wage a national war on corruption, drugs and crime.

Among those freed are 745 convicted rapists, 748 murderers and 156 drug criminals, according to an internal prisons document, obtained by Reuters, that names all of the prisoners guilty of crimes categorized as "heinous". They included Josman Aznar, Ariel Balansag and Alberto Cano, three of six men sentenced to death in 2004 for the 1997 kidnap, rape and murder of two sisters in one of the country's most high-profile cases. Their sentences were later commuted to life imprisonment.

Duterte, a former prosecutor and crime busting mayor counts among his many nicknames "Duterte Harry" and "The Punisher" - references to a Clint Eastwood movie and the title of a Time magazine article that featured him - and he was furious when critics alleged that a corrections bureau run by his appointees was letting dangerous criminals pay their way out of prison. The bureau denies the allegations of graft. One of its former chiefs has said that he did not know the justice minister's approval was needed for the prisoners to be released.

Duterte last week demanded that the 1,700 convicts surrender, offering bounties of 1 million pesos (\$19,200) for each if they failed to comply. As of yesterday, 185 had turned themselves in. House minority leader Edcel Lagman called it a "massive jailbreak" that made a mockery of the administration's key law and order poli-

cy platform. "This is really a serious indictment of any campaign against graft and corruption when people, who are now convicted of heinous crimes, are just being released without the knowledge of the public," Lagman said.

### Packed prisons

The Good Conduct Time Allowance Law was passed under Duterte's predecessor in 2013 to encourage rehabilitation, and de-congest some of the world's most crowded jails. More than 21,000 prisoners were released, 2,000 of whom were sentenced for heinous crimes, like rape, drugs, murder, bribery, plunder, kidnapping and arson. Of those, close to 900 were freed by a corrections bureau under Duterte loyalist Nicanor Faeldon, and 130 under Ronald dela Rosa, a senator endorsed by Duterte.

Dela Rosa, a former police chief who led Duterte's war on drugs, said only one of those freed was a drugs offender. Prison documents seen by Reuters, however, show 16 drug criminals were released while he was prisons chief. Dela Rosa has not been accused of any wrongdoing, but said he is open to being investigated. He is advocating reinstating capital punishment, which he said made more sense than a good conduct program. "Why pin the blame on us? We are just implementing the law. We didn't make the law," he told news channel ANC. "To simplify everything, restore the death penalty."

Duterte reluctantly fired Faeldon, relieving him of what was his second high-profile post. He quit as customs chief in 2017 after \$123 million of narcotics passed through the bureau undetected. Faeldon has not been charged with any offence. He told a Senate hearing that he was unaware the Justice Secretary's approval was



**MANILA:** Residents construct a makeshift bedframe after a fire razed their homes in Manila yesterday. The early morning fire killed at least three people, according to local reports, and displaced some 20 families. —AFP

required before releasing nearly 900 former felons serving life sentences. Faeldon's lawyer, Jose, told Reuters his client took no bribes from inmates, but

accepted that the buck stopped with him. "We are not washing our hands over command responsibility", he said. —Reuters

## What would Israel annexing the Jordan Valley mean?

**GAZA:** On Tuesday Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced he would annex the Jordan Valley in the occupied West Bank if he won upcoming elections. The pledge, a week ahead of a closely fought general election, was controversial but what would it actually mean?

### What did Netanyahu say?

In a televised address Tuesday evening, Netanyahu announced he planned to annex the Jordan Valley as soon as victory was secured and his new government took office. "There is one place where we can apply Israeli sovereignty immediately after the elections," Netanyahu said, using a map of the Jordan Valley to illustrate his plans. "If I receive from you, citizens of Israel, a clear mandate to do so ... today I announce my intention to apply with the formation of the next government Israeli sovereignty over the Jordan Valley and northern Dead Sea." He specified that the plan would not include Palestinian cities, such as the Jordan Valley's Jericho, though it would effectively be encircled.

### Hasn't he said that before?

Kind of. Israel is facing its second election in five months after Netanyahu along with his right-wing and religious allies emerged from polls in April with a majority, but he was unable to form a governing coalition. Before those elections, he pledged to apply Israeli sovereignty, or annex, Israeli settlements in

the West Bank, but without giving a timeframe or details. Tuesday's announcement was the first specific step to implement that decision, which he also re-committed to.

### What is the Jordan Valley?

The Jordan Valley accounts for around one-third of the West Bank, located along the eastern side of the territory along the Jordanian border. It is almost all in Area C, the roughly 60 percent of the West Bank Israel fully controls. It is home to only 9,000 or so of the more than 400,000 Israelis living in West Bank settlements, according to Israeli statistics, but is strategically important and hosts many Israeli businesses, largely agricultural.

Some 65,000 Palestinians live in the Jordan Valley, according to Israeli human rights group B'Tselem. Israeli right-wing politicians have long viewed the area as a part of the territory they would never retreat from, seeing it as the country's eastern border. Palestinians believe that Israeli control so deep into the West Bank effectively ends the possibility of an independent Palestinian state. They say it amounts to an apartheid-like arrangement for Palestinian communities there.

### What was the reaction?

The Palestinians were furious, saying the move would end faint prospects for a peace deal. "He is not only destroying the two-state solution, he is destroying all chances of peace," senior official Hanan Ashrawi said. A more important reaction from Netanyahu's perspective will be US President Donald Trump, whose strong support has been a major boost to Netanyahu. Trump, who had not yet commented, is due to announce a long-delayed peace proposal after the Israeli election. The European Union warned that if carried out Netanyahu's pledge would "undermine the viability of



**JORDAN VALLEY:** A Palestinian worker harvests dates in the Jordan Valley village of Jifilik in the Israeli-occupied West Bank yesterday. —AFP

the two-state solution and the prospects for a lasting peace."

### Will it happen?

Ofer Zalzberg, senior analyst with the International Crisis Group, said the announcement was Netanyahu's attempt to increase right-wing support at next week's election. Polls in recent days have indicated he may again find it difficult to form a governing coalition, even if his Likud party is the largest. Zalzberg said it was far from certain Netanyahu would win or that his coalition partners would all back such a plan.

### What would it mean?

If imposed, the most immediate implications for Palestinians may be more symbolic than practical, Zalzberg said. Israel already controls the area, but formally annexing such a large part of the West Bank would be a clear indication the Jewish state never intends to give it up. "It could lead to a dramatic decrease

in Palestinian support for the two-state solution and lead Palestinian decision makers to dramatic steps," he said. Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas said in a statement late Tuesday that if Netanyahu followed through with the threat, all peace agreements between them would no longer be valid.

Ashrawi said it was part of wider Israeli attempts to slowly force Palestinians out of the West Bank. "He (Netanyahu) is trying to take the land without the people and saying you are free to leave." For Israeli settlers living or working in the Jordan Valley, annexation would mean developments in the area would no longer be decided on by the army but the regular Israeli ministries, potentially making getting permits easier. But Zalzberg said that for Palestinians, the most important thing would be the indication that the current, supposedly temporary, situation would be considered permanent. —AFP

## Sex assault claims rock Ardern's govt

**WELLINGTON:** New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern apologized yesterday for her party's handling of an alleged sexual assault, as a top ally was forced to resign. In the most serious scandal Ardern has faced since she took office in late 2017, the centre-left leader admitted "mistakes were made" after a Labor Party volunteer accused a senior party staffer of assault last year. "Raising an allegation of sexual assault is an incredibly difficult thing to do - for additional distress to be caused through the way these allegations are handled is incredibly distressing," Ardern said in a statement.

The 19-year-old woman alleges the staffer sexually assaulted her at his home in February last year and she reported it to Labor Party president Nigel Haworth in October that year. An internal party investigation recommended no action against the man and Haworth argued as recently as Tuesday that the complainant did not inform him about the seriousness of the allegations.

The woman, who has not been publicly named, disputed this, providing media with emails and documents she said supported her version of events. Other volunteers also backed the woman and said their complaints to the party were not taken seriously. Ardern said she discussed the woman's documents with Haworth yesterday morning, as she tried to address the scandal. "Whilst he stands by the statements he made on this matter, I believe mistakes were made," she said.

Ardern added: "On behalf of the Labor Party, I apologize to the complainants for the way this matter has been dealt with." In a separate statement, Labor said that Haworth - who has been credited as an unsung hero of Ardern's electoral victory - had resigned. Ardern said she never knew about the nature of the allegations. "I was informed in the very beginning that the allegations made were not sexual in nature," she said. "That is obviously directly counter to what is now being reported." —AFP

## Reports of 'CIA mole' in Kremlin put lives at risk

**WASHINGTON:** US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has angrily denounced news reports detailing the secret exfiltration of a CIA mole who had operated at the top levels of the Kremlin, saying such reports could put lives at risk. The informant reportedly confirmed to US intelligence that President Vladimir Putin directed Russia's meddling in the 2016 US presidential election, straining superpower relations and casting a cloud over Donald Trump's stunning victory.

According to multiple news reports citing sources in American espionage community, the informant was whisked out of Russia two years ago amid fears he was at risk of exposure, depriving Washington of essential insight into Putin's activities and thinking. Pompeo, who was CIA director in 2017, questioned the reports without being specific, but did not deny their general thrust. "I've seen that reporting.

The reporting is materially inaccurate," he said, speaking in the White House. "As the former CIA director, I don't talk about things like this very often," he said. "It is only the occasions when there is something that I think puts people at risk, or the reporting is so egregious as to create enormous risk to the United States of America, that I even comment in the way I just did."

Russian media identified the suspected insider as Oleg Smolenkov, an aide to Putin's top foreign policy advisor Yuri Ushakov. Smolenkov reportedly once served in Russia's embassy in Washington. His Kremlin position could have given him access to top-level national security information and likely provided US intelligence with essential insights into Putin, intelligence experts said. "If these reports ... are accurate, I think that really speaks to a tremendous intelligence victory on the part of the CIA," former CIA spokesman Ned Price told MSNBC. On the other hand, Price said, the exfiltration would be "a strategic loss for us over time, as we will lose those insights." —AFP

## UN investigators link US, Syria and Russian forces to war crimes

**GENEVA:** Air strikes by US-led coalition forces in Syria have killed or wounded many civilians, indicating that required precautions were ignored and war crimes may have been committed, United Nations investigators said yesterday. Syrian government and allied Russian warplanes are also conducting a deadly campaign that appears to target medical facilities, schools, markets and farmland and which may also amount to war crimes, the report by the UN Commission of Inquiry on Syria said.

The investigators also accused Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, a jihadist alliance formerly known as Nusra Front that is the dominant armed group in Idlib, of firing rockets indiscriminately and killing civilians. The eight-year-old war has claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands and forced 13 million people from their homes, half of whom have left their shattered homeland. Backed by US-led coalition air power in a fight to oust

Islamic State, the Syrian Democratic Forces, which include Kurdish fighters, retook the group's last major stronghold of Hajin in eastern Syria in late December.

The coalition's Al-Jazeera Storm operation resulted in a high number of civilian casualties, including in a series of strikes on Jan 3 in Sha'fah, south of Hajin, that killed 16 civilians including 12 children, the U.N. report said. "The Commission finds that there are reasonable grounds to believe that international coalition forces may not have directed their attacks at a specific military objective, or failed to do so with the necessary precaution," it said.

"Launching indiscriminate attacks that result in death or injury to civilians amounts to a war crime in cases in which such attacks are conducted recklessly," it added. Coalition officials could not be reached immediately for comment on the report. Night raids by SDF forces backed by coalition helicopter gunships killed and wounded civilians in Shahil and other parts of Deir al-Zor province, in further apparent violations of international law, the investigators said.

Syrian government forces carried out repeated air strikes in Saraqib, in northwest Idlib province on March 9, damaging Al-Hayat women's and children's hospital, despite pro-government forces



**Z?AHR, Syria:** Syrian boys look at a destroyed sheep pen following a reported Russian air strike in the village of Al-Daheer in Syria's northwest Idlib province yesterday. —AFP

being aware of its coordinates, the report said. In Idlib on May 14, "pro-government forces airdropped between two and four missiles on a fish market and primary school for girls in Jisr Al-Shughur", killing at least 8 civilians, it said.

"Such attacks may amount to the war crime of deliberately attacking protected objects and intentionally attacking med-

ical personnel," it said. The Syrian army denies its strikes target civilians and says its forces only bomb militants associated with hardline Sunni fundamentalist groups linked to Al-Qaeda. The report covers the year to July and is based on nearly 300 interviews and analysis of satellite imagery, photographs and videos. —Reuters

## Analysis

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## 'Day of Fire': Blazes ignite suspicion in Amazon town

A maverick journalist in this isolated Brazilian ranching town warned his readers last month that the surrounding Amazon was about to go up in flames. Queimadas, or burnings, are nothing new in Novo Progresso, located on the frontier where Brazil's farmland edges the Amazon rainforest in the northern state of Para. Locals say farmers annually use fire to illegally clear pastures or newly deforested areas. But the Aug 5 article in the online Folha do Progresso was eerily specific about an upcoming "Day of Fire."

It said growers and ranchers were planning to set a coordinated series of fires in the forest and nearby land on Saturday, Aug 10, inspired in part by President Jair Bolsonaro. Brazil's right-wing leader has vowed to open the world's largest rainforest to more development. Punishment of environmental crimes has plummeted on his watch. When the day came, the number of fires tripled from the prior 24 hours. Government data recorded 124 blazes, compared to just six on Aug 10 last year.

Bolsonaro's office did not respond to a request for comment. In an Aug. 25 message on Twitter, Environment Minister Ricardo Salles said Bolsonaro had ordered a "rigorous" probe to "investigate and punish those responsible" for the Novo Progresso fires. State and federal police have since descended on this rough-edged town of 30,000. Some residents are not pleased with the sudden attention. Most farmers approached by Reuters declined to be interviewed. Many dismissed the Folha do Progresso story as rubbish, the invention of a fabulist. "For you outsiders, we're all criminals here," one rancher said, declining to give his name. Adecio Piran, the reporter who wrote the article, told Reuters he temporarily went into hiding after receiving death threats. He stands by his story. According to prosecutors investigating the case, Brazil's government did not move aggressively to prevent the conflagration, despite forewarning. Prosecutor Paulo Oliveira said he notified Brazil's environmental agency, Ibama, about the Folha do Progresso article on Aug. 7. The agency responded on Aug. 12, two days after the "Day of Fire," saying it lacked the police support needed to investigate the matter, according to copies of the correspondence between Ibama and Oliveira reviewed by Reuters.

Army troops were dispatched to the area weeks later. By last Wednesday, there were about 200 soldiers camping on a dusty patch of land used for country fairs on the edge of town. As Reuters drove the long road into town on Aug. 30, smoke still hung heavy in parts. Charred tree trunks and ash littered the ground where jungle recently stood. Brazil's Environment Ministry declined to comment for this story. Salles, the minister, has said previously that overly restrictive environmental policies have incited rural dwellers to resort to illegal logging and mining to make a living. The "Day of Fire" is part of a brutal wave of destruction in Brazil's rainforest this year. Some 6,404.8 sq km have been despoiled, double the area felled at this point last year and larger than the U.S. state of Delaware. Images of the Amazon burning have sparked international condemnation of the environmental policies of Bolsonaro, who has dismissed those concerns as outsiders meddling in Brazil's internal affairs. Townspeople in Novo Progresso bristled with resentment at the arrival of federal police and the military. Cattle traders complained it was bad for business.

Madalena Hoffmann, a former mayor of Novo Progresso, said she did not know if the Aug. 10 fires were intentionally coordinated. She said deforestation has gone too far. But like many here, she blames the government for imposing environmental rules so complicated and strict that farmers feel they must break the law to ply their trade. "Fundamentally it's the government's fault," she said.

### 'Abandoned'

Novo Progresso dates to the early 1980s, when Brazil's military dictatorship lured families here with the promise of land and opportunity. The armed forces, where former Army captain Bolsonaro got his start, viewed the largely uninhabited Amazon as a vast, resource-rich asset vulnerable to invasion or exploitation by foreigners. The military built roads and encouraged settlement. But by 1985, the dictatorship had fallen. The newly democratic government began what would become a very different policy towards the Amazon: Conservation.

"We were abandoned," said Moises Berta, a 59-year-old rancher. Sipping coffee under a dawn sky at a bakery popular with farmers, he said he moved to Novo Progresso as a young man in 1981 with hopes of starting a successful farm. Berta said the government has left him and others in the lurch by failing to grant clear titles to lands they have worked for years. Possessing the title to one's farm makes it easier to obtain financing and eventually sell it. Without it, ownership is difficult to prove, making illegal activity such as cutting down forest easier to get away with.

In Brazil, land ownership can be granted by demonstrating the property is being used constructively, is not owned by someone else, and is not located in a protected area - standards Berta says his holdings meet. But 38 years after arriving, Berta still does not have the title for his ranch beside highway BR 163, a vital artery for transporting soy and cattle, despite repeatedly trying to register it with the federal government. He might not have the rights to his land, but holding up his phone, Berta showed a document pertaining to four open cases against him from Ibama, the environmental watchdog. Asked what laws he had allegedly violated, he grinned. —Reuters

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This photo taken on Aug 27, 2019 shows an aerial view of a rough road connecting Mali's capital Bamako with the western city of Kayes. —AFP

## Bumpy ride as protests persist over Mali roads

Like many of his fellow Malians, Ousmane Maiga used to drive regularly between Gao, in the north of the country, and the capital Bamako. Today, he balks at doing the once-familiar trip. For one thing, there is the threat from militants - and then there is the state of the roads, which are catastrophically bad. The 1,200-km journey, which in the past would take around 24 hours, now takes "at least five days", he told AFP. "The road is so damaged that most people have to go via Burkina Faso and Niger, where they have to pay extra taxes."

The activist belongs to one of around 60 civil society groups in Gao, which yesterday were scheduled to stage protests demanding action to tackle Mali's roads problem. Africa's eighth-largest country has a mere

21,681 km of roads - and of these, just 7,156 km are tarred. In the vast northern region - twice the size of Sweden - one of the only tarred highways is the RN16 linking Gao to the central town of Ségou. "It's an obstacle course," Maiga, 43, said. "The top speed is 40 kph...and there's the dust, the heat and now the insecurity."

Northern Mali fell into the hands of jihadists in 2012 before the militants were forced out by a French-led military intervention. But much of the region remains chronically unstable and since 2015 violence has spread to the center of the country, an ethnic mosaic. Several construction projects launched in recent years with the help of international funding had to be temporarily suspended due to security threats, particularly in the country's north and center.

### Angry residents protest

Apart from the constant threat of jihadists and armed militias, Mali's infrastructure has also suffered from bad weather, a lack of state services and alleged widespread corruption. At the other end of the country, demonstrators in the southern city of Kayes won a symbolic victory in late August after blocking thousands of trucks from transporting their merchandise across the main bridge into neighboring Senegal.

The protests, which spread to other parts including Bamako, interrupted a key part of Mali's trade and prompted Prime Minister Boubou Cissé to visit the region. After driving along Kayes's dilapidated roads, the premier - in power since April - vowed his government

would release emergency funds worth A7.5 million (\$8.2 million) and restart construction works on the Kayes-Bamako axis.

However, the announcement angered residents in Mali's north who often feel ignored by Bamako, especially after rumours started to spread that a company charged with building a new road in Timbuktu had been diverted to the Kayes region - a claim the government denies. Since last weekend, hundreds of young people have been blocking access to the airport of Timbuktu, a UNESCO world heritage site, as part of a protest calling for better infrastructure and improved security. They also managed to halt water traffic to the country's center and south for three days. —AFP

## 'We just have to brave it': Women face assault on Zimbabwe buses

When Zimbabwe's government started running a bus system earlier this year with fares on average one-third lower than those of private bus companies, Thandekile Gama was excited. The 33-year-old hairdresser had grown tired of paying up to 3 Zimbabwe dollars (less than 10 US cents) every time she took a trip within Bulawayo, the country's second-largest city, so the new bus system with fares capped at 50 cents seemed like a gift.

But that gift came at a cost: Gama said the more affordable fares have led to overcrowding on the government-owned buses, putting her and other women she knows at greater risk of sexual harassment and assault as they travel. "The buses are crowded, as would be expected, but there are creeps who ride the buses to fondle women," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "You just feel a hand feeling you up and then disappearing."

Reports of harassment and rape on public transportation are on the rise, said Auxillia Sibanda, an assistant inspector with the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP), at a public meeting in July. She did not provide specific numbers, noting that the statistics were still being compiled. World Bank figures show about one-third of Zimbabwe's 16 million people live in urban areas, and that its urban population is growing about 2 percent annually.

Across the country, rapid population growth has led to increased demand for public utilities, including transport, according to legislator and women's rights defender Tabitha Khumalo. But authorities did not anticipate the impact of that demand on the safety of female commuters using public transportation such as private and state-run buses as well as

## Israeli economic growth overshadows struggles of poor

With the lowest unemployment rate in the Mediterranean, Israel can give the impression of having achieved an economic miracle. But its growth can obscure a darker side in poorer neighborhoods where families' struggles with the cost of living are acute. At 10:30 am, the first of the pensioners begin arriving at Lasova (Satisfied in Hebrew), a soup kitchen in south Tel Aviv, paying the young receptionist one shekel (25 cents) before taking a place at one of the tables.

Today's menu: Pasta, soup, salad, rolls, chicken and soft drinks. The blades of the fans whirl from the high ceilings of the erstwhile synagogue, brought back to life by the hundreds of people coming for a hot meal every day, and Mazal makes her entrance. The bespectacled redhead launches into her life story while eating, from her rough beginnings to the British sweetheart who sends her text messages in Hebrew with the help of Google Translate.

Each month Mazal receives a pension of 2,600 shekels (\$740). Her part-time cleaning work brings in another 2,200 shekels (\$625), but "it's not enough." "You've got rent, you've got electricity, a phone, other expenses," the 66-year-old sighed. "Everything is expensive." A divorced mother of two and grandmother of four, Mazal found herself homeless a few years ago, squatting near Tel Aviv's bus station for a year-and-a-half before the state provided her with social housing in a small city outside of Israel's economic capital.

But she still comes to Lasova several times a week to escape her solitude and enjoy a square meal. "I can't afford to buy food. I don't have money," she said. "I have a sick brother with cancer who I help. He can't move around much and I buy things for him. I

also help my daughters and my grandchildren sometimes too. "You can't live like this," she said.

unlicensed "pirate" taxis, she said. The government re-launched the Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (Zupco) buses in January, several years after the state-owned company's fleet was grounded following a litany of problems that included millions of dollars of debt and allegations of government corruption.

At the time of the re-launch, information minister Monica Mutsvangwa said Zupco was part of the modernisation of the national transport system and assured the nation that there would be "adequate security" to protect passengers. Zupco's acting CEO Everisto Madangwa said in a phone interview that those security measures include assigning at least one police officer to each bus, "to ensure passenger comfort and safety".

Madangwa declined to directly respond to the accusations of sexual harassment on the company's buses, but said the government regularly adds to the fleet to both meet demand and decrease congestion on the buses. He added that the company plans to grow from the current 500 buses to 3,000 countrywide, without specifying a timeline for the target.

### Financial respite

Madangwa could not provide figures for how many passengers use the Zupco buses daily, but noted that the bus system has been popular from the first day it started running. Gama and other passengers say much of that popularity stems from the low fares, which provide some financial respite for a population struggling through crippling inflation and shortages of bread, fuel and hard currency. Female passengers have long been subjected to whistles, crude comments and groping on buses, Gama explained, but with so many people using the Zupco system, the harassment has become more aggressive and invasive. "The sexual harassment has become too much, but (these) buses are the cheapest," she told Thomson Reuters Foundation as she stood in a long queue to board a Zupco bus. "We just have to brave it."

A 2018 Thomson Reuters Foundation survey of 1,000 women in five of the world's biggest commuter cities - London, New York, Mexico City, Tokyo and Cairo - found 52 percent cited safety as their top concern while using transport. For Khumalo, the problem of women's safety on

### The 'invisibles'

Hundreds of meals are served at Lasova daily to senior citizens, African migrants, the unemployed and the homeless under the watchful eye of Ravit Reichman. "They are the invisible people of Israel, who nobody cares about," said Reichman, sporting short bleached hair, tattoos and leather boots. Reichman ran kitchens in the military for over two decades before joining Lasova. Nearby, two new towers are being built, with skyscrapers dotting the landscape toward the beach.

Innovation has helped boost Israel's economy over the past 15 years to the point that the Jewish state has joined the leading pack of industrialized countries as far as growth and jobs are concerned. In July, the unemployment rate fell again to 3.7 percent. The average salary stood at 11,175 shekels a month - or \$3,175. But according to Israel's National Insurance Institute, almost 1.8 million people of the country's nearly nine million residents live below the poverty line.

And by the standards of the OECD - the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development - the "start-up nation" is lagging behind in terms of social equality. "It's a paradox since we're living the 15 years of Israel's golden economic age, in which the per capita income has almost doubled and passed some European states," said Gilles Darmon, director of the Latet NGO that distributes food to organizations such as Lasova nationwide.

### 'Working poor'

Year after year, studies show two groups topping the poverty data - Arabs and ultra-Orthodox Jews, both with swiftly growing demographics. Among the former, many women prefer to stay home to raise children. In the latter group, men work less in order to devote themselves to religious studies, according to John Gal, co-author of a poverty report issued by the Taub Center for Social Policy Studies. "The moment you have

Zimbabwean cities' public transport systems is a "recent phenomenon, seen after the entry of government buses and proliferation of pirate taxis". She and a group of other female legislators have lobbied the government to set up a database of sex offenders "as many of these perpetrators are repeat offenders". In general, said Khumalo - who also serves as the national chair of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change - the government could do more to protect and support survivors of sexual violence. Figures released in 2018 by the Musasa Project, a women's rights group, revealed that up to 50 percent of rape cases in Zimbabwe go unprosecuted. Lawmakers are currently drafting a bill that proposes a mandatory minimum of 60 years for the rape of anyone under the age of 12.

### Fear of reporting

Bulawayo police spokesman Abednico Ncube told the Thomson Reuters Foundation that police were doing everything they could to ensure women's safety on public transportation. But the congestion means officers "cannot monitor each and every passenger", he added. Ncube advised anyone who experiences sexual harassment while riding on a bus to report the incident immediately after it happens. "It is important for victims of indecent assault to attract the attention of witnesses as soon as they feel violated so that police can effect arrests," he said.

But there is a problem with that advice, said Gillian Chinzele, project director at the Institute for Young Women's Development, which supports women's participation in political processes. Women in Zimbabwe are often reluctant to report harassment for fear of not being taken seriously, she said. "There must be training of the police on how to deal with cases of public violence against women ... as a way of instilling confidence in the victims," said Chinzele. Gama, the hairdresser in Bulawayo, agreed, saying that she and other women she knows have learned to live with being groped on the bus. Because to go to the police, she said, is to risk being ridiculed for reporting a "petty crime with no known perpetrator". "It's difficult as it is to report rape," she said. "Imagine trying to report being fondled by a hand you did not see." —Reuters



People dine in the Lasova restaurant soup kitchen in Tel Aviv on Sept 8 2019. —AFP

two or three children then it is problematic," he said. "The cost of living is high, particularly housing. On the other hand health-care, education and transportation are less expensive than in other advanced economies."

In 2011, tens of thousands of Israelis took to the streets to protest the high cost of living, pushing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to announce new housing plans. Ahead of Israel's Sept 17 elections, the social issue seems to be off the radar, eclipsed by debates over security, religion and state, and Netanyahu's legal woes. In its latest report, the OECD warns of the "growing share" of "working poor" in Israel.

After his meal at Lasova, Alexander, a 45-year-old temporary worker, returns to the street with a full belly and a shekel less. "I still have four shekels on me. It's really hard," he said. "Once I pay my rent I have nothing left. It's the same for friends of mine who earn 4,000-5,000 shekels a month." And the elections? "It's a battle between guys to see who's strongest." —AFP

## Business

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FRANKFURT AM: The X6 Vantablack car by German carmaker BMW is displayed during the International Auto Show (IAA), in Frankfurt am Main, yesterday. — AFP

# Trump wants US rate 'down to zero or less'

## Fed expected to cut interest rates in September

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump wants US "interest rates down to ZERO, or less," he tweeted yesterday amid widespread expectations that the Federal Reserve will cut rates later this month. "We should then start to refinance our debt. Interest cost could be brought way down, while at the same time substantially lengthening the term," he added.

"It is only the naïveté of Jay Powell and the Federal Reserve that doesn't allow us to do what other countries are already doing. A once in a lifetime opportunity that we are missing because of 'Boneheads,'" Trump said, in perhaps his most insulting comment to date about the US central bank.

As it becomes increasingly apparent that the US economy has slowed in 2019, in large part because of concerns about Trump's trade war with China, Trump has publicly

berated Fed Chair Jerome Powell and the independent Fed for failing to loosen monetary policy fast enough.

The "Federal Reserve should get our interest rates down to ZERO, or less," Trump said. Investors overwhelmingly expect the Fed to deliver a 25-basis-point rate cut next week. But cutting to zero would be an extreme move reserved only for a severe economic crisis.

After raising the benchmark lending rate four times last year, to a range of 2.0-2.25 percent, the central bank cut in July for the first time in more than a decade, partly as insurance against the impact of trade uncertainties on the economy. Powell has vowed to act to ensure that American economic expansion continues but warned the central bank has no "rulebook" for dealing with trade conflict.

Trump selected Powell to take over Fed leadership but has heaped constant criticism on him for his handling of

policy, even speculating about whether he may be a bigger "enemy" than Beijing.

With many of the world's central banks cutting rates amid signs of flagging economic growth, Trump says the Fed is putting the United States at a disadvantage.

### 'Great currency'

He also has complained about the Fed's efforts to reduce its massive holdings of securities, that were built up during the 2008 global financial crisis after rates were cut to zero in an attempt to shore up the ravaged economy. "We have the great currency, power, and balance sheet," he tweeted.

While the Fed is not expecting a recession, trade frictions—as well as slower global growth and persistently low inflation—are among the "significant risks" that policy mak-

ers are watching, the Fed chair said during a conversation at the University of Zurich on Friday. The US economic landscape has shifted this year, as business investment has weakened noticeably, manufacturing has fallen into decline and job creation has slowed. And with other world economies slowing, the US dollar has strengthened as investors find a safe haven in purchases of US assets like government debt. The stronger dollar tends to make US exports more expensive.

The Fed chair noted, however, that unemployment had remained near historic lows for about 18 months while wages were rising, fueling consumer spending. Powell, whom Trump promoted to Fed chairman last year, has reiterated that he and his Fed colleagues ignore such comments when they set monetary policy. —AFP

## NBK to sponsor int'l banking conference: 'Shaping the Future'

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) is sponsoring the International Banking Conference "Shaping the Future" organized by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) that will be held on September 23, 2019 at the Four Seasons Hotel in Kuwait City. The prestigious event will welcome an audience of top-key policymakers, senior banking industry executives, banking experts and FinTech entrepreneurs from across the globe.

Shaikha Khalid Al-Bahar, Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer of National Bank of Kuwait will participate in one of the panel discussions focused on the key trends affecting the banking sector and the needs for the industry to evolve in order to keep pace with the future. Discussions will also cover other topics including changes in the technological landscape and the increasing competition from FinTech companies, as well as addressing traditional banks' need in order to face the rising FinTech evolution and to remain at the heart of the financial services industry in the future.

The discussion session will also include the challenges facing the modern banking industry, including the main threats to the global economy as well as the changes in customers' composition and age groups. Several key financial industry figures will participate in the panel discussions



Shaikha Khalid Al-Bahar

including H.E. Rasheed Al Maraj - Governor, CBB, Abdulaziz Alghurair, CEO - Mashreq Bank, Catherine Mann - Chief Economist - Citi and James Cliffe, Managing Director - Refinitiv.

"Shaping the Future" conference aims to provide insights on the best ways to develop the banking industry and how to meet the various challenges surrounding the industry, in addition to developing a collective vision for the banking industry's future, so that it can continue to grow and contribute positively to economic and social development. The conference will examine the economic and social challenges facing the banking industry and the opportunities and threats posed by technological innovation, laying out a vision for how the industry can thrive and better support sustainable economic development.

Through four focused panel discussions and keynote presentations, the conference will provide a detailed, nuanced framework of what the future will hold for the global banking sector as we head into the 2020s. It will also discuss the importance on how banks should respond to the ongoing transformational changes, especially as millennials, who are fast becoming the dominant consumer group, see little distinction between longstanding banks and their digital-only rivals. This is blurring the lines between financial services and other industries and posing challenges to regulators who must strike a balance between nurturing innovation and mitigating risk.

Moreover, the conference will also discuss the prospects of global economic growth and the available tools and the threats posed on growth opportunities, including the ongoing political uncertainties, trade tensions and the volatility of commodity and currency markets. The conference will also seek to answer how the banking sector can prosper, delivering returns to shareholders while also supporting sustainable economic development at a time of rapid change within the industry itself.

## Banks can add independent members to their boards: Hashel

KUWAIT: The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) has amended governance regulations for Kuwaiti banks, allowing them to add independent members to their boards of directors and subcommittees, said Central Bank Governor Dr Mohammed Yousef Al-Hashel yesterday. Hashel said adding independent members to banks' board of directors will enhance board members' independence as a basic principle of sound governance practices.

Dr Hashel also said the new regulations will define independent board members and the conditions of such independence in order to enable them to take impartial and objective decisions for the bank's best interest, enhance trust in the bank and strengthen its financial stability.

In addition, Dr Hashel explained that the new amendment stipulates that independent members should be a minimum of four and a maximum of half of the board members, as per the companies law. "The amendments also allow the minimum number of independent members to be two from June 30, 2020, then four from June 30, 2022, to avoid unexpected demand for independent members and allow gradual implementation of the decision," he said. Dr Hashel added that the new regulation also emphasizes governance in risk management, and that the new regulations - accessible on CBK's website at: [www.cbk.gov.kw](http://www.cbk.gov.kw) - will take effect on June 30, 2020.



Dr. Mohammad Al-Hashel



## Business

# NBK receives 3 awards from Global Finance at GFM Awards in Dubai

## Bank wins 'Most Innovative Digital Bank' award for real time payment tracker

**KUWAIT:** National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) was awarded "Best Consumer Digital Bank", the "Best in Mobile Banking" in Kuwait and the Most Innovative Digital Bank in Real Time End-To-End Payment Tracking on Customer Payment worldwide by Global Finance Magazine for 2019.

In an award ceremony held in Dubai, NBK received its awards and was recognized in the presence of NBK top executives including Dimitrios Kokosioulis Deputy Chief Executive Officer - IT & Operations Group, National Bank of Kuwait, Mohammed Al-Kharafi, General Manager - Group Head of Operations at NBK and Dhari Al-Quraishi, Deputy General Manager, IT & Operations Group.

Global Finance, headquartered in New York, was founded in 1987 and is one of the leading publications specialized in economic research and analysis. The magazine has a circulation of over 50,000 and readers in 188 countries. Winning banks were chosen among entries evaluated by a world-class panel of judges consisting of financial and technology sector leaders and under the supervision of Infosys, the global leader in consulting, technology and digital transformation, in collaboration with the magazine's staff. Global Finance Magazine uses a variety of subjective and objective criteria for choosing the winners, including: the strength of strategy for attracting and servicing digital customers, success in getting clients to use digital offerings, growth in numbers of digital customers, breadth of product offerings, evidence of tangible benefits gained from digital initiatives, and web/mobile site design and functionality.

Commenting on receiving those prestigious awards, Dimitrios Kokosioulis, Deputy Chief Executive Officer - IT & Operations Group said: "NBK always strives to maintain its leading position as a digital banking pioneer through

continuously offering new and innovative digital services and introducing digital transformation standards in traditional bank branches".

"NBK Mobile Banking and NBK Online Banking are among the key services offered by the Bank as it caters to the young population in Kuwait, with over 63 under the age of 30. Moreover, Kuwait has one of the highest internet and mobile penetration levels in the world." He added.

Kokosioulis highlighted that digital transformation is a main pillar of Consumer Banking Group's strategy that supports NBK Group's main objective by fulfilling customers' needs and requirements. In 2018, NBK achieved strong growth in mobile transactions, which increased by 40 Y-o-Y, thus confirming the success of its efforts aimed at encouraging customers to use digital banking channels.

NBK Mobile Banking is a safe and easy channel to manage accounts from anywhere and at any time. Customers can conveniently open a new account, view transactions made on accounts and credit cards, check their NBK Miles Points and NBK Rewards Program Points, pay outstanding credit cards balance, pay bills online, find the nearest branch, ATM or CDM in Kuwait, as well as submit an account statement request and order check-books, in addition to a wide array of services. NBK Mobile Banking is constantly evolving by adding new and innovative services and improving existing services. Some of the newest features include managing banking cards while traveling, increasing the monthly transfer limits and updating customers' contact information, making NBK Mobile Banking the greatest companion while travelling.

For the second consecutive year, NBK was named the "Best Digital Bank" and "Best Mobile Bank in Kuwait" for 2019 by Global Finance magazine.



## Amazon bets big on India with mega-office

**HYDERABAD:** With 49 elevators moving a floor per second and zumba classes for its more than 15,000 employees, Amazon's new Indian headquarters, its biggest building globally, matches its ambitions in a vast but challenging market. The US retail giant launched its first site in the South Asian nation of 1.3 billion people in 2013 and is locked in a fierce battle with Walmart, which bought a 77-percent share in local e-commerce behemoth Flipkart for \$16 billion last year.

"For Amazon, India is a very important geography," the firm's human resources director for India and the Middle East, Deepti Varma, said at the gleaming new 86-metre (282-feet) tall office building in the southern tech hub of Hyderabad.

While the prospects of success in the vast nation are tantalizing, the risks are also high, with Amazon and Flipkart incurring big losses as they expand and attempt to tap into new markets in Asia's third-largest economy.

Both firms will also face fierce competi-



HYDERABAD: Amazon's new Indian headquarters in Hyderabad. — AFP

tion from Indian conglomerate Reliance Industries-helmed by Asia's richest man, Mukesh Ambani-which is preparing to go up against the two US companies with its own e-commerce platform. Bureaucratic hurdles present further challenges.

New e-commerce rules that came into

force in February banned companies like Amazon from selling products from firms in which they have a stake. They are also forbidden from entering into exclusive deals with sellers. The regulations were brought in after brick-and-mortar retailers complained the e-tailers were unfairly selling

products at discount prices. "Going forward, the challenges are more around regulation and how to navigate the policy and regulatory environment," Ankur Bisen of Delhi-based consulting firm Technopak said. "We have seen how some of the policy announcements have got them off-guard." Amazon has already earmarked \$5 billion in investment funds for India, where one in three people use the internet—a figure forecast to swell by 300 million by 2020 mainly due to growing smartphone use.

India's e-commerce sales are expected to triple between now and 2022, when they are likely to pass the \$100 billion mark, according to recent research by industry body NASSCOM and PricewaterhouseCoopers. Walmart, the world's biggest retailer, said in May after reporting its first-quarter earnings that despite losses at Flipkart, "we continue to believe in a very sound long-term investment in a compelling market".

India is also a major source of employment for Amazon's global operations with some 62,000 full-time staff and 155,000 contract employees. Bisen said the Hyderabad campus "is a signal to the government that we are increasing our base in India and we are making sure there is a lot of India that is built into Amazon's global story". —AFP

## US producer prices rise; Fed rate cut still expected

**WASHINGTON:** US producer prices unexpectedly rose in August and underlying producer inflation rebounded, but the data yesterday did not change financial market expectations that the Federal Reserve will cut interest rates again next week to support a slowing economy.

Fed Chair Jerome Powell reiterated last week that the US central bank would continue to act "as appropriate" to keep the longest economic expansion in history on track. The Fed lowered borrowing costs in July for the first time since 2008. The Labor Department said its producer price index for final demand edged up 0.1 last month as a jump in the cost of services offset the largest drop in the price of goods in seven months. The PPI gained 0.2 in July. In the 12 months through August, the PPI advanced 1.8 after increasing 1.7 in July. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast the PPI would be unchanged in August and rise 1.7 on a year-on-year basis.

Excluding the volatile food, energy and trade services components, producer prices jumped 0.4 last month after dipping 0.1 in July, the first decline since October 2015. The so-called core PPI climbed 1.9 in the 12 months through August after increasing 1.7 in July. The Fed, which has a 2 annual inflation target, tracks the core personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index for monetary policy. The core PCE price index rose 1.6 on a year-on-year basis in July and has undershot its target this year.

US Treasury yields rose and US stock index futures pared gains slightly after the release of the PPI data. The dollar was trading higher against a basket of currencies.

### Rate cut in the bag

Financial markets have fully priced in a rate cut at the Fed's Sept. 17-18 policy meeting against the backdrop of simmering trade tensions between the United States and China that have soured business confidence and tipped both US and global manufacturing into recession. US tariffs on Chinese goods were this month broadened to include an array of consumer goods. There are fears the manufacturing downturn could spill over into the broader economy and derail the economic expansion now in its 11th year. The economy is being supported by robust consumer spending via a strong labor market.

In August, wholesale energy prices fell 2.5 after rebounding 2.3 in the prior month. They were weighed down by a 6.6 drop in gasoline prices, the most since January, which followed a 5.2 percent jump in July. Goods prices declined 0.5 last month, also the largest drop since January, after rising 0.4 in July.

Energy prices accounted for more than 80 of the drop in the cost of goods in August. Wholesale food prices fell 0.6 in August after gaining 0.2 in the prior month. Core goods prices were unchanged last month. They edged up 0.1 in July.

The cost of services increased 0.3 after decreasing 0.1 in July. Services were boosted by a 6.4 surge in the cost of guestroom accommodation such as hotels and motels, the largest gain since April 2009. The cost of healthcare services rose 0.2 last month after edging up 0.1 in July. Hospital inpatient care prices increased 0.4 and the cost of doctor visits shot up 0.5, reversing July's 0.5 decrease. But the cost of hospital outpatient care dipped 0.1.

Portfolio management fees increased 0.5 after rebounding 0.8 in July. Those fees and healthcare costs feed into the core PCE price index. — Reuters

## Europe's carmakers tell governments they must help sell electric cars

**FRANKFURT:** Europe's carmakers are telling governments they must help build electric car charging points and provide consumer subsidies to boost sales of battery-powered vehicles and assist the industry in meeting stringent new emissions rules.

German carmakers are accelerating plans to launch electric vehicles, under pressure from a European Union mandate to deliver a 37.5 cut in carbon dioxide

emissions between 2021 and 2030, on top of a 40 cut in emissions between 2007 and 2021. Industry executives warned at this week's Frankfurt auto show that the EU rules could be disastrous for profits and jobs because mainstream customers were not buying electric vehicles. Instead, consumers are opting for larger sport utility vehicles.

"Our industry is eager to move as fast as possible towards zero-emission mobility. But this transition is a shared responsibility," said PSA Group Chief Executive Carlos Tavares, who is also president of European auto industry association ACEA. "It requires a 360 degrees approach."

"Governments across the EU need to match the increasing pace at which we are launching these cars by dramatically stepping up investments in infrastructure. Moreover, they also have to put in place sustainable purchase incentives that are consistent across the EU," Tavares said. — Reuters



## S Africa tech giant Naspers' EU spinoff in stunning debut

**THE HAGUE:** South African media titan Naspers yesterday effectively created Europe's largest consumer tech company, called Prosus, with a stunning Amsterdam stock debut driven by interest in its stake in China's Tencent. Prosus' value instantly soared to around 123 billion euros (\$136 billion) according to the Bloomberg news agency, making the group the largest to trade on the Amsterdam stock exchange after Shell and Unilever.

The subsidiary groups all of Naspers' internet investments outside of its home market, with investors in particular interested in its 32 percent stake in Shenzhen-based internet giant Tencent. "The listing of Prosus is an exciting step forward for the group, giving global technology investors direct access to our unique and attractive portfolio of international consumer internet businesses," Bob van Dijk, Prosus and Naspers chief executive, said in a statement.

Prosus shares jumped by 29 percent above their referenced price of 58.70 euros shortly after trading opened, before slowing slightly by midmorning to go up 27 percent at 74.41 euros in Amsterdam.

The group also has a secondary listing in Johannesburg. Naspers retains a 73 percent stake in Prosus, it said. Founded in 1915 as Die Nasionale Pers (The National Press), Naspers initially published newspapers in Afrikaans, the language spoken by the descendants of Dutch immigrants in South Africa.

The Cape Town-based conglomerate has since become a huge global multimedia and e-commerce investor with an appetite for emerging markets. — AFP



FRANKFURT: A replica of a Mercedes Benz 300 SL Gullwing Roadster all made of teak wood is displayed at the Frankfurt motor show IAA 2019, in Frankfurt am Main Germany, yesterday. Frankfurt's biennial International Auto Show (IAA) opens its doors to the public today, but major foreign carmakers are staying away while climate demonstrators march outside — forming a microcosm of the under-pressure industry's woes. — AFP

## Business

# Al Mulla Automobiles takes customers on a G-Class experience tour in Austria

Visit included a tour of MAGNA Steyr, an exhibition and a G-Class off-road test ride



**KUWAIT:** Stemming from Al Mulla Automobiles Co's commitment to continuously giving customers unique experiences, Al Mulla Automobiles Co, the sole authorized general distributor of Mercedes-Benz in Kuwait, invited a group of its customers to a one-of-a-kind tour of the Mercedes-Benz G-Class plant in Graz, Austria. The guests were given the G-Class Experience tour during an enthralling and engaging day field with memorable moments.

The guests received a warm welcome to the G-Class Experience tour by Mercedes-Benz representatives and given a presentation at the factory going through the itinerary of the day and all the relevant safety protocols. The presentation was followed by a guided tour of the MAGNA Steyr factory, which has been the manufacturing and assembly point for Mercedes-Benz G-Class since 1979, to explore the history of the hand-made vehicle and experience it from the manufacturing and assembly phase to the final stage of delivery.

The tour at MAGNA Steyr was followed by a detailed technical explanation of the G-Class and the intricate details that make it the exceptional vehicle that it is today and its developments throughout the years. The guest then were taken on a visit to the G-Class historical exhibition that showcased an array of vehicles and details related to the Mercedes-Benz G-Class.

The next step was to let the guests



experience the G-Class in its natural habitat in the rough terrain of the Schockl mountain for an off-road mountainside driving experience outside the city of Graz. The drive consisted of a variety of trails that climb up to 1350 meters, including some sections with steep inclines of 45 degrees. The G-Class proved to be at home in the unyielding terrain and gave the guests an opportunity to experience what Mercedes-Benz means with 'Schockl Approved.'

Michael Ruehle, General Manager of Mercedes-Benz Passenger Cars and Vans

at Al Mulla Automobiles stated: "We are delighted to present a group of our esteemed clients with this exclusive trip to take part in the Mercedes-Benz G-Class Experience in Graz, Austria. The G-Class Experience is a fantastic initiative by Daimler that gives guests an opportunity to experience the G-Class in its natural habitat in the rough mountainous terrains and experience its capabilities. On behalf of Al Mulla Automobiles we'd like to thank the organizers for providing our guests with this opportunity, and we look forward



to organizing many more bespoke experiences for our clients in the future."

The new G-Class builds on the origins of its strengths through the combination of unparalleled off road capabilities with a significantly improved on-road performance and a unique design. The G-Class stands out in terms of comfort and through its markedly improved efficiency. The off-road icon continues to dominate with its robust type frame, low gear ratio and the three differential locks. For improved progress in the roughest of terrains the

low-range gear increases torque and shortens gear shifts through optimized gear ratio. It combines extraordinary strengths and precise driving characteristics to form a unique experience. The new G-Class captivates on account of the newly developed independent wheel suspension at the front precise direct-steer system and an optional suspension with adaptive adjustable damping. Be it in city traffic, on country roads or motorways, the off-roader captivates on any ground with exceptional performance.

## Turkish Airlines lets you explore Europe, US and Canada for less

**KUWAIT:** Turkish Airlines is helping more customers to capitalize on its unrivaled global network with special discounted fares to destinations across Europe, the United States and Canada. Passengers flying out of Kuwait with the award-winning carrier can avail discounts on flights to selected cities across the airline's North American and European network.

Passengers can benefit from generous discounts on flights to Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, Montreal, New York, San Francisco, Toronto and Washington. As well as Amsterdam, Athens, Barcelona,



M Ilker Ayçi

Berlin, Brussels, Bucharest, Budapest, Copenhagen, Dublin, Dusseldorf, Frankfurt, Geneva, Hamburg, Lisbon, London, Madrid, Malaga, Manchester, Milan, Munich, Oslo, Paris, Prague, Rome, Sarajevo, Stockholm, Venice, Vienna and Zurich. Discounts also

apply to the airlines base city, Istanbul, as well as North African destinations Casablanca and Tunis.

The offer is valid for passengers booking a flight between 5th of September and 10th of October 2019, and is valid for a travel period of 6th September 2019 to 15th May 2020. Book your Economy ticket now and fly from Kuwait Airport for the incredible lowest fares:

- Kuwait Airport to Europe from KD 129
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Turkish Airlines, one of the fastest growing airlines in the world, has been providing excellent services to its passengers through its Business Class offering, its flagship new lounges in the Istanbul Airport and its strong reputation for amazing Turkish hospitality and convenience on all levels. There are currently three Turkish Airlines lounges available in the Istanbul Airport - the Turkish Airlines Business Lounge, Miles and Smiles Lounge and Domestic Lounge, with 2 more scheduled to be open before the end of the year.

## Test your teamwork at Gulf Bank's Al-Tijouri escape room at The Avenues

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank is introducing Al-Tijouri, an escape room competition in which teams must cooperate to solve puzzles in order to win a cash prize. The activation is scheduled to take place in Phase 3 of The Avenues on Sept. 12, 13, and 14 and will award one winning team per day with a KD 300 cash prize.

Al-Tijouri is a game in which a team of players must cooperate to discover clues and solve puzzles in an enclosed space in order to escape the site of the game. The goal is to work together with members of your team, using a combination of strategy and communication skills to win. Upon entering the Al-Tijouri escape room, contestants will have to solve a number of puzzles in order to escape, solving clues related to

various topics, including some Gulf Bank-related trivia.

The rules are simple: Participation is free and open to both Gulf Bank customers and non-customers. Each team should consist of 1 to 3 players, who will be given no more than five minutes to solve the escape room. The team that manages to solve the escape room in the least amount of time wins. The activity, which is scheduled to take place over three days, will award one winning team per day with a KD 300 cash prize.

The Al-Tijouri escape room will be located in Phase 3 of The Avenues. Timings for the activity are Thursday, Sept. 12 from 3 pm to 10 pm Friday Sept. 13 from 10 am to 10 pm, and Saturday Sept. 14 from 10 am to 10 pm.

## Argentina's \$15bn burn stems peso rout - for now

**BUENOS AIRES:** Argentina has burned through \$15 billion in foreign reserves over the last month to stabilize the peso, which crashed along with the country's bonds after a sharp electoral defeat for market-friendly president Mauricio Macri.

Central bank data showed reserves tumbled 22 since Macri was trounced in an Aug. 11 primary election by Peronist rival Alberto Fernandez. The shock result spooked investors, who worry especially about Fernandez's running-mate, ex-President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, recalling the interventionist policies she imposed during her two terms between 2007 and 2015.

The peso lost a quarter of its value against the dollar in August and the central bank burned up reserves to stem the decline. Macri ultimately imposed currency controls, and the peso has steadied over the last week. Last year, Argentina was already reeling with soaring inflation and a weak peso when it got a \$57 billion credit line from the International Monetary Fund to help avoid default on foreign debt. Now investors worry Latin America's No.3 economy could still run short of much-needed foreign reserves as it keeps defending the peso ahead of the Oct. 27 general election.

"It's already at a dangerous level," said Roger Horn, senior emerging market analyst at SMBC Nikko Securities America. "When they got the IMF facility the idea was that it would act partially as a buffer but they've been using it lately to defend the currency ... something which we all learned not do in the 1997-98 Asia Crisis."

Central bank reserves stand at \$51.3 billion, central bank data show, down from \$66.3 billion before the August primary. Private sector dollar deposits have fallen around a

quarter to \$24.2 billion from \$32.5 billion before the primary. "The outflow of deposits in dollars represents the main source of the fall in reserves in recent days," said Matias Roig from Argentine brokerage Portfolio Personal Inversions. Argentines still remember a 2001-02 crisis, when the government froze deposits and imposed caps on cash withdrawals from banks. In another crisis in 1989, bank deposits were confiscated in exchange for bonds.

Some bankers said outflows appeared to slow over the last week under capital controls that restricted the purchase and transfer of currencies overseas. "Last week the daily outflows of deposits in dollars were decreasing, registering on Sept. 4 an output of \$774 million; almost 30 less than the previous Friday," investment bank Puente wrote in a note. Private sector bank deposits in pesos also held stable at around 2.4 trillion pesos, central bank data showed. The interbank peso, which was flat on Tuesday, has lost 19.11 since the primary election and 32.73 so far this year, making it one of the world's worst-performing currencies. — Reuters

## Zambia CB opposes bid to remove debt oversight

**LUSAKA:** Zambia's central bank said yesterday it opposed government moves to remove lawmakers' oversight over acquiring more public debt. The government proposed constitutional changes in August to remove lawmakers' right to approve new government loans and the ratification of international treaties - triggering an outcry from rights and opposition groups.

The government has said the changes are needed to get loans and treaties through when parliament is in recess.

Opposition politicians have accused President Edgar Lungu of trying to crack down on dissent - a charge dismissed by the government. The proposed changes come as the government has increased public debt - drawing warnings from the International Monetary Fund.

"It is our considered view that National Assembly oversight is critical over these important public functions in a democratic dispensation like ours," the Bank of Zambia said in a written submission to parliament released yesterday. A parliamentary committee is receiving submissions on the proposed constitutional amendments before presenting a report to the full assembly for debate.

The government requires a two-thirds majority in parliament to pass the amendments. No date has been set for a vote. The Law Association of Zambia has also taken the matter to the constitutional court seeking to have the draft law withdrawn. — Reuters

What's On

# US Embassy, ISN to hold educational seminar and open house in Kuwait

The International Student Network (ISN) will return to Kuwait to host a free educational seminar and open house at the Symphony Style Hotel in Salmiya, Kuwait on September 16, from 5 to 9 pm in cooperation with the US Embassy. The US Embassy's Education Adviser will be present at the fair, along with officers from the Embassy's Consular and Foreign Commercial Services sections.

Additionally, 11 US colleges and universities will participate in the event to provide information about their schools and answer questions from students and parents about educational opportunities in the United States.

**Agenda:**  
5.15 pm to 6 pm - Information session on choosing a US university by US Embassy Education Adviser, followed by a presentation from a consular officer about student visas  
6 pm to 9 pm - Educational fair

**Participating universities:**  
University of North Florida  
University of Illinois at Chicago

Austin Peay State University  
West Texas A&M University  
Saint Francis University  
Drury University  
University of South Florida  
Snow College  
University of California, Davis  
University of the Pacific  
Fordham University



As part of the bank's ongoing efforts, Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) along with Kuwait Governorates sponsored the distribution of gifts and stationery to primary school students in Jahra Educational Zone. This sponsorship came on the occasion of the start of the new academic year, and was attended by the Governor of Jahra Nasser Falah Al-Hajraf where he distributed gifts and school supplies to students with the participation of Deputy General Manager - Corporate Communication Sector — Amani Al-Wara'a.

Recipes

## Chicago-Style Chicken Dogs

**Ingredients:**

- 2 pepperoncini peppers, thinly sliced, plus 1 Tbsp brine
- 1 tsp honey
- 1 tsp yellow mustard, plus more for serving
- 1 tsp poppy seeds
- 1/4 small sweet onion, thinly sliced
- 4 fully cooked chicken sausages
- 4 hot dog buns
- 2 small plum tomatoes, sliced into half-moons
- 4 dill pickle spears
- 1 small romaine heart, thinly sliced

**Directions:**

Heat grill to medium. In a bowl, whisk together pepperoncini brine, honey, and mustard; stir in poppy seeds. Add pepperoncini peppers and onion and toss to coat. Grill sausages, turning occasionally, until lightly charred and heated through, 10 to 12 minutes. If desired, grill buns. Stuff sausages into buns along with tomatoes and pickles. Toss poppy seeds and onions with romaine and spoon on top of sausages. Serve with remaining romaine mixture and extra mustard if desired.



## Parmesan tots with dipping sauce

**Ingredients:**

- 3 tbsp chili sauce
- 3 tbsp mayonnaise
- 1 tsp yellow mustard
- 1 tsp sweet pickles, chopped
- 1 bag frozen potato tots
- 1 1/2 tsp olive oil
- 1 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1/2 cup Parmesan, grated

**Directions:**

Combine chili sauce, mayonnaise, yellow mustard, and chopped sweet pickles. Toss potato tots, olive oil, garlic powder on a baking sheet; roast at temperature specified on package 25 minutes. Toss with Parmesan; roast 3 to 4 minutes. Serve with sauce.

## X-cite inaugurates its 28th Showroom at Manara Mall

Unceasingly pursuing its inspiring success journey recently crowned by a partnership with the leading City Centre Group, X-cite by Alghanim Electronics, Kuwait's largest electronic retailer, announced the inauguration of its brand-new 28th store at the group's latest branch opened in Manara Mall, Shuwaikh, now that X-cite showrooms are the exclusive electronics stores within City Centre's branches spread across Kuwait.

The newest addition falls under the company's ongoing plan to expand and grow, bringing its network of stores closer than ever to its customers all over Kuwait. X-cite's noteworthy step reinforces its leadership in the local market as well as its presence and excellence on the regional level, while allowing customers to enjoy a truly pleasurable shopping experience with easy access to state-of-the-art electronic and home devices.

Relentlessly seeking to satisfy its customers by providing them with the best deals and surprises, X-cite will be presenting visitors of its showrooms located at City Centre a gift voucher worth KD 10 on all items for every purchase worth of KD 100, this offer valid from September 12 until 14, turning their visit into a profitable one besides being exciting and pleasant as well.

On the other hand, X-cite constantly offers its customers a wide selection of the latest personal and entertainment devices,

further to home and kitchen appliances and electronics such as smartphones, tablets and much more all under one roof. X-cite's visitors will also get the chance to experience the products and interact with them in order to test and learn about their advantages in the most practical ways.

Through its customer-centric concept, X-cite offers customers competitive quality and prices to serve every segment, providing them with the highest level of service, engaging with them, and earning their trust through supporting services and offerings. X-cite also enables customers to shop from the comfort of their homes through its free mobile app and shopping website. X-cite has established itself as a leading brand in providing the latest products to customers as it continues to build strong relations with international brands in the electronics sector.

Continuously seeking to satisfy the needs of its customers, X-cite provides them with diverse services that enable customers to experience products and interact with them, and the service of buy online and pick the product in store, whether in their 28 showrooms or through the website, designed to make online shopping a fast and easy experience. X-cite also offers premium maintenance and purchase services at most of its major showrooms throughout Kuwait and other services such as free delivery and X-care packages.

## S African delegation visits Kuwait to enhance economic and commercial relations

The South African Department of Trade and Industry (dti) will lead a business delegation from the nine different provinces in South Africa to the State of Kuwait from 14-17 September 2019. The dti and the South African Embassy in the State of Kuwait have been collaborating to promote all the nine provinces of South Africa given the diverse range of products each province provides. The Sectors included are agro-processing, metal beneficiation, energy, marine, ICT, construction and engineering and pharmaceuticals and healthcare. The purpose of the visit is to further strengthen the trade relations between the two countries and to explore potential business opportunities between South African companies and their Kuwaiti counterparts.

The delegation's programme will include a Business Seminar at the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the morning of Monday, 16

September 2019. B2B meetings will be held at the Chamber following the Business Seminar. The delegation will also hold bilateral meetings with relevant business stakeholders including the Kuwait Union of Consumer Cooperative Society (KUCCS), and other business stakeholders relevant to the identified sectors.

In 2005, South Africa and Kuwait signed a Trade Agreement and an Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement which affirmed the two countries' commitment to build strong and mutually beneficial economic and commercial relations. Kuwait (and the Middle East), is an important trade and economic partner for South Africa. Kuwait is the sixth largest export destination for South Africa in the Middle East. The forthcoming visit follows on the footsteps of previous successful dti led business delegations in 2015, 2016 and 2018.



## Birthday wishes

Happy 13th birthday my daughter. You are so beautiful inside and out. It's been a joy to watch you shine and achieve so much that you've wanted. We love you! Love: Daddy, mommy, Aliya, Sean, family and friends.

# Scientists create embryos to save northern white rhinos

## Rhinos devastated by poaching for their horns

ROME: Conservationists have successfully created two northern white rhino embryos in a key step towards pulling the species back from the brink of extinction, scientists in Italy said yesterday. There are only two survivors in the world, and both are female and unable to carry calves. The last male, named Sudan, died at the Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya last year, making scientists the majestic animals' last chance.

Using eggs harvested from the females and frozen sperm from deceased males, a team in Cremona in Italy has been able to create two viable embryos, according to the BioRescue international consortium of scientists. Najin, 30, and daughter Fatu, 19, are the last of the subspecies of white rhino, and live under 24-hour armed guard. Neither is able to carry a calf. Fatu has degenerative lesions in her uterus and Najin has weak hind legs which could cause complications if she fell pregnant.

In August they underwent a highly risky procedure carried out by a team of international vets, which saw them anaesthetized for almost two hours, and their eggs extracted using techniques that have taken years of research and development. At the Italian biotech laboratory Avantea,

those eggs were then fertilized with sperm from males Suni and Saut-though only two of Fatu's eggs developed into viable embryos. They have now been stored in liquid nitrogen to be transferred into a surrogate mother in the near future.

**Major step forward**

"Five years ago, it seemed like the production of a northern white rhino embryo was an almost unachievable goal-and today we have them," said Jan Stejskal, communications director at the Dvur Kralove Zoo, where Najin and Fatu were born. The coming months would be dedicated to optimizing a technique to transfer the embryos into a surrogate rhino, he said. Richard Vigne, managing director of Ol Pejeta, hailed the "major step forward", but warned "we have a very long way to go".

"Global human behavior still needs to radically change if the lessons of the northern white rhinos are to be learned," he said. There are five rhino species remaining on earth, of which black and white rhinos are found in Africa. The northern white rhino is generally considered a subspecies of white rhino although some scientists believe it to be a sixth species. Rhinos have few predators in



NANYUKI, Kenya: In this file photo Najin, left, and Fatu, the only two remaining female northern white rhinos graze in their paddock at the Ol-Pejeta conservancy in Nanyuki, north of capital Nairobi. — AFP

the wild due to their size but have been devastated by poaching for their horns-used in traditional Chinese medicine. Modern rhinos have plodded the earth for 26 million years. As recently as the mid-19th century there were more than one million in Africa. —AFP

## Nine black rhinos relocated to Tanzania

NAIROBI: Nine black rhinos from South Africa have arrived in the Serengeti as part of efforts to repopulate the park with the critically endangered species, Tanzanian authorities said Tuesday. The animals came from Thaba Tholo, a game farm in South Africa, and arrived Tuesday morning, before being transported to the famous Serengeti, the ministry of natural resources said in a statement.

"We will do everything in our power to protect these animals," said deputy natural resources minister Constantine Kanyasu. Once plentiful across sub-Saharan Africa, black rhino suffered first from hunting by European settlers, and later a poaching epidemic which largely wiped them out with only 2,475 recorded in 1993, according to the World Wildlife Fund.

Now, conservation efforts have brought the population back up to around 5,000. In Tanzania, the population now stands at 167 rhino, the ministry said. — AFP

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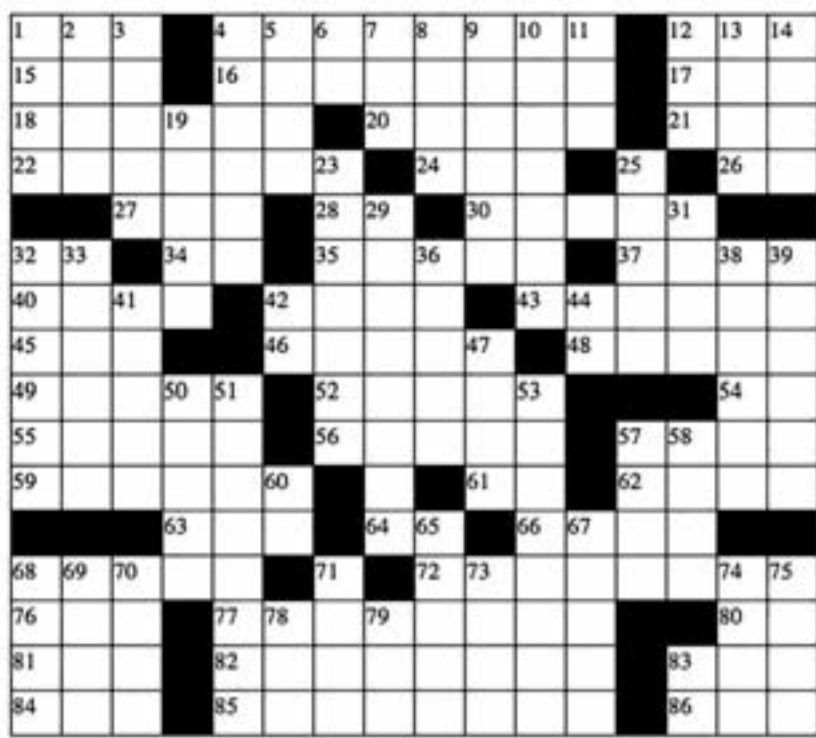
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Stars

CROSSWORD 2305



ACROSS

1. A master's degree in business.
4. A glancing rebound.
12. The compass point that is one point south of due east.
15. A former agency (from 1946 to 1974) that was responsible for research into atomic energy and its peaceful uses in the United States.
16. Too ripe.
17. (Scotland) A small loaf or roll of soft bread.
18. Usually elongate cluster of flowers along the main stem in which the flowers at the base open first.
20. Re-equip a factory or plant.
21. The compass point that is one point east (clockwise) of due north.
22. The molding or border above the base of a structure (a pedestal or podium or wall).
24. (informal) A witty amusing person who makes jokes.
26. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
27. American prizefighter who won the world heavyweight championship three times (born in 1942).
28. A metallic element having four allotropic forms.
30. A hidden storage space (for money or provisions or weapons).
32. A radioactive transuranic metallic element.
34. Being nine more than ninety.
35. Any of several short-billed Old World rails.
37. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
40. Informal terms for a meal.
43. King of the Huns.
45. Electronic equipment that provides visual images of varying electrical quantities.
46. Exactly vertical.
48. A Roman Catholic priest who acts for another higher-ranking clergyman.
49. Valuable fiber plant of East Indies now widespread in cultivation.
52. Having the leading position or higher score in a contest.
54. A hard gray lustrous metallic element that is highly corrosion-resistant.
55. A Hindu goddess who releases from sin or disease.
56. (combining form) Indicating radiation or radioactivity.
59. Best of its kind on record.
61. A heavy odorless colorless gas formed during respiration and by the decomposition of organic substances.
62. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
63. A unit of length of thread or yarn.
64. A highly unstable radioactive element (the heaviest of the halogen series).
66. Any competition.
68. Having a face or facing especially of a specified kind or number.
72. A small well holding writing ink into which a pen can be dipped.
76. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
77. The animal order including amoebas.
80. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
81. An ugly evil-looking old woman.
82. United States rock singer (1943-1971).
84. Free from liquid or moisture.
83. Before noon.
85. A river in northeastern Brazil that flows generally northward to the Atlantic Ocean.
86. Type genus of the Muridae.

DOWN

1. The 4th planet from the sun.
2. A man who is the lover of a girl or young woman.
3. The capital and largest city of Ghana with a deep-water port.
4. Relating to modern Greece or its inhabitants or its language n.
5. United States composer noted for his innovative use of polytonality (1874-1954).
6. A ductile gray metallic element of the lanthanide series.
7. Canadian hockey player (born 1948).
8. The man who man a ship or aircraft.
9. Seizure of a vehicle in transit either to rob it or divert it to an alternate destination.
10. Small creeping evergreen shrubs.
11. Two-year-old sheep.
12. The compass point that is one point north of due east.
13. A small cake leavened with yeast.
14. A detailed description of design criteria for a piece of work.
19. The principal evil jinni in Islamic mythology.
23. Large snake mackerel with rings like spectacles around its eyes.
25. A long loincloth worn by Hindu men.
29. Loud confused noise from many sources.
31. Surpassing the ordinary especially in size or scale.
33. A ceremonial procession including people marching.
36. (used of persons or the military) Characterized by having or bearing arms.
38. Any of various widely distributed beetles.
39. A bottle with a stopper.
41. (physiology) Of or relating to or producing normal tone or tonus in muscles or tissue.
42. A person forced to flee from home or country.
44. Broadcasting visual images of stationary or moving objects.
47. The Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the Dali region of Yunnan.
50. Eaten as mush or as a thin gruel.
51. A mixture of gases (mostly methane) that form in coal mines and become explosive when mixed with air.
53. A knob used to release the catch when opening a door (often called 'doorhandle' in Great Britain).
57. A piece of information about circumstances that exist or events that have occurred.
58. The United Nations agency concerned with atomic energy.
60. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
65. The inner and thicker of the two bones of the human leg between the knee and ankle.
67. (Hindu) A manner of sitting (as in the practice of Yoga).
69. Any culture medium that uses agar as the gelling agent.
70. Showing self-interest and shrewdness in dealing with others.
71. A unit of pressure equal to 0.001316 atmosphere.
73. Not final or absolute.
74. (Babylonian) God of wisdom and agriculture and patron of scribes and schools.
75. A software system that facilitates the creation and maintenance and use of an electronic database.
78. Extinct flightless bird of New Zealand.
79. Bulky grayish-brown eagle with a short wedge-shaped white tail.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

As an early riser, you have probably already run several miles before your workday begins. More than likely, others are just getting up by the time you have completed a half day of work. This is beneficial to you and helps you to greet the day with a feeling of success. If you are taking a test or an exam or studying, you may have to have a long talk with yourself in order to stay in your chair and keep at it. The same goes for calculating or shuffling papers. Some of your work could be boring and an extra concerted effort may be needed all during this day. Take a break at least twice during the day—if possible, enjoy a bit of fresh air and body movement.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You could sing positive, upbeat songs—you do your best to eliminate any negative and are a good mentor to others. You could work as a coordinator of events, a social worker or a customer relations manager. You have a boundless amount of optimism with irrepresible energy. Be as self-confident and assertive as you like, because you are resolved to achieve. You are a very attractive and inspiring person—luck and determination is on your side. Any dispute you may have will quickly come to a satisfying end. You move through most problems quickly. A totally new diet or exercise program can improve your life and you are a good influence to others in this way.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Your self-confidence is high and you feel the nudge to achieve. Outer circumstances are favorable and it should be easy for you to push forward in projects and in all aspects of your life. Things may seem almost magical in the way they work to your favor. This is a great time to get things accomplished. You find that you are able to bring more imagination to bear on your goals and ambitions. You appreciate your particular situation and enjoy support from those around you. This afternoon is a good time for surrounding yourself with friends and for having a good time. If you are celebrating the seasonal activities, now is a good time to order the food or reserve your hotel room. Make plans to enjoy some time with the people you love.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Your self-confidence is strong and you feel the nudge from somewhere that says it is time for you to make yourself known in the workplace. This is the day you speak up and make yourself known. This afternoon you may learn new ways to relieve stress. You might be embarrassed about doing yoga and relaxation exercises, but you will enjoy the results. This may mean you sign up to be in a group to learn these techniques. This evening, a friend in need or something you believe in that will suffer from a lack of your support is the issue that comes to your attention. You may be called on to lend a hand—start thinking of ways in which you can be helpful—do not wait until the last minute to solve problems.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

This is a very good day for job-related events. You could represent or speak for your company or communicate about your skills. Things are happening and your career or path depends on your own ambition and drive, which are strong now. Your common sense is good and you move in the right direction for your professional advancement. Taking action now is an important move. You can improve your financial situation and you think about ways in which to do so at this time. Your optimistic outlook helps you to teach other people things you have learned through your own life experiences. This afternoon you think about ways to improve your image, appearance or health. You may end a destructive relationship or become very lucky in love this evening.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You are riding a high now in terms of taking advantage of the cycles in your life. This time may be a high-water mark; however, this is also a time during which you should begin to consolidate and tie down the advances you have made recently. It may be best to begin to dig in and strengthen your current position rather than to expand too quickly. An award may come to you through your work. This afternoon you will find your mind turning away from the external or the material, to become more concerned with spiritual ideas. All of this will become clear soon. You tend towards mental pursuits and admire intelligence.



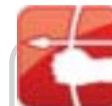
Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your energies run effectively toward making yourself felt in the material, tangible outer world. You are an action person who gains the attention of others and seems to get things moving. The circumstances of your life suggest extroversion. Self-discipline is an important issue in your life now as that is what stabilizes your work, as well as your relationships. Today you may be looking for a new vehicle. A better means of transportation has been needed for some time and now is a good time to look around and make some decisions. There are opportunities to improve your career through travel, writing or studying some new technique. A family meeting keeps you on your toes. You are encouraged to express yourself this evening.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

At this time, the key to your career involves attending to nagging details. You could talk someone out of a lawsuit this morning. You will be saving yourself and perhaps someone else from much frustration, and saving money and time. Your attitude and talents move in the direction of self-expression along with your particular ideas and thoughts. You could be leading a group discussion today and it may deal with some sort of academic crusades. You will be able to sway others to your way of thinking. Science, philosophy and religion are likely to seem as if they hold the ultimate answers. True wisdom lies in discovering that there are no ultimate answers, only good questions.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Skim a little off the top of your paycheck for a rainy day. Some earnings may slip too easily through your fingers. How about a budget at least give it a consideration. Good health, good marriage, good friends and a good job or career are often more important than money. Gifts do not have to be extravagant—sometimes they can be just as simple as a picture in a frame. People who are good for you enter your life this afternoon. Circumstances arise that give you the freedom and the opportunity to do something you have never done before. This may mean an opportunity to enjoy a hot air balloon ride or perhaps to ask that special someone for a date.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

There are makings for a bright day. You should be able to get your ideas across with ease. Your communication skills are at a high-water mark. You seem to gravitate to those things which last and hold true in your life just now. You could teach better business techniques to executives as well as those that choose to stay at home to work or run a family. Consider teaching your techniques at a junior college this next year. Matters of law, religion and philosophy are where you want more education. This afternoon, you may find a long list of chores to do. You make a good impression on family members by saving energy and accomplishing so many chores so quickly.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

At heart, you have a deep sense of responsibility and purpose. Others can see your seriousness and they respect your status in the workplace. Someone may need your advice today regarding a problem at work. You seem to enjoy helping others. You have the interest and the energy to achieve long-term personal and professional goals and will many times combine your goals into one. You may decide to own a business instead of managing a business at this time. Your self-confidence is high. You feel the warm urges of ambition and you influence others in positive ways.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Many of you may be in the beginning of a start-up business from your home. You are definitely moving in the right direction, but if you are asking for a loan, be sure to ask for more than you think you need so you will have a payback cushion, so to speak. Whether you are in sales or public relations, you may be wondering if the people you come into contact with today are okay. Everyone seems to be in such a hurry... Interruptions, difficult communications, etc. More than one person will seek your advice about sensitive matters this afternoon so, weather permitting, move on outside for a bit of exercise, if possible. You can demonstrate great understanding of and sensitivity to the needs of others—this afternoon and evening belong especially to you—relax.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Easter

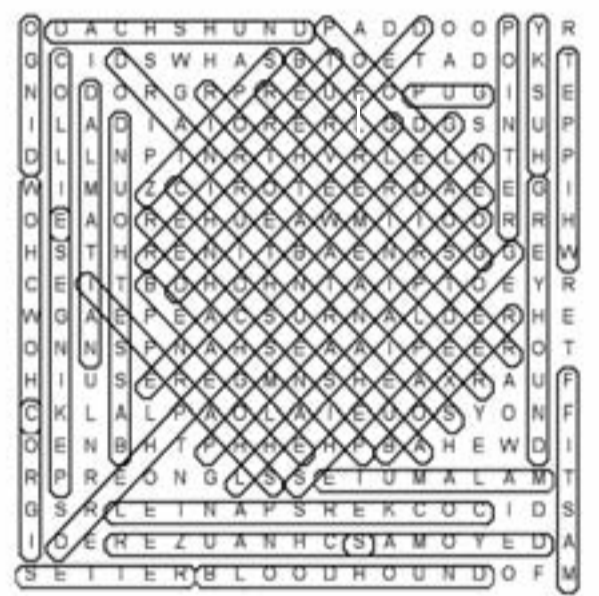
Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 34 letters spell a secret message.



- |                     |                  |                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| ASH WEDNESDAY       | DEATH DISCIPLES  | JESUS LAST SUPPER   | PENITENCE PRAYER |
| BREAD BUNNY         | EGG HUNT EGGS    | LENT MARY           | RESURRECTION     |
| CALVARY CELEBRATION | EUCHARIST FAMILY | MASS MEAL           | ROAST SACRAMENT  |
| CHOCOLATE CHRIST    | FASTING FESTIVAL | NEW TESTAMENT PALMS | SATURDAY SUNDAY  |
| CHURCH CROSS        | FRIDAY HOLIDAY   | PARADE PASSOVER     | THURSDAY TOMB    |
| CRUCIFIXION CUSTOM  | HOLY WEEK        | PENANCE             | TRADITION VIGIL  |

Yesterday's Solution

Dogs



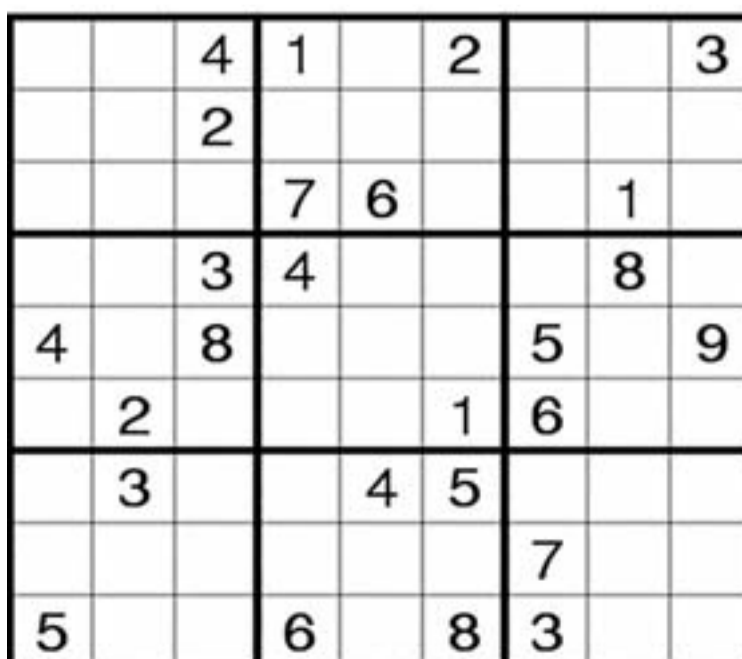
- |                       |                       |                      |               |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| BASSET HOUND          | DAKSHUND              | MASTIFF              | SAHUYED       |
| BEAGLE BLOODHOUND     | DALMATIAN DEERHOUND   | PEKINGESE PINSCHER   | SCHNAUZER     |
| BOXER BULLDOG         | DINGO GERMAN SHEPHERD | POINTER POMERANIAN   | SETTER        |
| CHIHUAHUA CHOW CHOW   | GREAT DANE GREYHOUND  | POODLE PUG           | SHAR PEI      |
| COCKER SPANIEL COLLIE | HUSKY LHASA APSSO     | RETRIEVER ROTTWEILER | SHEEPDOG      |
| CORGI                 | MALAMUTE              | SAINT BERNARD        | SPIZT TERRIER |
|                       |                       |                      | WHIPPET       |

The hidden sentence is: A DOOR IS WHAT A DOG IS PERPETUALLY ON THE WRONG SIDE OF.

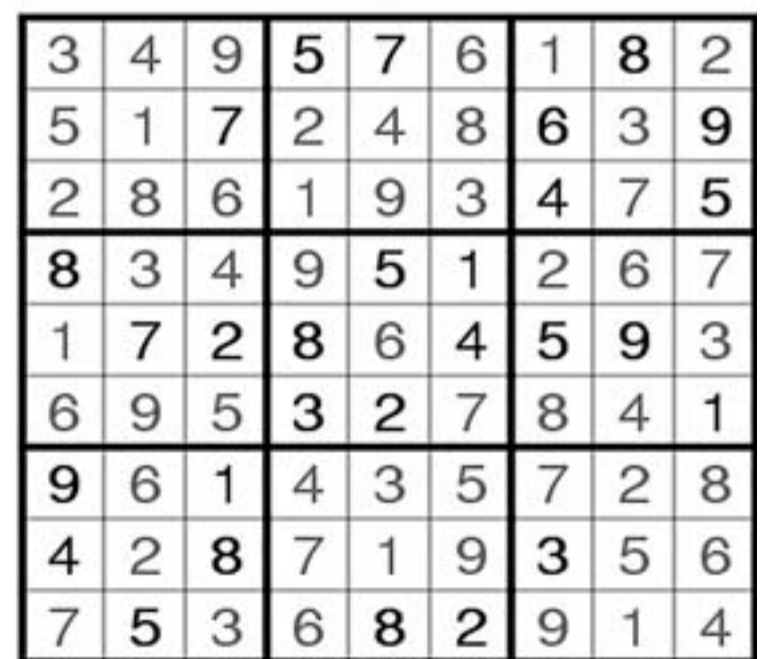
Yesterday's Solution



Daily Sudoku



Yesterday's Solution



# Lifestyle

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2019



A couple sit on the terrace of a cafe in Istanbul as seagulls fly over them on September 10, 2019.— AFP

Indonesian storytellers spread 'mighty girls' message to fight male dominance

From a schoolgirl who fights plastic pollution to real-life heroines, 800 Indonesian women are telling stories to change beliefs about girls, the project's organizer said on Tuesday.

The Southeast Asian country has one of the world's highest numbers of child brides, with one in four girls wed before the age of 18, United Nations' figures show, as old-fashioned social attitudes persist despite recent economic advances. From next month, the women will read a series of illustrated e-books to local boys and girls in a bid to smash stereotypes and male dominance in the world's most populous Muslim country.

"It will open their eyes to all the possibilities they can have as girls," said Morgan Belveal from the US-based charity The Asia Foundation, which runs the project as part of its free, digital library for children in local languages. "It starts a conversation in society that it is no longer acceptable that women are restricted to traditional roles," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation by phone.

A 2017 government survey found one-third of Indonesian women have faced physical or sexual violence, with cases most common among those with higher education and in urban areas. The books were written in collaboration with Asian writers and illustrators as part of an Asia-wide collection known as the "Mighty Girls", which features fictional and real-life stories, such as that of Indonesia's first female journalist.—Reuters



The cover of Indonesian language book Luh Ayu Manik Mas which features a superheroine who campaigns to save the environment. — Photo by The Asia Foundation

## PUPPET REBORN: INDONESIA PULLS STRINGS TO REVIVE NEAR-DEAD ART FORM

It's a warm night in Indonesia and the air is filled with excitement as villagers watch a puppet show accompanied by traditional music. To the rhythmic beat of cymbals, drums and a bamboo harmonica, the hand-held puppets wearing brightly coloured batik headdresses and sarongs fight, and one gets flung off the stage. This vivid performance is the brainchild of Drajat Iskandar, who has been lending a hand to revive the near-extinct art of "wayang bambu," or bamboo puppetry. Once enjoyed by generations of Sundanese, Indonesia's second most-populous ethnic group who originate from the central island of Java, the delicate art has almost disappeared from modern stages.

Iskandar, 47, has updated his bamboo puppets by making them three-dimensional, unlike conventional two-dimensional ones. This is done by weaving bamboo strips together to form an intricate head and torso fixed over two perpendicular bamboo sticks. The puppet is then dressed in a headdress and sarong. The narratives Iskandar's puppet troupe perform are also updated to reflect modern society, instead of the usual stories from Hindu epics such as the Ramayana and Mahabharata.

"I try to portray local stories and folklore from our community with bamboo puppets," Iskandar said. "The stories

we perform are also inspired by current issues, like brawls between students, drug problems, sexual freedom, and politics." Iskandar learned the art of "wayang bambu" from his father, who was also a puppeteer. A former artist, he started developing his own "wayang bambu" style of performance nearly two decades ago.

Now he has a full puppet troupe, along with an orchestra of twelve musicians that accompany each show, and has been training pupils to preserve the art form. Iskandar and his pupils regularly visit a bamboo grove near his home to gather materials to assemble new puppets and make the minor repairs needed after the sometimes frenetic shows.

He says bookings for his troupe's performances have steadily increased over the years. They're also a hit since they perform in the Sundanese language. "Members of the community, from children to the elderly, can understand and enjoy this new form of Sundanese culture, and the storyline is also very interesting," said Pupung Syaiful Rohman, a resident of Ciapus village, in West Java province, where the recent performance was staged. — Reuters



Bamboo puppets are pictured during a training session in Bogor, West Java province, Indonesia.



To the rhythmic beat of cymbals, drums and a bamboo harmonica, the hand-held puppets wearing brightly coloured batik headdresses and sarongs fight, and one gets flung off the stage.



Pupil of Drajat Iskandar Jamaludin Syam makes a puppets in Bogor, West Java province, Indonesia.



Puppeteer Drajat Iskandar holds bamboo puppets during a training session at his house in Bogor, West Java province, Indonesia. — Reuters photos



Puppeteer Drajat Iskandar performing puppets show at his house in Bogor, West Java province, Indonesia.



Designer Tommy Hilfiger and actress Zendaya walk the runway at the Tommy Hilfiger TommyNow fall runway show at the Apollo Theater in New York City. — AFP photos



Haitian-American designer Kerby Jean-Raymond waves after the Pyer Moss show at the Kings Theatre during the New York Fashion Week.

# Pyer Moss rocks NY Fashion Week with black music inspired collection

Pyer Moss creator Kerby Jean-Raymond rocked New York Fashion Week with his latest collection dedicated to African-American heritage, spurred on by a musical tribute to "original soul sister" Rosetta Tharpe. The American-Haitian designer had a packed-out audience of 3,000 fashionistas in a trance at the Kings Theater in Brooklyn as he concluded his trilogy of collections referencing black culture and history. More than 60 singers and an electric guitarist, saxophonist and pianist performed hits by black artists ranging from soul to rap as the Pyer Moss label returned to the runway after skipping Fashion Week in February.

The late Sunday show was dedicated to singer Tharpe who lived from 1915 to 1973 and whose mixture of blues and gospel is credited with influencing the early rock-and-roll musicians. All of the models were black or multiracial, in a celebration of African-American glamour that was in tune with Jean-Raymond's hugely successful two New York catwalk shows of last year.

The women wore brightly colored, sculpted silks while strong silhouettes, including big shoulders and flared trousers, were a key fea-

ture of the menswear. Jean-Raymond rose to fame at New York Fashion Week in late 2015 when Pyer Moss's spring 2016 collection took inspiration from the Black Lives Matter movement, which campaigns against racism and violence towards black people, including police brutality. He is considered one of the best fashion designers of his generation and his designs regularly feature references to African-American culture and the community's role in the history of the United States.

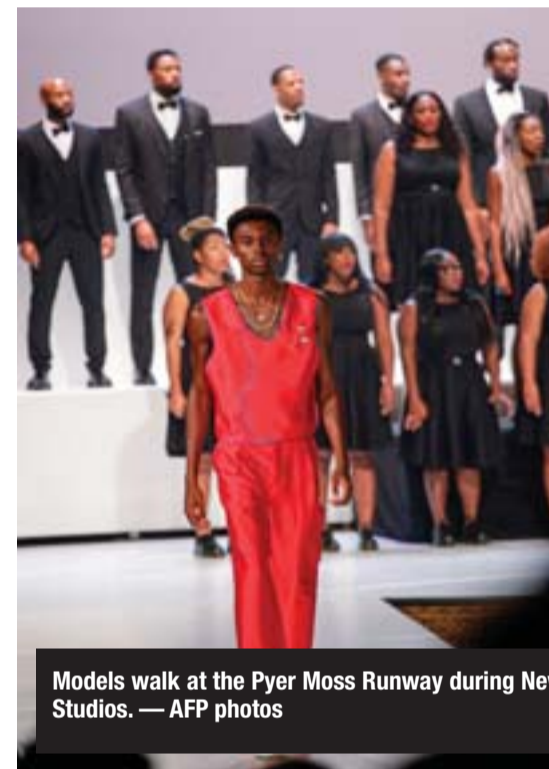
The 32-year-old said he had wanted to create a black rock aesthetic but warned that his next collection may not be devoted to African-American culture. "That's not my thing. I'm not a race guy. I care about people. I'm going to speak to different things that matter to me. I've made a show about depression," he said. Pyer Moss announced in July that Jean-Raymond would create a whole new fashion line for Reebok as the struggling sportswear manufacturer seeks to revive its brand. Jean-Raymond remains fiercely independent and says he will never compromise his designs. "I don't care about selling clothes," he told a group of journalists after the show. "The company could be doing

more. We could be making a lot more money... but I refuse to just make anything without a meaning. I'll figure out a way to make money later," he added.

**Tommy Hilfiger returns**

The second full day of New York Fashion Week also saw the return of Tommy Hilfiger after an almost three-year absence.

Hilfiger's show at the Apollo Theater in Harlem was straight from a 1970s movie set—everything from the retro cars, to the music and the clothing echoed that decade. The designer put together a collection that fitted perfectly on his new muse Zendaya, who also participated in the creative process. There was plenty of grey, leather, polka dots, ruffles wide-brimmed hats and high-belts in a reworking of seventies imagery designed to appeal to young Tommy Hilfiger customers.—AFP



Models walk at the Pyer Moss Runway during New York Fashion Week at Pier 59 Studios. — AFP photos



Models walk on the runway for the Tommy Hilfiger TommyNow fall runway show at the Apollo Theater.





Models on the runway at Vera Wang during New York Fashion Week on September 10, 2019 in New York City.



Models walk the runway for Coach 1941 during New York Fashion Week.



Models walk the runway for Proenza Schouler's Spring 20 collection show during New York Fashion Week.

# Rihanna's star-studded bash is toast of NY Fashion Week

Rihanna's A-list bash, Vera Wang's return to the runway, and Proenza Schouler's eighties power suits—AFP takes a look at the highlights from the fourth full day of New York Fashion Week on Tuesday.



In this file photo Rihanna appears onstage during the 2019 BET awards at Microsoft Theater in Los Angeles, California.

## Rihanna dominates

Pop icon Rihanna's Savage x Fenty lingerie show was the week's most anticipated but exclusive event and doubled as an invitation-only concert, featuring some of music's buzziest acts such as Migos and Halsey. In a spectacle that dominated New York's Fashion Week celebrity models, including the Hadid sisters and Joan Smalls, made appearances alongside artists like Normani. A-listers entered Brooklyn's Barclays Center for the show from Rihanna, a fashion and beauty mogul who unveiled the launch of her new luxury line with French powerhouse LVMH earlier this year.

Now in its second year, her hugely popular lingerie catwalk will stream on Amazon's Prime Video service on September 20. Setting herself up as the anti-Victoria's Secret—a thin-obsessed brand that this year canceled its annual catwalk—Rihanna's line features body-inclusive pieces from bombshell lace-up corsets and sheer floral thongs, to tomboy boyshorts and high-neck bralettes.

Despite—or perhaps because of—a social media ban inside the Barbadian star's show, it still dominated Tuesday's conversation as stars and stylists alike scrambled to exist in the shadow of Rihanna's Instagram account, @badgirlriri.

## Vera Wang returns

Designer Vera Wang returned to the catwalk for the first time in several years, and told AFP it was "great timing" thanks to the streamlined event that has gone from seven to five days. "There was almost 400 shows at one point, which I think you lose any kind of perspective," she said. "So I think this new editing made me feel it was right for us to come back, particularly with what we do which is really couture level, sewing and draping and cutting."

For her return Wang, made famous by her wedding dress creations, proposed her vision of sensuality that featured confections of body-revealing tulle, and suspenders reminiscent of garter-belts. "I dress a lot of Hollywood and I wanted to do my version of Hollywood when I'm not dressing a star in particular," Wang said.

## New decade incoming

Inspired by the notion of a new decade, Coach designer Stuart Vevers "wanted a collection that was about change and also something that was stripped-back and upbeat, optimistic and looking forward to the new decade." Originally a specialist in bags and accessories, Coach has always kept leather firmly anchored in its DNA.

But while it featured in this year's collection, Vevers did not make it the central element, playing with the brand's legacy while lending a fresh touch. The British designer—who presided over the launch of Coach's ready-to-wear line in 2015 — went back to basics, offering jackets, skirts, and leather pants, often matching.

## 1980s power

Models looked particularly statuesque stalking Proenza Schouler's runway, where architectural tailoring paired with belted feminine draping was the theme. This year's ready-to-wear collection featured sharp-shouldered power-jackets paired with sensuous cowlneck layering in sleek neutrals, often accessorized with thick, oversized hoop earrings.

Some sported voluminous pants while others wore slim-but-flowing maxi skirts over opaque matte black or white tights with strappy-heeled sandals. Designers Jack McCollough and Lazaro Hernandez pulled together many of the more feminine looks with waist-nipping belts or timeless trench-coats given contemporary flavor with details like asymmetric buttons. — AFP



Nicky Hilton Rothschild (left) and Paris Hilton attend the Savage x Fenty arrivals during New York Fashion Week at Barclays Center in New York City. — AFP photos



British actress/model Cara Delevingne (left), Puerto-Rican model Joan Smalls (center) and US model Gigi Hadid (right) arrive for the Savage X Fenty Show Presented By Amazon Prime Video.



Hip Hop band Migos (Quavo, Offset and Takeoff) arrive for the Savage X Fenty Show Presented By Amazon Prime Video.

## Lifestyle | Features



Regular motorcycle taxis queue for passengers without helmet or kits for safety unlike Uber-style branded motorbike taxis in Lagos. — AFP photos



ORide driver arrives on motorbike taxi to attend meeting at company headquarters, Ikeja in Lagos.



ORide driver decked out in a bib and with client on helmets in company's colors drive past motorbikes parked at the company headquarters.

## Motorbike taxi apps jostle for trade on crowded Lagos roads



ORide driver decked out in bib and helmet in company colors drives through traffic gridlock in Lagos.



OPay country manager Iniabasi Akpan speaks about his brand at the company's headquarters in Lagos.



Founder and Chief Executive Officer of MaxOkada Tayo Bamiduro poses with helmet in company color in Lagos.

Banker Yemi Adegbola used to leave his home in Lagos before 4 am each day, but would still arrive late to work because of the notorious traffic in Nigeria's biggest city. Now he says he has "dumped his car" for one of a raft of new motorbike ride hailing apps that developers hope can speed up journeys for the roughly 20 million residents of the economic capital. For years the jams-known locally as "go-slows"—have been a nightmare for Lagosians. Potholed roads, reckless driving and too many cars have helped turn the daily commute into an ordeal that often lasts for hours.

People miss appointments and business suffers as one of Africa's largest markets grinds to a standstill. Sensing an opportunity, a growing number of ride hailing services have stepped into the chaos-bringing order to the "okada" motorbike taxis that have long whizzed perilously around Lagos. First to launch was Gokada in 2018, pioneering an Uber-style system for two-wheeled transport that had already been successfully rolled out by firms elsewhere. It has since been followed by other operators like Maxokada and ORide—and the competitors are looking to overtake each other with better technology, lower prices and more services.

## 'Open market'

Before these startups, Lagosians in a hurry had to put their faith in the army of unregulated "okada" riders weaving hazardously through the city, they were seen as dangerous and blamed by the police for a rise in petty crime. The authorities clamped down and in 2012 banned the 100cc bikes from 475 roads and highways around the city. This year some 3,000 motorcycles were impounded and destroyed for violating the restrictions, police said. The ride hailing apps provide a striking difference.

Their drivers are decked out in bibs and helmets in company colors, carry safety kits with them and have more powerful bikes that can make longer trips. Passengers are charged an Uber-style tariff, and no longer have to resort to haggling each time they hail a ride. A traditional "okada" ride can cost between 50 naira (14 US cents, 12 euro centimes) and several hundred naira—depending on the distance, area and the mood of the driver. New entrant ORide kick-

started its services in May and is looking to tap into the abundant opportunities with 3,000 trained drivers.

The firm-part of the OPay online payment service—is looking to expand operations as part of a \$50 million push and already works in six other cities in Nigeria. "It's an open market in which everybody has something to offer. There's so much to cover in Nigeria," Iniabasi Akpan, OPay country manager, told AFP. Unlike other players which allow users to hail a ride both online or on the streets, passengers can only pay via the OPay app, developed by Norway's Opera Software. The firm has comprehensive insurance that covers both riders and passengers and secures it drivers with asset financing contracts that sees them pay back the cost of their new bikes in 18 months.

## Bumps in the road

Overall the two-wheeler taxi market is forecast to reach \$9 billion worldwide by 2021, according to India-based Tech Sci. But it has not been all smooth riding since the apps launched. Accidents remain unavoidable in the confusion of Nigeria's roads, online tools have faltered, drivers have looked to inflate fares and corrupt officials still prey on road-users. Gokada in May announced over \$5 million in new funding and said it hoped to branch out into other forms of transport and eventually push outside Nigeria.

But last month the firm shut down for two weeks after its chief executive Fahim Saleh encountered some of the navigational problems when a short journey ended up taking much longer. The driver he ordered took 15 minutes to pick him up, admitted he wasn't using GPS and then set off on a circuitous route to the destination.

"How could I be the CEO of Gokada, the company that pioneered motorcycle ride-hailing in Nigeria and be experiencing this?" Saleh wrote in an online post. "I told the pilot to pull over to the side of the road, I would hop over the median and wait for an Uber. 'This is what it has come to,' I thought." The disappointment chimed with the gripes of some Nigerian users who have complained of navigation problems while using the various apps and accuse drivers of deliberately taking longer routes to increase

fares. Firms have sought ways around the issues. Gokada relaunched its 2.0 service with a fresh fleet of bikes after giving drivers more training and incorporating features like helmets with inbuilt mobile headsets.



Founder and CEO MaxOkada Tayo Bamiduro speaks, relaxing on motorbike taxi at company headquarters, Lekki in Lagos.

ORide has a monitoring unit set up to track its drivers. Despite the bumps in the road, riders told AFP the apps were helping them bolster their business and offering a key lifeline. "This scheme has taken many out of poverty by creating jobs," ORide driver Johnson Onipede told AFP, sitting on his light green bike as he waited for his next ride. Onipede said his main headache remained one familiar to all Lagosians—venal local thieves. He said riders needed help getting small gangs of thugs, known as Agberos or Area Boys, to stop their extortion and harassment. "Both the government and company should help us to stop the Agberos and Area Boys because they are making life unbearable for us."—AFP

## Daniel Radcliffe has life turned upside-down in 'Guns Akimbo'

In Daniel Radcliffe's latest film role, the "Harry Potter" star goes in a split second from a normal, anonymous young man to a celebrity sensation whose life is turned upside-down. Does that sound familiar to the former child actor who was plucked from obscurity to front one of the biggest movie franchises of all time? "Yes I suppose so! I really hadn't thought about that," Radcliffe told AFP. "God I need to call my therapist!"

Fortunately for Radcliffe, his real-life journey was considerably more gentle than the protagonist of "Guns Akimbo," which had its world premiere at the Toronto film festival. He plays a nerdy video game developer who wakes from a brutal attack to find guns have been surgically bolted to his hands, and he has been forced to fight to the death for the amusement of a sadistic online community. Asked how he chose the role, Radcliffe said: "A lot of the things I've done have been like weird fairytales, like 'Horns' or 'Swiss Army Man'."

"They're all about somebody living a normal life and then something crazy and transformative happening to them. "So I guess I enjoy those kind of stories, stories

that take a crazy route into a thing we can relate to. And this film definitely falls into that category." As the plot suggests, "Guns Akimbo" is a more radical departure from Hogwarts than any of his projects yet. Its darkly cartoonish approach to copious on-screen violence includes countless gory fight scenes and deaths in which the characters wield guns, hammers and even a bazooka.

Like "The Running Man" or "The Hunger Games," ordinary people are cheered on by bloodthirsty crowds in their fights to the death—with the millennial twist of live-streaming and YouTube-style trolls. "This film is inspired by the darker corners of the internet and parts of social media and those ideas, but it's not necessarily making a massive point about them," said Radcliffe. "Jason is somebody who has absorbed certain parts of the internet and '80s action movies and gaming, and this film is the result of all those things coming together," he said, referring to director Jason Lei Howden. "I don't think anyone should get their moral code from this movie!"—AFP



Daniel Radcliffe attends the 'Guns Akimbo' premiere during the 2019 Toronto International Film Festival at Ryerson Theatre in Toronto, Canada. — AFP

## 'Ford v Ferrari' turns back clock for Hollywood

"Ford v Ferrari," the new auto racing movie starring Christian Bale and Matt Damon, is a proud throwback to an era when Hollywood made authentic blockbusters for grown-ups, its director said Tuesday. The movie portrays how Henry Ford II strove to make his US car brand fashionable once again by hiring a designer and driver capable of beating Enzo Ferrari's Italian racing machines at the famous Le Mans 24-hour race in 1966. Shot for around \$100 million largely without computer-generated special effects by Fox before its Disney takeover, it is a rare Hollywood big-budget project that is not a sequel or a superhero movie.

"We don't mind if you call it old fashioned or a throwback," director James Mangold told journalists yesterday. "I think people miss movies that weren't shot entirely in a room with green backings ... when Hollywood made movies that were large, but not necessarily for 12 year-olds," he added.

Mangold himself is no stranger to superhero films, directing X-Men film "Logan" in 2017 — although the film stands out as the first of its genre to earn an Oscar writing nomination. For his latest film he hired a team of playwrights headed by Jez Butterworth ("Jerusalem"). Mangold said he avoided special effects in "Ford v Ferrari" for the key race scenes because for performers "it's like acting inside a sandwich bag."

The movie employed top professional race drivers—including Ben Collins, who appeared as The Stig on British show "Top Gear"—and built replica vintage cars. Bale was

quick to slap down criticism that he and Damon should have taken the steering wheel themselves. It's a "total insult" to the professionals to "assume that we could really do that," he said. The star praised Ken Miles, the British racing legend he portrays, as an "eccentric, passionate, slightly insane" man in dedicated pursuit of his dream.

## Bale shed 40 pounds

Bale said Miles embodied the contradiction among speedsters "that you feel alive precisely because of the inherent danger that could happen any minute that you're just keeping at bay." "But I guarantee none of these men would have been doing these races if there wasn't that danger present at all times." The British actor, 45, joked that he had to quickly shed the 40 pounds he put on to play US Vice President Dick Cheney in 2018's "Vice" to fit in the car.

"Wouldn't have been the same thing would it, if I'd have been a 240-pound Ken Miles, barely getting into those cars?" he said. "Those cars are not made for large men at all, you know—they're not made for comfort, whatsoever." "Ford v Ferrari," which outside North America is titled "Le Mans '66," hits theaters November 15. The Toronto International Film Festival runs until Sunday. — AFP



Actors Christian Bale (left) and Matt Damon attend the 'Ford v Ferrari' premiere at the Roy Thompson Hall during the 2019 Toronto International Film Festival Day 5 in Toronto, Ontario. — AFP

# Classifieds

Thursday, September 12, 2019

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DAY: Wednesday 11/09/2019 Valid From 7 PM To 7 AM

**Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours**

**BY NIGHT:** Hot to relatively hot with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 12 - 38 km/h.

**BY DAY:** Hot with light to moderate freshening at times north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 45 km/h.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings		
STATION	MAX. REC.	MIN. EXP.	SFC. CHART 11/09/2019 1200 UTC		
KUWAIT CITY	42 °C	30 °C			
KUWAIT AIRPORT	43 °C	27 °C			
ABDALY	43 °C	26 °C			
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C			
JAHRA	43 °C	28 °C			
FAILAKA ISLAND	- °C	- °C			
SALMIYAH	39 °C	31 °C			
AHMADI	40 °C	33 °C			
NUWASIB	44 °C	27 °C			
WAFRA	42 °C	24 °C			
SALMY	41 °C	24 °C			

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	MAX. Temp.	MIN. Temp.	Wind Direction	Wind Speed
Thursday	09/12	Hot	43 °C	27 °C	NW	15 - 45 km/h
Friday	09/13	Hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas	44 °C	28 °C	NW-NE	08 - 32 km/h
Saturday	09/14	Hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas	44 °C	26 °C	VRB-SE	06 - 28 km/h
Sunday	09/15	Hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas and some scattered clouds will appear	45 °C	25 °C	VRB-S	08 - 30 km/h

TOMORROW PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:11
Sunrise	05:31
Zuhr	11:44
Asr	15:15
Sunset	17:58
Isha	19:16

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	42 °C
MIN. Temp.	31 °C
MAX. RH	34 %
MIN. RH	11 %
MAX. Wind	N 50 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

All times are local time unless otherwise stated. UPO 2019/09/11 14:22 UTC V1.00 T2.4 8-1/2 ع-ق

## 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

## Career Opportunities for Teachers at Private American School for the 2019-20 Academic Year

**Positions include:**

Department	Positions
Middle and High School	English Teacher & Social Studies Teacher*
Middle and High School	Math Teacher

\* Native English Speakers Only

To apply for these positions, submit your resume, cover letter and recent photograph to recruitment@abs.edu.kw

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
 I, JOLLY PANACHAMOOTTIL ABRAHAM holder of Indian Passport No. J1334887 having permanent address KANNADICKAL HOUSE, MAKKA-PUZHA P.O., RANNY, KERALA (STATE), INDIA, PIN-689676 residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as Given name: JOLLY and Surname: PANACHAMOOTTIL ABRAHAM. 11-9-2019

I, GEORGE THOMAS KANNADICKAL holder of Indian Passport No. S9916023 having permanent address KANNADICKAL HOUSE, MAKKA-PUZHA P.O., RANNY, KERALA (STATE), INDIA, PIN-689676 residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as Given name: GEORGE and Surname: THOMAS KANNADICKAL.

I, Andriya Sebastian Sreeja holder of Indian Passport No. M8392114 having permanent address: Pallivilakom Veedu, R.C Street, Balaramapuram, Trivandrum, Kerala, India. Residing in Kuwait, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as Given name: Andriya Surname: Sebastian (C 5669) 9-9-2019

**EMERGENCY 112**

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

Arrival Flights on Thursday 12/9/2019				Departure Flights on Thursday 12/9/2019			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
FEG	241	Alexandria	00:05	AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05
IGO	1757	Kochi	00:10	MSC	406	Sohag	00:15
THY	772	Istanbul	00:20	MSR	615	Cairo	00:30
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	FDB	072	Dubai	00:30
KAC	102	London	00:50	FEG	342	Sohag	01:05
KAC	504	Beirut	01:00	IGO	1758	Kochi	01:10
RJA	642	Amman	01:20	KAC	677	Dubai	01:50
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	THY	773	Istanbul	01:50
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	DLH	625	Frankfurt	01:50
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:50	KAC	417	Manila	02:00
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	THY	765	Istanbul	02:50
KKK	1268	Istanbul	01:55	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:50
PGT	828	Istanbul	02:00	KKK	1269	Istanbul	02:55
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	PGT	829	Istanbul	02:59
KAC	156	Istanbul	02:35	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05
JZR	734	Cairo	02:35	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:10
QTR	1086	Doha	02:40	JZR	111	Doha	03:25
JZR	722	Alexandria	02:40	JZR	409	Delhi	03:30
JZR	254	Amman	02:40	JZR	701D	Asyut	03:30
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:50	UAE	854	Dubai	03:30
PGT	860	Istanbul	02:50	JZR	713	Sohag	03:50
THY	768	Istanbul	02:55	THY	769	Istanbul	03:50
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:00
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	OMA	644	Muscat	04:05
JZR	262	Beirut	03:10	QTR	1087	Doha	04:15
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
KAC	418	Manila	03:20	PGT	861	Istanbul	04:20
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	JZR	1735	Cairo	04:40
JZR	406	Kochi	03:30	QTR	1077	Doha	05:00
OHY	352	Istanbul	04:00	LMU	511	Cairo	05:00
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	OHY	351	Istanbul	05:00
KAC	382	Delhi	04:05	IGO	1752	Chennai	05:10
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	KAC	303	Mumbai	05:15
MSR	0516	Cairo	04:25	MSR	0517	Mumbai	05:25
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:25	FDB	070	Dubai	06:00
JZR	404	Hyderabad	04:50	THY	1465	Istanbul	06:00
THY	1414	Trabzon	05:05	THY	771	Istanbul	06:30
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	KAC	745	Sharm el-Sheikh	06:45
IGA	170	Bahrain	05:05	GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50
THY	770	Istanbul	05:20	RJA	643	Amman	07:00
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	JZR	251	Amman	07:10
KAC	552	Cairo	05:50	JZR	121	Dubai	07:15
KAC	548	Alexandria	05:55	RBG	550	Alexandria	07:30
KAC	362	Colombo	06:05	BAW	156	London	07:40
BAW	157	London	06:10	KAC	413	Bangkok	07:45
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:15	KAC	173	Munich	07:55
JZR	402	Mumbai	06:25	JZR	211	Jeddah	08:00
KAC	678	Dubai	06:40	KAC	193	Trabzon	08:10
KAC	106	London	06:40	KAC	181	Paris/NCE	08:10
RBG	559	Alexandria	06:50	IRA	606	Mashhad	08:10
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:50	IGO	1756	CNN	08:10
QTR	8511	Doha	06:55	KAC	163	MXP	08:35
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00	KAC	505	LCA/Beirut	08:40
JZR	408	Ahmedabad	07:05	KAC	177	Vienna	08:45
IGO	112	Doha	07:05	KAC	561	Amman	08:55
IRA	601	Tehran	07:10	QTR	8512	Doha	08:55
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:50	KAC	121	AGP	09:00
QTR	1084	Doha	08:00	KAC	613	Bahrain	09:00
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:05	KAC	117	New York	09:05
KAC	384	Delhi	08:10	KAC	791	Madinah	09:10
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	QTR	1085	Doha	09:10
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:50	KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:15
OMA	641	Muscat	09:00	KAC	157	Istanbul	09:20
GFA	209	Bahrain	09:05	KAC	773	Riyadh	09:40
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	JZR	731	Cairo	09:45
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	UAE	856	Dubai	09:50
IRA	675	Lar	09:55	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	09:55
JZR	702D	Asyut	09:55	JZR	301	Istanbul	09:55
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	OMA	642	Muscat	10:00
IAW	157A	Al Najaf	10:00	KAC	101	London	10:05
JZR	714	Sohag	10:00	GFA	210	Bahrain	10:05
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	QTR	1071	Doha	10:30
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	KAC	617	Doha	10:40
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	IGO	1754	Ahmedabad	10:40
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00	FDB	056	Dubai	10:40
OMS	223	Muscat	11:00	IRA	668	Mashhad	10:55
JZR	1736	Cairo	11:05	SVA	513	Riyadh	10:55
JZR	122	Dubai	11:45	IAW	158A	Al Najaf	11:00
IAW	157	Al Najaf	12:00	JZR	221	Riyadh	11:20
AHY	119	Baku	12:05	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35
JZR	410	Delhi	12:10	OMS	224	Muscat	11:40
JZR	252	Amman	12:20	JZR	309	BJV	11:45
JZR	746	Sharm el-Sheikh	12:25	MEA	405	Beirut	11:55
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	SYR	342	Damascus	12:00
THY	766	Istanbul	12:30	JZR	213	Jeddah	12:05

# Air conditioning for all? Hotter world facing 'cooling poverty'

OXFORD: As climate change brings more frequent and extreme heatwaves around the world, demand for air conditioners is soaring, with 10 new units sold every second on average - but the poor may be left to swelter, said a University of Oxford researcher. By 2050, energy use for cooling is projected to triple, while in hot countries like India, China, Brazil and Indonesia, it is expected to grow five-fold, the World Bank has said. "By the end of the century, global energy demand for cooling will be more than it is for heating," said Radhika Khosla, who leads an Oxford Martin School programme on future cooling.

But not everyone will be able to afford to beat the heat. "Traditionally, energy poverty has been defined as people not having heating. Now that is potentially going to shift, and we could have cooling poverty," Khosla warned on the sidelines of a conference on efforts to slash planet-warming emissions. Rising heat is having a huge impact on health - deaths and hospital admissions jump in heatwaves - but also on productivity as workers struggle to cope, climate scientists say.

A 2018 report from Sustainable Energy for All, a UN-backed organization, said more than 1.1 billion people globally faced immediate risks from lack of access to cooling. On a warming planet, cooling is not a luxury but "essential for everyday life", said the organization's CEO Rachel Kyte. But because air conditioners use 20 times as much power as running a fan, their growing popularity could fuel demand for fossil fuel-based electricity that exacerbates climate change.

Rather than relying entirely on air conditioning, buildings should be designed so they are easier to keep cool, which is still rare, said Khosla, who also directs research at the Oxford India Centre for Sustainable Development. Her modern apartment has windows that open just a few inches, making it hard to keep cool on hot days, she said. "Net zero" buildings - designed partly to stay cool without heavy use of air conditioning - are popping up around the world, from Southeast Asia to the United States and Europe, but

remain the exception, she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Khosla, who has herself lived in a range of hot cities from New Delhi to Chicago, predicted that in the future, housing that cannot be kept cool or have air conditioning installed could see a drop in value, even in relatively cool places such as Britain.

## New technology

In some developing nations with rising incomes, buying an air conditioner is also a status symbol, which could make any push for lower-energy alternatives challenging, she said. Making less power-hungry, affordable air conditioners will be crucial, Khosla believes. Most machines for sale now - the majority built in China - are half as energy-efficient as they could be, she said. But researchers are working on more efficient cooling technologies that could hit the market in as little as two years, Khosla said.

Judges are now looking at entries for a \$3-million global cooling prize, launched by the Colorado-based Rocky Mountain Institute, aimed at developing an affordable window air conditioning unit that is at least five times more efficient than current models. Amory Lovins, co-founder of the institute, said designing cheaper, greener air conditioning was "extremely important". Getting manufacturers to ramp up production fast - partly by putting in place policies that require greater energy efficiency - will also be key, Khosla said.

Greener cooling is "one of the levers we have left" to hold the line on climate change, and using less energy for cooling would help avert power blackouts in cities on sizzling days, she said. Cities face an "awful feedback loop" as air conditioners churn out hot exhaust, boosting temperatures further, she said. All these risks mean smarter cooling must be figured out quickly, before the world gets even hotter and more families rush to appliance shops, she said. "It's a future we can't afford to get wrong," she warned. —Reuters

## Energy 'transition' touted, but fossil...

Continued from Page 1

"All energy transitions - including this one - take decades, with many challenges along the road," the CEO of Saudi energy giant Aramco, Amin Nasser, said at the conference. Nasser said his country supports the growing contribution of alternatives, but criticized policies adopted by many governments that do not consider "the long-term nature of our business and the need for orderly transition".

Oil is still the lifeline for the Gulf states, contributing at least 70 percent of national revenues across the region which has been cushioned by decades of immense profits from the flow of "black gold". Gulf nations have invested tens of billions of dollars in clean energy projects, mainly in solar and nuclear. Dubai has launched the world's largest solar energy project, with a price tag of \$13.6 billion and the capacity to satisfy a quarter of the energy-hungry emirate's current needs when it comes on line in 2030.

But critics say the addiction to oil is a tough one to kick, particularly when supplies remain abundant and the massive investment in infrastructure necessary to switch to renewables is daunting. "A global shift from dirty fossil fuel to renewable energy is economically, technically and technologically feasible... All that is

missing is political will!" said Julien Jreissati from Greenpeace in the Middle East.

He said while the United Arab Emirates has put plans into action, "Saudi Arabia which has always made big announcements regarding their renewable energy ambitions is lagging behind as their projects and targets remain ink on paper. "There is no doubt that the world will leave oil behind. The only question remaining is when will this happen?"

Despite important technological advances made in the past decade, renewable energy sources still make up just around 18 percent and nuclear adds another six percent of the world's energy mix. The Abu Dhabi conference saw calls for accelerated innovation and "disruptive" technology to speed the transition as the world prepares for global energy demand to peak between 2020 and 2025, according to the World Energy Council. In a new report yesterday, the council said that avoiding a climate crisis is highly challenging and requires "a mix of all technologies and broader innovation" in tandem with an international dialogue on energy transition.

Estonian President Kersti Kaljulaid also argued that sustainable and environmentally friendly energy practices must be aligned with national and global economic policies in order to have the required impact. "It makes more economic sense to apply all green technologies globally, and if this happens we might go to being CO2-free energy users 5 or 10 or 20 years quicker," she told the conference. "I prefer that market forces, pushed by smart policymaking and legal space-setting, act quickly and save us all from the alternative." —AFP

## Trump vows to hit Taliban as...

Continued from Page 1

He also warned militants against ever carrying out an attack in the US again. "If for any reason, they come back to our country, we will go wherever they are, and use power, the likes of which the United States has never used before," Trump said. "I'm not even talking about nuclear power. They will never have seen anything like what will happen to them," he added.

The warlike comments came as Al-Qaeda, which carried out the attacks, released a video calling for assaults on American, European, Israeli and Russian interests. The militant group's leader Ayman Al-Zawahiri criticized "backtrackers" from jihad in the 33-minute video, according to Site Intelligence Group. Trump announced on Twitter Saturday that he'd been about to meet leaders of the Taliban - who harbored Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan - on Sunday at his Camp David presidential retreat. The announcement angered some, coming so close to the Sept 11, 2001 anniversary.

Relatives of victims, survivors, police officers, firefighters and city leaders held a ceremony yesterday at

Ground Zero where hijacked Al-Qaeda planes brought down the Twin Towers. They held poignant moments of silence at 8:46 am (1246 GMT) and 9:03 am, the precise times that the passenger jets struck the North and South Towers. In what has become an annual tradition, relatives began reading out the long list of those who were killed, saying a few words about each victim, in a ceremony that took almost four hours.

"We love you, we miss you and you will always be America's heroes," said one woman after reading out the names of her brother and cousin. Relatives hugged and consoled each other and left roses at the memorial. Some held up placards with images of their loved ones who were killed. Bagpipes played as police officers walked into the ceremony carrying the US flag before the US national anthem was played. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, Mayor Bill de Blasio, and his predecessors Michael Bloomberg and Rudy Giuliani were among those who attended.

Trump and First Lady Melania Trump welcomed victims' families and survivors to the White House where they marked the anniversary with a moment of silence before the president headed to the Pentagon for his speech. Al-Qaeda hijacked four planes. The third hit the Pentagon and the fourth, Flight 93, crashed in a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. In addition to those killed on Sept 11, thousands of first responders, construction workers and residents have since developed illness, many of them terminal, as a result of inhaling the toxic fumes. — AFP

drawing on walls in public places a prior approval of authorities or using children and women in activities that pose a danger to them or scare them. The bill also bans taking pictures of others without their consent in order to make fun of them, besides not respecting queues in public places or for obtaining services.

It bans spitting in public places, throwing trash or cigarettes from cars and placing advertisement posters on walls of private homes without seeking prior permission. The bill proposes a fine of between KD 500 and KD 1,000 for violators. The lawmaker said he submitted the draft law seeking to protect Kuwaiti values, morals and traditions and also safeguard public order after he noticed that strange behaviors and practices have been on the rise.

## MP proposes stiff fines for wearing...

Continued from Page 1

The bill cannot be debated in the Assembly unless the legal and legislative committee says it is in line with the constitution, a difficult proposition since personal freedom is protected by the Kuwaiti constitution.

The bill also bans people from appearing in public in underwear or sleeping pajamas, or playing loud music that could disturb the public. It prohibits writing or

## Sadr joins Iran supreme leader at ceremony

TEHRAN: Powerful Iraqi cleric Moqtada Sadr joined Iran's supreme leader during a rare visit to Tehran to mark the Shiite holy day of Ashura, state media reported yesterday. The office of supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei issued pictures of Sadr flanked by Khamenei on one side, and the commander of the elite Quds Force of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, Major General Qasem Soleimani, on the other. Iran's judiciary chief Ebrahim Raisi also attended the ceremony, which commemorates the death of Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) grandson Hussein at the Battle of Karbala, in modern-day Iraq.

Sadr's surprise visit comes at a time of deep political divisions among Iraq's Shiite factions, and as Baghdad tries to walk a tightrope between its two main allies, Tehran and Washington. Tehran has close but complicated ties with Baghdad, with significant influence among its Shiite political groups. The two countries fought a bloody war from 1980 to 1988 and Iran's influence in Iraq grew after the US-led invasion of Iraq toppled veteran dictator Saddam Hussein in 2003.

In 2014, Iran sent Soleimani and "military advisers" to Iraq to help it in the fight against the Islamic State group, and Soleimani continues to play a key role as a powerbroker in Iraq during times of turbulence. Sadr himself is a populist cleric, political figure and former militia leader whose bloc emerged as the biggest in the Iraqi parliament after May 2018 elections.

But he refused to align with the pro-Iran camp to form



TEHRAN: (From left) Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iraqi Shiite cleric Moqtada Al-Sadr and Qasem Soleimani, Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps lieutenant general sit during a ceremony commemorating Ashoura on Tuesday. — AFP

a government, visited Tehran's regional rival Saudi Arabia and has criticized pro-Iran paramilitary groups in Iraq - sparking contradictory analysis of the current visit. Some observers suspected Sadr had been "summoned" to Tehran after statements challenging Iran and its Iraqi allies in the Hashed Al-Shaabi paramilitary force.

The Iraqi cleric recently launched a Twitter campaign against the more hardline elements of the Hashed and even took aim at the Iraqi government, saying Iraq was becoming a "rogue" state. Others said it might indicate a vote of confidence in him by Iran's top leadership over the Hashed's political arm, the Fatah alliance. Many noted it was strange to see Sadr outside Iraq on Ashoura, a holy day during which millions of pilgrims travel to Karbala. On Tuesday, a stampede broke out among pilgrims visiting the Imam Hussein shrine in Karbala that left 31 people dead and more than 100 wounded. —AFP

## Water discovered in atmosphere...

Continued from Page 1

Future space missions are expected to detect hundreds more in the coming decades.

"Finding water in a potentially habitable world other than Earth is incredibly exciting," said lead-author Angelos Tsirias, also from UCL. "K2-18b is not 'Earth 2.0'," he said. "However, it brings us closer to answering the fundamental question: Is the Earth unique?"

Working with spectroscopic data captured in 2016 and 2017 by the Hubble Space Telescope, Tsirias and his team used open-source algorithms to analyze the starlight filtered through K2-18b's atmosphere. They found the unmistakable signature of water vapour. Exactly how much remains uncertain, but computer modelling suggested concentrations between 0.1 and 50 percent.

By comparison, the percentage of water vapor in Earth's atmosphere varies between 0.2 percent above the poles, and up to four percent in the tropics. There was also evidence of hydrogen and helium as well. Nitrogen and

methane may also be present but with current technology remain undetectable, the study said. Further research will be able to determine the extent of cloud coverage and the percentage of water in the atmosphere.

Water is crucial in the search for life, in part because it carries oxygen. "Life as we know it is based on water," said Tinetti. K2-18b orbits a red dwarf star about 110 light years distant - a million billion kilometres - in the Leo constellation of the Milky Way, and is probably bombarded by more destructive radiation than Earth.

"It is likely that this is the first of many discoveries of potentially habitable planets," said UCL astronomer Ingo Waldmann, also a co-author. "This is not only because super-Earths like K2-18b are the most common planets in our galaxy, but also because red dwarfs - stars smaller than our Sun - are the most common stars."

The new generation of space-based star gazing instruments led by the James Webb Space Telescope and the European Space Agency's ARIEL mission will be able to describe exoplanet atmospheres in far greater detail. ARIEL, slated for a 2028 launch, will canvas some 1,000 planets, a large enough sampling to look for patterns and identify outliers. "Over 4,000 exoplanets have been detected but we don't know much about their composition and nature," said Tinetti. "By observing a large sample of planets, we hope to reveal secrets about their chemistry, formation and evolution." — AFP

## UK to let foreign students stay...

Continued from Page 1

Business Secretary Andrea Leadsom said the change was aimed at attracting the "brightest and the best from around the world" and a sign of "the UK's ambition once we have left the European Union". "Instead of being open to free movement from just the (EU), the United Kingdom will be able to take advantage of a global talent pool... and that's something that's a great advantage for us," she told BBC radio.

Leadsom said the government wanted to increase the number of international students in Britain 30 percent to 600,000 by 2030, with an emphasis on science, technology, engineering and maths, collectively

known as STEM subjects. International students currently make up half of all full-time post-graduate STEM students in the country. "Giving them that two-year period will enable them to find a job that befits their degree," Leadsom added. "There are so many new skills and new industries that are just now emerging, and we do want to be able to attract a global talent pool of people."

But with concerns over levels of immigration a key driver behind Britain's 2016 vote to leave the European Union, the move was not universally welcomed. Alp Mehmet, chairman of Migration Watch UK, which campaigns to reduce immigration levels, said it was an "unwise" and "retrograde" step which would "likely lead to foreign graduates staying on to stack shelves, as happened before". "Our universities are attracting a record number of overseas students so there is no need to devalue a study visa by turning it into a backdoor route for working here," he added. — Agencies

## Kuwait condemns Netanyahu's...

Continued from Page 1

Damascus "strongly condemned" Netanyahu's vow, with a Syrian foreign ministry source telling the state news agency SANA that it was an "expansionist" plan in "flagrant violation" of international treaties.

Israel occupied the West Bank in the 1967 Six-Day War in a move never recognized by the international community. It also seized - and later annexed - part of the Golan Heights from Syria, and the two countries remain technically at war. Saudi Arabia flagged the announcement as a "dangerous escalation", and convened an "emergency meeting" of the foreign ministers of the 57 member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Jeddah on Sunday to discuss the issue.

United Arab Emirates' foreign minister Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Nahyan denounced Netanyahu's proposal as "electoral exploitation in the most heinous form". While the Gulf Cooperation Council's chief Abdellatif Al-Zayani, characterized the Israeli prime minister's rhetoric as a "dangerous and aggressive provocation".

Beyond the Arab world, Turkey slammed Netanyahu's pledge as "racist". Ankara would "defend (the) rights and interests of our Palestinian brothers and sisters till the end," said Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu. The United Nations condemned that Netanyahu's plan would have no "international legal effect". Meanwhile, the

European Union said the pledge undermines any prospects for peace. "The policy of settlement construction and expansion... is illegal under international law and its continuation, and actions taken in this context, undermine the viability of the two-state solution and the prospects for a lasting peace," an EU spokesperson said in a statement.

Netanyahu's main opponents in the election, the centrist Blue and White alliance, along with others called the announcement an obvious attempt to win rightwing nationalist votes, which will be key for the premier's Likud party.

Netanyahu's announcement was only the start of a tense evening. Later Tuesday night, Netanyahu was hustled off stage at a campaign rally when sirens warning of incoming rockets blared in the southern city of Ashdod. Both rockets fired from Gaza were shot down by Israel's Iron Dome air defense system, and Netanyahu later returned to the stage after the all-clear, saying Hamas was scared of him winning the election. Israel later bombed Hamas positions in Gaza in response, causing no casualties. Yesterday, three more rockets were fired toward Israel from Gaza, the army said, and an Israeli tank retaliated by striking two Hamas posts. There were no reports of casualties.

Recent days have also seen a controversial push by Netanyahu to pass legislation that would allow party officials to bring cameras into polling places during the election. The legislation drew outrage from opposition parties, and critics labeled a clear attempt to depress turnout among the Arab population as it could intimidate many into staying away. A vote on the bill failed in parliament yesterday, but before that the head of the mainly Arab Joint List alliance, Ayman Odeh, approached Netanyahu and stuck his phone in front his face to film him. Odeh was removed from the chamber. — Agencies



Sports

# Seager homers twice as Dodgers clinch 7th consecutive National League West title

**BALTIMORE:** Corey Seager homered twice in the first three innings and finished with five RBIs as the visiting Los Angeles Dodgers defeated the Baltimore Orioles 7-3 on Tuesday night to clinch their seventh consecutive National League West title. The Dodgers, who have made it to the World Series the past two seasons but lost both times, had a low-key celebration on the field after the final out on Tuesday. They subsequently partied in the visiting clubhouse. Seager hit a three-run homer in the first and belted a two-run shot in the third as the Dodgers took a big lead early on and never looked back. Both long balls came off Baltimore starter Ty Blach (1-3). Walker Buehler (13-3) fired seven shutout innings for Los Angeles, striking out 11 while yielding four hits and no walks.

**BREWERS 4, MARLINS 3**

Pinch hitter Tyler Austin lofted a tiebreaking sacrifice fly in the top of the ninth inning, and Milwaukee beat host Miami despite losing right fielder Christian Yelich to a season-ending knee injury. Yelich — a strong candidate to win his second straight National League MVP award — left the game in the top of the first inning after he fouled a ball off his right knee. The Brewers announced postgame that he fractured his kneecap. Milwaukee's ninth-inning rally started with a leadoff single from former Miami Hurricanes catcher Yasmani Grandal. Trent Grisham, who had replaced Yelich, then doubled, and Grandal scored when Miami center fielder Lewis Brinson's throw home was offline on Austin's fly.

**PADRES 9, CUBS 8 (10 INNINGS)**

Manuel Margot drew a four-pitch, walk-off walk from Steve Cishek with one out in the 10th inning to give host San Diego a victory over Chicago. The Padres held leads of 6-2 and 8-5, but the Cubs rallied to tie the game in the eighth on the second homers of the game by both Kris Bryant and Jason Heyward. Cishek retired the first hitter he faced in the 10th before giving up an infield single to Luis Urias. Cishek (3-6) then issued walks to Austin Hedges and Travis Jankowski to load the bases before failing to throw a strike to Margot. Michel Baez (1-1) picked up his first major league win.

**INDIANS 8, ANGELS 0**

Zach Plesac threw a four-hit shutout to lead Cleveland past Los Angeles in Anaheim, Calif. Plesac (8-6) gave up two singles to David Fletcher and doubles to Kole Calhoun and Taylor Ward while throwing 114 pitches. He struck out five and walked two. The 24-year-old rookie never previously pitched past seven innings in the majors. Jordan Luplow homered, drove in three and scored twice. Frammil Reyes drove in four runs, and Francisco Lindor hit his 30th home run of the season to allow Cleveland to keep pace with Tampa Bay and Oakland in the American League wild-card race.

**METS 3, DIAMONDBACKS 2**

Zack Wheeler tossed seven strong innings, and Todd Frazier accounted for all the Mets' runs with a pair of RBI doubles as New York beat visiting

Arizona. Wheeler (11-7) allowed one run on seven hits and two walks while striking out seven. He limited the Diamondbacks to two hits in 12 at-bats with runners on base. Brad Brach recorded two outs in the eighth but gave up a homer to Eduardo Escobar before Justin Wilson got the final four outs for his second save. Wilson struck out ex-Mets infielder Wilmer Flores with two on for the final out.

**PHILLIES 6, BRAVES 5**

Corey Dickerson homered twice and knocked in three runs to lift host Philadelphia past Atlanta. J.T. Realmuto and Bryce Harper each added a home run, and Scott Kingery contributed an inside-the-park homer. Blake Parker (3-2) earned the win in relief, while Hector Neris earned his 25th save with a scoreless ninth inning. Ronald Acuna Jr. and Freddie Freeman each had three hits for the Braves, and Johan Camargo homered.

**TWINS 5, NATIONALS 0**

Mitch Garver hit a two-run homer and Jose Berrios pitched seven strong innings to lead Minnesota to a victory over Washington in Minneapolis. Garver became the third Twins player to reach the 30-homer mark this season, joining Max Kepler (36) and Nelson Cruz (35). It's the first time since 1987 that Minnesota has had three players hit 30 home runs in a season and the fifth time in franchise history. Berrios (12-8), who entered the contest with a 1-3 record and 8.07 ERA in his six previous starts, allowed just two hits and a walk while striking out four.

**RAYS 5, RANGERS 3 (11 INNINGS)**

Tampa Bay scored a pair of unearned runs with the help of two Texas throwing errors in the 11th inning to post a win in Arlington, Texas. Emilio Pagan (4-2) pitched a scoreless 10th for the victory, and Pete Fairbanks worked around two hits in the bottom of the 11th to notch his first career save. Austin Meadows slugged a two-run homer for the Rays, who won their sixth straight. Nick Solak went 2-for-5 with a two-run homer for the Rangers.

**TIGERS 12, YANKEES 11**

Jordy Mercer hit a game-winning RBI single in the ninth as host Detroit overcame a six-homer onslaught by New York. Jeimer Candelario drove in three runs for Detroit while Christin Stewart homered and knocked in two runs. Joe Jimenez (4-7) pitched a scoreless inning to get the win for the Tigers, who wiped out an early six-run deficit. Brett Gardner and Didi Gregorius hit two homers apiece for New York. Edwin Encarnacion and Gleyber Torres also went deep.

**ATHLETICS 21, ASTROS 7**

Matt Olson and Sean Murphy recorded multi-homer games, and Oakland made amends for a 15-0 loss in the opener of a four-game series by dismantling host Houston. Olson set a single-season high with his 30th home run and then added his 31st as well, while Murphy ran his career and season totals to three. The Athletics slugged six homers, including



**BALTIMORE:** Caleb Ferguson #64 of the Los Angeles Dodgers pitches in the ninth inning against the Baltimore Orioles at Oriole Park at Camden Yards in Baltimore, Maryland. — AFP

three two-run blasts off Joe Biagini in the fourth inning. The Athletics were already comfortably ahead 11-2 before they teed off against Biagini. They tagged Wade Miley (13-5) for seven runs in the top of the first, stringing together six consecutive one-out singles after Marcus Semien opened the game with a single and Olson walked two batters later.

**BLUE JAYS 4, RED SOX 3**

Ken Giles retired Rafael Devers with two on in the ninth inning to seal host Toronto's victory over Boston to snap a season-high, seven-game losing streak. Giles converted his 19th save in 20 chances, but it was hardly easy. He needed to 29 pitches to cap a night in which six Toronto relievers combined for 4 2/3 scoreless innings. The Blue Jays scored all of their runs on homers by Cavan Biggio, Reese McGuire and Rowdy Tellez. The Red Sox lost their fourth straight and fell to 3-7 in their past 10 games.

**ROCKIES 2, CARDINALS 1**

Nolan Arenado homered for one of his two hits, Chi Chi Gonzalez pitched six solid innings for his first win of the season, and Colorado beat St. Louis in Denver. Gonzalez (1-6) gave up just one run on four hits, struck out four and didn't walk a batter. Jairo Diaz pitched two innings to pick up his second save, and Charlie Blackmon added two hits for the Rockies. Dexter Fowler doubled and scored for the Cardinals, who managed just six hits.

**WHITE SOX 7, ROYALS 3**

Yoan Moncada had three hits, including one of

Chicago's three home runs, as the host White Sox defeated visiting Kansas City. The Royals got home runs from Adalberto Mondesi, Alex Gordon and Ryan O'Hearn, but they were all solo shots, while Chicago got a grand slam from Eloy Jimenez and a two-run shot from Moncada. Ivan Nova (10-12) won despite serving up all three of the Royals' homers and allowing six hits in 5 2/3 innings. He struck out five without a walk.

**GIANTS 5, PIRATES 4**

Johnny Cueto made a masterful return to the mound after a 13-month absence, and San Francisco narrowly avoided a second straight bullpen meltdown in a victory over visiting Pittsburgh. Stephen Vogt had a two-run single and a two-run home run to account for nearly all the San Francisco offense, helping the Giants end a two-game losing streak. Cueto (1-0), pitching in the majors for the first time since July 28, 2018, demonstrated he's fully recovered from Tommy John surgery by firing five shutout innings, allowing just one hit and one walk. He struck out four.

**MARINERS 4, REDS 3**

Kyle Seager hit a two-run homer with two outs in the eighth inning as Seattle defeated visiting Cincinnati. Kyle Lewis, making his major league debut, and Dylan Moore also homered for the Mariners, who snapped a six-game losing streak that equaled their longest of the season. Brian O'Grady hit his first major league homer for the Reds. — Reuters

## Australia aim to finish Ashes mission with series win against England

**LONDON:** Australia head to the Oval hungry to win their first Ashes series in England since 2001 as the peerless Steve Smith seeks to inflict further pain on the hosts. Tim Paine's men finally saw off stubborn England at Old Trafford on Sunday to take a 2-1 lead in the five-Test series with just one match to go, meaning they will retain the urn.

To stand any chance of levelling the series, the World Cup winners will have to find a way to solve the riddle of the immovable Smith, who has scored 671 runs in just five innings at an astonishing average of more than 134.

The former captain, top of the international rankings, has carried his team's batting with three centuries and two fifties, including a double-century in the win in Manchester, with Marnus Labuschagne the only other batsman who has shown any consistency. Smith, who returned to Test action in England after completing a 12-month ball-tampering ban, has made his mountain of runs despite missing three innings after he was felled by a Jofra Archer bouncer. Given a full series, the freakish Smith might well have been even closer to Don Bradman's mark of 974 runs for the most runs ever made in a Test series, set in 1930. The other key factor for Australia has been the strength of their pace attack, with Josh Hazlewood and world number one Pat Cummins catching the eye with 42 wickets between them.

Australia coach Justin Langer, revelling in having the world's top-ranked batsman and bowler at his disposal, is urging the other batsmen to step up in the match starting on Thursday, even though he admits they lack experience.

"You can't just give them that experience, they have to earn that and we're very thankful to have Steve batting," he said. "I've never seen batting like that. You're still got to perform whether you're young or you're a veteran, but we also have to recognise they are young batsmen and it's a really tough school and hopefully they'll come through at some point."

Joe Root must inspire his troops to one last effort after a gruelling season in which England became world champions in the 50-over format for the first



**LONDON:** Australia's David Warner (L) prepares to bat in the nets during a training session at The Oval in London yesterday, on the eve of the start of the fifth and final Ashes cricket Test match between England and Australia. — AFP

time. Their failure in the Ashes has prompted questions over the Yorkshireman's position, but outgoing coach Trevor Bayliss is adamant the captain retains the support of the England hierarchy.

"He's not come under question from anyone making any decisions," Bayliss said. "He's under no pressure at all."

## Sri Lanka name depleted squads for Pakistan tour

**COLOMBO:** Sri Lanka yesterday named depleted squads for a six-match tour of Pakistan, after 10 top players opted out citing security concerns.

Lahiru Thirimanne has replaced one-day international skipper Dimuth Karunaratne, who refused to join the tour along with Twenty20 skipper Lasith Malinga. Thirimanne will lead a 15-member ODI squad, while the 16-member T20 squad will be led by Dasun Shanaka.

A majority of international teams have refused to tour Pakistan following a March 2009 militant attack on the Sri Lankan team bus during a Test match in Lahore. The other eight players who opted out of the Pakistan tour are Thisara Perera, Angelo Mathews,

Speaking about Root's form with the bat, Bayliss added: "Everyone goes through periods where they don't score as many runs as they'd like. I think the Australian team have bowled pretty well to him."

England talisman Ben Stokes was included in an unchanged 13-man squad but will be assessed to find out whether he is fit to bowl at the Oval. — AFP

Niroshan Dickwella, Kusal Perera, Dhananjaya de Silva, Akila Dananjaya, Suranga Lakmal and Dinesh Chandimal.

**ODI squad:** Lahiru Thirimanne (Captain), Danushka Gunathilaka, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Avishka Fernando, Oshada Fernando, Shehan Jayasuriya, Dasun Shanaka, Minod Bhanuka, Angelo Perera, Wanindu Hasaranga, Lakshan Sandakan, Nuwan Pradeep, Isuru Udana, Kasun Rajitha, and Lahiru Kumara.

**T20 squad:** Dasun Shanaka (Captain), Danushka Gunathilaka, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Avishka Fernando, Oshada Fernando, Shehan Jayasuriya, Angelo Perera, Bhanuka Rajapaksha, Minod Bhanuka, Lahiru Madushanka, Wanindu Hasaranga, Lakshan Sandakan, Isuru Udana, Nuwan Pradeep, Kasun Rajitha, and Lahiru Kumara.

**Series schedule:**  
**1st ODI — Karachi, September 27**  
**2nd ODI — Karachi, September 29**  
**3rd ODI — Karachi, October 2**  
**1st T20 — Lahore, October 5**  
**2nd T20 — Lahore, October 7**  
**3rd T20 — Lahore, October 9. — AFP**

## India's selectors face call to solve opening woes

**MUMBAI:** Finding a solution to India's top-order batting conundrum will be top of selectors' agenda when they meet today to pick the squad for next month's home test series against South Africa.

Despite being the world's top-ranked test side India have struggled with their opening combination, which, in turn, has heaped pressure on the middle order.

Since 2018 KL Rahul, Murali Vijay, Shikhar Dhawan, Parthiv Patel, Prithvi Shaw, Mayank Agarwal and Hanuma Vihari have all opened in tests but none have been able to cement their spot. Experienced duo Dhawan and Vijay are not expected to be considered after repeated failures while Prithvi Shaw is currently serving a doping ban.

Rahul has played 36 tests but failed to score a half-century in his last seven matches while his opening partner in West Indies, Mayank Agarwal, has just four tests under his belt. With Ajinkya Rahane and Vihari putting in solid performances in the middle order in two tests against the West Indies, Rohit Sharma has had to sit out, prompting calls to try the limited-overs opener at the top of the order in the longest format too.

"As selection committee, we haven't met after the conclusion of the West Indies tour. We will definitely take this (Rohit as opener) point into consideration when we all meet and discuss about it," India's chief selector MSK Prasad told India Today. "KL is definitely a great talent. Of course, he is going through a bit of a tough time in test cricket and we are definitely concerned about his form. He needs to spend more time on the wicket and regain his touch and form."

Rohit, 32, has secured his place at the top of the order in the Twenty20 and 50-over formats and finished with the most runs at the recent World Cup in England. The only player in the world with three double hundreds in one-day internationals, Rohit bats in the middle order in the longest format but has never really flourished on the test stage.

He was dropped following a poor return in South Africa in early 2018 when he scored 78 runs in four innings. He played two tests in a four-match series in Australia at the end of the year, missing one match with injury and another due to the birth of his child. Virat Kohli's side should not see too many changes in the rest of the batting order while the bowling unit, which led them to a 2-0 win against the West Indies and to the top of the World Test Championship table with 120 points, should also remain mostly intact.

Vishakhapatnam will host the first Test between India and South Africa from Oct. 2 followed by matches at Pune and Ranchi. — Reuters

## Sports

# Kolkata: Birthplace of the Calcutta Cup, and still India's rugby hub

## Battered trophy went on to become one of the most famous prizes in rugby

**KOLKATA:** When England and Scotland play rugby each year, the winner hoists the Calcutta Cup — a relic of the sport's roots in India, and a nod to the city where it is still thriving to this day.

In the 1870s, when the Calcutta Rugby Football Club started charging for drinks, interest among British colonialists waned and it was disbanded leaving 270 silver rupees in the kitty, or so the story goes. These were melted down to make the Calcutta Cup, the exquisite and now battered trophy still contested annually by England and Scotland, with cobras for handles and an elephant perched on top.

While the trophy went on to become one of the most famous prizes in rugby, the sport also survived in Kolkata, as the hot and bustling former capital of British India is now known. Indeed today it is the hub of rugby in India, and doing much good in the deprived city in the process, thanks in part to two British expats who gave up their careers to make Kolkata their home.

### THE OTHER CALCUTTA CUP

A big name in Kolkata's sporting scene is the Calcutta Football and Cricket Club (CCFC), its walls festooned with photos of sporting captains of yore. Founded in 1792, it is the oldest cricket club outside Britain, only five years younger than the Marylebone Cricket Club at Lord's, known as the 'home of cricket'.

But the CCFC is not just about cricket. "The 'F' in CCFC is for rugby and not football," points out sports coordinator Saurav Chatterjee, as members play sports in the bar. One of the many trophies in the packed cabinets behind him is none other than the Calcutta Cup.

But this is a different trophy from the more famous

one now housed in the Museum of Rugby in Twickenham, England. Kolkata's own Calcutta Cup, smaller than its namesake, is keenly contested every year by about eight Kolkata clubs, one of several local and national competitions.

Before independence in 1947, winners included British military teams such as the King's Own Regiment. But then home-grown sides including the CCFC, the Police, La Martinere Old Boys and a team from the city's Armenian community took over.

"We have a very huge history here of rugby in Kolkata," said Ryan Galstaun, 37, a member of that community refereeing boys' and girls' sevens in sweltering heat.

### 'JUST FOR A LARK'

But in recent years there have been two new kids on the scene, Future Hope and the Jungle Crows. Both were started by Brits — a former bank manager and an ex-diplomat — and both have won the city's Calcutta Cup multiple times with teams made up of former street children.

The clubs are also about more than rugby, using the sport to help both boys and girls from Kolkata's poorer areas — of which there are many — on the road towards a brighter future. Paul Walsh, 50, says he started Jungle Crows in 2004 with two compatriots "just for a lark". The other two have moved on but Walsh, from Chester in northern England and now an MBE, stayed.

His Khelo Rugby project involves taking a rugby ball into poor communities, gaining children's trust and helping them in other areas, including giving them money for schooling and training. "You get the odd-



File picture shows John Barclay and the Scotland team with the Calcutta Cup.

shaped ball out, you get the rugby ball out, and it will light up any child's face," Walsh told AFP. "They're interested. So that initial enthusiasm, we just kind of build on that really."

### DIRE POVERTY

"My home situation is very bad," said Vicky, 19, who

started playing rugby 10 years ago and is now at college thanks to Jungle Crows, and helping to coach the next generation. As he speaks, a group of children delightedly splatter through the mud playing British bulldog, a rough-and-tumble variant of tag, on a piece of wasteland near the Kolkata port where families live in dire poverty. — AFP

## Patriots receiver Brown accused of rape

**LOS ANGELES:** New England Patriots receiver Antonio Brown was rocked by fresh controversy on Tuesday after being accused of raping his former fitness trainer in a federal lawsuit filed in Florida.

Brown, who signed for the Super Bowl-champion Patriots after being released by the Oakland Raiders on Saturday, was accused of sexually assaulting 28-year-old former trainer Britney Taylor in three separate incidents in 2017 and 2018.

"As a rape victim of Antonio Brown, deciding to speak out has been an incredibly difficult decision," Taylor said in a statement released through her attorneys. "I have found strength in my faith, my family, and from the accounts of other survivors of sexual assault. Speaking out removes the shame that I have felt for the past year and places it on the person responsible for my rape."

Brown later denied wrongdoing in a letter issued through his attorney, claiming that sexual relations between the two had been consensual. "Mr Brown denies all of the accuser's allegations," the statement said. "Any sexual interaction with Mr. Brown was entirely consensual."

The Patriots issued a statement Tuesday night saying they had already been contacted by the league. "We are aware of the civil lawsuit that was filed earlier today against Antonio Brown, as well as the response by Antonio's representatives."

"We take these allegations very seriously. Under no circumstances does this organization condone sexual violence or assault. "The league informed us that they will be investi-



GLENDALE: File photo taken on August 15, 2019 Wide receiver Antonio Brown #84 of the Oakland Raiders warms up before the NFL preseason game against the Arizona Cardinals at State Farm Stadium in Glendale, Arizona. New England Patriots receiver Antonio Brown was rocked by fresh controversy on Tuesday after being accused of raping his former fitness trainer in a federal lawsuit filed in Florida. — AFP

gating. We will have no further comment while that investigation takes place."

In the lawsuit filed in the Southern District of Florida, Taylor alleges that she had first met Brown in 2010 when they attended a bible study class at Central Michigan college together. The NFL star later hired Taylor in 2017, saying he needed her to help him improve his flexibility.

However according to the lawsuit, Brown twice sexually assaulted Taylor during training sessions in June 2017. He later bragged about one of the incidents in profane messages included in the lawsuit.

Taylor terminated her professional relationship following the incidents but several months later agreed to work with him again after he apologised. "Brown reached out to Ms. Taylor, expressing contrition, begging

forgiveness and pleading with her to train him again," the lawsuit reads.

"Ms. Taylor was hesitant but eventually agreed, swayed by his assurance that he would cease any sexual advances." The assurance was false, the lawsuit stated. On May 20, 2018, Brown forced Taylor face down onto a bed and raped her.

"She tried to resist him," screaming and repeatedly shouting "no" and "stop", the lawsuit says. "Brown refused and penetrated her," the suit adds. The lawsuit did not state whether Taylor had taken her accusations to law enforcement. Taylor said in her statement however she would cooperate with the NFL and other agencies. However it stated Taylor had passed a polygraph conducted by a former FBI employee relating to the allegations in her lawsuit. — AFP

independent report into secondary schools rugby released earlier this year.

The report, commissioned by New Zealand Rugby, found that while the game was booming among schoolgirls, boys were increasingly turning to alternative sports such as basketball.

"The numbers of boys playing the game at secondary school is trending downwards at an alarming rate, especially considering the overall secondary school roll has been steadily increasing," the report said.

"Decreasing numbers of players leads to fewer teams and problems in forming meaningful, viable competitions." Figures from School Sport NZ show the number of schoolboy rugby players declined from 25,841 in 2014 to 21,532 in 2018, a fall of 17 percent.

Over the same period, basketball's popularity surged 41 percent from 13,130 to 18,498 participants.

In Auckland, the number of secondary school rugby teams fell from 225 to 181 between 2013 and 2018, a trend Gall said was echoed nationwide.

The report pointed to a range of reasons for the decline, including the "fragmented and confusing" structure of schoolboy competitions, a lack of qualified coaches and concern over the physical nature of the game.

It also said the hyper-competitive nature of the sport, with schools running rugby programmes akin to semi-professional academies, was "creating disquiet and questionable outcomes".

The report's release came shortly after

controversy blew up in the Auckland IA competition, when schools threatened to boycott St Kentigern College over its recruitment policies. The row highlighted many of the concerns in Gall's report, with the wealthy private school accused of using scholarships to lure top talent that delivered it five titles in seven years.

"They're not building from the ground up, from year nine to 11. They're going after the superstars and it's brazen," Napier Boys' High principal Matthew Bertram said at the time. St Kentigern eventually backed down and signed a code of conduct imposing conditions on player recruitment. But Gall said the issue was not confined to one school.

Students cited in the report said that a win-at-all-costs mentality had detracted from their enjoyment of rugby. Gall said a major problem was in-fighting between schools, clubs and provincial unions over control of schoolboy competitions.

He said without good governance it was difficult to adopt policies to make the game more inclusive, encourage participation and place emphasis on values, rather than just winning. "It can't be done on an ad hoc basis, there needs to be more planning and strategic thinking about how to grow the game," he said.

"There needs to be a lot more cooperation... and less self-interest. "There's some provinces where the clubs are at war with each other and at war with the school and the schools are at war with the clubs and the provincial union. That can't go on." — AFP

## History of the Rugby W Cup

**PARIS:** It is odd looking back to imagine that anyone ever thought a Rugby World Cup was a bad idea. But they did.

In a meeting of the International Rugby Board in 1984, both Scotland and Ireland voted against the idea while the English and Welsh each cast one vote in favour and one against, a precursor perhaps to the division which has marked Brexit. Fortunately, Australia, New Zealand, France and South Africa - who were members of the IRB in spite of the apartheid-induced international sporting sanction - all voted in favour and the idea was born. AFP Sports here chronicles the four most recent tournaments, from 2003 through until 2015:

### 2003

Hosts: Australia

Final: Australia 17 England 20 (aet) (Stadium Australia, Sydney)

Third: New Zealand 40 France 13

After four successive wins for southern hemisphere sides, there was genuine concern that the European sides would never be good enough to challenge. That fear was put to bed by an England team that had developed over several seasons and a year before the tournament had beaten both Australia and New Zealand down under. Martin Johnson's team, heavily reliant on the boot and vision of

## Rugby World Cup: Players to watch

**PARIS:** From a Test match point-scoring stalwart to a World Cup winner, from an Olympic champion to an emblematic leaders who transcends sport as well as a fresh-faced rookie, AFP Sports looks at five players who could turn out to be the headline grabbing names of the Rugby World Cup starting in Japan on September 20:

### JOHNNY SEXTON, IRELAND

The reigning World Rugby Player of the Year heads to his third World Cup having featured in only one of four of Ireland's warm-up matches due to injury.

The influential fly-half returned during the victory over Wales in early September to win his 84th cap in the number 10 jersey. Sexton trails only the man he displaced at fly half, Ronan O'Gara, as Ireland's all-time points scorer, with 770. O'Gara scored 1,083 international points. Sexton is joined by Munster's Conor Murray in forming an experienced half-back partnership under head coach Joe Schmidt.

### BEAUDEN BARRETT, NEW ZEALAND

The 28-year-old, a world champion four years ago, travels to Japan along with brothers Scott and Jordie, after a difficult few months.

Jonny Wilkinson, eased through to the final where they met an Australia side which had grown during the tournament, beating the All Blacks in the semi-finals. The final was another epic which went to extra-time, Wilkinson sealing an English win with a drop goal just 20 seconds before the end. It remains the only win by a European side in eight tournaments.

### 2007

Hosts: France

Final: England 6 South Africa 15 (Stade de France, Paris)

Third: Argentina 34 France 10

This tournament of surprises began with Argentina beating hosts France in the opening match and ended with South Africa claiming their second title. In between Fiji beat the Welsh who consequently missed out on the quarter-finals as did Ireland who, like the French, were undone by a bold and exciting Pumas team. In the last eight, Thierry Dusautoir's French side then turned the tables on the All Blacks in Cardiff, the only occasion when New Zealand have failed to reach the semi-finals. The 2003 champions England were a mess at the start of their defence, slipping to a 36-nil thrashing by the Springboks in the pool stage but they recovered to edge Australia in the quarters and France in the semis. The final was tight and there was plenty of debate over a disallowed England try when Mark Cueto was adjudged to have brushed the touchline. Victory for the Boks while Argentina undid the French a second time to take the third-place play-off. —AFP

Barrett, a former two-time World Rugby Player of the Year, has been moved to full-back by head coach Steve Hansen to accommodate for Richie Mo'unga in the number 10 shirt and deal with an injury to Damian McKenzie. Despite persistent doubts about the accuracy of his goal-kicking, Barrett's talent and speed in open play, especially on the counter attack, make him one of the most dangerous players with ball in hand.

### LEONE NAKARAWA, FIJI

The 'Octopus', as he is called by team-mate Jale Vatubua, is among four Fiji squad members at the World Cup who also won a gold medal at the Rio Olympics in 2016. The Racing 92 second-row stands 1.98m tall. His ability to use his long arms to off-load the ball can be almost undefendable. His reach also means he is dangerous disrupting opposition ball high in the air at lineouts as well as during driving mauls. With 59 caps, the 31-year-old Nakarawa is one behind Campese Ma'afu as the Pacific Islanders most experienced player heading to Japan.

### SIYA KOLISI, SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa's first black Test captain will look to follow in the footsteps of Francois Pienaar and Jon Smit by guiding the Springboks to a World Cup title.

The Stormers flanker, who wears the same number six as Pienaar did in 1995, has been a key part of the Rassie Erasmus-led turnaround of the national team after pitiful defeats to Italy and Wales in the space of seven days in November 2016. —AFP

## Alarm at NZ's falling schoolboy rugby numbers

**WELLINGTON:** As the All Blacks chase a third straight World Cup in Japan, the schoolboy rugby competitions that forged many of New Zealand's stars face an "alarming" fall in player numbers amid concerns about elite schools poaching top talent.

Schoolboy rugby is a big deal in New Zealand — senior matches are televised nationally and the rivalries between some schools date back more than a century.

Before Jonah Lomu, Richie McCaw and Dan Carter became All Blacks legends, they were honing their skills for Wesley College, Otago Boys' High and Christchurch Boys' High respectively.

The prestigious Auckland Grammar boasts that 51 All Blacks have emerged from its rugby programme, while Christchurch Boys' High (46) and Wellington College (35) have similar pedigrees.

"It's part of the fabric of New Zealand society, rugby in all walks of life is, and certainly we've got strong traditions in our schools," said Peter Gall, who co-authored an

Sports

# England, France hammer minnows, Ronaldo shines for Portugal

## Turks thrash Moldova 4-0, Serbia beat Luxembourg

PARIS: England and Portugal both scored five goals while France scored three as they overcame lowly-ranked Kosovo, Andorra and Lithuania in Euro 2020 qualifying on Tuesday. Captain Ronaldo, making his 160th international appearance, scored four as Portugal won 5-1 in Vilnius and strengthened their position in Group B after a sluggish start.

For Ronaldo it was a second hat-trick in three internationals. The victory over Lithuania, 130th in the world rankings, kept Portugal five points behind Ukraine at the top of Group B. Portugal, who opened the group with home draws against Ukraine and Serbia, started their recovery with a victory in Belgrade on Saturday. They have a game in hand on all the other teams in the group.

"We were better, we are better, and we won because of it," said Fernando Santos, the Portugal coach. "We kept the pace after the win at Serbia, otherwise this triumph would make no sense, and we are closer."

Ronaldo's first goal was a penalty. The second, with the scores level after an hour, was a scuffed low shot from outside the penalty area which took a couple of stragglers off the artificial turf before it was parried into the air by the diving Ernestas Setkus. The dropping ball hit the back of the goalie's head before rolling in. The third was a clinical volley from close range. The fourth was a low shot into the corner.

Vytautas Andriuskevicius scored the hosts' only goal before William Carvalho added a fifth for the reigning champions at the end. Serbia beat Luxembourg 3-1, as Aleksandar Mitrovic netted twice, to solidify their grasp on third place. They are a point behind Portugal.

In Southampton, Gareth Southgate's England side trailed early on to Kosovo, ranked 120th in the world, when Valon Berisha scored after 34 seconds. England replied with a first-half goal binge that ended with Jadon Sancho scoring twice to make it 5-1 at the break.

### 'BIZARRE GAME'

The visitors claimed two back in the second half, including a second for Lazio midfielder Berisha, but the 5-3 victory put England three points clear in Group A, ahead of the second-placed Czech Republic, who beat Montenegro 3-0. "A bizarre game," said Southgate. "The outstanding parts of our play were obvious. The errors were obvious." In Paris, the world champions made light work of beating 136-ranked Andorra 3-0. It was Les Bleus' 100th match at the Stade de France.

Antoine Griezmann missed a penalty for his country for the second game running but Kinglsey Coman, Clement Lenglet, with his first on the international goal, and Wissam Ben Yedder clinched three points.



VILNIUS: Portugal's forward Cristiano Ronaldo (C) vies with Lithuania's Saulius Mikoliunas (R) during the UEFA Euro 2020 Group B qualification football match Lithuania v Portugal in Vilnius, Lithuania. — AFP

"It is really annoying. I'll just need to keep working. You can't be on top of your game all the time," Griezmann said. Coman also scored two against Albania on Saturday. "It has been a very good week. It has gone well personally and collectively," Coman told television station TF1.

Cenk Tosun scored twice as the Turks beat Moldova

with ease in a 4-0 victory in Chisinau. But Iceland, who had been level with the top two, suffered a blow as they lost 4-2 in Albania.

That result meant Iceland dropped three points behind. It also changed the tiebreak, allowing Turkey to take first place from France. — AFP

### Euro 2020 qualifying standings

Euro 2020 qualifying standings after Tuesday's Groups A, B and H matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Group A							
England	4	4	0	0	19	4	12
Czech Rep	5	3	0	2	9	8	9
Kosovo	5	2	2	1	10	10	8
Montenegro	5	0	2	3	3	13	2
Bulgaria	5	0	2	3	5	11	2

Group B							
Ukraine	5	4	1	0	11	1	13
Portugal	4	2	2	0	10	4	8
Serbia	5	2	1	2	10	12	7
Luxembourg	5	1	1	3	5	8	4
Lithuania	5	0	1	4	4	15	1

Group C							
Germany	5	4	0	1	17	6	12
Northern Ireland	5	4	0	1	7	4	12
Netherlands	4	3	0	1	14	5	9
Belarus	5	1	0	4	3	10	3
Estonia	5	0	0	5	2	18	0

Group D							
Rep. Ireland	5	3	2	0	6	2	11
Denmark	5	2	3	0	15	5	9
Switzerland	4	2	2	0	10	4	8
Georgia	5	1	1	3	4	8	4
Gibraltar	5	0	0	5	0	16	0

Group E							
Croatia	5	3	1	1	10	5	10
Slovakia	5	3	0	2	9	7	9
Hungary	5	3	0	2	7	6	9
Wales	4	2	0	2	4	4	6
Azerbaijan	5	0	1	4	5	13	1

Group F							
Spain	6	6	0	0	17	3	18
Sweden	6	3	2	1	13	8	11
Romania	6	3	1	2	13	7	10
Norway	6	2	3	1	11	8	9
Malta	6	1	0	5	2	13	3
Faroese	6	0	0	6	3	20	0

Group G							
Poland	6	4	1	1	8	2	13
Slovenia	6	3	2	1	12	5	11
Austria	6	3	1	2	13	6	10
North Macedonia	6	2	2	2	8	8	8
Israel	6	2	2	2	11	11	8
Latvia	6	0	0	6	1	21	0

Group H							
Turkey	6	5	0	1	14	2	15
France	6	5	0	1	19	4	15
Iceland	6	4	0	2	10	9	12
Albania	6	3	0	3	10	9	9
Moldova	6	1	0	5	2	17	3
Andorra	6	0	0	6	0	14	0

Group I							
Belgium	6	6	0	0	19	1	18
Russia	6	5	0	1	18	4	15
Kazakhstan	6	2	1	3	8	9	7
Cyprus	6	2	1	3	11	6	7
Scotland	6	2	0	4	5	13	6
San Marino	6	0	0	6	0	28	0

Group J							
Italy	6	6	0	0	18	3	18
Finland	6	4	0	2	8	4	12
Armenia	6	3	0	3	12	11	9
Bosnia-Herzegovina	6	2	1	3	12	11	7
Greece	6	1	2	3	7	10	5
Liechtenstein	6	0	1	5	1	19	1

## England's got talent, but errors must be cut out for Euros glory

LONDON: England's abundance of attacking talent has the Three Lions believing they can end a 54-year wait to win a major international tournament next year, when the Euro 2020 final will be hosted at Wembley. Raheem Sterling, Jadon Sancho and Harry Kane were in full flow as Kosovo, unbeaten in 15 matches prior to travelling to Southampton on Tuesday, were put to the sword with five goals in 38 first-half minutes.

That took England's tally in four qualifiers to 19 goals with mathematic qualification seemingly a formality. But there remains plenty for Gareth Southgate to perfect ahead of the European championships as Kosovo became the first visiting side to score three times in a qualifier in England for 12 years as the hosts edged an eight-goal contest 5-3.

"We've been saying international football is dull, that wasn't the case tonight," said Southgate, who did not hold back in criticising a sluggish start to the second-half that saw a 5-1 lead quickly cut to 5-3. "The small bit after half-time: ridiculous mistakes, poor deci-

sions, lack of covering back, so we made the game really uncomfortable for ourselves." Centre-backs Michael Keane and Harry Maguire, who became the world's most expensive defender after a £80 million move from Leicester to Manchester United last month, were at fault for all three goals conceded.

England's inability to close out the game after going in front has also seen them lose two semi-finals at the World Cup in 2018 and the Nations League in June under Southgate.

Attack may therefore be the best form of defence come the Euros with 19-year-old Sancho taking his sensational form for Borussia Dortmund onto the international stage with his first two England goals, alongside the established pairing of Kane and Sterling. The latter two have each scored six times in four qualifiers in Group A, with Sterling a man transformed in an England shirt over the past year. Prior to scoring twice in a 3-2 win in Spain last October, Sterling had not scored for his country in 27 games stretching back three years. — AFP

## Delight, chaotic scenes as Qatar held by India in WCup qualifier

DOHA: Hundreds of Indian fans launched celebrations after their team held World Cup 2022 hosts Qatar to a goalless draw in Doha in a preliminary qualifying match for the flagship tournament.

But some of the sparkle of India's achievement Tuesday was lost following chaotic scenes as visiting fans struggled to enter the stadium. There was jostling outside the South Stand around 10 minutes after kick-off when a crowd of several hundred Indian fans chanted and held up tickets while a phalanx of Qatari security held them back.

"What a shambles," said a British football fan who was also unable to enter the ground "even with a ticket". "What a unique way to do it," he said, noting that his group's tickets had been issued without gate numbers.

Security officers had increasingly heated exchanges with fans stuck outside but able to clearly hear the drama unfolding inside. Nearby, hundreds of others snaked around the car park. At half-time a surge of several hundred Indian fans attempted to bypass security and ticket control and rush through two of the stadium gates. The automatic doors were closed and the situation was brought quickly under control.

### 'CAN'T HANDLE THE CROWD?'

"If they can't handle the crowd they shouldn't give the tickets," said a 24-year-old Indian migrant worker who had

a ticket and was refused entry. "We are working day and night in the heat, we are paying our money and we have our tickets," he added, declining to be named as Qatari officials reinforced barriers around the area.

"If they are doing this at a (lower-profile) match, how will they handle a World Cup match? "We all live here, if foreigners are here how will they handle it?" Indians make up almost 22 percent of Qatar's population while Qataris are only 10.5 percent of the total, according to official statistics.

This led some Indian fans to complain that they were allocated just eight percent of tickets to Tuesday's game — the minimum quota permitted by international football rules. The 15,000-capacity Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium will not be used for the World Cup in 2022.

FIFA, contacted by AFP, referred questions to the Qatar Football Association who did not respond to requests for comment. "It's a bit of a disaster," said another British football fan based in Qatar who had travelled to Doha's western suburb of Al Sadd to watch the match.

Despite the disappointment of Indian fans forced to watch the action on a screen set up in the car park, there were jubilant scenes inside the stadium following the upset draw. Away fans chanted in unison and waved India's tricolour flag as the team toured the ground that is home to Qatar's domestic Al Sadd team.

India coach Igor Stimac highlighted the gulf between his team's modest facilities and the lavish infrastructure enjoyed by Qatar as he warned his players to keep their heads down following the surprise result. "We have two stopwatches and lots of willingness to learn everyday," he said at the post-match press briefing. The area around the stadium was quiet following the match however with the crowd dispersing quickly and calmly. — AFP

## Arsenal's Mead wants to knock Lyon off Champions League perch

LONDON: Lyon remain the team to beat when the women's Champions League gets underway yesterday, but Arsenal and England forward Beth Mead believes the time is coming to knock the relentless French champions "down a peg or two".

Arsenal travel to Italy to face Fiorentina in the first leg of their last 32 tie on Thursday after a first English title in seven years. Mead was vital to that success last season, forming a prolific partnership with Dutch striker Vivianne Miedema, before starring in England's run to the World Cup semi-finals.

The Gunners are the only English side to win the top prize in women's European club football in 2007. But in the 12 years since, Lyon have become Europe's dominant force — winning the Champions League six times, including the past four seasons.

Having seen international teammates Lucy Bronze, Nikita Parris, Alex Greenwood and Izzy Christiansen all leave England behind to join Lyon's ever-burgeoning galaxy of stars, Mead is aware of the challenge facing anyone trying to end the French club's grip on the competition.

"When they buy a player it is one of the top-end players from any other team. They are a different class, I enjoy watching them," Mead told AFP. "As an English player you want to see an English team knock them down a peg or two. I want to see them knocked down. We'll see if someone

is able to do it one day soon. "In saying that, half the team now are English!" Mead admits that the facilities, conditions and success offered to Lyon's female stars makes them a dream destination. At just 24, she is likely to be a future target should her rise continue.

After scoring nearly a goal a game in six years with Sunderland, a move to Arsenal in 2017 opened the door to international recognition. A stunning strike to beat Brazil as England won the SheBelieves Cup earlier this year established Mead as a regular for her country. She was an ever-present as the Lionesses fell short at the semi-final stage for a third consecutive major tournament.

Two months on, defeat to the USA still hurts. After seeing off England, the Americans went onto lift a fourth World Cup against Miedema's Netherlands in the final.

Seven of the eight quarter-finalists in France came from Europe and Mead believes the developing European leagues, with the Champions League as the pinnacle, will see Europe's national teams surpass the USA.

"The USA are unbelievable but I actually think by comparison the European leagues are better," added Mead. "I think America just have an unbelievable mindset that they are going to win, and they do, so fair play to them. We are getting closer, but it's just small margins." — AFP



DOHA: Qatar's defender Assim Madibo (bottom) tackles India's midfielder Sahal Abdul Samad (C) during the FIFA world cup Qatar 2022 and AFC Asian cup China 2023 preliminary joint qualification round 2 match between Qatar and India, at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium in Doha. — AFP

## Abram strikes late as Peru down Brazil

LOS ANGELES: Peru grabbed a slice of revenge for their loss to Brazil in the Copa America final on Tuesday, defeating the five-time World Cup winners 1-0 in a friendly in Los Angeles.

A headed goal from Argentina-based defender Luis Abram was enough to give Peru a hard-fought win over the Brazilians.

Brazil, who defeated Peru 3-1 in the final of the Copa America in Rio de Janeiro in July, never got going to the disappointment of a 32,287 crowd at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum.

The defeat brought an end to Brazil's 17-game winning streak, a run which started with a victory over the United States just over a year ago.

Brazil coach Tite meanwhile opted against starting Paris Saint-Germain star Neymar, four days after he had made a successful return from injury with a goal and an assist in a 2-2 draw with Colombia on Friday.

Tite, who had been reluctant to start Neymar in back-to-back games as the striker regains fitness, brought on the PSG forward after 63 minutes in place of Liverpool's Roberto Firmino.

Neymar attempted to up the tempo in attack, but was unable to break the deadlock, with Brazil, who were also missing Dani Alves and Thiago Silva, struggling to find their usual attacking rhythm.

Instead it was Peru who grabbed a winner, Abram rising to meet Yoshimar Yotun's free-kick to glance in the winner. — AFP

**25** Seager homers twice as Dodgers clinch 7th consecutive National League West title



**26** Kolkata: Birthplace of the Calcutta Cup, and still India's rugby hub



**27** Delight, chaotic scenes as Qatar held by India in WCup qualifier



DONGGUAN: France's Evan Fournier (R) takes a shot during the Basketball World Cup quarter-final game between US and France in Dongguan yesterday. —AFP

## France eliminate USA in major upset

### Australia surge into Basketball World Cup semi-finals for first time

**DONGGUAN:** France blew the Basketball World Cup wide open yesterday by handing the United States their first loss in the competition in 13 years in their quarterfinal clash, powered by a double-double from big man Rudy Gobert of the Utah Jazz.

The historic 89-79 win for France eliminates the Americans early from the competition in China, dashing their hopes of a third straight title. The prospect of an American exit had looked increasingly possible after the USA sent a squad of second-tier stars and the loss is likely to prompt soul-searching in USA basketball.

Gobert, the two-time NBA Defensive Player of the Year, had three blocks, including a key rejection down the stretch to help France seal the victory in the southern Chinese city of Dongguan.

The 7ft, 1in centre called the win "unbelievable". "I've been dreaming about this for a while. I was thinking we might never get the opportunity (to beat the USA) again and I told that to the guys," Gobert said.

"It doesn't mean much if you don't win the gold, but it will go down as one of the biggest wins of my career and one of the biggest wins for French basketball for sure." In a hint of the sniping that may result in the United States over the debacle, shooting guard Donovan Mitchell, who lead the Americans with 29 points, hit back at critics of the team.

"You guys are going to go on and say who we didn't have but why don't you all focus on who we do have?" he told reporters. "We have 12 guys that want to compete for America, just like every other country. It sucks that some of our country people don't feel that way about us, but we don't care. We wanted to compete and we did." France will play Argentina on Friday, who made it to the final four by defeating Serbia.

The USA loss sets up an enticing consolation match with Serbia on Thursday. Packed with NBA players, the two were tournament favourites and will be trying to salvage pride.

Yesterday's contest was marked by

big lead changes, and Mitchell's jumpers and slashing moves to the basket helped the Americans cut down a 10-point French advantage in the third quarter to seize back the lead.

But Mitchell cooled in the fourth and the French came back, led by Gobert and sharp-shooting small forward Evan Fournier of the Orlando Magic, who led France in scoring with 22 points. Fournier slashed to the hoop for a driving lay-up to give France the lead again at 78-76 with about three minutes remaining in the game. With under a minute left and down by four, Mitchell squirted into the lane for a layup but Gobert smothered the shot by his Jazz teammate and the Americans were never able to get any closer.

The win raises the prospect of France adding a Basketball World Cup title to the football World Cup hardware they won in Russia last year.

Meanwhile, San Antonio Spurs' Patty Mills was in sparkling form once more for Australia as they reached the Basketball World Cup semi-finals for

the first time yesterday.

The Boomers, who had never gone beyond the quarter-finals in 11 previous appearances, defeated tournament debutants the Czech Republic 82-70 and will meet Spain on Friday.

This was undefeated Australia's sixth win in a row in China and in doing so they avoided becoming the latest surprise casualty at this unpredictable World Cup.

Australia were heavy favourites in Shanghai against the Czechs, who bravely hung on until midway through the third quarter, when the Boomers cranked up the pressure.

Australia survived the World Cup "Group of Death" also including Canada, Senegal and Lithuania, before beating the Dominican Republic and then fellow semi-finalists France.

Veteran Australian Andrew Bogut was again loudly booed throughout by fans in Shanghai upset with a tweet he wrote in July about Chinese swimming star Sun Yang. He goaded the crowd afterwards with a dance as he came off the court. —AFP

### Coleman denies doping, hits out at drug 'smears'

**LOS ANGELES:** US sprinter Christian Coleman hit back at criticism of his three missed doping tests yesterday, insisting he had never taken performance-enhancing drugs and never would.

Coleman, the favourite for the 100m at the World Championships in Doha, risked a suspension after drug-testers were unable to locate him on three separate occasions in a 12-month period.

However the charges against him were withdrawn because of a technicality on September 2 after the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) received guidance on how the 12-month window should be calculated.

Coleman, who had previously denied any wrongdoing in a statement released in August, took to social media yesterday to elaborate on his case.

In a post on Instagram, the 23-year-old insisted he was a clean athlete, emphasising he does not even take legal supplements. "Therefore I have never failed a drug test and

never will," Coleman said.

"I'm the biggest advocate for clean sport because I know the sacrifice and what it takes to make it to this level. "I shouldn't have to defend myself but for the first and last time I literally do not take ANY supplements or protein powders. Nothing even legal to help with recovery. Nothing. I work hard at practice, drink water and Powerade, rest, and work even harder the next day."

In a separate video message posted on Youtube, Coleman appeared to accuse USADA of attempting to "smear" his reputation, and pointed the finger at US authorities for releasing details of his case into the public domain.

The first reports of Coleman's case appeared in Britain's Daily Mail newspaper. USADA had refused to comment on the case until Coleman himself issued a statement to NBC on August 24.

"It shouldn't have even been a public ordeal," Coleman said. "I've never heard of a situation where an athlete doesn't have their own privacy, they don't get an opportunity to clear their name before any public knowledge is out there."

"It's a shame on USADA that this was public knowledge, that they didn't know their own rules — that they expect athletes to know the rules but they can't follow their own."

The case against Coleman stalled after the sprinter's lawyers pointed out under existing rules, his three where-

abouts tests should not have been classified as three missed tests.

His first offence occurred on June 6 last year. A doping control officer attempted to test the sprinter and discovered he had failed to update his whereabouts information to reflect his location.

Two more whereabouts failures were logged on January 16 this year and April 26. However Coleman's team successfully argued under current rules, his first missed case should have been backdated to the first day of that quarter — April 1, 2018 — which would mean the dates of the three offences fell outside the required 12-month timeframe for a doping offence to have occurred.

Coleman yesterday broke down the details of how each missed test happened. He said the first incident in June 2018 happened when he was injured and sought treatment in Oregon, forgetting to notify drug testers of his change in location. "That's on me, that's my fault," he said. The second incident in January occurred when he changed the time of a weight session near his base in Kentucky from 9am to 8am. A doping control officer arrived to administer a test. Coleman, who said he was only 10 minutes from his home at the time, said he did not receive a call from the tester.

"She said that she came while I was at weights and that she attempted to call," he said. "I didn't get a call, I didn't even know that I had a missed test." —AFP

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- Minimum 2-3 year's local dealership experience
- Preferably Engineering background
- Excellent English & Arabic communication skills (read, write & speak)
- Age group 25-35
- Transferable visa #18; Kuwait based
- Has valid Kuwait driver's license

Please mention the position applied for in subject title.

Interested Candidates are Requested to e mail their CVs ASAP to:  
recruitmentchoice14@gmail.com